REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
ERCIYES UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

SARTREAN AND DELEUZIAN SELVES; A STUDY OF SADEGH HEDAYAT'S *THE BLIND OWL*, SAMUEL BECKETT'S *MURPHY* VERSUS MARGARET ATWOOD'S *SURFACING* AND SAUL BELLOW'S *HERZOG*

By
Onur EKLER

Advısor
Prof. Dr. Behzad GHADERI SOHI

Doctoral Thesis

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This study, entitled as "Sartrean and Deleuzian Selves; A Study of Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl*, Samuel Beckett's *Murphy* Versus Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing* and Saul Bellow's *Herzog*" that has been prepared by Onur Ekler under the supervisor, Prof. Dr. Behzad Ghaderi Sohi has been certified as the Doctoral dissertation in the Department of English Literature, Social Sciences Institute at Erciyes University.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to trace the shift in the interpretations of the Self from modernism to postmodernism in general and from Sartrean no-Self to Deleuzean rhizomic Self specifically in Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl*, Samuel Beckett's *Murphy*, Saul Bellow's *Herzog* and Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing*. To corroborate this argument, this thesis firstly examines the notions of the Self from medieval period to postmodern period to show the changing perspectives towards the Self with regard to the social, ideological, cultural, economical transformations in the relevant time. Secondly, it discusses Sartrean no-Self and Deleuzean rhizomic Self in detail to see the shift from the nihilistic views on the Self in modern period to positive ones in postmodern period in general. Finally, this thesis makes a comparative analysis of the selected novels to trace this shift in the protagonists' Self-quests. The argument of this study is that similar to Deleuzean rhizomic Self, Bellow and Atwood have adopted a more positive attitude toward the Self and have celebrated life and the Self in multiplicity while Hedayat and Beckett have had reductionist, decadent, nihilistic views on the Self like Sartrean no-Self. The present study has tried to show that different interpretations of the Self might surface with regard to the changing dynamics of the time. Moreover, as argued in the cases of the protagonists in the selected novels, this thesis has attempted to indicate Deleuzean rhizomic Self might be seen as a possible alternative to help one survive in times of crisis in contrast to the nihilistic tradition of Sartrean no-Self.

Key Words: Self, Nothingness, Rhizome, Bad faith, Nomad Thought, Subjectivity

SARTRE VE DELEUZE'UN SELF ANLAYIŞLARI; SADEGH HEDAYAT'İN *THE BLIND OWL* VE SAMUEL BECKETT'IN *MURPHY* ADLI ESERLERİYLE MARGARET ATWOOD'UN *SURFACING* VE SAUL BELLOW'UN *HERZOG* ADLI ESERLERİNİN KARŞILAŞTIRILMASI ÜZERİNE BİR ÇALIŞMA

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ÖZ

Bu çalışma, genel olarak modernizmden postmodernizme ve daha özgül olarak Sartre'ın hiçlik teorisinden Deleuze'un rizom benlik teorisine göre değişen benlik algısını Sadegh Hedayat'in *The Blind Owl*, Samuel Beckett'in *Murphy*, Saul Bellow'un *Herzog* ve Margaret Atwood'un *Surfacing* romanlarında izlemeyi amaçlar. Bu argümanı desteklemek için, bu çalışma, ilk olarak, ilgili dönemin sosyal, kültürel, ideolojik ve ekonomik olgularına göre ortaya çıkan benliğe yönelik değişik algıları göstermek için benlik teorilerini Orta Çağ'dan Postmodern döneme dek mercek altına alır. İkincil olarak, modern dönemde benliğe yönelik benimsenen hiçlik algısından postmodern dönemde benliğe yönelik ortaya çıkan olumlu değişimi göstermek için Sartre'ın hiçlik teorisini ve Deleuze'un rhizomic benlik teorisini detaylı bir şekilde tartışır. Son olarak, bu çalışma, yukarıda bahsedilen benlik algısındaki bu değişimi seçilmiş romanlardaki ana karakterlerin benlik arayışlarında gözlemlemek için bu romanları karşılaştırmalı olarak inceler. Hedayat ve Beckett'ın Sartre'ın hiçlik teorisine benzeyen hiçlik görüşlerine kıyasla Bellow ve Atwood'un hayatın ve benliğin temelindeki parçalanmışlığı kutlaması ve benliğe yönelik Deleuze'un rizom teorisine benzer bir tavırla daha pozitif bir tutum benimsemeleri bu çalışmanın temel argümanını oluşturur. Bu çalışma, zamanın değişen dinamiklerine göre benlik üzerine farklı yorumlamalar olabileceğini göstermeye çalışmıştır. Buna ek olarak, incelenen romanların ana karakterlerin durumlarında ileri sürüldüğü gibi, bu çalışma, Deleuze'un rizom benlik teorisinin Sartre'ın hiçlik teorisinin aksine, kriz anlarında birinin hayata tutunmasına yardım edebilecek olumlu bir alternative yol olarak görülebileceğini göstermeye çalışmıştır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Benlik, Hiçlik, Rizom, Kötü İnanç, Nomadic düşünce, Öznellik

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Know thyself! (An ancient Greek aphorism)

"Know thyself?"- If I knew myself, I'd run away (Johann Wolgamg Von Goethe)

Any fool can turn a blind eye but who knows what the ostrich sees in the sand (Beckett).

The question of the Self has always been the topic for discussion in non/fictional writings ever since humankind fell from innocence as a result of the loss of Eden. In search for an answer to this question, different interpretations have surfaced in different periods under different conditions. Despite being under different masks, the question never changes: Who are we? One cannot help but ask: What was Adam and Eve's defiance against God's will for? What was Oedipus' confrontation with his fate for? What was Medea's stepping out of her social role for? What was Hamlet's melancholic mood for? What were all these 'transgressive' acts for? Were all these futile attempts? Or should we consider these as attempts to solve the riddle of the Self?

The question of the Self for mankind usually surfaces in times of crisis. This crisis occurs particularly when the Self does not altogether fit in the culture anymore. As a result of this, the Self begins to suffer since its position in that given culture has been displaced. Then the Self is cast adrift. It starts to set out a voyage to know itself. This crisis occurs differently regarding the relevant periods. When the clothing of the Self becomes obsolete for the new social dynamics, the Self struggles to change it. However, this process is really painful. In ancient Greece, this crisis happened when consciousness of man became above the established order. Pentheus' defiance against Dionysus despite unintentionally, Antigone's attempt to violate against the laws of Gods, Socrates' defence of his position at the expense of death despite being accused of blasphemy can be exemplified for the crisis of the Self in Ancient Greece (Grene and Lattimore, 37-128). In Renaissance and Early modern period, this crisis happened when

the totality of Self in the Great Chain of Being under the guarantee of Christianity began to break because of the rise of Humanism. The humanistic notion of the Self, resuscitated with the boundless energy, broke the chains of the Higher Order and tasted the freedom of the will. The Self took itself to the centre as Phytogoras said: "man is the measure of all things." Faustus' contract first with Lucifer and then with Mephistopheles despite God's warnings, Hamlet's experimental observations to find the murderer of his father rather than believing the ghost's/Father's command "List, list, O, List! (Act I, Sc. V, p. 2)", Prospero's colonial ambitions, Macbeth's murdering the king, the shadow of God on earth can be the examples of the humanistic notion of the Self.

In the Enlightenment period, the boundless energy of the humanistic Self was confined with the rational and mechanical notions of Newton's mechanical universe and Decartes' dualistic notion of the Self. The mechanical and rational control of the unbridled energy of the humanistic Self led to the development of the dualistic notion of the Self, theorized by Rene Descartes. This notion flourished as a need to cope with the rapid changes that occurred in the embers of decaying values of bourgeoise society. In his *Discourse on Method*, Descartes argues that thinking is the evidence of existence. He regards indubitably this principle that "I think therefore I am" as the foundation of philosophy.

> But immediately upon this I observed that, whilst I thus wished to think that all was false, it was absolutely necessary that I, who thus thought, should be somewhat; and as I observed that this truth, I think, therefore I am (COGITO ERGO SUM), was so certain and of such evidence that no ground of doubt, however extravagant, could be alleged by the sceptics capable of shaking it, I concluded that I might, without scruple, accept it as the first principle of the philosophy of which I was in search. (46)

Descartes sees himself as a thinking Self. He carries on his discussion saying that everything he perceives consists in thinking, and thinking does not need any material being in order to exist. His emphasis on the thinking Self, as the essence of everything, left no room for the extended reality of the Self. It caused the thinkers not to see the whole picture of the Self in his age or in the following centuries. Unlike Descartes' thinking Self, David Hume attempted to see the Self through the senses. Rousseau put the emphasis on the emotional side of the Self. Karl Marx attempted to materialize it. Their one sided existential questioning of the Self widened the split in the Self. Thus, the conception of the Self became bigger and bigger in the course of time.

In modern and postmodern literary periods, the question of the Self has become more problematic. Most probably it is because the Self cannot pace up with the new social dynamics of the time and it becomes insufficient to the needs of time. A critical thinker on existential philosophy, Barrett in his book *Irrational Man* (1958) clearly expresses that the developments in science and technology have been so rapid that man has found himself in an unsecured atmosphere. He claims that these rapid changes have displaced him. Thus, the Self is drifted. His organic connections with the Nature have become mechanical (25). Another critic, Luntley in line with Barrett blames modernity for stripping the Self bare of its essentials. He claims that the Self becomes too abstract, ahistorical, without gender, class, values, and beliefs (151). The displacement of the Self caused dizziness and anxiety. The Self becomes alienated to its own surrounding. So the Self as a displaced figure is exposed to further fragmentation. It has come to a point when man cannot cover his fragmented Self with the traditional illusions. Therefore, the unbarred, integrated and unitary notion of the Self has come under criticism particularly in modernist and postmodernist periods. Sypher in *Loss of the Self in Modern Literature and Art* (1954) notes that an issue of the lost and and inauthentic Self has appeared as the main point of the contemporary literature (22).

Before embarking on modernist and postmodernist discussions of the Self, it is worthwhile to explain the central point that has been the point of departure in this study, that is, to trace the shift in approach toward the Self from modernism to postmodernism in general, and from Sartrean notion of no-Self to Deleuzean notion of 'rhizomic Self' in particular in the selected texts.

In the modern period, there appeared some efforts or investigations to bridge this ever widening split in the Self particularly among modern thinkers. They have sought ways to reintegrate the fragmented Self of modern man. And they have resorted to anatomizing the Self to discover what lies behind. Though different in their methods and philosophy, many thinkers have blinked an immediate eye to the truth through the crack of the Self that has been caused by the ongoing rapid changes. What they have attempted to do is to see whether the Self exists or not, but their one-dimensional existential glasses have gradually led to the total destruction of the Self. To illustrate, Nietzche's and Freud's emphasis on the irrational side of the Self, Husserl's detachment of the pure Self bracketing the world outside, Heidegger's seeing the anchorage of Self

not in God but in the world have eventually drifted modern man into an inevitable descent to nothingness (Solomon, 111-152).

The end of the voyage in the maze of 'Know Thyself' becomes most complicated since modern man is totally trapped in the chaosmos. That is, he realized no exit in this maze. Here, it is worthwhile to note that the modernist view of chaos, as Mellor points out, is the negative interpretation of a romantic ironist's understanding of chaos (184). The modernist-existentialist man feels terror, anxiety and fear in the chaos where a romantic ironist finds the unboundless energy that makes way for Self-multiplicity and Self-becoming. As Mellor argues further, while the romantic ironist sees life as the flux of de-creative and re-cretive process, the modernist-existentialists only put the emphasis on the destructive side of life (185).

The philosopher, novelist, playwright in modernist period to stigmatize the Self with nothingness is Jean Paul Sartre (1905-80). This study will first explore the critical reception of his reductionist attitude of the Self that will throw more light on modern man's nausea from which he suffers amidst the existential crisis. As will be studied later, Sartre destroys the operating Self-image in the consciousness. He realized that the ladder by which the total man had climbed up till modern times was broken (Sartre, 16). It is possible to see the similar depiction of this situation in another modernist figure, Yeats' lines in "The Circus Animals' Desertion" (1939):

> Now that my ladder is gone,
> I must lie down where all ladders start,
> In the foul and bone shop of the heart

Of significance here is that Sartre attacks Husserlian notion of Self because of his claim that the pure, permanent Self can be discovered through phenomenological reduction:

> This world with all its objects, I said, derives its whole sense and its existential status, which it has for me, from me myself from me as the transcendental ego…(Husserl, 26)

Instead, Sartre uses Husserlian reductionist method to evidence his notion of no-Self. Sartre in his well-known essay, "Transcendence of the Ego" (1934) conceptualized his notion of 'No-Self'. Later in his life, he extended his study of no-Self theory in his book, *Being and Nothingness* (1943). For him, there is no permanent Self in the

consciousness. This can also be said the other way around: in consciousness, there is no-Self as the knowing subject. The Self is the product of the consciousness. He states:

> Consciousness is a being whose existence posits its essence, and inversely it is consciousness of a being, whose essence implies its existence; that is, in which appearance lays claim to being. Being is everywhere...We must understand that this being is no other than the transphenomenal being of phenomena and not a noumenal being which is hidden behind them...Consciousness absolutely cannot derive from anything, either from another being, or from a possibility, or from a necessary law. Uncreated, without reason for being, without any connection with another being, being-in-itself is *de trop* for eternity …(24)

To Solomon, an important scholar on Western philosophy, Sartre resembles consciousness to "wind blowing from nowhere to everything" (180). Sartre calls mankind pitiful since they deny their total freedom by hiding behind the Self-illusion. He claims, only if they can destroy this illusion, they can be totally free. In one of Sartre's plays, *Dirty Hands* Jessica accuses Hugo of not letting her see the bare existence behind the illusions:

> I was your luxury. For nineteen years I have been put in your man's world and was forbidden to touch anything and you made me think that all was going very well and that I did not have to worry about anything but putting flowers in vases. Why did you lie to me? Why did you keep me ignorant, if it was to admit to me one day that this world is cracking and that you are all powerless and to make me choose between a suicide and a murder? (Act 5, sc. 2)

Sartre further argues that humanity should see their 'thrownness' into the world in order to perceive their true existence (Sartre, 5). As the quotation above shows, Jessica keeps herself hidden in the veil of illusions that Hugo has created for her. A rupture in the illusions led her to Self-destruction.

In addition to Sartrean concept of nothingness, this study will also explore one of Sartre's big concepts; *Bad Faith* that means the denial of freedom. Sartre as a Marxist-Existentialist emphasizes that man denies the absolute freedom since he thinks that life has moral constraints beyond him. He calls such a figure as a coward. Sartre rejects these moral limitations on man and thinks that the universe is indifferent to us. In other words, he implies that man should see the absurdity of life. Sartre is greatly disturbed by man's tendency to treat the absurd world as a meaningful place.

Albert Camus (1913- 1960), a great friend to Sartre, defines the Absurd as "the confrontation between ourselves, with our demands for rationality and justice, and an indifferent universe" (Camus qtd. in Haney, 149). This definition reminds us of Roquentin's words in Sartre's *Nausea*: "They will have to find something else to

conceal the enormous absurdity of their existence" (161). Roquentin experiences the nausea in his confrontation with this absurdity. One can understand that both Camus and Sartre resemble to each other in the proposition that man clothes himself with different social roles to hide the absurdity of his existence.

One of my objectives in this study is to demonstrate the problematic side of Sartrean concept of 'no-Self' in its reductionist perception. It manifests itself in Sarterean existential philosophy as the endless suffering of the individual in the total darkness of chaos. It abandons the individual in his nakedness alone amidst the ebb and flow of anxiety within the cycle of choice and responsibility after one has been stripped of one's permanent Self. By decentering one from the fixed, permanent, traditional Self, modern man/woman either struggles to find out what lies behind the mirror by striping of all the contingent elements of the contingent world or disguises oneself in the pseudo world with pseudo names and hence suffering from Self-alienation. The first path reduces one to Self-destruction in one's existential quest since for Sartre, what s/he will discover is nothingness, and the latter lets one create an illusory World (Bad Faith) to hide one's nakedness.When the illusory world collapses and one sees that there is no-Self thus facing nothingness, one realizes that the world in which one lives is nowhere but a waste land. Estelle in Sartre's *No Exit* play exemplifies this situation by saying that "when I can not see myself, I begin to wonder if I really and truly exist [...] How empty it is, a glass in which I am absent" (19).

Sartrean theory of no-Self will be analyzed in such a way to highlight its reductionist, destructive and nihilistic manner. This study will also attempt to show that Sartrean theory of no-Self has not been able to develop a positive notion of the Self that can evolve in harmony with the evolutionary time and space, thus rendering the Self, an illusion to be destroyed in the relevant time. Modern man has been stuck in one side of existential quest. To Sartre's point, while some like Sisyphus seek out the boundless energy and freedom in their total destructions in chaos, others harbour in different masks, or predetermined roles, created by the society. Kennedy defines the fact of having to act in such predetermined roles, controlled by the society as the protean Self. As he points out, the protean Self is a means of the society to cause man to lose his free will and to turn him into the willing prisoners or 'the reality instructors' of the society (4-6). McMurphy in Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, Stephen Daedalus in Joyce's *Ulysess*, or Oedipa in Pynchon's *The Crying Lot of 49* are considerable

examples to the loss of romantic Self against the protean Self of the controlling systems. Their romantic spirit in their quest for Self-becoming is eventually suppressed and they have to yield to the social orthodoxy. To Sartre and some other modernists such as Beckett and Hedayat, the passive acceptance and the internalization of the prefigured dramatic roles in the society means the suppression of the limitless and undisciplined energy of the individual. In Sartre's novel, *The Age of Reason*, his protagonist, Mathieu well puts Sartre's position toward role-playing: "all these was just a mere performance" (225). In another context in the same novel, Mathieu says, "Perhaps it's inevitable, perhaps one has to choose between being nothing at all and impersonating what one is" (227). In the following pages to come, this study will try to show how such internalized dramatic performance enables Sartre and others to realize the nature of the protean Self and to doubt the existence of the Self behind these masks at all. Also, we will attempt to explore with examples from the selected novels how the solipsistic and destructive nature of Sartre's nihilistic view of the Self and others will lead one to further victimization and Self-destruction after one's refusal to recognize the external world beyond oneself.

Solomon rightly claims that Sartrean no-Self is "too conformist, too radical, and too Cartesian (194)" to cope with the social dynamics of the postmodern/Capitalist culture, since, as Collins argues, postmodern world necessitates the multiple, situational, fluctuating notions of the Self (26). Therefore, my further explorations in this study will be on the'rhizomic' Self, claimed by Gilles Deleuze that might be an antidote to the Self-crisis, particularly experienced in the second half of the 20th century. I will attempt to present the rhizomic Self particularly as an alternative to Sartrean no-Self because the latter strips the Self bare of its essences and lets the consciousness face the unbearable situation of nothingness. As mentioned above, this study will attempt to show that one's experience of the pangs of existence in his confrontation of Sartrean nothingness leads one either to become the stranger in his/her own community or to seek out ways for Self-destruction. Moreover, this study intends to go even further by claiming the ineptness of Sartrean no-Self theory for the swift, sudden and constant changes in the society. Therefore, while most of the modernist fictions have begun to lament over the loss of secure home and the fragmentation of the Self in desolation, this study will deal with how the postmodern Self has stopped this lamentation for the stable, real,

integrated Self. What is more, I will try to show how rhizomic Self celebrates the Self in multiplicity since the fragmentation has been perceived as normal in the flux of time. Change is regarded to be fundamental for the Self. In other words, the Self in constant change cannot have a stable identity. It is constantly redefined and reshaped regarding social, cultural, ideological transformations of the relevant time.

At this point, it is important to highlight the relation of the Self with other terms such as identity and social persona to prevent the contradiction in terms. To Zahavi, the Self is the totalizing principle of one's social identity (Zahavi, 143). Likewise, Melucci defines the Self as the sum of actions and choices that determine one's identity in the society (Melucci, 31). Mellucci also notes that identity is a synchronical and diachronical process through which one can observe the 'the playing of the Self' throughout the ages (30). To him, the conflict between the Self and the traditional categories of the society leads to the dissolution of the Self as a social actor on the stage due to the changing dynamics of the relevant time. The Self becomes a masquerade, that is, mere representations or social personas (roles) in the postmodern world that hide the absence of the totalizing Being behind one's actions or choices (47). However, in modern World, the Self is thought to have a rigid, fixed, idiosyncratic character that supposedly acts behind the social personas. This explains the failure of the modernists not to cope with the flux of social personas that result from the swift changing dynamics of the relevant time.

The flux of things in the postmodern world drifts the Self from the position of Being, a sort of rigid, fixed character into the realm of Becoming that is depicted by fluidity, instability and plurality. Best and Kellner see the postmodern culture as a new arena for welcoming changes and possibilities (Best and Kellner 9). Likewise, Jameson in his book, *Postmodernism or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* portrays it as a transitory state that flourished out of late capitalism and defines it intentionally an "absolute and absolutely random pluralism […] a coexistence not even of multiple and alternate worlds so much as of unrelated fuzzy sets and semiautonomous subsystems" (372). However, in "Postmodernism and Consumer Society", Jameson who has Marxist tendencies attacks Postmodernism and late Capitalism to break the individuation process of the Self. The collapse of this process he claims causes to create schizophrenic characters in the society. To him, schizopherenia is thought to be a psychological

disorder in which an infant cannot develop an integrated Self-formation (26). He sees popular culture to blame for this situation since they create images full of "isolated, disconnected, discontinuous material signifiers, which fail to link up into a coherent sequence" (119). In brief, Jameson sees schizophrenia as the inherent danger of popular culture.

Like Jameson, Deleuze has also found out some links between capitalism and schizophrenia. However, in contrast to Jameson, Deleuze does not regard Schizophrenia as a phychological disorder. He regards it as the destroyer of traditional codes, or boundaries among cultures (76). Crockett in his book, *Deleuze Beyond Badiou* interprets Deleuzean understanding of schizophrenia as the absolute limit of capitalism where mankind would create no permanent, fixed Self within local cultures and would see the fluidity of contextual Selves as normal (82). To Deleuze, a schizophrenic person negates the values. S/he finds no lack in him. In other words, desire lies not outside but within oneself. For him, schizophrenic desire is the liberating power in one's body from any kind of border. That means the schizophrenic Self is a nomadic traveller who struggles against the different forms of despotic, hierarchal, fixed, totalized Self. Such attitude of the Self causes to repress the liberating force of schizophrenic desire. To Deleuze, it must be abandoned since the dynamics of the postmodern world necessitate contextual, plural, impermanent, fluid selves.

In this respect, Deleuze theorizes 'rhizomic' Self as an alternative notion that is able to respond to the needs of the postmodern world. The rhizomic Self is pluralistic, decentered, uprooted and not intentional. In this way, I will argue how Deleuzean rhizomic Self might help one survive in times of crisis in contrast to the nihilistic tradition of Sartrean no-Self.

In order to explain the rhizomic Self, my theoretical stand in this study will be the rhizomic model of thought claimed by Deleuze and Guittari in their book; *Capitalism and Schizophrenia (1980)*. This book consists of two volumes: *Anti-Oedipus* and *A Thousand Plateaus*. The latter attempts to highlight the rhizomic notion of the Self in its contrast with the Self-notions in the arborescent or root-tree system. Therefore the second book will mainly be focused. Deleuze's argument that arborescent

notion of the Self and society[1]have no longer responded to the needs of the society will be analyzed with examples from the selected texts. In light of the reasons that have widened the gap between the Self and society in each passing day, his argument that the stable, permanent, fixed notions of the Self should immediately be abandoned will gain momentum in this study. This study will further argue his view that the constant configuration of the Self is possible with regard to the changes in social ideological perspective. At this stage, this study will be an attempt to elucidate Deleuze's proposition of the rhizomic Self.

This thesis will contextualize the rhizomic Self in both collective and individual levels. It will first attempt to explain what the 'rhizomic Self' is. Then, It will be presented as an alternative self-theory to help the characters to grow further connections after a sudden rupture or destruction as a result of the changing dynamics of the contemporary society. That is why; there is no ultimate end for 'rhizomic Self' that is always in the middle (23).

While Sarterean existential philosophy has put the seemingly operating Self under siege in its self-annihilative and monolithic approach, I will try to show the possible ways of redeeming the Self from the total destruction, which could be the remedy for the in-between characters to restore their psychological health in the selected novels to be discussed in this project. In doing this, I will make use of Deleuzean rhizomic Self, one of the postmodern notions of the Self. The rhizomic Self is originally multi-directional and does not follow any predestined discourses. Thus it is an ever-motioning Self in eddying time and space. Thanks to its fluidty, the rhizomic Self will help people regard life and the Self inherently in plurality.

To corroborate my argument above, this thesis will be twofold. Firstly, I will critically analyze *Murphy (1938)* by Samuel Beckett (1906-1989), and *The Blind Owl (1937)* by Sadegh Hedayat (1903-1951) in light of Sartrean no-Self. The most prevailing and persistant view among the critics are that Samuel Beckett's *Murphy* and Sadegh Hedayat's The *Blind Owl* could be read in line with Sarterean theory of no-Self. They were exact contemporaries. Moreover, there exist some facts and rumors about their association with each other. Sartre was an intersecting source of inspiration for

[1] Deleuze and Guittari see the arborescent model of sociey as man's total efforts to create a stable, hierarchal society in which man has a stable Self. However, they reject this Notion since in the flux of time, it is imposibble to create a stable Notion of Self.

both writers. As Moran notes, Beckett met Sartre at Ecole Normale and they continued a distant relationship through the forties (99). As for the association between Sartre and Hedayat, Katouzian in his book, *Sadegh Hedayat: The Life and Legend of an Iranian Writer* refers to a legend that Hedayat and Sartre were friends. Also, Katouzian mentions that according to some occasional claims in the weekly presses of the time, Sartre and his existential philosophy were accepted as the basis of Hedayat's attitude to life (264). It is also known that Hedayat translated Sartre's short story *The Wall* in *Sokhan* (Speech/Discourse, a prestigious Iranian literary monthly) then new literary periodical (142).

Moreover, the first pillar of this thesis is to critically find traces of Sartrean notion of no-Self in Samuel Beckett's *Murphy*, and Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl*. Both Beckett and Hedayat share similar nihilistic views with Sartre. Therefore, both novels can be regarded as the fruits of the nihilistic views Beckett and Hedayat had in their lives. The protagonist, Murphy bears powerful marks of Beckett's states of mind during his stay in London where he underwent psychoanalysis. Likewise, the narrator in the *Blind Owl* has some hystrecial tendencies as the suicidal novelist, Hedayat did have. Hedayat attempted to commit suicide two times in his life. In his second attempt, he killed himself in a hotel room with gas. The way he killed himself is quite similar to the way Beckett's protagonist, Murphy did. It is worth to mention that gas in ancient Greece means chaos (Cresswell, 80).

This study will attempt to demonstrate how both novelists unconsciously fell into Sartrean pits of nothingness in order to solve the riddle of the Self in the aforementioned novels. I will try to show their argument about the freedom of the Self from bondage. This bondage they both identified is the external world. It is possible to notice the heroes' existential cracks in their lives resulting from their detachment of the Self from the outside world. Therefore I will attempt to find out the reasons why both heroes feel as if they are the living corpses caged in the material world and why they both become strangers to their surroundings. Moreover, I will attempt to show how the characters' unconscious tracing of Sartrean no-Self in their existential voyages drifts them to nothingness.

The salient element in this comparison is that neither of the characters can grasp life, as the dynamic interplay of paradoxes as the romantic ironic Self does. As Schlegel argues "irony is the form of paradox" (48). The ironic paradox reveals the dynamic

interplay between the contradicting forces in man's mind: man's desire for order, coherence (to become being) and his desire for chaos and freedom (to become becoming). They are neither reconciled nor separable. They are in constant conflict. Because of this, the reasons why neither of the protagonists can cope with the existential nausea will be analyzed in this thesis. I shall further argue that Sadegh Hedayat and Samuel Beckett give too much credit for the destructive side of existence. The ultimate goal for both of them is the protagonists' utter destruction in chaos in its dissociation from the world of illusions. I will try to show how their failure to see the dynamic relations between the decreative and recreative sides of the mind and life causes them not to have an evolving perception of Self-becoming. One may find an affinity in the way both protagonists behave. As will be studied later in detail, the narrator's cutting the etherial girl that is the embodiment of illusion into pieces in Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* and Murphy's surrender to Endon's black pieces in the chess play in Samuel Beckett's *Murphy* can be seen as the result of ignorance in man's vision not to realize the necessity of ceaseless clash between these two forces which is able to unleash the creative energy to balance the Self in plurality or multiplicity.

Secondly, in defense of my argument, I will attempt to show the proto/types that have been able to achieve the realm of the 'rhizomic' Self in two postmodern novels by two Canadian origin novelists: *Herzog (1964)* by Saul Bellow (1915-2005) and *Surfacing (1972)* by Margaret Atwood (1939-). In this project, I will deal with how the novelists are able to develop Self-notions similar to Deleuzean 'rhizomic' Self in both selected novels. In both novels, the protagonists' existential torments are mainly brought up by their past lives. Both protagonists attempt at Self-reconstruction by first experiencing an existential crack and then delving into their past. Both protagonists set the flashbacks for the reader to show how they end up with this existential nausea. By using flashbacks to thier memories, Atwood and Bellow here attempt to create a stage to improvise on the throbbings of existence. Even though both protagonists are on the same path to manufecture a notion of the Self in flux of time, their methods for existential questioning are different. Herzog achieves it in mind while writing unsent letters. However, the narrator in *Surfacing* achieves it in action while keeping track of her lost father.

Of significance here is that rhizomic Self is not the variable of the fixed, unified, traditional Self that seems to have a kind of totalitarian role. It is a series of ceaseless connections and ruptures. Similar to this notion, both protagonists become aware of the fact that life itself is the dynamic interplay of the paradoxes. It is the constant clash of these paradoxes. Therefore, in this study, I will try to show that both protagonists unconsciously trace the 'rhizomic' Self in their walkthrough that will help them accept all the paradoxes and uncertainities in human life rather than being reduced to nothing in Sartre's chaos.

My claim is that the protagonists in both novels are able to develop a notion of the Self that celebrates life in multiplicity despite their disjoint minds. Their spontaneous awareness that life is the energy released from the dynamic interplay of the destructive and creative forces in one's mind and society helps them cope with the overwhelming effect of the higher consciousness leaking from any possible crack of one's own mind. Thus it enables the hero with the necessary insight into the endless possibilities of the existence. Thanks to this, the Self is redeemed from any kind of siege by turning matter into energy. And this energy becomes the rhizomic Self, the essence of which is based on fluidity and alterity rather than on rigidity and identity. Therefore this thesis aims to justify the possible ways of rhizomic Self to the in- between characters that are stuck in the chaos of Sarterean nothingness.

In testing my argument in this thesis, I will make a critical analysis of the selected novels, which employ the reductionist aspect of Sartrean existentialism aiming to show how the characters are drifted into the pitfalls of the monolithic understanding of Sartre's 'no-Self'. My anticipated conclusion will be that the awareness of the coexistence of the destructive and the creative forces and their ceaseless clashes in one's Self, which is prerequisite for creating the rhizomic Self, can be key to enable one to restore one's psychological health which he once lost amidst the existential nausea due to the fragmentation of the permanent Self. In this way, the rhizomic Self or ever-becoming Self can help people protect their psychological integrity during the painful processes before any sudden immediate changes in their lives since it is not an understanding of Self built on deification of ideas which turn into the walls of biases in time leading to create polarizations in the individual and society but it is like a spirally flowing energy in the flux of Postmodern period.

In this study, the chief questions I will investigate for are: What contributions do these novelists and thinkers make to the existential questioning of the Self? Why did Sartre perceive the Self and life as a lie to be destroyed? Why did he put too much emphasis on the negative and nihilistic side of the existence? Do Hedayat and Beckett share some resemblance in thought to Sartre's nihilistic tradition? Do Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* and Beckett's *Murphy* bear elegiac and suicidal tone on the Self, similar to Sartrean no-Self? What lacks in the protagonists' questioning and where lies their flaw to build a rhizomic Self or an ever-becoming Self, which is key to psychological reintegration of modern man without conforming to socially accepted values? Can Deleuzean rhizomic Self can be seen a possible alternative to Sartrean nihilistic tradition? Do Atwood's *Surfacing* and Bellow's *Herzog* develop a positive sense of the Self and life similar to Deleuze's rhizomic Self? These questions will help me parcel out my thinking and also keep me to sustain a systematic and focused study.

1.2. 1.1. Overall Objectives

The primary concern of this thesis is that modern fiction has an elegiac, suicidal and nihilistic tone on the Self while the postmodern fiction has a more positive sense of life and the Self. To corroborate this argument, this study will be an attempt to trace the shift in Self-concept from Sartre to Deleuze in the selected novels. A further concern will be to discuss the possibility of rhizomic Self out of the dynamic interplay of the destructive and creative forces in one's nature. Its defensive point will be to present the rhizomic Self as one of the possible ways to recuperate the suffering minds of the characters stuck in the Sarterean reductionist existential quest with no exit and enable them to reintegrate into the society which is regarded, for Sartre and Sarterean existential thinkers, as the 'rabble' or hell. To do this, this thesis will be twofold. Firstly, it will discuss the critical reflections on the convulsions of the protagonists, imprisoned in Sarterean existential understanding in the novels: Beckett's *Murphy*, Sadegh Hedayet's *The Blind Owl.* In both novels, it will attempt to make critical analysis on the existential quests of the characters in whose fissured minds, how the light, the truth, the "I" reflected once symmetrical, precise and indivisible and clear has become refracted, diffused, distorted. And also depending on this, it will aim to show how they are drifted into nothingness due to their subjective dissolutions in the process of self- destruction.

Secondly, it will discuss the im/possibilities to reintegrate the in-between characters in Samuel Beckett's *Murphy* and Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* into the dynamic realm of the rhizomic Self that is able to negate the corrosive effects of the the changing dynamics in the contemporary society. Thanks to this negation, the release of the creative energy out of the ceaseless clashes of destructive and creative forces help these characters keep up with the ambiguities of life. As a result, they can forge a rhizomic Self that celebrates the new openings and possibilities in the relevant time. Deleuzean rhizomic Self never sees changes, as threats since s/he hoovers in the way of becoming, that is, his/her very essence will become the flux of changes. To prove this argument, the characters that have achieved the rhizomic realm of ever-motioning Self in Saul Bellow's *Herzog* and Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing* will be studied closely in order to compare and contrast with the characters both within the same novel and across the selected novels.

Moreover, this thesis will be a critical study on the nihilistic views of the Self, shared by some leading existentialist thinkers like Sartre and Beckett, and Hedayat. In this way, this thesis will become quite experimental particularly on observing the shift from Sartrean notion of 'no-Self' to Deleuzean 'rhizomic Self' that grows like crabgrass out of the dynamic interplay of destructive and creative forces.

1.3. 1.2. Research Methods

The basis of my argument against the nihilistic tradition of Sartrean existential quests in Beckett and Sadegh Hedayat is the insufficient capacity to grasp the Janus-faced man in his/her ontological quest. They anatomize the Self as T.S. Eliot says in his poem "like a patient etherized upon a table". They remove all the constituent parts out and reduce it to nothingness instead of letting it flow freely. That is why my research methods will be based on the textual analysis of the primary sources as well as supporting my findings with a lot of critical books on the selected novels employing Sartrean 'no-Self'. Moreover it will consist of interpreting and comparing/ contrasting the primary sources. My interpretive strategy is grounded in deducing some hypothetical results to create awareness of the 'rhizomic' Self while I approach critically to the existing notions of the Self in the selected texts. In doing this, I will ply among different social theories, such as; Modernism, Existentialism, Capitalism,

Postmodernism… My method of analysis will be dialectical to point to other possibilities and alternative ways of looking at the same issue. Thus, the novels to be selected will be analyzed accordingly.

1.3. Limitations and Delimitations of the Research

This thesis aims to trace the positive shift from Sartrean 'no-Self' to Deleuzean 'rhizomic Self' in the selected novels: Samuel Beckett's *Murphy*, Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl*, Saul Bellow's *Herzog*, Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing*. It attempts to show the necessity of achieving the 'rhizomic Self' in the present time that is able to keep up with the needs of time. Moreover, it will attempt to prove the validity of the claim whether the 'rhizomic Self' as the dynamic interplay of the destructive and creative forces in one's nature enables one to adapt to the stunning changes ongoing around or not. It attempts to prove it by approaching critically towards the reductive and Self-annihilative understanding of Sartrean 'no-Self' in the selected novels, Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* and Samuel Beckett's *Murphy*. The major limitation of this comparative study is the necessity of restricting the number of the selected works. There are many works, which could have been included to evidence the 'rhizomic Self'. In order not to get distracted from the main argument and to have a focused study, I have elected to focus on those in which the consciously or unconsciously dynamic interplay of the creative and destructive forces in the protagonists' existential quests are either themes or important backdrops. A second limitation is that the collective consciousness across geography does not grow equally in the evolutionary time and space. This point is a little problematic for this comparative study. However my argument is that the individual Self might have the higher consciousness that might enable him to think beyond one's society. Therefore, this thesis delimits the number of the authors represented paying attention not to the geography but to the alignment of the authors' views of the Self in the selected novels with the Self-theories in this thesis that will be scrutinized here.

1.4. Significance

The uniqueness of this thesis lies in the experimental study to create an awareness of the rhizomic Self, which is born out of the dynamic relations of the ceaseless clashes of destructive and creative forces in one's mind or society. Many

existential studies have been done over the ontological quests but they have not gone too far beyond the already trodden paths of theoretical reflections over the existential quests in their monolithic approaches. Certainly, they made great contributions to the studies over the Self-concept. Also, there is no claim that without their efforts, such a thesis can be possible. Taking Hegelian dialecticism into account, the ceaseless clashes of ideas give birth to new ideas in the evolutionary time. Thus, this thesis comes out of the uninteruppted clashes of the philosophical and social ideas of the existential thinkers like Sartre, Beckett, Hedayat and the postmodern thinkers like Deleuze, Bellow, Atwood. This thesis in itself, which has to be compressed in a set of rules, might be seen as the product of already trodden barren land by the arrows of critics. But it must be kept in mind that Socrates resembles himself to a barren midwife (Greek word '*maieutic'*) in Plato's *Theatetus* (Plato, 102). Although Socrates like the barren midwife could not give birth to ideas and only sees in himself a huge nothing, he helps many to give birth to new thoughts. Therefore, this thesis might be a good guide for the readers to be aware of Deleuzean rhizomic Self that welcomes changes rather than seeing them as threats to their fixed, permanent, traditional Selves. Moreover, this thesis will render it possible for the readers to understand how one can achieve the rhizomic Self without being stuck in Sartrean chaos by giving a detailed critical analysis of the protagonists in the novels; Beckett's *Murphy*, Hedayet's *The Blind Owl*. The characters in these novels suffer from the pangs of existence. They are imprisoned in the matrix of an infinite restlessness after their illusory worlds are broken. They are drifted to the realm of death in their Self-alienated worlds in which they see nothing meaningful around and they are reduced to nothingness in chaos with suicidal acts. This thesis will enable the readers to see the reasons why these characters fail to see the creative side of life in its endless possibilities. Their blindness to the fact that the source of the existence is the dynamic interplay of the destructive and creative forces in one's mind or society led them to Self-destruction. This study suggests that the rhizomic Self can help people accept Self-multiplicity as an inherent condition of life during the painful processes before any sudden immediate changes. The readers of this thesis will realize that 'rhizomic' Self is not an understanding of the Self built on deification of ideas which consequently turn into the walls of biases leading to create polarizations in the individual mind and society. On the contrary, it is energy that flows in the evolutionary time and space.

This thesis also intends to negotiate these concepts among various social strata in Turkish culture in two perspectives. Firstly, and to the best of my knowledge, there are in Turkey few studies devoted to the field of Self-theories and even fewer experimental studies to the scope of postmodern Self-theories out of the critique of modern, particularly existential Self-theory of 'no-Self'. Secondly, Turkey has been passing through the torminous process in which suicide bombs in big cities, the failed coup attempt have unfortunately led to the death of many innocent people. In these days, the paranoid effect of these terrible events on the citizens has caused them to experience a kind of existential nausea. They have sardonically realized that the stability in their life has been greatly shaken. They need to develop a new notion of Self that will help them survive through the corrosive effects of these agonizing events. It seems difficult but not impossible since Turkey's people like many other people in this region have been poisoned by radicalization and/or the deification of the ideas that they have once created or have been imposed upon. In this state of rottenness, covered by painted veils, they have been canalized into the predetermined spheres with ossified principles, which have become their prisons. However, this thesis has the humble hope to make a contribution on further analysis of these social issues to negotiate the need for change in a more dialogical way. Thus I hope I will gain further knowledge to establish negotiation spaces among my people to question their selves, spheres and depending on this, to break the walls of bias. Thanks to this, they can create rhizomic connections in the flux of ideas and they will see changes not as threats to their spheres but as new arenas that make help them see their selves as improvisers. Only in this way, they can build a Self or state transcending beyond any conflicting ideas like race, religion and politics...This thesis humbly aspires to do that.

1.5. Definition of Terms

Camera Obscura: is an optical device, which consists of a dark room and aperture from which the light comes in to create images. It is used as a metaphor for different purposes by different thinkers: For the precise, rational, symmetrical eye and the mind by Rene Descartes, for the human understanding by John Locke… (Pape&Burwick, 165)

Romantic Irony: first coined by Schlegel in his famous *Fragments*. It has a conception of a chaotic universe. It is an artistic form that simultaneously deals with Self-

destruction and Self-creation. (Mellor, 4))

Husserlian Transcendental Ego: is a central, whole subject from which all acts of consciousness arise. He claims that all conscious acts can change or perish in time, but not the Pure Ego. He says that the Ego is free being that is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent in the consciousness as the source of all conscious acts. (Elveton, 90)

Sartrean Nothingness: can be defined as the total removal of the residues from the consciousness. It means the destruction of the Husserlian transcendant ego as the subject position in the consciousness. For Sartre, the awareness of consciousness as not being makes it realize that it is nothingness. (Sartre, 56)

Bad Faith: is the attempt to escape from the anxiety. It is the state of self-delusion. It is the denial of the freedom. It is a refusal to know one's real self. (Sartre, 112)

Self in Itself and Self for Itself: are the two types of existence for Sartre as the being of the object and the being of the consciousness. Being in itself is the pure existence. It is so complete in itself that it does not change in time. It means 'being what it is'. Being for itself is the negation of the being in itself. It is a lack. What it lacks is the being in itself. It is defined as being what it is not or not being what it is. (Sartre, 319)

Dionysian and Apollonian Forces: are the terms in *The Birth of Tragedy* coined by Nietzsche. Their etymological origins are two Greek deities, Apollo and Dionysus. Nietzsche defines them as two opposed forces in perpetual antagonism in art, man and life. The Apollonian is the symbolical reflection of illusion, individuation, form, and restraint. On the contrary, the Dionysian is the primordial formless state. Nietzsche claims that these two forces are in ceaseless conflict with each other. (Huskinson, 18)

Rhizome: is a botanical concept, which is metaphorically used to define the horizontal model of society by Deleuze and Guittari in their book *A Thousand Plateaus*, the second volume of *Capital and Schizophrenia*. A rhizome is an underground root system, a dynamic, open, decentralized network that branches out to all sides unpredictably and horizontally. A view of the whole is therefore impossible. A rhizome can take the most diverse forms: from splitting and spreading in all directions on the surface to the form of bulbs and tubers. The most important characteristic of a rhizome

is that it has *multiple entryways*. From whichever side one enters, as soon as one is in, one is connected. There is no main entryway or starting point that leads to "the truth." (Deleuze, 12-25)

Deterritoriliaziton and Reterritorialization: are the concepts used in *Anti-Oedipus* to achieve rhizome between the unrelated things by Deleuze and Guittari. They exist simultaneously to put the society on a state of ceaseless changes. To put it simply, they can be defined as the destructuring and restructuring functions of the mind that happen at the same time. Rhizomic relation comes out as their dynamic interplay. (Deleuze, 60)

Nomad Thought: is not a new philosophical thought. It is used under different terms in previous times. Spinoza called it "ethics." Nietzsche called it the "gay science." Artaud called it "crowned anarchy." To Maurice Blanchot, it is the "space of literature." To Foucault, "outside thought" (Deleuze, 13). Deleuze and Guittari express the thought with no boundaries. It does not imprison itself in any kind of order, strata or 'identity' and flows freely in a ceaseless flux state of things. It provides the synthesis of multiple elements, which does not require hampering their distinctive qualities to create an ideal nonhomogeneous society. (Deleuze, Xiii)

1.6. Background

> The subtleties and delicacies hidden in our being are revealed in full manifestation only in utter darkness and silence. Otherwise, they die away in the daily life endeavors, the light and the hue and cry in the environment. I felt that needed darkness within myself and my attempts to remove it from my being were in fact futile. .... I now realize that the most precious thing in my being is this very need to darkness and silence. Actually, it exists in everybody, but is revealed to us only when we distance the secular life and ourselves from the worldly and live in seclusion... I only want to be myself and wake up from within the real whatever that I am. (Hedayat qtd in Harati and Abadi, 98)

> BLANCHE
> And turn that over-light off! Turn that off! I won't be looked at in this merciless glare! (Williams, 11)

Light and darkness are universal symbols for the contrasting states of consciousness. Those symbols have always been challenging points for the analysis of the Janus- faced Self. Just like Nietzche's dancer on the thin rope above whom there lies the light and below whom there lies the darkness, man attempts to stabilize himself between this duality or in other words, between illusion and bare existence (Nietzche,

6). But he never achieves it ever since the totality of man was lost in modern times. He either clings to light or darkness in order to or not to answer the question, 'who really am I?'. In both ends, his choice leads him to Self-alienation and Self-destruction. Different studies have been done on the possibilities of re-integration of the fragmented Self. However, few studies could step beyond defining the situation of the fragmented Self in reductionist terms.

As a reaction to the Cartesian notion of the rational Self, different interpretations of the Self have surfaced such as Rousseau's romantic notion of the Self, Schopenhauer's denial of the rational Self, Kierkegaard's subjective notion of the Self Freud's notion of the split Self, Nietzche's perception of the Self as a paradox, Marx and Engels' understanding of the reified Self. Each of them interpreted the Self in their monolithic approaches. The first reaction against the Cartesian notion came from Rousseau. He developed a new understanding of the Self in his solitary walk through the forests of St. Germain. What he discovered was his own 'Self'. It was different from Descartes' pure rational Self that is based on the indubitable premise that 'I think therefore I am.' His understanding of Self was based on the goodness he shared with all humanity. He focused on the inner richness of Self although it was surrounded with artifices of life. He criticized Descartes notion of Self as a thinking being, the boundaries of which are drawn by pure logic leaving no room for feelings and intuition. He took the feeling as central to the Self rather than logic (Mansfield, 18-20). Rousseau contends that the individual is free and independent. Another theorist is Schopenhauer that reacted against the Cartesian thought. He rejects the notion of the Self-knowing subject. He only sees it as a Self-deceptive notion. For him, it is only a mask for the warring instincts caused by the Will. Schopenhauer illustrates the operation of the Will within us with the sexual love. He remarks that the Will wants to perpetuate itself. However, one realizes that there lies disaster behind every desire (Solomon, 76-78). For Schopenhauer, man has to gain an insight to cultivate the flux of Self in order to blow out the flame of desire. Only in this way, he is able to achieve 'nirvana'. Nirvana for Schopenhauer is the Will- less state or the denial of the Will (Solomon, 80-83). Kierkegaard is also another critic of the Cartesian notion of the Self. He championed the subjective Self, the essence of which is passion and freedom. For him, the basis of the Selfhood is personal choice. Kierkegaard deals more with how one chooses than what

one chooses. The Self for Kierkegaard is either/or (Solomon, 91-93). Marx and Engels also criticized the rational Self in its total detachment from the material conditions. They sought out ways to explain the Self with the material relations. Unlike Kierkegaard's sense of alienation, which is defined as the Self away from God, Marx sees alienation as the reification of the Self in materialism. This view makes him question next who is the greatest sufferer of self-alienation in this commodity economy (Solomon, 96). Moreover, Nietzsche as an admirer of Ancient Greece, quests his notion of the 'Self' not in the contemporary world but in Ancient Greece. In his early work, *The Birth of Tragedy*, he sees tragedy as central to the life. He propounds that thanks to tragedy; one can only bear the sufferings and absurdities behind the temporality of one's existence by making them into the ecstatic moments. In doing this, it gives the message to the spectator of a tragedy that the Self is a struggle between the rational and irrational impulses of life. Nietzsche calls these impulses as Dionysian and Apollonian. For him, these impulses are in a continuous conflict with each other. In this endless war between these impulses, Self can be achieved (Huskinson, 20). Lastly to mention here is is Sigmund Freud (1865- 1939) as the critic of the rational thought. He saw the necessity of scientific explanation of the selfhood that troubled his culture. He claimed that much of the mind was hidden from the rational Self. He termed it as the unconscious mind. He said the unconscious mind consists of the urges and impulses that are repressed, blocked, or rechanneled by the conscious mind. Therefore, he purported that man's integrity is constituted between the impulses of the unconscious mind and the rational censorship of the conscious mind. In other words, the Self manifests itself as the outcome of the dialectical forces (Solomon, 140-41). All of these Self-notions widened the crack in the Self rather than finding ways to recuperate Self-fragmentation.

Even worse, in existential studies, the Self is detached from all contingent elements that belong to the phenomenal world. It is reduced to nothingness in Sarterean terms. Their efforts to rebuild the totality of Self resulted in the total destruction of the Self.

Jean Paul Sartre's 'no-Self' that he theorized first in his article, *Transcendence of The Ego* (1934), and then continues in his famous book called *Being and Nothingness* (1943) has been the main discussion point of many researchers. However, the discussions over Sarterean concept of 'no-Self' have never gone beyond the textual

analysis or comparative purposes. Webber in his doctoral thesis under the title of *Consciousness in the World* puts forward the presence of the Self as a Being in the world. His focal point in his study is to depict the concepts such as bad faith, nothingness, freedom, and choice. Medhidammaporn in his comperative study of *Selflessness Theories*, compares and contrasts Sartre' No-Self theory with Anatta (no-Self) in Early Buddhism. Fox in his book *The New Sartre: Explorations in Postmodernism* places Sartre among the postmodern figures like Foucoult and Deleuze. In addition, he sees Sartrean no-Self theory in assenting forms of postmodernism. Hennesey in her doctoral thesis named *Beckett and Being: A Phenomenological Ontology (2015)* focuses on the links between Sartre's notion of no- Self and Beckett's works. She gets the attention of the reader to the dichotomy between presence and absence of the Self. However, unlike the aforementioned studies, this thesis will focus on Sartre's reductionist approach in his 'no-Self' theory. Unlike the pure discussion of no-Self theory in the aforementioned studies or books, this thesis will attempt to make this discussion via the protagonists in the selected novels.

In the second phase, this thesis will embark on a discussion over postmodern self-theories in general and particularly Deleuzean 'rhizomic' Self. This argument has been of little questioning among scholars. I have noticed that some similar studies have been carried out on re-building of the Self out of the dynamic interplay of destructive and creative forces: One of them is Chatzantonis' work *Deleuze and Mereology: Multiplicity, Structure and Composition.* In this work, he surveys Deleuzian notion of Self that concerns multiplicity. However, his conception of the Self in multiplicity is of the relations between parts and the wholes. The way he sees multiplicity is different from the one to be discussed in this project. I will attempt to show the concept of multiplicity as the inherent condition of life and the Self. Another is Stagoll's work, *Deleuze's Becoming Subject: Difference and the Human Individual* (1998). In this work, Stagoll claims that Deleuze's Subject does not have any permanent identities. Instead, it is always in the process of Becoming. This claim bears similar qualities to what I will put forward in this project. However, in my project, I will attempt to show the reasons why the capitalist society needs such notion of Self. Another work is Huskinson's *The Whole Self In The Union Of Opposites*. Our starting points are the same to create awareness about a new self-theory by bringing two opposite forces

together, but our conceptions of 'whole Self' are quite different. While she aims to restore the fragmented modernist Self into a concrete wholeness, I will attempt to reach to a different end. My objective will be to show the plural Self in wholeness, the essense of which is the flux of changes. In doing this, this thesis will not be the pure philosophical discussions of self-theories as Huskinson did; it will mainly focus on their reflections in the novels of the selected novelists taking socio- historical background into consideration.

There are also some works available on the philosophical links between Sartre and Deleuze. In this context, there are three works among many in relation to my project. These are respectively; Boundas' article on "Foreclosure of the Other: From Deleuze to Sartre (1993)", "Hell is Other People, Other People are Possible Worlds: Deleuze beyond Sartre" by Arjen Kleinherenbrink and "Deleuze and Sartre: From theory to Praxis" by Raymond Van de Wiel. In the first article, Boundas sees Sartrean existentialism has enabled the start of poststructuralism. He gets attention to ambiguous relation between Sartre and Deleuze. The other two articles hold common grounds. Both focus on the differences between Sartrean and Deleuzian theories about the existence of other people. One different point between these two articles is that as Wiel also refers, it is the practical failure of Sartrean theory of no-Self.

The first pillar of this study is to trace Sartrean no-Self in Sadegh Hedayat's *TheBlind Owl*, and Samuel Beckett's *Murphy*. Therefore, both novels will be studied in light of Sartrean nothingness to show how the protagonists, not aware of the ceaseless clashes of destructive and creative forces in one's mind as the driving force of the life itself, have eventually been imprisoned and destroyed in Sartrean vortex after they tear out the veil of illusions with Sartrean reductionist method. Out of the critical analysis of both novels, this thesis will attempt to trace Deleuzean rhizomic in Saul Bellow's *Herzog* and Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing* in order to show that the protagonists are able to gain insight into life and the Self, based on the dynamic interplay between the antithetical forces.

The books have fastidiously been selected since they are unexplored territory for the analysis in the context of the selected Self-theories, which will be analyzed in this thesis. I have discovered that the former studies have revolved around the cycle of the

authors' purposes. Within this context, I have noticed that there have been many studies done over Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* and Samuel Beckett's *Murphy*.

Firstly, there are different interpretations on Hedayat's the *Blind Owl*. These interpretations are canalized into two different discourses. The first discourse sees the novel in psychoanalytic current. As Simidchieva notes, Alishan and Katouzian are seen as two representatives of these discourses. She also argues that Alishan sees part I of the novel as the dream world and part II as the real world in the psychoanalytic cycle of consciousness and sub consciousness (Simidchieva, 24). Whereas, Katouzian sees part I as the narrator's life in decaying society of modern world and part II as the narrator's life in thriving Ray of golden past. Katouzian focuses on the character's yearning for the golden past of the society (Katouzian, 119). My interpretation will not dwell on either way. Central to my argument, *The Blind Owl* can be read in light of Sartrean 'no-Self'. In addition to these discourses, I have also found out some studies that have been carried out on the discussion of Self in *the Blind Owl*. One of them is Mahmoodi's article,"The Construction of Self and the Rejection of the Natives as the inferior Other: Sadegh Hedayat's Blind Owl". In this article, Mahmoodi discusses Self-alienation of the people in the face of the false ideals of western Modernity. Another study on the discussion of Self in the *Blind Owl* is "Absurdity and Creation in the Work of Sadegh Hedayat" *(1982)* by Lashgari. In this article, he aims to show Hedayat's wish to know himself before his death. He also gets readers' attention to Hedayat's use of artistic creativity to cover a blanket over the absurdity of life. In an article called "Hysterical Self Analysis", Khamsad presents the reader the biographical history of *the Blind Owl*. In due course of my readings of secondary sources on Hedayat and his works, I have also explored some studies that have searched different connections of Hedayat's *the Blind Owl*. One of them is "the Khayyamic Influence in the Blind Owl" by Leonard Bogle. Bogle focuses on the influence of Omar Khayyam's philosophy on Hedayat's *The Blind Owl.* In his discussion, he traces the protagonist of *The Blind Owl* in the track of Omar Khayyam's ideas about the Self and the existence. Omar Khayyam sees the Self as the accidental creation (89):

> A drop of water merged with the sea
> A speck of dust became one with the earth
> What is your coming into the world?

A fly appears and disappears. (qtd in Bogle, 89)

In 1934, Hedayat published *the Songs of Khayyam*. In the introduction to this work, Hedayat writes his views of Khayyamic philosophy. In 1937, *The Blind Owl* was written. Bogle in this article attempts to see the relation between *The Blind Owl* and Khayyamic philosophy. Another connection I have found out is the relation between Buddhism and *The Blind Owl*. In the article,"Buddhism and The Structure of The Blind Owl"by Richard A. Williams, and in a personal note on *the Blind Owl* by Iraj Bashiri, the influence of Buddhism on Hedayat and his work has been researched. Both critics focus on the voyage of the narrator in the cycle of samsara (the world of illusions) and nirvana (the egoless state). My observations led me to draw the conclusion that there are few studies that have been conducted upon the application of Sartrean theory of 'no-Self' to Hedayat's works, particularly to *the Blind Owl*.

Secondly, there are a lot of secondary sources on Samuel Beckett's *Murphy*. The conflict between the internal and external forces has become the central criticism almost in all of them. One of them is Kiberd's article with the name "Murphy and the World of Samuel Beckett". In this article, Kiberd sees Murphy as the incarnation of Beckett's concern with the arguments of existential crisis or Cartesian duality between illusion and reality. The article titled as "Murphy's Surrender to Symmetry" by Neil Taylor and Bryan Loughrey, concerns the game of chess between Murphy and Mr Endon. Through game of chess, they attempt to explain Murphy's realization of the Cartesian split and how he is drifted to utter chaos in the end. Arka Chattopathyay's article titled as "Murphy in the Letters of Samuel Beckett"argues the split between the Self and the voice. To Chattopathyay, the split results from Murphy's encounter with the other. The realization of the other leads him to lose his voice. Chattopathyay bases her argument on three letters Beckett wrote to Thomas Mcgreevy (2). These letters were written during the years (1935-36) when Beckett wrote *Murphy*. Chattopathyay argues that Beckett's memories in the streets of London that he mentioned in these letters are the inspirational source to *Murphy* (2). John Fletcher's book with a name *The Novels of Samuel Beckett* (1964) discusses the evolution of Beckett's characters and style during his literary career. About Murphy, Fletcher also directs his attention to the duality of mind and matter that Murphy has experienced. Hugh Kenner in his book *Samuel Beckett: A Critical Study* prefers to guide the reader to think critically rather than

making a textual analysis. He guides the reader to see Murphy as a man who is stuck between material and immaterial existence. Angela B. Moorjani in her study, "Abysmal Games" claims that *Murphy* epitomizes Beckett's technical achievement of "undermining of the subject," because it includes "the reduplication of the subject within itself" (81). Anthony Farrow in his book called *Early Beckett: Art and Allusion in More Pricks than Kicks and Murphy* allocates two chapters on Murphy. In these chapters, He pays attention to the philosophical side of *Murphy*. He attempts to explore the distinction between objective knowledge of the world and the phenomenological consciousness that have been discussed in the novel. Moreover I have also encountered some finished projects for comperative purposes between Samuel Beckett and Sadegh Hedayat. Freedom, free will, in/authentic life, the destruction of Self, the split in Self are among the main concerns of these projects. For example, the article titled as "Crosbian Nihilistic Reading of Samuel Becketts's *Endgame and Sadegh Hedayat's Three Drops of Blood*" by Hassan Shahabi and Fatimah Mojdegani attempts to show the absurdity of life that seeds desperateness in the characters in the selected works. Also, they attempt to show how two writers have employed similar nihilistic notions despite their different social contexts. However, all my review of secondary literarture on Sartre- Hedayat- Beckett has helped me see that tracing Sartrean notion of no-Self in the selected works of Beckett and Hedayat will be unexpolored territory for the first part of my project. Unlike the secondary sources I have discussed earlier, I shall trace Sartrean no-Self in the selected works of Samuel Beckett and Sadegh Hedayat. Moreover I shall argue that for Sadegh Hedayat and Samuel Beckett, the ultimate goal is the protagonists' ultimate deaths in their detachment from the phenomenal world. In other words, when the split in Self between mind and the external world causes one to fail to synthesize, and one prevails the other, so self- destruction becomes inevitable.

In the second phase of my project, as I have said above, I shall trace Deleuzean rhizomic Self in Saul Bellow's *Herzog* and Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing*. There are various projects done on both novels. The arguments on both novels vary from feminist/ecofeminist perspectives to postmodernist/ capitalist studies. However, The common ground to bring these two novels together is the American- Canadian context and their tendency to develop a positive sense of the Self. They both reject the nihilistic tradition on the Self that prevailed in the modernist texts as in Hedayat's *The Blind Owl*

and Beckett's *Murphy*. In this respect, my project can be regarded within this scope.

First of all, much of the critical attention that has concentrated on Bellow's *Herzog* usually feature Bellow's preoccupation with the place of man in the contemporary society. Critics often try to focus on the male and Jewish heroes of Bellow's novels who try to stabilize their lives in their struggles against the chaos of the modern world. One of the projects done on this topic is "The Prisoner of Perception" by Tony Tanner, a British critic. He sees Herzog is in the dynamic interplay between his ideas and his actions. For Tanner, Herzog desires stability in his social and intellectual life, but at the same time he fears this fixity would paralyze him. Therefore, Tanner concludes that his perception is his prison. Gabriel Josipovici's article titled as "Herzog: Freedom and Wit" *(1971)* talks about Bellow's success in creating an awareness of the infinite mystery of human beings without being overwhelmed by it. For Josipovici, *Herzog* stands out in a position between tradition and modernism. Galloway mentions in *The Absurd Hero in American Fiction: Updike, Styron, Bellow, Salinger* that Herzog is a nomad in the thought as well as in the soul. He is "the picaro flat on his back" (154). Another article, "That Suffering Joker" by Sarah Blacker Cohen discusses Herzog's agony caused by his too much thinking with little action. She sees the novel as the trace of Herzog's struggle to free him out. Another project done on Saul Bellow's *Herzog* is *Bellow's View of Man and Contemporary Society (1979)* by Barbosa. In this project, Barbosa searched on the relationship between man and the contemporary society through examining *Herzog*. She aims to show Herzog's pursuits of synthesizing the conflicts between contemporary man and his society. Similar to this study, the article titled as "Hegel, Herzog and the Reconstruction of the Self" (2013) by Kılıcer attempts to explore the reconstitution of the Self in the context of history.

Unlike the preceding studies on *Herzog* that I have reviewed, this thesis will be an attempt to trace Deleuzian rhizomic notion of Self in the existential voyage of the protagonist, Herzog. Though similar points we have in discussions, there are some differences in our approaches. I shall argue how Herzog attempts to achieve alterity rather than identity in the contingent web of postmodern/capitalist world. Instead of focusing on the reconstitution of the Self as most critics above did, I will attempt to show how Herzog has been able to achieve by taking the creative and destructive forces in the mind and society for granted.

The other novel in which I will trace Deleuzean rhizomic Self is Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing*. I shall argue how the heroine is able to attain the rhizomic Self though unconsciously. The secondary literature on this novel orbits around the feminist or ecofeminist studies. Emma Odenmo's essay titled as "Empowerment of the Oppressed in Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing* and Louise Erdrich's *Tracks*: A Comperative Study of Feminism and Postcolonialism" discusses woman's attempt to escape from the patriarchal society by rejecting the oppressors' ideals. Unlike Odenmo's radical views, my project humbly attempts to find out the Self in multiplicity. Vijeta Gautam and Dr. Jyotsna Sinha's article with a name, "Role of Nature in Self-Exploration in Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing*" argues the interaction between nature and femininity. Sherill E. Grace in her article, "in Search of Demeter, the Lost, Silent Mother in *Surfacing*" retells the myth of Demeter in order to remind the self- alineated woman of her natural power. Similar to this article, Kathleen Wall in her book *Callisto Myth from Ovid to Atwood: Initiation and Rape in Literature* interprets *Surfacing* as woman's return to her natural essence. Some other critics like Kiley Kapuscinsky sees *Surfacing* as an attempt to develop nationalistic ouvre to build a national consciousness in Canada. Other critics like Flamengo Janice attempt to see the novel in Post Colonial dimensions. Flamengo in his article "Postcolonial Guilt in Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing*" attempts to analyze the novel in terms of identity crisis. He argues the novel full of references to ecological destruction, territorial occupation, modern forms of colonialism such as tourism, or commercialism. Moreover, I have read some existential studies on *Surfacing*. Sherill Grace in another study, *Violent Duality: A Study of Margaret Atwood (1980)* attempts to search the reasons for the split in the Self in the novel *Surfacing*. Also Grace argues that the Self is fluid and it does not need to be locked up into us (2). Grace's argument of the fluid Self has some grounds in Deleuzean notion of rhizomic Self that I will apply to *Surfacing* in this project. The difference is that I am going to observe the fluid Self within Deleuzean theoretical framework.

With these different existential investigations on the concept of Self as mentioned above, it is my hope that this research will add to the existing scholarship by bringing Deleuzean 'rhizomic Self' into light out of the awareness of the dynamic interplay between creative and destructive forces in one's mind and society. By

critically tracing the protagonists in Samuel Beckett's *Murphy* and Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* who are stuck and destroyed in one-sided Sartrean approach, I hope to illuminate an understanding of 'rhizomic' Self which can give way a possible reintegration of the characters into the society without accepting the social orthodoxy. This thesis will humbly aspire to do that.

This thesis is divided into five chapters including Introduction part. Chapter Two commences with the historical analysis of the different notions of Self that flourished as a response to the social dynamics of the time from medieval period to Postmodernism. Focus will then shift to Sartrean reductionist notion of 'no-Self' with an extensive inquiry into his concepts such as nothingness, bad faith, and freedom in his book, *Being and Nothingness*. Moreover, it will be a critical attempt to explore how Sartre throws the Self to the threshing machine of nothingness. Next, Deleuzean rhizomic Self, the essence of which is pluralistic, decentered, fluid and fictional will be discussed. Moreover, I will argue why rhizomic Self is well suitable to the postmodern culture with an emphasis on the key concepts that are mentioned in Deleuze and Guittari's *A Thousand Plateaus*, the second book of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Integral to this chapter will be to trace the shift in the notion of Self from modernism to postmodernism in general, from Sartre to Deleuze in particular.

After these general discussions of the first two chapters, chapter Three attempts to trace Sartrean notion of 'no-Self' in two modernist novels, Samuel Beckett' *Murphy* and Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl*. Firstly, Beckett and Hedayat's contributions to the existential field will be discussed. Then, I will also survey how Beckett and Hedayat advocate the self-annihilation by tearing the veils of illusions apart through the awareness of nothingness. I will attempt to prove this in the socio-cultural contexts of the heroes in the selected texts. Finally, the protagonists' existential voyages in the aforementioned novels will be analyzed in the orbit of Sartrean notion of 'no-Self'.

Chapter Four is grounded in close readings of two postmodernist novels, Saul Bellow's *Herzog* and Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing* in terms of tracing Deleuzean notion of 'rhizomic' Self in the protagonists' existential quests. The inquiry in this chapter will devote itself to explore how the heroes in both novels are able to develop 'rhizomic' Self in their socio-cultural contexts that will help them accept life as

paradoxes.

The Final chapter will commit itself to provide concluding comments on findings by comparing and contrasting Sartrean notion of ‘no-Self’ and Deleuzean notion of ‘rhizomic Self’ displayed in Sadegh Hedayat’s *The Blind Owl*, Samuel Beckett’s *Murphy*, Saul Bellow’s *Herzog* and Margaret Atwood’s *Surfacing*. It will also present the dialectical discussion of the self-notions that point to alternative views on the argument of this study.

CHAPTER II

THE VOYAGE OF THE SELF FROM MIDDLE AGES TO POSTMODERNISM

2.1. Introduction

I have so far laid down the basic lines of thought concerning the notion of the Self, which this project plans to explore and understand in selected fictions as reflections on this concept. The major argument of this project is that the Self might undergo different interpretations with regard to the changing dynamics of the time. In this line of thought, the introduction provided some general accounts of the Self in different periods. Following this framework, this chapter will make a deeper investigation by tracing the Self in different historical periods ranging from its totality in medieval period down to its fragmentation and multiplicity in modernist and postmodernist periods. My footing behind this objective will be to show how new social dynamics might develop as the material manifestations of the relevant period and in turn how the existing notion of the Self might become insufficient within the changing dynamics of the time. The general scheme of historical eras to be discussed can be outlined as the medieval period where the Self-concept had a unitary and integrated and blessed understanding, early modern period in which the process of fragmentation started, and the Self had a great awakening, 19th century period in which the Self transits from the Absolute to the material, high modern period in which the Self splits and moves toward nothingness, postmodern period in which Self in multiplicity is celebrated. The voyage of the Self in the historical process will help understand better the transition from Sartre's notion of 'no-Self' to Deleuze's 'rhizomic' notion of the Self. In the second place, the close discussion of Sartre's notion of 'no-Self' and

Deleuze's rhizomic notion of the Self will be helpful to contextualize the analysis of the characters in the selected novels in the following chapters.

2.2.The History of the Self

The concern over selfhood, which has been a problem since the fall of mankind, has particularly taken the central stage as a post/modern phenomenon. The dissolution of the Self in the course of the historical, social and cultural developments has brought the question "who am I" into prominence. As a result of the flux of the social roles in context-dependent and consumerist-capitalist relationships, particularly in today's world, the Self suffers most from the paradoxes and contradictions that have been inflicted on the Self till now. The Self has begun to be seen as the source of the contradictions with regard to the changing dynamics of the time. As Turner mentions, The Self might be the creator as well as a construct. S/he might be essential, material but transcendent and immaterial. S/he might have a unified sense as well as s/he might be in fragments and plural (9). Even though the roots of these paradoxes dated back to the fall of mankind, this thesis delimits its survey starting with the socio-cultural developments that happened in early modern period, as it was the period where the totality of the medieval Self was broken. However, the question is how the Self has lost its totality and what developments have led it to turn into a matrix of paradoxes in time. My objective in this part is an attempt to show how the new social dynamics that developed in the socio-historical context has led to the transformation of the Self from his seemingly stable, fixed, permanent structure to fluid, nomadic, multiple one from medieval period to post-modernism.

2.2.1. The 'Blessed' Self in middle Ages

In Medieval period, social life was based on a hierarchal system called 'Feudalism'. As Bloch defines, it is a system that structured the social relations in a reciprocal way between the landowners, their vassals, and fiefs (145). Within this structure, the important thing was to have social status. Marriage was a tool to gain status in life. The parents arranged marriages for their children with the people of higher status to acquire some privileges. Another aspect of this system to stress on was that women were inferior to men. The roles in the society were strictly drawn between man and woman. Father-husband was the central pillar of the family. Mother/wife was seen

as the property of father/husband. Last but not the least, the control mechanism of this structure was the Church. It dominated the society and became the authoritarian figure in every corner of man's life. It became a totalizing power.

As well as in the feudal society, the Self had a fixed, predestined place equated with the social Self in the Great Chain of Being. Great Chain of Being was a spiritual hierarchical structure of all matter and life, supposed to have been ordered by God. The chain started from God and went downward from spiritual beings to material beings. Man had a unique position between spiritual beings and material beings. Humans were thought to possess divine power, but with the physical constraints. As such, they have sensuality and physical feelings such as pain, hunger, thirst, and sexual desire just like other animals that are inferior in the chain of Being. Man's self-fulfillment was to free the soul from the body in order to achieve salvation by following the Church's doctrines in this life of trials and errors.

The Christian doctrines dictated with a Platonist reasoning that the afterlife was superior to the material world as the soul to body. Medieval mind was shaped by the Church doctrines that stressed constantly over the huge prominence of the world to come and the uselessness and emptiness of the world in which he lived. Material existence was but the test and trial for the salvation of the soul. The body was the prison of the soul. Even the cosmological understanding was balanced on the distinction of the wickedness of the material realm and the spiritual heavenly bodies. This depiction was well illustrated in Dante's *Divine Comedy*:

> Through me you pass into the city of woe:
> Through me you pass into eternal pain:
> Through me among the people lost for aye.
> Justice the founder of my fabric moved:
> To rear me was the task of power divine,
> Supremest wisdom, and primeval love. (Dante, 13)

Such dualistic perception in the doctrines of the Church originated from St. Augustine (354-28), the philosopher and theologian. In his *Confessions (397-400)* Augustine claimed that we are born with a corrupted nature so our free will is diseased: "My will is my weight" (13.9.10). To him, the origin of evil lies in this defect in our free will. Because of this, he said; "My inner Self was a house divided against itself" (8.8.1). What he meant is that the digression of free will from the path of God to the

material world causes evil to take the stage. Turning inwards, a path to see Christ that is called grace can be the healing power for the free will. Through Platonic vision, Augustine gained insight to the concept, the transcendental God, perceived by reason since he thought that one's pious acts in this life would lead him to the eternal happiness with God. He believed that the way to God is only possible with mind's eye. In doing this, his voyage goes inwards to upwards that means first entering into the realm of inner Self then leading his way to God. The true Self lies introspectively within rather than in the outer world. Thanks to the inner Self, he claimed one is able to attain the blessed life.

Briefly, religion to medieval man was a central system in every corner of life as a solid structure surrounding the individual's life from birth to death, even to afterlife bestowing and surrounding all with sacraments and rituals. So medieval man had a unitary understanding of selfhood in Christian way of life. He had no interest to question selfhood apart from questioning how to redeem the inner Self/soul according to Christian doctrines of salvation.

2.2.2. Early Modern Period: The 'Skeptic Self' Born

In late medieval period, there occurred some important events that led to a decrease in church power. As Dewald notes, the outbreak of plague, the shortage of food, long-term wars, uprisings and some so-called heretic views affected the seemingly unshakable authority of church. He also states that between 1378 and 1415 Roman Catholic Church experienced a great schism between rival popes, and some scholars set forth the necessity of transformational acts in church structure to repair this damage (26-34).

Likewise, Dewald also makes the point that the scientific developments in 15th century marked the beginning of a new age. The printing press was invented in the 1440s. It became popular quickly in big cities of Europe, and the books under the control of the religious authority began to be multiplied via the printing press and made available to people (29). Depending on this, ideas circulated more easily. Catholic church was quite disturbed by the spread of ideas and often encouraged censorship.

In 1517, Martin Luther's anarchical thesis (1483–1546), which is also regarded as the start of Protestant reformation, led to a split in Christianity. Thanks to the printing press, Luther's ideas spread quickly and became the source for the religious split in many European countries. Luther's gratification was well expressed in these lines:

> …For I see what benefit it has brought to the churches, that men have begun to collect many books and great libraries, outside and alongside of the Holy Scriptures…(7)

This experience of religious fragmentation and other developments led man to lose his faith in the authority of Catholic Church. The perceived corruption in the affairs of Catholic Church, the impact of humanism and the new learning of the Renaissance pushed man to question much of the traditional thought. The loss of the Church meant the destruction of the entire system, which made the material life of Western man meaningful. In his breakaway with the church, the gradual disappearance of the spiritual ties with the heavenly realm set man free to cope with the material world. But he felt homeless in such a world, which no longer answered the needs of his Self. A home is the traditional matrix that normally holds our life. This home was thought to be the Christian way of life for the medieval man. When man's confidence in Catholic Church was greatly shaken, he felt homeless, deserted, isolated. He felt like a traveller in the way of becoming. Henceforth, these surfacing conditions made him seek out the ways to restore his own human completeness. This time, he would pave his path without the Church's doctrines, and rituals. Man's feeling of homelessness provided advantage for him as well as bothering him because of the turbulent process of the in-between situation. The quest for stability gave the way to the birth of a new man, The Renaissance man. He challenged to have a new and powerful vision of mastery over the whole earth. The loss of faith led the Renaissance man to quest for new homes since his fixed place in the great chain of Being had been totally shaken by the ongoing developments of the time. Now a new question arises: who was the Renaissance man?

The Renaissance movement was a period of rebirth in the history of Europe between 14^{th} to 17^{th} centuries. It was the transient period from the medieval to modern period. The intellectual basis of the Renaissance period was humanistic notion that could be summarized by Protagoras' statement, "Man is the measure of all things". They took it as a motto to the heart in this period. This new thinking became visible in every scope of life ranging art, architecture, politics, science and literature. Burckhardt

locates 'individualism' at the center of his analysis and makes it as the essential quality of the Renaissance man (see Caferro, 31). The Renaissance man was a new man on the world's stage, whose characteristics nurtured from his unlimited passion and thirst for new knowledge. He was a self-sufficient performer, conscious of his own individuality. Medieval man, by contrast, was aware of himself only as "a member of a race, people, party, family or corporation, through some general category" (qtd. in Caferro, 32). Marlow's play, *The Tragical History of Life and Death of Dr. Faustus* is a good example that tells the birth of the Renaissance man. Despite Mephistopheles warnings about the horrors of hell, Faustus sold his soul to Lucifer for his craving for the knowledge of the unknown. He was regarded as a great epitome of the rise of individualism and humanism.

Francis Bacon has often been regarded as the pioneer of early modern mechanical arts. He attempted to outstrip nature from sacredness. For doing so, idols as man-made obstacles which could deceive the mind's objective thinking must be abandoned. He claims that for pure, objective thinking, man should remove these idols from his mind.

Henry Turner in his book, *The English Renaissance Stage: Geometry, Poetics and The Practical Spatial Arts* (2010) has suggested that the developments in science could not fully be understood without studying how poets, playwrights reflected the new science that thrived in the contemporary science and technology (27). Some playwrights of the age like Shakespeare, Marlow, and Ben Jonson reflected the social, intellectual and scientific developments in their plays. To illustrate, Shakespeare unconsciously uses Bacon's new experimental method, the 'inductive thinking' in *Hamlet*. When the protagonist, Hamlet faces his father's ghost, the ghost tells him how his uncle has killed him. However, he wants to test the reliability of the ghost's remarks by experimenting what he has told him in a play, which resembles the sequence told by the ghost. Hamlet and Horatio watch the king's movements from different angles. When the king has leapt up and left the room, both have agreed that the king is guilty. Supposing that the ghost here symbolizes the past knowledge, the tradition, religion, Hamlet's action to experiment over it can be regarded as the question of idols, which Bacon emphasized as the precondition for the development of new 'Self'.

As manifested in the literary examples above, one can realize that the Renaissance artists like Chaucer, Shakespeare, Marlow and Jonson hinted at man's entering into a new competition with nature. Such artists attempted to invert art and nature's positions in the inured dualism reflected in the terms; naturata naturans (nature naturing) and natura naturata (nature natured). Naturata naturans as Coleridge defined in his 'On Poesy and Art', "nature was in the active sense" (227). It was believed to move with the dynamic, self-generating, vital principle. On the other hand, natura naturata was supposed as the finished project of the creator. The role of artist in early modern period changed greatly in the way that he took on the role of a creator rather than presenting the mere imitation of the already completed project. Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586) in his 'Defense of the Poesy' (1579) referred to the role of artist as the creator with these lines:

> Only the poet… lifted up with the vigor of his own invention, does grow, in effect, into another nature, in making things either better than nature brings forth, or, quite a new, forms such as never were in nature… her world is brazen, the poets only deliver a golden…[The poet] most properly do imitate to teach and delight, and to imitate borrow nothing of what is, has been, but range, only with learned discretion, into the divine consideration of what may be, and should be. (qtd. in Harmon, 121)

As Sidney here emphasized, the artist was no more the slave of nature. He began to be seen as the creator that was able to turn imperfect nature into a perfect one. That is, Sidney perceived the artist as a God-like creator.

Within this newly formed discourse, the quest for the new Self in early modern period was emphasized in the contemporary art, literature and science. The Self moved from the rigid and fixed place in medieval period into a realm of the skeptics' unbound creativity in early modern period. Hamlet can be seen as the representation of the newly born world in which knowledge is acquired by mechanical arts based on inductive reasoning and experimentation, not by tradition or faith.

Another mechanical view of nature, which was sensational, was Newtonian model of universe. It gave man the impression that he dominated and controlled the machine-like nature. Newton began to see the living creatures mechanistically. The body began to be seen as the machine. As Oppermann notes, Newtonian theory of mechanical universe became the driving force for the material progress that allowed for

an undisputed anthropocentricism (8). However, the Cartesian and Newtonian theories brought radical consequences together with them. One weakness, not the least, was that they caused a continuing separation, disintegration and disorientation in human psyche.

The resulting polarity between what Descartes calls the reality (the mind) and the extended reality (the body) has driven natural science to focus its attention on the extended reality where the animals and plants were situated:

> I was a substance whose whole essence or nature consists only in thinking, and which, that it may exist, has need of no place, nor is dependent on any material thing; so that " I," that is to say, the mind by which I am what I am, is wholly distinct from the body…(Descartes, 31)

This view led man to focus on the extended reality. According to strict mathematical laws, the animals and plants act like machines. Their determining mechanism is the material causes.

Parting humans from nature seen, as a dead mechanism to be exploited was the direct outcome of the mechanistic worldview, the justification of Newtonian mechanistic universe. Newton's laws enabled perfect and distinct and symmetrical images of a mechanical universe. It helped create an influential discourse in the seventeenth century. Founded on the dualistic division and the Newtonian mechanistic theory, such a discourse was well known as the herald of a scientific age in the centuries to come. These theories started to systematize the western thought. The reduction of nature into a state of dead mechanism gave the man the upper hand to pave the way for the rapid progress based on science and technology. Capra best summarizes 17th century paradigm with these lines:

> the view of the universe as a mechanical system composed of elementary building-blocks, the human body as a machine, the view of life in society as a competitive struggle for existence, the belief in unlimited material progress to be achieved through economic and technological growth…(264)

This inescapably resulted in the continuing exploitation of nature and the ongoing materialization in Western world.

To put it briefly, early modern period ended as it began in crisis. Man's fixed place in the Great Chain of Being collapsed. Worn-off values of Christianity left man

homeless. For a man who no longer had a homeland and was cast adrift, knowledge became a home to live. The substitution of rational for religious thinking in early modern period was the first phase to strip man naked. While medieval Self was sufficient to the needs of the society, the new social dynamics in early modern period made the Self become insufficient to the needs of time.

2.2.3 Notions of the Self from Early to High Modernity

> The significance of that 'absolute' commandment, *Know thyself* – whether we look at it in itself or under the historical circumstances of its first utterance – is not to promote mere self-knowledge in respect of the *particular* capacities, character, propensities, and foibles of the single self. The knowledge it commands means that of man's genuine reality – of what is essentially and ultimately true and real – of mind as the true and essential being. (qtd. in Solomon, 78)

The Enlightenment was a period from which the outburst of ideas flourished. This period of rapid progress, discovery and exploration in philosophy, science and technology which first emerged in England in mid- seventeenth century, then in France in mid-18th century and finally reached Germany and Eastern Europe in the beginning of 19th century brought far-reaching notions of the Self together. It caused radical changes in society and culture bringing industrial, political, philosophical revolutions in its wake. It was a time when winds of theories flourished, the traditional beliefs were shaken, and the once solid bases of society were challenged and uprooted. Amidst the skeptical air that befell on the uprooted and destabilized European society, the Self turned into a point of fundamental crisis.

It was in the Enlightenment in which Rene Descartes bore the transcendental Self into a central argument. The focal point for Descartes was the existence and the Self. He treated the mind as a distinct realm of existence. His method of throwing everything into doubt till he certified its certainty and his subjective perception of the 'I' as key to understanding a world outside of our experience made him the founder of the so-called rationalist movement. The mechanic aesthetic of the rationalists hated the chaotic order in the early modern period and they were on the quest for a complete, precise and symmetrical vision of things. Moreover, if one has the right to claim, Cartesian thought was born out of the quest for the 'mathematical definiteness', which aims to control self-consciousness of Renaissance man in early modern period, the energy of which is boundless. The rationalists in the enlightenment period did not

accept such an outburst of self-energy with a potential to harm 'the big machine'. They think that individualism is out of question when the issue is the clockwork civilization. However, while Descartes attempted to poise the Self according to principles of clockwork machine, his theory led to a fierce discussion on the transcendental Self for the 19th century Europe.

The first reaction, voiced loudly against the tyranny of Cartesian reason was the movement called Romanticism. The German Romantics such as Schiller, Schelegel perceived the Self as a living organism. They made an analogy between the Self and the organic growth of a plant. They propounded that the plant is hidden in the secret power of the seed. They emphasized the priority of the whole over parts. While it is growing, it begins to evolve into many forms assimilating its substance till it finally reaches the highest potentiality. The ultimate point is the organic unity. They remarked that a plant might form new parts. They went on to say that the whole and its parts coexist with one another. If a leaf breaks off from the whole, it dies. As Abrams notes in his *Lamp and the Mirror* that organic unity is a self-evolved system (168).

Schlegel introduces an artistic creative mode, called Romantic irony in his famous fragments that well explains this Self-evolving system. To Schlegel, romantic irony is a way of thinking about the world that embraces change and process (Schlegel, 54). As Mellor argues, it ontologically sees the world as chaotic. However, this chaos has eternal flux of forms, always flowing into new ones and new creations. Schlegel sees the impotency in the rational image that is precisely and symmetrically reflected on the mirror. He substitutes the flat mirror with a convex mirror since he realizes the abundant fertile land of the chaotic universe. So the romantic ironist attempts to see the beauty not in light of reason but in the teeming chaos of creativity. The clear image becomes diffused and distorted. The crack in the 'camera obscura' or the skull of the artist led to distorted images of situations and characters and chaotic scenery. Romantics' introduction of distorted figures and chaotic situations were harsh reactions against Descartes' rational or Hume's empirical Self. What they focused is the romantic ironic Self who celebrates the ever-becoming Self. With this notion, the drastic change in taste and beauty made the grotesque figures as heroes of the time. Byronic characters such as Cain, Manfred, and Don Juan can be seen as the best figures that exemplify the

artistic creation of the time. Their continual Self-creating voyages despite their Self-constraints can be shown as examples to romantic irony.

The 19th century was a period of fast-tracking scientific discovery and invention with important progresses in various fields such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology and philosophy following the enlightenment. It was an age in which global exploration and colonization was enjoying its full efficiency and transportation, travel, communications were being globalized.

The Industrial Revolution began in England and spread to continental Europe. This was followed by the political revolutions in France starting with French revolution and later July Revolution of 1830 and philosophical revolutions of Germany. Ewen claims that 19th century Europe can be best portrayed as the fusion of industrial revolution in England, revolutionary tradition in France and philosophical revolutions in Germany. Engels described England with these words in 1844:

> The industrial revolution is of the same importance for England as the political revolution for France, and the philosophical revolution for Germany, and the difference between England in 1760, and in 1844 is at least as great as between France under the *ancient régime* and during the revolution of July (qtd in Ewen, 5).

One of the great consequences of Industrial Revolution was the multiplication of the social roles. In medieval period, the Self had a fixed, stable identity in the community as a knight, pioress, bishop, miller, summoner, etc. But with the changing dynamics in the Industrial age, the Self was forced to adapt itself to the new conditions that surrounded him. With the multiplication of the roles, a new emergent class arose around the commercial occupations in the city. It was called as the middle class or Bourgeoisie. They found a place in society between the decaying aristocracy and the working class which Marx and Engels would call it the Proletariat. During the 19th century, the expansion of middle class was clearly visible. The rise of the capitalism was associated with the rise of the middle class. The accumulation of wealth in the free trade economy turned them greedy capitalists. Their ravenous actions for wanting more led them to hire workers including women and children with lowest wages without realizing the danger behind it.

In the commodity economy where money governs, man as a producer himself becomes the product. Marx realizes the Self's rapid transformation into a forced labor after the rise of Industrial age. He is aware that man is dehumanized and experiences a sense of alienation to his own nature. Unlike Kierkegaard's sense of alienation, which is defined as the Self away from God, as Solomon emphasized, Marx sees alienation as the reification of the Self in materialism (96). This view makes him question next who is the greatest sufferer of self-alienation in this commodity economy. The answer for Marx is the proletariat or the workers.

In brief, in Europe, England's capitalist industry, German idealism, and France's revolutionary tradition in the chaotic atmosphere of 19th century pave the way for the appearance of the different notions of the Self. Some deified or reified the Self with regard to the social, economical, ideological transformations of the relevant period. One can witness that The Self gradually became concrete in the 19th century in order to meet the needs of the age. Particularly, Marx and Engels were the leading figures that broke the ties of the Self off the transcendental realm and based him on the economic relations. As a result of this, the Self became anchored in the social and economical relations.

2.2.4. Notions of the Self in High Modern Period

> The ant's a centaur in his dragon world.
> Pull down thy vanity , it is not man
> Made courage, or made order, or made grace,
> Pull down thy vanity , I say pull down.
> Learn of the green world what can be thy place
> In scaled invention or true artistry ,
> Pull down thy vanity (Pound)

In the 19th century, different notions of the Self attempted to see man as ethical, rational and liberal and lastly material. These notions allowed man not only to discover the obscurities in the universe but also to put self-limitation over himself. Having lost his anchorage in God, man began to see himself as the measure of all things. His self-centered illusion made him the bridge between the material and the absolute. However it caused him to be drowned in the boggy water of Bourgeoisie values and conventions even if he did not wish to see behind the mirror. However, the stunning developments in

science, economy and philosophy multiplied the social roles in the society. Eventually he found his Self in fragmentation just like the bits and pieces of the broken mirror. He was gradually stripped of his divinity, became the prisoner of the material life, turned into the irrational animal and eventually became an atomic particle in nature. As Pound exclaims in his poem, man can no longer be considered as the ethical and rational authority in life. At the end of the 19th century, man was turned into a puppet at the hands of the social, economic, biological determinism. Pound and the other modernists in the early 20th century had the utmost feeling that the harmonious nature of organic notion of the Self was broken not only with the increasing predetermined social roles in the post-Industrial Age but also with the decaying values of middle class. They realized that such notion could no longer be a remedy to the needs of modern man. They claimed that 19th century illusions could not cover the nakedness of the Self any longer. The answer given to the question "what is man" was not able to satisfy the modern man. This feeling became the basis of radical shift in the quest for the Self by rejecting the traditional notions of the Self. Their primary focus was to break with the past. They adopted the motto 'to make it new'. This motto gave meaning to what was termed as 'Modernism.'

Two modernist novels to be studied in this thesis, Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* and Samuel Beckett's *Murphy* share similarities with regard to the characters' unconscious tracing of Sartrean path of destruction. Therefore, studying modernism in general will provide the reader with prior knowledge about the Sartrean theory of 'no-Self' that is echoed in Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* and Samuel Beckett's *Murphy* as well as informing how this nauseating notion surfaced and how it was molded by the socio-historical context of the time. Hedayat and Beckett's protagonists are usually alienated from social life as Sartre's are. Rather, they are disgusted with life-illusion. They usually believe that the bare existence lies in the destruction of life-illusion. They yearn for some golden moments in the past where people had true faces, but not wear masks. However, they know for sure that these were gone. Because of this disillusionment, they usually feel fragmented, displaced, alienated, crippled, and paralyzed. They feel trapped in this nauseating vortex and usually albeit not always find them in the path of destruction. Similar to Sartre's, their weakness lies in not grasping life as the flux of changes.

In modernist period, as Barett puts forward, life pace became faster more than ever due to the globalizing technologies in the fields such as mass media, transportation, trade and so on. He also argued that depending on these developments, there occurred an increase in production that made people prosperous and thus the material needs of people were satisfied to a large extent (31).

However, colonial competition grew bitter. The colonialists' hypocrisy behind the benevolent project of bringing civilization to the savage lands went up to unbearable levels. As a result of the colonial powers' greedy pursuits, The World War I broke out. Its economical depression in its aftermath disrupted the material progress and broke the life- illusion. It destroyed the foundations of the traditional life and Self. This eventually stupefied man and pushed him to Self-estrangement. This stranger begins to appear everywhere. His traumatic experience of the bloody war caused him to raise awareness of the disillusionment surrounding him. He realized that the solid floor on which he once stood became vaporized because of the dissolution of the illusions. His sense of isolation grew bigger in his homelessness. He becomes 'No Man' just like Odysseus in his encounter with the blind giant, Polyphemus. We come across with this 'no Man' figure under different social masks in the modern world.

As this 'no Man' figure might be Roquentin in Sartre's *Nausea*, the Narrator in Hedayat's *The Blind Owl*, he might be the eponymous character, Murphy in Beckett's *Murphy*, Septimus in Woolf's *Mrs Dalloway*. We might encounter him as Stephen Daedalus in James Joyce's *Ulysses* or Meuersault in Camus' *The Stranger*. They are all Self-questers amidst the chaotic life of the modern world. One common thing in their Self-quests albeit different social contexts they have is the nihilistic tendency in their attitudes. The reductive path in their quests leads them firstly to Self-alienation, and eventually to their own nothingness. The concept of nothingness became one of the biggest topics in modernist-existentialist literature. The old waiter in Hemingway's work *A Clean Well Lighted Place* stresses the importance of this concept in modernist literature.

> What did he fear? It was not fear or dread, It was a nothing that he knew too well. It was all a nothing and a man was nothing too. It was only that and light was all it needed and a certain cleanness and order (qtd. in Oates, 299).

The everyday man had a sudden glimpse of the nothingness, which became the self-theorists' primary focus. The war destroyed their unshakable pillars in life. Modern man realized that human existence hung on by a thread.

In conclusion, with the multiplication of social roles in the post-Industrial Age, man's struggle to create a permanent Self exacerbated the fragmentation of the Self. In modernist notions of the Self, this fragmentation began to be perceived as a psychological disorder such as self-alienation, dissociative identity disorder. Though different in their methods and notions, many modernist theorists of the Self attempted to reintegrate the Self as if the Self were a patient. However, their approaches caused the existential crack to grow bigger and bigger and led to the unbearable suffering for man. The end of the voyage in the maze of 'Know Thyself' became most complicated in that modern man either felt totally trapped in darkness of chaos or imprisoned in the prefigured roles of the society. What is worse, with Sartrean theory, a theorist of this kind, Sartre would realize no exit in this maze, which would lead him to take the path of destruction. I will analyze Sartre and his theory of no-Self later in this chapter.

2.2.5. Postmodern Notions of the Self

> Do I contradict myself?
> Very well then I contradict myself.
> (I am large, I contain multitudes.)
> (Walt Whitman, Song of Myself, 1855)

As Taylor puts it in his influential work, *Sources of the Self*, the traditional notions of the Self cannot survive in the decentralized, fragmented, transient experiences of modern society as man is succumbed to the various, impermanent experiences as a result of swift changes in the social dynamics of the time (420-25). Depending on this, modern man steps out the sphere of the permanent identity and lets him float in the uncontrollable flux of social roles. The flux of social roles eroded the traditional notions of the Self even though they continued to reverberate. The erosion seemed to take its full speed with Sartre. When it is discussed in the next section, one will clearly see that in the postwar era, the critics thought that Sartrean existentialism opened a black hole in the consciousness. Out of this black hole, Sartre appeared with a revolutionary understanding of freedom. His idea of freedom caused man to slacken off

his duties and commitments in the society, which once stabilized the permanent Self in the pre-modern period. Even though this freedom gave man the upper hand to choose for one's life projection, as Gidden implies, it comes at a price since in the late modern period, chaos, uncertainty, anxiety have become on rampant (43). Sartre's notion of freedom began to be condemned by the critics for the nauseating air in the society. He was accused of removing the last pillar from man to make life meaningful. His removal of the Self from the subject position in human consciousness with his theory of nothingness made a domino effect upon literary, philosophical and intellectual environments. By doing so, he inadvertently caused man to drift into nothingness rather than to develop a way to struggle with the fragmentation of the Self that exacerbated as a result of the multiplication of the roles in the modern society. The receptions of Sartrean theory of nothingness as destructive and reductive led to the demise of the Self by creating a bleak air of suicidal society. Therefore, in the face of bold developments in critical theory, the criticism on Sartrean existentialism grew like a mountain. This reaction that in time encompassed the basic premises of the western culture began to be called as 'postmodernism'.

Postmodernism as a literary, social and an intellectual movement is important for this study since it has introduced new notions of the Self that have been able to bridge the gap the modernists in general and Sartre specifically have opened. Two of the novels to be studied in this thesis can be categorized as postmodern in terms of both literary techniques used and the postmodern identities the characters have. Therefore, studying postmodernism in general will give an insight into the notion of the Deleuzean Self that is indirectly reflected in Saul Bellow's *Herzog* and Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing* as well as into how this notion emerged and was shaped by the social, cultural, historical dynamics of the time. Both novelists attempt to create postmodern characters with disjointed, spasmodic, paradoxical, mobile, fluid natures, which necessitate "plural selves, superficial and fleeting identities" (79). Their realities are the products of consumerist society and constantly open to reconstruction in order to deconstruct the notion of unified, stable, coherent, consistent, fixed sense of the Self.

The question, 'what is postmodernism?' is difficult to answer. However, the definition can be recognized in its distinction from modernism. Modernism realized that the traditional values upon which the world and society were built collapsed. Therefore

the world and society needed to establish new cultural, political, philosophical premises to make a new start. The modernists claimed that the individuals would have to find a basis that could re-anchor the individuals in life. They hopefully attempted to build a unitary, permanent basis that could reinvigorate the Self already in fragments. However, where they found themselves was a wasteland. The game was already over in its start as Clov exclaimed in the beginning lines of Beckett's *Endgame*; 'finished, it's finished, nearly finished' (1). Sartrean nothingness was believed to collapse upon the literary and intellectual, social fields like a huge black cloud. From the start, it seemed a total frustration.

To Postmodernism, on the other hand, there is nothing to eulogize. As Woodhead underlined, the fragmentation of the Self is not a problem but its very condition (58). Most postmodern theorists took a positive stance and saw that this seemingly chaos would liberate man from any constraints and would enable the infinite variety of ideas to coexist. In its most extreme, the postmodernists began to learn how to dance in the flux of things. Gergen proclaims that postmodernism as a movement, where the selfhood was rendered to utter erosion, brought "the existentially unsettling rhetoric of relativism" with it (qtd. in Turner, 16). Gergen further argues:

> As we enter the postmodern era, all previous beliefs about the self are placed in jeopardy, and with them the patterns of action they sustain... The postmodern condition more generally is marked by a plurality of voices vying for the right to reality... Under postmodern conditions, persons exist in a state of continuous construction and reconstruction; it is a world where anything goes that can be negotiated. Each reality of self gives way to reflexive questioning, irony, and ultimately the playful probing of yet another reality. The center fails to hold. (7)

With this relativism at hand, the postmodern world experienced even greater changes to the traditional way of relations that early modernity has already begun to erode. According to Dunn, for example, modernity produced a plurality of new private and public spheres as a result of complex network of relations. Each sphere such as family, state, religion, and other institutional apparatus attempted to dominate the Self. The multiplication of the social roles in modernity, and increasing erosion of the traditional values posed a threat to the unified sense of the rational Self. It eventually revealed the existential problem of the Self (54-57). In time, the globalizing culture and flattening of the traditional values that is key to postmodernity began to eliminate the

traditional, stable, fixed, role-based notions of the Self. People now involve in a multiple web of relations worldwide and that drifts people to adopt any number of roles at any given time. As the ways in which we relate to others have changed, so have the ways in which we experience ourselves. Society has had to become accustomed to, what Gergen refers to as, 'the postmodern consciousness'- a sense of impermanence and disunity since both the social world and the individual are caught up in a process of continual deconstruction and reconstruction. A social theorist, Giddens argues that Postmodernism introduced an unprecedented degree of globalizing technologies that rendered the transmission of image and sound possible across vast distances. Thanks to this, man is drawn into ever-widening array of relationships (see Turner, 46).

Within this relativist perspective of reality, the status of the Self was radically exposed to change. He lost the universally, transcendentally grounded status. He began to be treated as products with regard to value-centered relationships. The Self is constructed to be sold or to be consumed. Within the value-centered consumerist society, the act of consuming begins to define one's Self. Massumi defines the Self in postmodern condition with an axiom: "I buy therefore I am" (7). The consumerist approach leads man to create situational selves that can be consumed easily. One can easily observe the shift in notion from an unchanging, unified sense of the Self to the representational and situational selves that can change in this complex network of the postmodernist-consumerist relations.

The complicated network of relations in the postmodern, consumerist world, which is totally new for the traditional man, brings different notions of the Self within the same category: the Self in multiplicity. According to many postmodern theorists, seeing the Self in multiplicity might be a remedy for the elegiac, suicidal man stuck in Sartrean black hole since postmodernism is not coherent, stable, unified entity, but a chaotic pit, the essence of which is the flux of changes. They have realized that there is no enduring Self but the context-based selves that are in constant change. Dunn suggests that with each changing style, a new Self-image is constructed. Each new construction might arise from different trends, developed via media in relation to consumer products. The postmodern man realizes that s/he needs to develop situational selves that can be shifted with regard to momentous demands. Among them, there is no

core Self that endures and wears different masks. Each Self that becomes a situational construction feigns as the genuine Self (17-18). Upon this, Hoffmann defines the new Self emerged as changeable, unstable, illusory, made of fragments. In addition, the Self began to be celebrated as multiple, situational, fluid, and nomadic. The new, multiply constituted Self enabled the postmodernists to deconstruct and reconstruct the hierarchal and binary views of the world, the language, the history, above all, the Self (78-85).

As it is the case, the postmodern man will no longer pursue the stable and permanent Self nor will s/he care about it. From early modern to post modern period, as Turner claims, self-fragmentation was considered as a psychological disorder that was bound to the idea of self-alienation. He identifies the cause in the widening gap between the modernists' quest for reunifying notion of the Self and the ever-changing determinants of the culture. Different perspectives toward self-fragmentation flourished as a result of the cultural change shifting the primary elements of identity from social roles to social goods. Upon these socio-cultural changes, the Self has been greatly pluralized and constructed in an episodic way. The authentic Self based on the stable systems of meaning in pre-modernity has been displaced in the episodic and discontinuous nature of the postmodern world. The globalizing world with its stunning tech requires a never-ending, impermanent, episodic, incomplete understanding of the Self (Turner, 30-45). As Bauman observes, he does not have any permanent identity in itself but always involves in the process of identification:

> Perhaps instead of talking about identities, inherited or acquired, it would be more in keeping with the realities of the globalizing world to speak of *identification*, a never-ending, always incomplete, unfinished and open-ended activity in which we all, by necessity or by choice, are engaged. (152)

The postmodern condition requires a chameleonic Self (ever-changing Self) that has no core identity but changes with regard to the needs of the situation. It is essentially plural to bear the anxiety and uncertainty of the chaotic world devoid of, tradition and stable systems of meaning. To claim such a Self, one has to have consciously held roles in the society rather than being puppets by internalizing the predetermined roles at the hands of the social systems.

As we see while discussing Sartrean notion of 'no-Self', modernist way of thinking inadvertently aligns self-fragmentation with self-alienation, which is something to be reduced or destroyed in the society. No one claims that Sartre did it on purpose as no one could claim Alfred Nobel discovered dynamite to use in wars. Sartre's struggle to free the Self from the traditional grounds of Being with his theory of freedom unintentionally breeds nothing but anxiety and fear before any projection of life. His consciousness-raising about the breakdown of Self-illusion left modern man no harbor to anchor. Although Sartre was the first modernist to conceive that the Self was an illusion created by man, his reductive method gave no chance to deconstruct it but to destroy it. The positive turn in postmodernist perspective toward the Self gave no credit to Self-multiplicity as pathological. As Featherstone notes:

> This postmodern, anti-essentialist critique of identity thinking is something, which emphasizes that instability and lack of fixity should not necessarily be seen as pathological and signs of an identity crisis. This contrasts with some of the theories of identity in the past, as, for example, in the 1950's, when psychologists saw the maintenance of a stable centered self as important for mental health. (54)

In brief, the Postmodern condition prioritizes the Self's capacity for change and its permeability to new situations easily rather than focusing on its stability and fixity as an unchanging essence at the center of existence. Sartre's weakness lies in his reductive and destructive method to the condition of the Self since the social world necessitates the Self (though a changeable and disposable construct) to sustain the complex network of relations with others. After we have seen the whole picture of the Self from medieval period to postmodernism, in the following part, it is time to trace the shift in the notion of the Self from Sartre to Deleuze. It will be two-phased. First, it will attempt to focus on what Sartrean notion of 'no-Self' is and how it causes Self-destruction with its reductionist method. Secondly, we will study what the 'rhizomic' Self is and how it should be seen as a positive asset to the postmodern man in order to cope with Sartre's nausea amidst the flux of changes.

2.3. Jean Paul Sartre: Notion of 'no-Self'

So far I have attempted to discuss different notions of the Self that flourished as responses to the social dynamics in different historical periods. It enables us to see the whole picture of the Self that paves the way for the place of Sartre's notion of 'no- Self'

within this picture. My objective in this part will be twofold. First, this part attempts to make a critical analysis of Sartre's reductionist notion of Self, which associates the consciousness with nothingness. Secondly, this part deals with the critical reception behind the supposed insufficiency of his notion of 'no-Self' for the needs of the time. This part also actualizes itself through an engagement of Sartrean main concepts such as no-Self notion, nothingness, bad faith and freedom. Therefore, my source in this part will mainly be his essay, "Transcendence of the Ego", his work *Being and Nothingness* and the critical reception written on Sartre's notion of 'no-Self'. All these aforementioned claims will be supported with the examples to be given from his literary works.

Jean Paul Sartre (1905-1980) appears as the leading existentialist figure in post World War II France. He was the one to coin the term, 'Existentialism'. Sartre argues that human beings seek for a rational harbor in their life to take shelter in order to make their life meaningful. However, he argues that it is nothing but a "futile passion". In his works, he dissects the Self in its complete nakedness, and sees it as a construct or a life-illusion over the brute existence in which he finds nothingness. He was a philosopher, and a literary figure whose novels, plays, stories mainly employ existential matters, political realism, and unremitting hopelessness. As a man of literature and philosophy, he supports the absolute freedom of the individual from any constraints and restrictions imposed by the environment. Although Macann finds Sartre's position too exaggerated in his time, he finds one thing certain. His philosophy signified real liberation. He claims that Sartre's readers realized they had more control in their lives than they had ever questioned before. They came to realize the importance of taking responsibility for their own lives and situations. This awareness even pushed them to think they could change their lives if needed (157). Particularly, bourgeoisie morality that he had a lifetime conflict with suffered greatly from this consciousness that Sartre raised in his book, *Being and Nothingness*.

Sartrean notion of 'no-Self' arises from his challenge to Husserl's transcendental Self. When he and his lifelong friend, Simon de Beauvoir went to study in Berlin in 1933-34, Sartre discovered Husserl's phenomenology. Sartre wrote in his diary of the impact of Husserl:

> Husserl had gripped me. I saw everything through the perspectives of his philosophy… I was Husserlian and long to remain so. (qtd. in Mcbride, 106)

However, this impact lasted only 3 years. He had a sharp break with Husserl in his groundbreaking essay, entitled "The Transcendence of the Ego" *(1936).* Sartre sets out his discussions in his essay with criticism on Husserlian justification of the omnipresent *I* in consciousness. As mentioned in the preceding sections, the transcendental Self for Husserl is the permanent, unifying mechanism from which all acts of consciousness permeate. He argues, all acts of consciousness may disappear, but the Self is perpetual. To prove this, Husserl uses phenomenological reduction as a method to define the pure Self in consciousness by bracketing the material world. The reason for this is to see the pure Self as the residue of phenomenological reduction. Husserl claims:

> I exist for myself and am constantly given to myself, by experiential evidence, as '*I myself*.' This is true of the transcendental ego and, correspondingly, of the psychologically pure ego; it is true, moreover, with respect to any sense of the word ego. (33)

Unlike Husserl who claimed that the Self is the subject of consciousness, Sartre in his essay held the opinion that the Self is the object of consciousness: He argues; the Self "is neither formally nor materially in consciousness: it is outside, in the world" (31). The Self "is not the owner of consciousness; it is the object of consciousness" (97). As Falzon argues, the Self, for Sartre, is a construct, a life-illusion (109). Sartre follows Husserlian phenomenological reduction for a different end. Unlike Husserl, he uses this method to deny any permanent Self in the consciousness. Sartre argues that consciousness is totally empty. He exemplifies this Selfless consciousness with these lines:

> All consciousness, Husserl has shown, is consciousness of something. This means that there is no consciousness that is not a positing of a transcendent object, or if you prefer, that consciousness has no 'content'. (11)

Sartre argues that Husserlian transcendental Self would be a deterministic actor that is a sort of predetermining "projector" in a phenomenological movie theater. To Sartre, the preprogrammed projector is the biggest obstacle to man's absolute freedom. For him, there is no projector that reflects the images in the movie theater. There are only spontaneous light rays that suddenly and accidentally appear and launch themselves on display. As Minissale observes, this is the unrestrained freedom of the

Selfless state (176).

After his rejection of Husserlian transcendental Self in his essay, "Transcendence of the Ego", the fundamental conclusion that he drew is that consciousness has no contents at all. Nothingness for him is a selfless state. Therefore, this thesis will align his no-Self with his theory of nothingness. Sartre begins his existential study in *Being and Nothingness* with a debate that consciousness is nothingness. Sartre perceives nothingness as part of the human reality. Nothingness haunts Being. He also argues that man is his own nothingness and he brings nothingness into this world.

The example Sartre gives to prove the presence of nothingness is his appointment with Pierre at a café. Sartre says:

> I have an appointment with Pierre at four o'clock. I arrive at the cafe a quarter of an hour late. Pierre is always punctual. Will he have waited for me? I look at the room, the patrons, and I say, "He is not here." Is there an intuition of Pierre's absence, or does negation indeed enter in only with judgment? At first sight it seems absurd to speak here of intuition since to be exact there could not be an intuition of nothing and since the absence of Pierre is this nothing (40).

What Sartre gets readers' attention to is not his expectation of Pierre's presence but his absence as objective reality. At that moment, Pierre manifests himself as nothingness. The failure of his expectation or his negative judgment does not reveal first. On the contrary, it follows Pierre's absence. With this example, Sartre attempts to show that nothingness does not appear as one of the acts of consciousness. It must be seen as the source of man's nihilating process. It is consciousness itself. Above all, it is the existence itself! In Sartre's *Nausea*, Roquentin's awareness of this situation is well put into words with these lines:

> I knew it was the World, the naked World suddenly revealing itself, and I choked with rage at this gross, absurd being. You couldn't even wonder where all that sprang from, or how it was that a world came into existence, rather than nothingness. It didn't make sense, the World was everywhere, in front, behind. There had been nothing *before* it. Nothing . . . this nothingness had not come *before* existence, it was an existence like any other and appeared after many others. I shouted "filth! What rotten filth!" and shook myself to get rid of this sticky filth, but it held fast and there was so much, tons and tons of existence, endless: I stifled at the depths of this immense weariness. (134)

As in the example of Pierre's absence at a café, here, nothingness manifests itself to Roquentin. He realizes the chaotic side of existence, which a rationalist way of thinking can never grasp. He understands that it cannot be swallowed, digested or be explained within any rationalist boundaries. Amidst the abundance of particular, contingent, anarchic things, he feels sick, rather, nauseated in the face of nothingness as the brute reality. As he puts it, 'tons and tons of existence' arouses the sense of excess in him, which he cannot vomit. His immediate awareness of the contingency of factual existence, that is, the meaninglessness of the world shows that there is no central tenet, or Self in the role of creator of meaning.

In his association of no-Self with consciousness' nihilating process, Sartre focuses on the destructive tendency of consciousness. Take for instance, an earthquake slides a territory. The territory is exposed to change with the destructive effect of the earthquake. Sartre resembles destruction to questioning. Thanks to questioning, he argues, one can realize the possibility of no-Self. For example, when a clock breaks down, the first thing the mechanic does is to separate its parts. As he goes on to question deeper and deeper, he faces the possibility of nothingness beyond its function. He defines this possibility of non-being as fragility. He goes on to say that it is through man that fragility comes into world. For Sartre just like for Heidegger, a sudden break from everyday concern makes one closer to bare existence. For Sartre, this quest passes through destruction. In other words, when one starts to question, s/he approaches with a negative tendency. This means that consciousness is liable to negate the things: This clears it out that for Sartre; one oscillates between being and nothingness (23). For the materialization of this process of negation, one must disengage him from the world concern. Of significance here is Sartre's detachment from material world. He argues that only in this way man can achieve the absolute freedom.

A common criticism of Sartre, which this thesis has a similar concern, is that his early works were introspective, pessimistic, and destructive. The critics charge Sartre of encouraging people to detach from social commitments under the slogan of absolute freedom. A catholic critic, Mlle Mercier accused Sartre of ignoring the bright side of humanity and of forgetting the smile of a child. Moreover, he has been charged with his efforts to turn man into an isolated being. This in turn leads man to Self-destruction.

Another critic, Manser rightly observes Sartrean theory of nothingness as the reductionist aspect of his early philosophy. He sees the reason in Sartre's tendency to detach man from social commitments in order to prove his theory of nothingness (see Falzon, 111). From the social perspective, Sartre does not give any chance to man to compromise with the society. By stripping the world of meaning in this way, revealing man and the world in its brute reality as meaningless and contingent, Sartre throws man into nothingness which he thinks is the brute existence. For example, Roquentin's confrontation with the chestnut tree in Sartre's *Nausea* reduces his Self to nothingness.

> So I was in the park just now. The roots of the chestnut tree were sunk in the ground just under my bench…Then I had this vision. It left me breathless. Never, until these last few days, had I understood the meaning of "existence."…existence hides itself. It is there, around us, in us…I was thinking nothing, my head was empty, or there was just one word in my head, the word "to be". (126)

How did Roquentin come to realize that the pure existence is nothingness? It first started upon his discovery of the distinction between existence and essence when he grabs a stone on the seaside. An "odd feeling" suddenly overwhelms him, which is the immediate realization of the bare existence. He gradually realizes that all essences are futile. He understands that neither the outer world nor the inner world is related to existence. Then, behind his tendency to see Rollebon as his apparently convincing reasoning to make his existence meaningful, Roquentin realizes the authenticity of existence as nothingness. He becomes aware of the fact that he has deceived himself by seeing Rollebon as the mediator to hide the absurdity and detestability of his own existence. As a result, he finds only self-loathing and nothingness. He gradually detaches himself from every part of life. His efforts to find meaning in history, memories, diaries, or love become volatile in his confrontation with chestnut tree. Roquentin's detachment from all contingent elements of phenomenal world shows that Sartre puts too much emphasis on destructive side of the mind.

Further explorations on Sartre reveal that the concept of freedom is a salient element in his discussion of no-Self. Sartre argues that "man is free, man is freedom" (34). The Self does not come first. Man does not exist to become free. There is no distinction between "the way of Being and the way of Being free". In a way, man is

condemned to be free. Sartre explains this argument in his famous lecture given in 1946, *Existentialism and Humanism*:

> What is at the very heart and center of existentialism, is the absolute character of the free commitment… There is no difference between free being – being as self-committal, as existence choosing its essence – and absolute being. (47)

Thus, being free is the only basis of values for Sartre. In his literary work, *Nausea*, Sartre's mouthpiece, Roquentin realizes that freedom is existence. He feels that he is totally free. He is free to choose. He regards his total freedom and chooses to live in this regard. Therefore, Sartre rejects the possibility of any reference to any essence or transcendental Self before man's existence. Man firstly exists. Thus, freedom is boundless.

Man's awareness of his absolute freedom causes him to suffer anxiety. He has realized that absolute freedom bears full responsibility on his shoulders. It is the anxiety that is intensified by the awareness of total responsibility of one's actions. That anxiety terrifies him before any possible choice. Therefore, for Sartre, absolute freedom becomes a burden. At that moment, man escapes from this anxiety by hiding his freedom from himself. He takes shelter in what Sartre calls 'bad faith'. He defines bad faith as follows:

> If I am my anguish in order to flee it, that presupposes that I can decenter myself in relation to what I am, that I can be anguish in the form of "not- being it," that I can dispose of a nihilating power at the heart of anguish itself. This nihilating power nihilates anguish in so far as I flee it and nihilates itself in so far as I am anguish in order to flee it. This attitude is what we call bad faith. (83)

For Gordon, bad faith is defined as 'a lie to oneself' (286). This means that man hides the truth from himself. It is the attempt to flee from the anxiety before man's situation of total freedom. Man is what he is not since he is a lack and if he attempts to disguise his lack in prefigured roles in the society, he ends up in bad faith.

Sartre explains *Bad Faith*, with some examples: One example of *Bad Faith* Sartre gives is that of a waiter that makes his best effort to act in the way that a waiter can behave.

> [W]hat *are we* then if we have the constant obligation to make ourselves what *we are* if our mode of being is having the obligation to be what we are? Let us consider this

> waiter in the café…All his behavior seems to us a game…He is playing, he is amusing himself. But what is he playing? We need not watch long before we can explain it: he is playing at *being* a waiter in a café. There is nothing there to surprise us. (59)

For Sartre, the waiter's stagy behavior proves that he tries to role-play being a waiter. However, to role- play a waiter, the waiter, one way or another must be conscious that he is not actually a waiter. As Macann observes, he fools himself that he is a waiter (122).

In brief, Sartre defines bad faith as a refusal to authentic life. It is a lie to oneself. It is to hide freedom from oneself. It is a bundle of excuses to deny who one really is. When one realizes that there is nothing behind the veil of illusions, he either masks himself in bad faith or embrace nothingness in the path of destruction. Sartre claims, only the latter path is for the bold ones.

In a nutshell, Sartrean theory of nothingness is based on the selfless state of consciousness. Consciousness is emptied from all residues and it is total emptiness or nothingness. Sartre argues that the reality of nothingness is justified with the nihilating activity of consciousness. When the contents are removed from the consciousness, there lies nothingness. In the face of nothingness, man discovers his own freedom. At that moment, one feels anxiety and nausea before any possible choice since one feels the burden of responsibility on one's shoulders. One has a tendency not to take this responsibility and tries to flee into bad faith. One's flight into bad faith implies man's desire to seek out a meaningful life. Each attempt for Sartre is a failure to have stable and meaningful life since life for him is a futile passion. To Sartre, man's constant frustration in his pursuit of perfection leads him to total destruction (23). When the spell is broken, man's awareness that this struggle for Godlike perfection is pointless makes him resign from life-illusion and submits him to total destruction. In the following part, we will observe Deleuzean notion of rhizomic Self as an alternative Self-theory to see life not as fragile but endless possibilities.

2.4. Deleuzean notion of 'Rhizomic' Self

He don't plant 'tatos
Don't plant cotton
Them that plants them is soon forgotten
But Old Man River he just keeps rollin' along. (27)

As we have studied in the previous sections, all notions of the Self, mentioned till postmodernist time, have been insufficient in their approach to grasp the existence of multiplicity as socially normal but not a dissociative Self-disorder to be cured or destroyed. For this reason, the priority of this thesis is to explain an alternative self-theory, which is called 'rhizomic self' to enable one to see that there is not one dimensional path for truth in existential quest since existence is itself multiple dimensions just like the constitution of sub- atomic particles from the contingent and continuous clashes of quarks in the quantum vacuum. Deleuze says; "the Self is only a threshold, a door, a becoming between two multiplicities" (275). With this idea in mind, this section aims to provide a detailed analysis of the introduction chapter of the second volume entitled as "Introduction: Rhizome" which gives us necessary insight to what 'rhizomic Self' is and why it is crucial for modern man in his rite of passage. This analysis will in turn help us deal with how Bellow and Atwood's protagonists are unconsciously able to achieve such notion of the Self.

The notion of 'rhizomic Self' is a theory claimed by Gilles Deleuze based on his two-volume book, *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* co-authored by Felix Guittari. Volume 1 is *Anti Oedipus,* appeared in 1972 and volume 2 is *A Thousand Plateaus* in 1980. Deleuze met Guittari during the protests in the events of May 1968. Their unorthodox and anti-hierarchical sides push them to write this masterpiece book *Capital and Schizophrenia* together.

As the old man river implies in the epigraph to this section, change is the essence of the Self. The postmodern notions of the Self have stopped the lamentation over the loss of secure home and the fragmentation of the Self in desolation. Instead, they consider the Self in constant change in the flux of time and hence it cannot have a stable identity. Their primary focus is that the Self is constantly redefined and reshaped to suit the present needs of the time. There is no more being but becoming all the time. In this respect, Deleuzean notion of 'rhizomic' Self flourished as a need to keep up with the undercurrents of the time in the second half of the 20th century since the world is no

longer cosmos but a ‘chaosmos’ as Deleuze puts it. Therefore, this thesis argues that Deleuzean ‘rhizomic’ Self will be a fine alternative to cope with the Sartrean chaosmos that engulfs the Self with his theory of nothingness.

Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) has an ambivalent relationship to Sartre. In his early writings, he confesses Sartre’s influence on him. In 1964 just after Sartre’s rejection of the Nobel Prize, he praised Sartre in an essay *He was my Teacher* in which he said:

> In those days, who except Sartre knew how to say anything new? Who taught us new ways to think? As brilliant and profound as the work of Merleau-Ponty was, it was professorial and depended in many respects on Sartre's work. [...] The new themes, a particular new style, a new aggressive and polemical way of posing problems – these came from Sartre. (77)

However, in his later life, he wanted to prevent the publication of the essays he wrote on Sartre. To Dosse, in his biography of Deleuze, he disapproves Sartre’s thinking after he has written these essays and he wants to take a different path (119-120). Dosse thinks Deleuze’s interest on Sartre’s thinking as a youth passion. It is possibly true that the driving force for Deleuze that lets him take a different path from Sartre is his emphasis on the possibilities (rhizome) rather than a certain truth. To Deleuze, all events derive from singularities or sub-atomic particles. His claim is that a matter consists of singularities. This energetic facet of the matter enables the dynamic interplay of forces. The interplay of the singularities will arise different possibilities about what the matter will be. In a way one can claim that different possibilities might breed constantly changing truths or Selves. This point enables Deleuze to escape from Sartre’s nihilistic deductions and opens the way for him to project a different notion of the Self for the post modern world that is Deleuzean rhizomic notion of the Self.

Deleuze’s main criticism of the assumption about the all-knowing Self, around whom things are rationally coordinated, marks the discursive change in recent discussions about the Self. With ‘rhizomic’ notion of the Self, he attempts to displace the Self having been posited in the hierarchal and dualistic Western thought that might be blamed for the division of the world:

> There is no longer a tripartite division between a field of reality (the world) and a field of representation (the book) and a field of subjectivity (the author). Rather, an assemblage establishes connections between certain multiplicities drawn from these

> orders. (23)

Deleuze rightly criticizes the ones to insist on creating stable identities in an age when life becomes as Schrag calls in his work, *The Self After Postmodernity*, "episodic narratives" depending on the dynamic and fleeting interrelationships within the context-based moments. Deleuze notes that life makes sense not in the quest for a stable Self any longer but in the endless play of the situational masks. With this, one is able to keep up with the dynamism and the flux of the things. Deleuze uses the 'arborescent' and the 'rhizome', the terms to compare and contrast traditional understanding of the world based on the fixed, stable identities and one with multiple involvements in dynamic interrelationships.

The arborescent social system is a root-tree system that defines the hierarchal, mechanistic and dualistic structure in the social life. Within the root-tree network, the Self is canalized into the predetermined, fixed and rigid roles in the society. However, these permanent roles cause the Self to become fragile in the fast-moving time. In time, the Self is not able to meet the demands of the time and is annihilated in the nauseating 'chaosmos'. Deleuze argues that such system that constitute the predetermined Self in the arborescent order must be abandoned since the social roles in the post-Industrial Age have been so pluralized that one cannot identify oneself with fixed roles. Deleuze considers that dynamic interactions in the postmodern world necessitate a new notion of the Self to enable man to flow smoothly from one social role to another without being stuck in one of them. To Deleuze, there is no longer an identity but alterity. For the very reason, Deleuze comes up with the rhizomic Self, the essence of whom is not fixity, not stability but changes.

At this point, the question "what is rhizome" niggers one's mind. 'Rhizome' is a botanical term used by Deleuze to metaphorically describe any kind of fluid, horizontal, decentralized system that enables the Self to keep up with the complex network of relations in the postmodern world.

> Any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be. This is very different from the tree or root, which plots a point, fixes an order (28).

According to Deleuze, rhizome can be connected to anything. Rhizome diverges from root-tree system that founds a stable order. A rhizome may use innumerable

arrangements within context-specific moments. In other words, it may flow not in one direction, but in many directions. As most of the postmodernists did, his main focus is on language in this regard as it flows, establishes new connections, and opens new horizons.

Deleuze defends that Self-multiplicity should not be seen as the fragmentation of the Self. On the contrary, he thinks that it should be seen as a possibility to dispose of any unitary, dualistic and hierarchal relations. He attempts to explain this situation with the rhizomic relations between puppet strings:

> Puppet strings, as a rhizome or multiplicity, are tied not to the supposed will of an artist or puppeteer but to a multiplicity of nerve fibers, which form another puppet in other dimensions connected to the first: "Call the strings or rods that move the puppet the weave. It might be objected that its multiplicity resides in the person of the actor, who projects it into the text. (29)

Puppet strings as a rhizome or multiplicity are connected not to the subject who pulls the strings, but to another puppet within the situation-specific events.

To clarify rhizome's free-flowing relations, Deleuze uses a new term, 'nomad thought'. He attempts to explain how the monadic notion of the Self turns into nomadic one in the postmodern world. Deleuze uses Jorge Luiz Borges' well-known story, *The Garden of the Forking Paths* to show his ever-becoming Self. While the philosopher-the protagonist, Ts'ui Pên is writing his book, he confronts with many alternative paths. In contrast to the traditional characters that might choose one at the cost of others, he considers that each path is so interconnected to others that each of them should be perceived as a gate to others. Therefore, he decides all of them as the possible solutions. Deleuze argues that the paths no longer revolve around a central thought. Rather, there is no more a fixed, stable order that orbits around the unified notion of the world, God and the Self.

> "Nomad thought" does not immure itself in the edifice of an ordered interiority; it moves freely in an element of exteriority. It does not repose on identity; it rides difference. It does not respect the artificial division between the three domains of representation, subject, concept, and being; it replaces restrictive analogy with a conductivity that knows no bounds. (13)

As Rodowick suggests, the voyage just like the nomad thought becomes only a process that has no beginning or end but only bifurcations (99). Deleuze associates the

nomad thought with fluid borderlines. Any kind of fixed, stable order, or 'identity' cannot incarcerate it and hence flowing freely in a ceaseless flux state of things. It renders the rhizomic relations possible even within the endless discords and conflicts of the postmodern chaosmos. Deleuze asserts that the nomad space enables one to have a fluid identity that is able to evolve the Self within the dynamics of time. In the traditional society, the fragility of the Self lied in the fact that the Self had a rock-like identity that revolved around the unchangeable certainties. Therefore, the Self was exposed to the predetermined roles by the system itself. However, the Self flows freely within the multiplicity of the nomadic space rather than being trapped in any predetermined social roles. In this regard, to Deleuze, Self-multiplicity becomes a positive asset in the way that the Self involves in the Self-making process in accordance with the spatio-temporal events.

The question how the Self-making process should be pushes Deleuze to think about concepts like 'deterritorialization' and 'reterritorialization'. He attempts to clarify these terms exemplifying the rhizomic relation between two unrelated things like wasp and orchid. The wasp deterritorializes itself flying away from its beehive to collect pollen from the flowers. Deterritorialization of the wasp is under process till its interaction with the orchid. It casts off the 'I' as a knower in the path it is taking. On the other hand, the orchid deterritorializes itself by making an image of a wasp. The wasp reterritorializes on that image, and eventually the wasp merges with the orchid by taking part in the orchid's reproduction of the image. Then, The wasp reterritorializes the orchid by carrying its pollen to somewhere else. In its flight, it scatters some pollen away. This leads to the sprout of different lives on earth. Thus, they achieve rhizomic relation.

> A veritable becoming, a becoming-wasp of the orchid and a becoming-orchid of the wasp... Each of these becomings brings about the deterritorialization of one term and the reterritorialization of the other. (31)

The wasp and the orchid are not who they are anymore. They are in the process of becoming.

The implication here in the example is that interaction is inevitable. One can understand that there is no more unchanging Self but selves that change constantly in

the ceaseless interactions. The globalizing technologies such as media, Internet, smart phones and so on, exposes the postmodern man to the flux of changes and interactions in each step he makes. As a result of the complex network of relations, he has to involve in the constant making of the Self with regard to the changing conditions of the time.

Deleuze suggests that one may expand one's horizon through forming a rhizome since rhizome makes endless connections without a centre. He mentions that deterritorializiton is nothing to fear if he sees others as the gate to endless alternative paths. Deterritorialization does not mean abandoning one's values, traditions, ideas as Sartre defined, but opening to endless interconnections where they reterritorialize themselves as tied to the on going changes rather than defying the changes.

In brief, Deleuzean notion of the rhizomic Self is never a being but always a becoming. It can make new connections with anything in its own way. It is open to any kind of assemblage on the way from adaptation to sudden transformation and to get on the plane of consistency. It does not seek to reintegrate the fragmented Self into a permanent structure. Instead, it celebrates the fragmentation. Ever-changing form of the rhizomic Self within this multiplicity sees life as a gate to new possibilities. Unlike Sartrean reductive notion of the Self that first nauseates the Self and then destroys it without leaving any meaningful pillar to lean against, Deleuzean Self has a fluid, nomadic, mobile structure that can be deconstructed and reconstructed depending on the changing dynamics of the time so that man is able to sustain in evolutionary life.

2.5. Conclusion

This part presented the historical interpretations of the Self from Medieval period to the postmodern period in order to make our discussion of Sartrean no-Self and Deleuzean rhizomic Self more contextual and meaningful. This part also helped us realize the departure point that distincts Deleuze from Sartre in terms of their notions of the Self. Sartre's sees others in the society as a threat. He regards "others is hell". However, Deleuze sees others a positive asset in the way that the Self might be nomadic and mobile in one's relation with others within the dynamics of time. It is the moment when new connections are developed and are linked to new dimensions. Taking this departure point for granted, this part will be a lighthouse for the discussion of next two chapters since we will trace the shift in the notions of the Self from modernism to post

modernism in general, from Sartre to Deleuze in particular by centering on the social historical, and intellectual lives of the protagonists in two modernist novels: Samuel Beckett's *Murphy*, Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* and two post modernist novels: Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing* and Saul Bellow's *Herzog*.

CHAPTER III

SARTREAN 'NO-SELF' IN SADEGH HEDAYAT'S *THE BLIND OWL* AND SAMUEL BECKETT'S *MURPHY*

In Chapter II, I have made a theoretical study of the Self that has enabled me to trace the transformation of the Self from medieval to postmodern period with a main focus on Sartrean and Deleuzean notions of the Self. This chapter will be an attempt to trace Sartrean notion of no-Self in the existential voyages of the protagonists in the selected modernist fictions: Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* and Beckett's *Murphy*. It aims to display firstly the protagonists' detachment from the nauseating social life, and then, to depict their self-alienated worlds and lastly, their gradual destruction in the heroes' unconscious tracing of Sartrean path. In order to show how the characters are drifted into the reductive path of Self-destruction amidst the changing socio-cultural and ideological dynamics of the relevant time, it is important to contextualize the novels. Thus, before the critical tracing of no-Self notion in the characters' existential voyages, this chapter first provides a brief introduction to the writers, and the novels with an insight into the socio-historical transformations that cause the existential Self-crisis of the protagonists as reflected in the novels. Lastly, this chapter provides an interpretation of the results of the analyses of the novels selected in light of Sartrean notion of no-Self.

3.1. Sartrean notion of No-Self in Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl*

3.1.1. An Introduction

In post-constitutional era of Iran, there occurred swift and stunning changes in socio-political dynamics that displaced Iranian man from the supremacy of the traditional, moral and social conducts of the old order.

As Katouzian, an important scholar in Iranian studies, notes, the revolution (1905-11) that ignited the end of Qajar dynasty (1785-1925) signaled modern era in Iran (1). It enabled the establishment of the Parliament in Iran, which resulted in an unprecedented freedom that presented new opportunities and boundless possibilities for the making of new Iranian Self (1). In the course of the revolution, particularly some literary intellectuals made different Self-making attempts that aimed to reconstruct the already fragmented Self-image around different forms of social, political tenets such as romantic nationalism, Leftism or fundamentalism. Through this quest, they found new forms of expression. They created a literary platform where people could discuss social and modern issues. Prose fiction, satire, and drama gained importance. As Katouizan also argues, newspapers and journals played an important role to let the ordinary man take part in the social, political discussions of the day (5). However, such freedom caused the angst of the displaced Iranian man. They were like fish out of water. In a sudden, they turned from the passive recipient to the active one in building of the Self and the nation.

Another important event that nauseated Iranian Self during this period was the rise of Reza Shah's dictatorship. The dictatorial regime of Reza Shah began with a coup in 1921 firstly welcomed by the intellectuals of the time since it was believed to pave the way for modernism and nationalism. However, later, most of them realized that Reza Shah was a power drunk dictator who led the country into another form of suppression of human rights and freedom of speech (5). Hence they split with him. His growing dictatorship led to the disillusionment of the hopes and dreams of the Constitutional period as mentioned earlier. To some critics, Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* is regarded as an elegy on the end of the ideals cherished by the Constitutional Revolution. In brief, these sudden transformations in the transition period of Iran nauseated the Iranian Self and led to its fragmentation and breakdown.

There flourished many literary intellectuals and their works to hold light to the angst of the Iranian man in the transitional period of Iran, but none surpassed Hedayat and his *Blind Owl*. As Jalal Al-e Ahmad, another significant critic and a friend of Hedayat, argues, being a child of Iran's Constitutional period, an adult of the Reza Shah dynasty (1925-41), Hedayat fully experienced, expressed and embodied the aforementioned Self-crisis in his works, particularly in *The Blind Owl* (1936) (23). In

his attempt to build a new Self, Hedayat opened up a can of worms that started to nibble his own Self away. This led to his unbearable existential suffering and the existential angst of death in life. In this part, we will attempt to see how Hedayat unconsciously ended up in Sartrean 'no-Self' in his quest that he set out for building a new Self by analyzing his biographical context and his masterpiece, *The Blind Owl*.

3.1.2 The Biographical Context of Sadegh Hedayat

> Man is lonely and helpless. He lives in a hostile world, which is not his [true or natural] home He cannot have genuine ties with, or be committed to, anyone. He himself knows this too, because you can read it off his face. He tries to hide it, and pretend that he fits [in this world]. But he gets caught out, because he himself knows that he is superfluous. (qtd. in Katouzian, 232)

Sadegh Hedayat (1903-1951) is posthumously regarded as a towering figure over modern Persian prose fiction. As a highly intellectual man who lived in the transitional period of Iran from the Constitutional revolution to the abdication of Reza Shah (1905-41), none but Hedayat could well put the Self-crisis of people in the nauseating air of Iran. To Katouzian, he is the father of modernism in Iran with the modernist and surrealist techniques that he used in his works (1).

Sadegh Hedayat had a controversial life in most turbulent times of Iran and interested many readers to delve into his life to be able to see the association of his works and ideas better.

Sadegh Hedayat descended from a well-to-do family. Most of his relatives were influential people in politics and literature. Little information was known about the early life of Hedayat. He got educated both in Persian and French in the well-known school, Ecole St Louise (1919-1925). In 1926, Hedayat carried on his education in Europe. He went there to study civil engineering. However, as it is understood from his letters, he tended to study French literature rather than engineering. Hedayat stayed in Europe about four or five years. As Katouzian has found out from his letters, Hedayat seemed unhappy in Europe but he could not go back to Tehran since he found it embarrassing. In his letter of May 1929, he wrote: "What am I supposed to do? There is nothing else I can do, and frankly I'm fed up (qtd. in Katouzian, 34)." His unhappiness in Europe might have resulted from not overcoming the culture shock. His cultural identity was always already broken. His death obsession began to take hold of him during these

times (Katouzian, 33-34). He wrote his essay on death in Belgium in 1926. In this essay, as we will see in *the Blind Owl* as well, he saw death as the remedy to his nibbling thoughts: He wrote:

> Oh death, you lessen the sadness and sorrow of life and take his heavy burden off our shoulders. You put an end to the misery of the wandering, ill-fated and unhappy men. You are the antidote for grief and despair… You are not like life- bitter and fierce. You don't drag man to aberration and depravity and throw him to a horrible whirlpool. You are a shining light but they take you for darkness… you are a cure for sad hearts. (1)

From Taqi Razavi's memories of Hedayat, we learn that in 1928, not long time after his travel to Paris, Hedayat attempted suicide by throwing himself from the bridge. He got off it cheaply. To Katouzian, this hints that Hedayat's pessimistic moodiness dated back earlier in his life (37).

In 1930, he eventually decided to return to Tehran. He became a member of a group called the Rab'eh or Group of Four. The other members of the group were Motjaba Minovi, Bozorg Alavi and Mas'ud Farzad, famous for their interest in Iranian literary and cultural renaissance. According to Katouzian, they were highly critical of the literary tradition, which was seemingly heralding of modernity and Arianism under the dictatorial regime of Reza Shah (52-53).

Under the rising dictatorship of Reza Shah rule, too much censor on words and speech made Hedayat deeply sick though not the main cause of his sufferings. He went to Bombay in 1936 not only staying away from the suppression but also allegedly publishing his novel, *the Blind Owl*. There, in India, he learnt the Pahlavi language, the ancient language of Iran. Also, as Bashiri rightly alleges, he was interested in Buddhism though Katouzian does not appreciate much about this idea. Katouzian sees Hedayat's travel to India as an accidental trip (59). He unwillingly went back to Tehran in 1937 and became an editor of *The Music Magazine*. Soon enough, Iran was invaded by the Allies power followed by the abdication of Reza Shah in 1941. Everyone was jubilant including Hedayat. The arbitrary rule of Reza Shah was over and that gave people hope for the building of democracy and freedom. Tudeh (people's) party, a Marxist, Soviet-baked organization, led by Hedayat's friends, two of whom were Bozorg Alavi, Ehsan Tabari was established. As Katouzian has noted, Hedayat did not take part in the party issues. During this period, Hedayat got a position in the editorial board of modern

literary periodical, *Sokhan (Speech)* (4). Some of his famous literary translations such as *Maskh* (Kafka's *Metamorphosis*), *Goruh-e Mahkumin* (The Penal Colony), and Jean Paul Sartre's story *The Wall* were published in this magazine. By the way, as Katouzian also notes, although Hedayat was not a member of the Tudeh party, his friend, Bozorg Alavi's detainment after the failure of Tudeh party in the political arena greatly frightened him (61). The fear of the police began to haunt Hedayat. His sense of guilt was starkly visible in his work, *The Blind Owl*,

> Just then the voices of a band of drunken policemen rose loud from the street. As they marched by they were joking obscenely among themselves. Then they began to sing in chorus… In terror I shrank back from the window. Their voices resounded strangely through the night air, gradually growing fainter and fainter. No, they were not coming for me, they did not know.... (91)

After all these developments in Iran, Hedayat was deeply frustrated. His depressions intensified and worsened. He hated the false lives people had around him. He called them 'rabble', a term popular with modernists, in many of his works. He cursed on his country and the people around him with these lines in one of his letters: "What an accursed, base and rotten country we've got, and what malevolent and infernal people it has! (qtd in Katouzian, 5)" In another letter, he wrote "I only wonder what a shameless son-of-a-whore I must have been to be able to carry my own carcass in this son-of-a whore set up till this moment" (qtd. in Katouzian, 5). He felt condemned. He felt shattered into pieces. This was not the life he expected. His hatred, his disgust, his anger and the meaningless life around first nauseated him and then alienated him from others. He became aware that "a frightful chasm lies between others and him" (Hedayat, 2). In 1951, His growing anxiety led to his suicide in a hotel room, in Paris, turning on the gas cooker (Katouzian, 243).

During his lifetime, Hedayat as a prolific writer produced various works ranging from political, satirical works to psychological and existential ones. According to Katouzian, his literary works can be categorized into four branches: Psycho-fiction (*Zendeh be Goor* (*Buried Alive*) (1930), *Buf-e Kur (The Blind Owl),* In *Mardi ke Nafsash ra Kosht.* (*The Man Who Killed His Self)* (1932 *Tarik Khaneh* (*Dark Room*) (1940)…)-pure fiction *Mordeh-khor-ha* (*The Ghouls…)*-satirical works (*Hajji Aqa, Vagh Vagh Sahab (Mr. Bow Wow)…*) and romantic nationalist works (Parvin dokhtar-e Sasan (*Parwin the Sasanian Girl), Roba-iyat-e Khayyam (The Melodies of*

Khayyam)…(Katouzian, 65) Psycho-fiction contains Hedayat's most acclaimed fictions including his masterpiece, *Buf-e Kur* (*The Blind Owl*). This branch, as we will see while studying *The Blind Owl*, generally reflects Hedayat's stance to the ontological problems of the human existence. Pure fiction presents the depiction of the society. His satirical works generally feature his hate and contempt for the political figures in the society. And lastly, his romantic-nationalist works mirror his longing for his country in pre-Arab Conquest. However wrong it might be to draw such distinct boundaries among his works, Katouzian's categorization might be a good guide to the reader.

Apart from this wide range of works that is huge and various enough to be classified, Hedayat was also interested in translations. He translated some works of the western literary figures of the time such as Kafka and Sartre. To Rahimieh and other critics, Hedayat's translations can be regarded as the base of his existentialist ideas (124-125). In *Peyam-e Kafka* (*The Message of Kafka*), Hedayat himself confesses that he used his translations to enter into the writer's skull. What Hedayat has found out there, "a world where there is no room for God- a world of nothingness" (qtd in Jahanbegloo, 140). In this respect, his translations bear critical significance in shaping Hedayat's existential stance in many of his works, including his masterpiece, *The Blind Owl*.

3.1.3 Eastern and Western Influence on Hedayat's *The Blind Owl*

There is more than one source that is thought to have contributed to Hedayat's eclectic mind. His fictions under the psycho-fiction category, particularly his masterpiece, *The Blind Owl* are claimed to have carried the marks of these sources though not directly. Hedayat's travels to Europe, India and his zealous interest in reading might have been the reasons behind his untiring quest for the Self as well as for his existential problems in general. To one's surprise and interest, the common point an existential reader like Hedayat might have inferred from all these readings was the notion of death and Self-illusion. His reading of Khayyamic and Buddhist philosophies in the East, and his familiarity with the existential literature in the West (Kafka, Rilke, Sartre, Poe…) gave him the occasion to deepen his knowledge both of techniques and themes. As he deepened his knowledge, so did his Self-crisis.

As Bogle mentioned in his article, Khayyam may have influenced Hedayat

particularly in two ways: his anti-Islamic views and his discussion of the transient and accidental nature of existence (89). Like Khayyam, Hedayat had anti-Islamic views. Hedayat's critique of the practices of the fellow men and the religious leaders of his time made him disgusted over all philosophy of Islam.

> The whole philosophy of Islam is founded on filth. If they take the lower organs away from it, Islam will collapse and will cease to have any further meaning and relevance (qtd. in Katouzian, 215).

Many of his works included allusions to his critique of Islam in one way or another. His satire, "Islamic mission to European cities" starkly put forth his ideas about religion. In Hedayat's *Melodies of Khayyam (1934),* one can clearly feel that Hedayat showed sympathy for Khayyam's rejection of God, and his hate of his fellow people. According to Tavakoli-Targhi, Hedayat accused Arabs of robbing Iran's ancient splendor (107). Hedayat called the Arabs as 'highway robbers'. Moreover, for Hedayat, Khayyam saw the world based upon contingent existence. He also alleged there is no after life or redemption. To Khayyam, the Self was the composite of atomic particles. When one dies, the Self is disentangled into atomic particles. According to Katouzian's claim, Hedayat possibly purged of his own ideas rather than Khayyam's (83): "Beyond this earth… there is no reward or punishment. Bygones and becomings make up two states of nothingness…" (qtd in Katouzian, 83). Also, in this work, Hedayat explained Khayyam's ideas about death and the similarity between Khayyam's death wish and Buddha's nirvana. With Khayyam's description, death is a shadow that "laughs at us with a tremble-inducing laugh (qtd. in Bogle, 94)". It is inescapable fact of life. As one can see later in *The Blind Owl*, death is depicted as the shadow lying on the wall. In the novel, Hedayat embodied death with its hysteric laugh into many characters: Hearse driver, uncle, father-in-law, and the odds-and-ends seller… All these characters symbolize the omnipresent shadow of death upon the narrator.

In addition to Khayyam's philosophy, Bashiri in his "Personal Notes", talks about the influence of Buddhist tradition on Hedayat's fictions, particularly on *the Blind Owl*. For him, Hedayat saw the Self an illusion to be broken in order to find the path to Buddhist salvation. However, the point that Bashiri missed out was Hedayat's rejection of any spiritual realm. It is starkly visible in his anti-religious cry. Though Khayyam's materialism contradicted with Buddhist spiritual salvation, what Hedayat found in both

of their teachings was the transience and impermanence of the things. Death is the ultimate reality that befalls upon everything. As it was important to Khayyam's and Buddhist tradition, death was the ultimate reality that destroys all life-illusions. Hedayat saw it as the gate to freedom. It was the key to liberation from the material prison.

To many critics, Hedayat was indebted as much to Western literature as to Eastern literature. During his travels in Europe, and his study of French literature, he possibly came across with the important figures of Western literature such as the works of Rilke, Kafka, Poe, and Sartre… To some critics, Hedayat was influenced with their ideas and styles. However it does not mean that Hedayat just imitated their works. In Hedayat's *Peyam-e Kafka* (*Message of Kafka)*, one can learn that Hedayat was impressed by Kafka's depiction of the characters from everyday life and by the echoes of futility surrounding his works. Hedayat experienced some kind of similar melancholy, fragility, repression, and depression that Kafka's characters did in his works. He was also thought to be familiar with Poe's pessimistic works. As Beard claims in his work *Hedayat's Blind Owl as a Western Novel*, Hedayat's use of repetition, his suspension of high tension in his psycho-fictions, his distinct depiction of the protagonists' obsessive behaviors hint the affinity with Poe's writing style in his stories (119). As this thesis argues, much of the critical reception of Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* regarded that Sartre might have been one of the western sources of Hedayat's *Blind Owl*. As Beard notes, Hedayat and Sartre might have nurtured from the same book, Rilke's notebooks of *Malte Laurids Briggs (1910)* in their works, *the Blind Owl (1936) and Nausea (1938)* (110). He also states, both of them seemed to be influenced by Rilke's views on death (111). Sartre's praise of Rilke's depiction of death scenes in his *Being and Nothingness (1943)* saying "all individual life has been a preparation for this end (652)" is such as to prove this argument. Likewise, Hedayat was impressed by Rilke's detailed account of death. To some critics, some scenes from *The Blind Owl* might have been copied from Rilke's works. The common point for both Sartre and Hedayat had from Rilke was that death was the final path to destroy the Self-illusion and to see the authentic existence beyond consciousness. In other words, they both see death as the gate to bring consciousness to the limits of no-Self.

Moreover, Another critic that covertly associated Hedayat's *Blind Owl* with French existentialism and the "decadent and defeatist ways of thinking" of Albert

Camus and Jean-Paul Sartre, was Ehsan Tabari, one of the intellectuals of Tudeh party. The keynote speech of Ehsan Tabari, a Marxist critic, at the First Congress of Iranian Writers in 1946 is as follows:

> …Sartre says that man is a bundle of useless emotions, and while consciousness is constantly trying to reconstruct itself, the structure keeps falling down all the time. There is no reality but nothingness, and life is unearned and irrelevant. In the works of Sadegh Hedayat, this contradiction is evident. (qtd. in Katouzian, 170)

It is known that Hedayat was familiar with Sartre and his works. Hedayat translated Sartre's *The Wall* in 1945 (Katouzian, 142). Considering Sartre's *Nausea* was written 2 years after Hedayat's *Blind Owl*, it is wrong to claim Sartre's *Nausea* could be one of the main sources to his masterpiece novel, *The Blind Owl*. However, the affinity between their ideas in their works though indirectly took us to the same result: Sartre's no-Self theory. This theory was first uttered in Sartre's *The Transcendence of the Ego* (1934). No one is certain of Hedayat's familiarity with this article. But one thing is certain that Hedayat's existential questioning in his own life and in his works aligned him with Sartrean existentialism.

All these aforementioned sources that were thought to be the background of Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* have two things in focus for Hedayat. All clues we gathered from these sources point to the same result: Hedayat's obsession with Self-illusion and death as the gate to freedom. These themes became the dominant subjects that spread across Hedayat's psycho-fictions. As well as eastern and western influence on his works, one may find it interesting to see the parallels and the allusions among his works in this category to his *Blind Owl* in terms of Hedayat's existential preoccupation with death and Self-illusion. In his early story, *Zendeh be Goor* (*Buried Alive*) (1930) his obsessively watching himself in the mirror and his constant talk about his death wish remind us of what the narrator did in *the Blind Owl*. In *Mardi ke Nafsash ra Kosht.* (*The Man Who Killed His Self)* (1932), one may find the protagonist, Mirza Hosein Ali's voyage to destroy his Self in the path to Sufi light. However, his awareness of the misdeeds of his schoolmaster led to his self-disillusionment and committing suicide. On the other hand, the narrator of *The Blind Owl* is disgusted of the false actions of the seemingly Islamic people like the odds and ends man or the butcher across his window. In Hedayat's another story, *Arusak-e Posht-e Pardeh* (*Puppet Behind the Curtain*) (1933), the similarity in the description of the manikin to the ethereal girl in *The Blind*

Owl is quite remarkable. Also, both works resemble to each other in terms of the structural design. In one of his late stories, *Tarik-Khaneh* (*Dark Room*) (1940), discovering that the recluse's isolation and alienation from the world around into his womb like home and his anger at the false lives outside resemble the narrator's actions in *the Blind Owl* might be striking. In brief, Hedayat's obsessive, and traumatic views on death and the Self-illusion though under different masks are quite clear in his works in the psycho-fiction category, particularly in *the Blind Owl*.

3.1.4. The Summary of *the Blind Owl*

No one definitely judges if one says Hedayat's *the Blind Owl* was regarded as his best-known work, the reputation of which became worldwide. Hillman, a well-known scholar of Persian fictions hailed the novel as "the most important literary document of the century in Iran (Hillman, 2). Even though the book was written during the dictatorial period of Reza Shah's rule (1925-1941), the publication of the book was suspended after the abdication of the Shah. When Hedayat was in Bombay, India in 1937, He sent the limited copies of the book to his closest friends. On the book was written: "Not for sale or publication in Iran (qtd in Kamshad, 24)."

The critical reception of *The Blind Owl* was instantaneous and quite contradictory. As Hillman mentions, some praised its originality as the purest reflection of the writer's imagination and some labeled it as pessimistic tradition of the works of European writers such as Kafka, Dostoyevsky, and Sartre... (Hillman, 2) Others interpreted it as a critical exposition of the social atmosphere caused by the dictatorial repression. Though undeniably true about the novel, the book goes beyond what has been said. As it will be explained later in this chapter, the book reflects the writer's existential questioning of the Self that nibbles his mind away. However, what the critics all have one thing in common is that the impact of the novel on modern Iranian prose fiction remains unchallenged.

The novel is structured into two parts. They are loosely connected to each other with few passages at the ends of Part I and Part II. Each part talks about the psychic and material experiences of a psychologically obsessive narrator in two different times, places and roles.

In part I, the narrator as a pen-case painter lives in a small room with a closet at the outskirt of a ruined city. He obsessively paints the same scene on the pen-cases: A woman with sublime beauty is offering a lotus flower to an old man in Indian clothes sitting and biting his index finger under a cypress tree on the other side of the river. He gives his works to his uncle to sell. On 13th day of Nowruz , his uncle unexpectedly comes to his visit. To offer his uncle something to drink, he remembers having a bottle of wine left to him by his mother. When he reaches his hand to get the bottle, he sees a crack on the wall. On looking through the hole, he is amazed to see the same scene he has ever painted on the pen-cases. When he returns, his uncle is not there. He starts searching every corner of the city, but it is of no use. He cannot find her. He understands that the girl does not belong to this world. One day, when he returns from another hopeless adventure to find her, to his surprise, the girl stands on the doorstep of his house. She enters the room and lies on his bed. When he pours a glass of the inherited wine into her throat, he realizes that she is dead. With a glimmer of hope, he attempts to resuscitate her but he fails. In order to immortalize her beautiful eyes, he draws her. He decides to cut the girl into pieces lest the rabble should set their eyes on her. Then he puts her pieces into a suitcase. Thanks to an old hunchbacked hearse driver, he buries it in a graveyard near the old city of Rey. The hearse driver gives him a vase on their way back to home. When he returns home, to his amazement, he finds the same illustrations he has ever painted on the vase the hearse driver gave to him. It is important to note that he does not see any hole or crack on the wall when he puts the bottle of wine back. Before part I comes to an end, upon thinking the illustrations on the vase, he gets the idea that another wretched painter in the past might have had the same sufferings. Then he falls asleep because of smoking opium.

In part II, he travels back in time. He wakes up in the same room. But this time, his house is located in the middle of a crowded city. He appears as a writer rather than a painter. He is raised by her aunt and is married to her daughter, the harlot, just because she kissed him once in public. She is an unfaithful lady. After their marriage, she rejects to sleep with him. But she sleeps with other men. His house has two windows. One has a Street view. The other one has a backyard view. Across the window looking to the street, there is a butcher's shop and an old odds-and-ends man who sells petty things except for a covered vase and a knife. The narrator hears him reading the Koran with his

yellowish, rusty teeth. All these people sleep with his wife. His disgust of the people around intensifies his Self-alienation. It is noteworthy that these characters are the mirror images of the ones in Part I. As time passes by, his health is getting worse. He suffers from tuberculosis. He knows his death is near. He is obsessed with the idea that he is wretched creature whose existence is totally unnecessary. One day, he disguises himself as the odds-and-ends man to sleep with his wife. In a frenzy moment, he stabs her to death. He immediately goes to his room. When he looks at the mirror, he has become the odds-and-ends seller. In the end, he returns from journey to the present moment. He regains consciousness. He sees the red pieces of charcoal turned into cold ash. The first thing he searches for is the vase. He cannot find it. He sees the old hunchbacked man stealing and running away with it.

3.1.5. Sartrean 'no-Self' in *the Blind Owl*

As we said earlier, *The Blind Owl* can be read as Hedayat's existential glimpse into the chaos of the Self from which he had suffered all his life. Though not directly influenced by Sartre, it is interesting to note that the narrator's nauseating experience with the existential anguish and his embracing of death as the gate to freedom, bear some affinities with Sartrean existential concerns. In this part, using Sartrean terminology such concepts like *bad faith, no-Self*… I will attempt to trace how the narrator in *the Blind Owl* ends up in Sartrean nothingness in his quest in which he sets out to get to know his Self. I will try to show how Hedayat like Sartre grasped the Self as the illusion to be broken and death as the gate to the absolute freedom in nothingness in *the Blind Owl*.

Starting the novel with a shocking line with a third person speaker, "There are sores which slowly erode the mind like a kind of canker" (1), Hedayat attempts to highlight the universality of the existential crisis of the Self he has personally experienced. From page 2 on, the reader sees the narrator's move from objective to subjective stance:

> I propose to deal with only one case of this disease. It concerned me personally and it so shattered my entire being that I shall never be able to drive the thought of it out of my mind (2).

From the universality of the problem, Hedayat pins down it to the personal stance voicing his existential anguish that nibbles his mind. The narrator-writer here defines it as a disease with no cure as most modernist notions of the Self did. He confesses that he has attempted many times to escape from this anguish through opium or some other drugs. This confession also gives a hint to the reader that the narrator-writer has been drawn into an existential vortex with no exit. He feels stuck in purgatory. He feels uprooted from the material existence that the people surrounding him deeply indulge in. As he expresses, the nauseating situation for him is like a poisonous wine: "The evil impression [of the disease]…poisoned my life… I said poisoned" (2). Whoever drinks it, he argues, his permanent Self is shattered into pieces.

Similar to Hedayat's own resolution to end his sufferings, the narrator-writer believes that the inevitable path to end this unbearable existential agony is death. As Sartre argues in *No Exit*, "I think of death only with tranquility, as an end. I refuse to let death hamper life. Death must enter life only to define it (Act I, Scene, 5)", the narrator feels that he is a being onto death. Therefore he clears his intention from the very first lines. His words reveal how he desires to know the authentic existence of his Self before he dies.

Hedayat of *the Blind Owl* goes further to vomit his hatred for the people around him into lines. As Sartre's Roquentin asserts that his situation cannot be grasped within any rationalist boundaries, he claims no human being who does not experience it can comprehend such mental state he is involved in. He admits that there is a gap between him and the people around. He calls them rabble throughout the novel.

> In the course of my life I have discovered that a fearful abyss lies between me and other people and have realized that my best course is to remain silent and keep my thoughts to myself for as long as I can. (7)

His past relations with the rabble made him paranoiac about their untrustworthy nature. His hatred and disgust towards them has silenced and alienated him. In his Self-alienated world, he feels the urgent necessity to put his vomiting thoughts into lines. Therefore, he regards that the only addressee he can find as a reader is his shadow that lies on the wall in the light of the lamp. There are different readings of the shadow on the wall. Some say it as the distorted reflection of Hedayat himself in the face of new Iran. Some attribute it to the shadowy existence that lies on Plato's cave's wall. In fact,

both arguments can be read as paraphrases to each other. The base of their arguments was the narrator's realization: "The old odds-and-ends man, the butcher, Nanny and the bitch, my wife, were all my shadows, shadows in the midst of which I was prisoned" (123). However rightly they associate the shadow with the transient images, their half-quotation impedes them from seeing the ultimate image of the shadow as an owl. The shadow will change into "exactly like an owl" (123), which symbolizes the ominous death as Ghanoonparvar asserts in his article "Buf-e Kur as a Title" (72). Therefore, I will dwell in neither interpretation. To my reading, his shadow on the wall, the only addressee is the reflection of the impending death since no one but death is the perfect listener with his insatiable appetite:

> If I nave now made up my mind to write it is only in order to reveal myself to my shadow, that shadow which at this moment is stretched across the wall in the attitude of one devouring with insatiable appetite each word I write. (7)

As well as the problem of addressee that echoes the narrator's solitude and alienation from the society, another problem that complicates the readers of *the Blind Owl* and has ignited the wick of discussion among scholars is its structural design. As mentioned earlier, the novel has a bipartite structure. Some scholars like Bashiri and Khamshad argue that the novel lacks consistency between these two parts. On the other hand, other scholars like Alishan and Katouzian side with the coherence between the two parts. Khamshad sees the parts overlapping each other. The narrator's dream world and his real world cross with each other depending on the narrator's conscious and unconscious states of mind (17). Bashiri interprets both parts as the narrator's buddhistic voyage in the cyclical existence. Both Khamshad and Bashiri are in agreement about the reversal of the parts so that the reader is able to understand easily. Alishan bases his argument on Freudian reading of the novel. He associates the interconnection of both parts with the narrator's conscious and subconscious states of mind (Simidchieva, 24). To Katouzian, the parts are historically related to each other. He sees Part I as the present day of Iran and Part II as the golden age of Iran. He argues the narrator travels back in time through some linkages at the end of part I and at the end of Part II (114-15).

This thesis will digress from these modernist trends in seeing the structural design. Surely, the novel has integrity in itself, but not in the eye of a rational reader. In

other words, the reason for my divergence from these modernist trends can be shown as the incoherence in their argument of the parts to Hedayat's clear intention that he well put in the very first pages: his desire to get to know his Self. Here, it should be noted that the reader comes face to face with a narrator whose mind is deeply in fragments. It is apparent that any rational interpretation with logical time sequence will let the readers fall into the already trodden pitfalls. As a reader, one should pay attention to Khamshad's advice: "The critic of *Buf-e Kur* is like a surgeon who becomes affected by the anesthetic every time he starts to operate" (16). One needs to have not rational but blurry mind devoid of time and place in order to understand his clear message. Therefore, It might be wrong to analyze the parts of the novel as one can analyze a historical document. In other words, following the exact, rational chronological order of time and place in such an irrational context based fiction might be misleading for the reader. Similar to Al-e Ahmad's argument that rightly alleges, "the novel is skeptical about the existence itself" (32), as a reader and critic of the novel who creeps into the obscure mind of the existentially nauseated narrator, central to my interpretation of the compositional structure of the novel will be the existential stance that will best serve Hedayat's intention.

What is also noteworthy about the existential stance of the novel is that Hedayat's depiction of the Self-crisis the narrator has experienced in different time and settings in both parts helps the reader regard it as the perennial problem of humanity. To support this argument, it can be exemplified that towards the end of Part I, the narrator's discovery of the same illustrations he has ever painted on the vase lets him think the possible existence of another man just like him:

> I realized that I had an ancient partner in sorrow. Was not that ancient painter who, hundreds, perhaps thousands, of years ago, had decorated the surface of this jar my partner in sorrow? ...Until now I had regarded myself as the most ill-starred of created beings. Now I understood…there had been one, an unlucky painter, an accursed painter, perhaps an unsuccessful decorator o f pen-case covers, who had been a man like me, exactly like me. (35)

The narrator realizes that the existential nausea he agonizingly feels is not peculiar to him. Regardless of time and place, there have been people in the same situation as he is. In the following lines, one may find out that rational time and setting bear no significance but only existence for the narrator.

> I do not know where I am at this moment, whether this patch of sky above my head and these few spans of ground on which I am sitting belong to Nishapur or to Balkh or to Benares. I feel sure of nothing in the world (42).

The narrator's existential attitude here bases our argument in a way. He feels like a walking dead body that is imprisoned in timeless moments. He emphasizes the fact that time and space have no meaning for him but only the riddle of existence that is the question for all mankind.

Considering the bipartite structure of the book from the existential perspective, we might glimpse into Hedayat's deliberate design that would pave the way for the narrator's spiritually and materially existential quests for the Self. Therefore, my existential stance will have two-fold objective. Firstly, it aims to help the reader see the narrator's leap into illusory worlds (bad faith) transcending beyond time and space through the narrator's (also Hedayat's) opium addiction. Secondly, it also enables the reader to see how the narrator ends up in Sartrean nothingness upon his awareness of the spiritual and material Selves as illusions to be destroyed.

Central to both illusory worlds Hedayat designed are two women: the ethereal woman in Part I, the harlot in Part II. With these women, Hedayat attempts to embody the Self in heavenly form and material body. It is worthwhile to mention that in his short story, *Soratakha* (*Masks*) (1932), Hedayat also portrays the woman as the embodiment of the Self with these lines: "The woman is the ultimate image of our Self, she is no more than an illusion far from reality" (qtd. in Katouzian, 87). His point of view on the woman as the embodiment of the Self is visible in *The Blind Owl* as well.

Another crucial thing for my discussion is the painting. In this painting, there is an old man sitting under a cypress tree and a girl holding a flower and a stream flowing between them. This painting is important since it is everywhere in the novel. It is depicted on the pen-cases, on the vase, on the curtain… Even the characters in the novel are exactly the same just like the ones in the scene he has ever painted. The narrator is unaware of why he always paints the same scene. The repetitions of the same scene throughout the novel hint at its symbolical value as well as the narrator's psychological and existential trauma. That arouses curiosity in the readers. With this puzzle like painting, we understand that Hedayat wants to make readers active in reading process like detectives who search for clues. The scene bears the symbolical message Hedayat

wants to give to the reader. It can be interpreted as the gap between his Self and the rabble. In other words, it can symbolize the unattainable love either spiritual or material. My interpretation is that the scene tells about the existential paradox between illusion (creation) and death (destruction) as the antithetical forces in one's mind. This paradoxical relation is key to see the essence of life. As Bogle finds out in his article on Hedayat and Khayyam, there is an association between the old man's grating laugh with the laugh of death in Khayyam's lines (61). It is possible to say the old man- the hearse driver in Part I and the old odds-and-ends man and the butcher in Part II are the symbolical reflections of death. The ethereal woman in part I, and the harlot in part II might be interpreted as the embodiments of Self-illusions.

In part I, the narrator appears as a pen-case painter who lives in the outskirts of a ruined city, Tehran. It is a desolate place with not a soul living in it. He lives in a small room with a closet. The depiction of part I draws attention not only to the narrator's self-alienated world, but also to the abstractness of the setting away from materiality. It points to his spiritual quest. As Katouzian convincingly argues the setting might also be interpreted as the sign of the decaying civilization of Iran in Hedayat's time (120). As it is understood, the narrator feels totally forsaken in this desolate place: "There was complete silence everywhere. I felt that all mankind had rejected me" (Hedayat, 36). The reader can see that he feels debauched. His Self-alienation torments his soul and intensifies his existential nausea. It is noteworthy that the lines Hedayat wrote to Jamalzadeh in October 1948 strike the similarity in Hedayat's and the narrator's agony: "[…] it's just a vomity condemnation which I have to bear in filthy, shameless, fucking environment" (qtd. in Katouzian, 4).

The narrator attempts to escape from this filthy existence either with smoking opium or with painting obsessively the same scene on his pen-cases. Taking Sartre's argument of bad faith as the base, it may be inferred that the narrator's sudden break from everyday life and his confrontation with the bare existence as contingent and meaningless overwhelms him and he cannot shoulder the anguish of the absolute freedom in the face of nothingness. Therefore, through opium, he escapes into bad faith.

On 13th day of Nowruz, though as readers, we know it is one of his illusory worlds, the narrator claims to see the same scene outside his house through the crack on the wall:

> As I reached towards the bottle, I chanced to look out through the ventilation-hole above the shelf. On the open ground outside my room I saw a bent old man sitting at the foot of a cypress tree with a young girl-no, an angel from heaven-standing before him (8).

He searches for the spiritual woman everywhere. This is where his spiritual quest for the Self begins and his opium smoking increases. He repeatedly questions whether she exists or not throughout Part I: "Was she a real being or an illusion? Had I seen her in a dream or waking?" (62). These lines remind us of Keats's melancholic line in his *Ode to Nightingale*: "Was it a vision or a waking dream?" It seems that the narrator attempts to hold onto life with the ethereal girl. It can be understood that through opium effect, the narrator attempts to escape into an illusory worlds in order to alleviate his sufferings as he mentions: "Thereby I hoped to create from the resources of my mind a drug which would soothe my tortured spirit" (24). The narrator's attitude is described as man's leap into *bad faith* or an escape into illusion from facing his bare existence or death.

After a while he accidentally kills the ethereal girl with some poisonous wine. He sees her fade like falling star. The patrolling policemen interrupt the scene. His fear of the police comes to surface. This constant fear of the police clandestinely dominates the novel. This fear might be Hedayat's own for fear of being arrested by Reza Shah regime men. Anyway, after her death, in his attempt to immortalize her eyes, the narrator only sees the dark abyss in her once shining eyes:

> In her eyes, her black eyes, I found the everlasting night of impenetrable darkness for which I had been seeking and I sank into the awful, enchanted blackness of that abyss (19).

His sadistic act of cutting the girl into pieces and putting her pieces into a suitcase hints at the breakdown of the spiritual illusion. Her illuminating eyes turn into bottomless pit into which the narrator is drifted again:

> I had felt that I was walking in a profound darkness which had completely enshrouded my life. Those eyes which had been a lantern lighting my way had been extinguished for ever… (31)

The narrator first fooled himself into thinking that she was a lighthouse to make his life meaningful. Later, he was deeply frustrated to find her illusory nature like a firework ignited at a festival that transiently flashes and disappears into the oblivion. He understands that the light of truth is nothing but an illusion to be destroyed.

In her burial ceremony, the reader sees the bent old man with scarf again but this time he acts as a hearse driver. The old man symbolizes death (self-destruction) in his different forms. This can best be understood from the hearse driver's speech:

> 'I suppose you want to get into town? Lost your way, eh? Suppose you're wondering what I'm doing in a graveyard at this time of night? No need to be afraid. Dead bodies are my regular business. Grave digging's my trade. (32)

The failure in his spiritual quest for the Self to heal his wounded soul intensifies the narrator's existential nausea from which he tried to escape:

> I wished that I could run away from myself. Was such a coincidence conceivable? All the wretchedness of my life rose again before my eyes. (34)

The narrator wants us to see that each step he has made to escape recedes him from life and doubles his existential agonies. However, he does not give up his quest. Again, the narrator finds the solution to alleviate his sufferings in smoking opium: "I smoked my whole stock of opium, in the hope that the wonder-working drug would resolve the problems that vexed me… (36)" His opium smoking is highly significant again in that it lets the narrator wake up into another bad faith. This is the link to Part II. Through opium smoke, this time, the narrator transcends the boundaries of time and space and travels back in time to quest for the Self in material existence:

> When I awoke in a new world, everything that I found there was perfectly familiar and near to me, so much so that I felt more at home in it than in my previous surroundings and manner of life, which, so it seemed to me, had been only the reflection of my real life. (38)

In part II, the reader finds the narrator as a writer to depict the same scene on the painting with his lines. He repeats that he desires to know his Self and that his only listener is his shadow on the wall. Unlike his isolated house from the material existence in Part I, this time, his house is located just in the heart of the society. Across his house lies a butcher's shop and odds and ends man's counter: "The room itself has two windows facing out onto the world of the rabble" (44). The location of the house is

significant to trace the narrator's voyage from his spiritual quest down into the material world.

In his room, there is a mirror, which he fears to look at. The mirror bears a symbolical significance in that he sees his shadowy existence in the material world:

> on the wall inside my room hangs a mirror in which I look at my face, and in my circumscribed existence that mirror is a more important thing than the world of the rabble-men which has nothing to do with me. (44)

He is frightened to see its multiplication into different images in the mirror. As Katouzian rightly claims, there is only one character in the novel (118). The other characters in both parts are only the distorted shadowy images that help him explain his existential quest for the Self symbolically. The mirror images of the characters' lack of depictions, their rare speech evidence this argument. The reader seems to be drifted into the skull of the narrator in which the characters act as the allegorical reflections that enable him to cloth his abstract notions. Briefly speaking, the mirror in his room becomes his traumatic fixation in Part II.

Moreover, the narrator in Part II shows his disgust for the rabble though under different conditions. He realizes that the rabble deeply indulges in material and sexual pleasures. He sees a huge gap lies between him and the rabble. He calls them happy fools who are good at superficial things such as sex, money…

> I wandered without set purpose among the rabble-men as they hurried by, and expression of greed on their faces, in pursuit of money and sexual satisfaction. I had no need to see them since anyone of them was a sample of the lot. Each and every one of them consisted only of a mouth and a wad of guts hanging from it, the whole terminating in a set of genitals. (59)

The narrator's disgust of their actions doubles his estrangement. With the depiction of the butcher who takes pleasure in killing the lambs and the odds and ends man who makes money reading Koran with his yellow teeth rather than selling things, Hedayat attempts to show the cruelty, evil and corruption in his contemporary society. Like Sartre's, the narrator's hell is other people.

The central figure in part II is also a woman as the commodification of the Self in Part II. In other words, she is the embodiment of the material Self. She is exactly the same woman in Part I though not spiritual but a bitch. He calls her the bitch since he

believes she sleeps with the rabble men except for him. The thought that his wife cheats on him with the rabble men unbearably tortures him: “my wife, she feeling a stronger appetite for them than for me” (58). It makes him more repugnant of the world of the rabble. He has questioned himself many times what he lacks that the rabble has to attract her. The reader can see that the narrator is deeply frustrated with his quest in the material world as well. He could not find what he seeks out. He attempts to hold onto his wife to make his life meaningful, but she turns her back on him and deceives him. As a result, his life-illusion cracks as it happens in Part I. His quest gradually brings him to destruction.

From this time on, the narrator begins to question the transient nature of material things:

> At this very moment I doubt the existence of tangible, solid things, I doubt clear, manifest truths. I f I were to strike my hand against the stone mortar that stands in the corner of our courtyard and were to ask it, 'Are you real and solid?' and the mortar were to reply, 'Yes', I do not know whether I should take its word or not. (42)

His skeptical attitude gradually leads him to detach from life. He sees life as a mere fiction to be told to his shadow. He resembles his house to a coffin. The inference in his detachment from life is that he gradually gets drawn to the darkness of abyss. The narrator’s frequent and repetitive speech on death is the sign of it:

> For that space of time I was severed from nature and the phenomenal world and was prepared to accept effacement and dissolution in the everlasting flux. I murmured again and again, 'Death, death . . . where are you?' The thought of death soothed me. (64)

Hedayat’s perception of death as the destroyer of life-illusion is pervasive almost in all his works. In his short essay *on Death* (1927), he clearly expresses:

> Only death does not lie. With death, there remains no illusion. We are born of death, and it is death, which saves us from the deception of life. (1)

The world has lost its meaning. Everything familiar becomes absurd to him. He has lost his sense of belonging, time and space. He becomes skeptical about his existence: “I had no sense of time or place and doubted whether I really existed. It would seem that I myself created all my dreams…” (74). He is drawn into a dark well. He feels as if he is a living death in his grave-like room. He feels delighted with the thought of no-Self after death: “I genuinely longed to pass into oblivion and non-being”

(78). His only wish is to destroy the life-illusion and yields himself to death since he sees life a construct that veils the existential void. In other words, as he has killed the ethereal girl in Part I, he kills the bitch since he is able to cling to neither world.

In brief, the narrator in his existential quest for the Self in spiritual world in Part I and in the material world in Part II undertakes the role of creator and destroyer as a Godlike artist. However willing to take shelter in the permanent Self in order to escape from his existential anguish, he is not able to cling to life. He snubs the birth of new Iranian face that is reflected in the rabble's lifestyle. The reason is that he sees them as hypocrites, liars whose only pleasures are sex and money. Therefore, he regards life as bad faith, that is, a lie, a construct to be destroyed. He regards death not as a gate to after-life but to a dark well or no-Self state:

> it seemed to me that I was suspended from a slender hook in the shaft of a dark well. Then I broke free of the hook and dropped through space. No obstacle interrupted my fall. I was falling into an infinite abyss in an everlasting night.
>
> From the bottom of my heart I desired to surrender myself to the sleep of oblivion, If only oblivion were attainable, if it could last forever, If my eyes as they closed could gently transcend sleep and dissolve into non-being… (37)

As one can conclude, there is no progression but retrogression in his quest for the Self. The spiritual and material floors on which he has attempted to stand have collapsed. Like the recluse in Hedayat's *Dark Room*, the narrator is gradually reduced to nothingness in his reductionist voyage. Hedayat like Sartre or Beckett fails to see life and his relation with others based on the endless possibilities. One can notice that the narrator of *The Blind Owl* snubs the rhizomic transience of the situational masks reflected in the mirror. He expresses the crushing effect of the multiplication of the roles on him with these lines:

> They were all familiar to me within me. All these grimacing faces existed inside me and formed part of me: horrible, criminal, ludicrous masks, which changed at a single movement of my fingertip. The old Koran-reader, the butcher, my wife – I saw them all within me – they were reflected in me as in a mirror, the forms of all of them existed within me. (114)

Hedayat's critique of masquerading as hypocrisy of the rabble and his contempt for the change in him hint at his harsh rejection of the changing dynamism in the social world. This denial can be interpreted as a modernist attitude, which helps characters like

the narrator withdraw. In my opinion, his suicidal and pessimistic tendency leads him to seek out the answer in the reductive path. He prevails one (death) over another (illusion). This approach causes Hedayat and the narrator to disassociate from life and Self-destruction to become inevitable.

3.2. Sartrean 'no-Self' in Beckett's *Murphy*

3.2.1. Introduction

Every word is like an unnecessary stain on silence and nothingness. (Beckett)

As mentioned earlier in Chapter II, totally shaken by the bloody horrors of two wars, Western man felt traumatized by the angst of death upon the loss of their secure home, and values. He became nauseated in his desperate wait for a savior that would never appear. The permanent Self he once held onto was totally in fragments and pieces. His attempts to reintegrate the fragmented Self let him fail many times in the changing conditions of the time. As a result of the repeated failures for the reintegration of the Self, self-illusion was totally broken and hence, he ended up in nothingness. There were many literary figures that shed light on the nauseating Self-crisis of the Western man, but none surpassed Beckett in terms of starkly displaying his existential plight in its unbearable circumstances.

Samuel Beckett was one of the most influential and prolific literary figures of the 20th century. His oeuvre ranging from poetry, novel, drama had groundbreaking achievements in terms of such topics as the absurdity of human existence- quest for a meaning in life- Self-alienation- death as the gate to freedom without a later re-entrance. As Esslin argues, his ability to handle such serious issues with buffoonery, jibes, slippery of the tongue, silences and his pessimistic tone, above all, his farcical language labeled him as one of the leading members of the Absurdist writers (7).

Afflicted with the psychosis (a disorder of the Self), uprooted at an early age and nauseated in his own uncertainties, Beckett like Hedayat embarked on the notion of an utterly futile existence. Plagued by the similar existential angst like Hedayat, Beckett regarded the Self as an illusion to be destroyed in his works. No words but his silence in his works can express man's despair, Self-disillusionment and anxiety which Western man experienced during and post-war Europe. His works also illuminate nothingness

behind the life-illusions. Some critics like Butler rightly align Beckett with Sartre due to the affinity in their approach to nothingness. As we observed the traces of Sartrean nothingness in Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* in the preceding part, this part will be another attempt to trace Sartrean nothingness in Samuel Beckett's *Murphy*. To contextualize the novel, in other words to understand the social, biographical and philosophical references in the novel better, this part will first discuss Beckett's life in social and intellectual context, and then will move to the analysis of the novel in light of Sartrean no-Self theory.

3.2.2. The Biographical Context of Samuel Beckett

Samuel Beckett was born in 1906 into a protestant middle class family in the catholic Ireland. About his early childhood he says, "'You might say I had a happy childhood,' Beckett has said, 'although I had little talent for happiness" (qtd. in Pilling, 1). Like Hedayat, he learnt French with high level of competence. He studied modern languages from 1923 to1927 in Trinity College. Beckett as a student was a voracious reader. In his college years, he became familiar with Dante and English literature. His college years were really productive for him (Pilling, 1-10). Ackerley and Gontarsky remark "The smithy [lies] in which his soul was forged" (589). Upon his graduation, Beckett's career as a scholar started. He went to Ecole Normale Superieure, a college in Paris, as an exchange lecturer. As Moran notes, at that time, Jean Paul Sartre was also there. They were exact contemporaries. Sartre already had a reputation in the literary field. He had a journal called *En Suite* where Beckett sent some of his poems (7). In Paris, he also met James Joyce. Joyce had a lasting impact on Beckett particularly in terms of his writing style. During his two-year stay in Paris, he read Descartes' biography and philosophy. It is possible to trace Descartes' influence on Beckett's early fiction. He also published some articles on Joyce and Proust. He wrote an award-winning poem called *Whoroscope* (1930), which parodies Descartes 'life.

When his exchange program was over, he was offered a position as a lecturer in French upon his return to Trinity College in Dublin. After a while, Beckett was deeply frustrated with academic career. His realization that the poisonous atmosphere of the academic career disgusted him led him to give his resignation. It is possible to see his attributions to the academic world of pretentions. After his resignation, he began to write his unfinished novel, *The Dream of Fair to Middling Women*. In 1933, his loss of

his father had a traumatic effect on him. After that, he went to London and lived there for 2 years (Knowlson, 20-40). During his stay, he wrote and published his collection of stories entitled as *More Pricks than Kicks* in 1934. On his occasional visits to Trinity College Library, he met Geulincx philosophy of ethics, which had a lasting impact on his works, particularly on *Murphy*. In London, he undertook a therapy to recover his worsening depression under a Jungian psychoanalyst, Wilfred Bion. During this therapy, he was fascinated by one of Jung's lectures with a subject of "never properly born" (qtd in Ackerley, 321). Its influence can be traceable in his later works. This period of depression and the recovery therapy will be a backdrop to his first published novel, *Murphy* (1938). Joyce was rumored to memorize some parts of *Murphy*. According to Ellmann's notes, Joyce remarked, "I think he [Beckett] has a talent" (701).

In 1937, he first visited Germany. There, he was appalled to see the transformation of the country under the Nazis. Then, he moved back to Paris at the end of 1937. There he met his future wife, Suzanne Deschevux-Dumesnil. Like Sartre, Beckett was also a fighter in the Resistance army against the Nazis during the Nazis occupation of France. After the resistance failed, he managed to escape to Roussillon located in the unoccupied south of France. There, he finished writing his last English novel, *Watt* (1942-44). As Pilling argues, one can find the traces of such turbulent atmosphere in this novel (36).

When the war was over, he was deeply occupied with writing. However, he began to write his works in French. In Knowlson's notes, his formal biographer, we encounter Beckett's reason for this change: "It was a different experience from writing in English. It was more exciting for me- writing in French" (qtd in Knowlson, 357). He wrote an unsurpassed trilogy- *Molloy, Malone Dies, The Unnamable* (1947-50). After those novels, he wrote *Waiting For Godot* (1953) that brought him worldwide fame. The critics on Beckett's works usually drew a boundary as before and after *Waiting For Godot*. Before this period, Beckett was seen in the apprentice years in which he sought out his voice and his style. On the other hand, the period was interpreted as the mastering years in which he searched the ways to minimalize his voice and style down to silence. Together with his pinnacle work, *Wating For Godot*, his later works such as *End Game (1957), All that Fall (1957), Krapp's last Tape (1958),Happy Days (1961)* were Beckett's further achievements in drama that gained him Nobel Prize (1969).

3.2.3. Beckett's Pessimism and His Obsession with Death in his Works

Beckett's works as we talked about Hedayat's works, are usually categorized as pessimistic, reductive and nihilistic as one of Beckett's nihilistic characters, Krapp records; "With all this darkness round me I feel less alone" (15). In his description of an artist, Beckett glorifies the art of failure: "To be an artist is to fail, as no other dare fail... failure is his world and to shrink from it" (qtd. in Gluck, 109). A common point critics usually posit is Beckett's aesthetics is the rejection of the external world. In other words, he rejects the strict boundaries of the rationalistic order upon which the West is based. As Butler argues, it is possible to see the critique of the closed rationalistic system and the protagonists' eagerness to escape from this prison like system in almost all of his works (180). According to Knowlson, Beckett is frightened of being prisoned all his life. Beckett expresses this fear with these lines; "I remember feeling trapped, of being imprisoned and unable to escape, of crying to be let out but no one could hear, no one was listening" (qtd. in Knowlson, 171).

Like Hedayat's works, the pessimistic mood of Beckett's works arose from the aforementioned critique of people's attempts to take shelter in the illusory world already fragmented and shattered into pieces after post-War. In his protagonists' lives, without exception, the reader can find an isolated man who seeks out ways to cut all his connections from the material world and to find the bare existence. And this quest usually ends up in darkness, nothingness and death. To illustrate, his protagonists in his early prose fiction such as Murphy, Watt, Molloy, Malone, and the unnamable all withdraw from the hypnotic vision of the illusory world of the rationalistic, closed system. Their awareness of the absurdity of life around let them see death from a different angle. They perceive death as redemption from this closed system. They adopt it to put an end to life-illusion and as the gate to freedom.

Another common point to highlight in Beckett and Hedayat's works is the emphasis on death as the gate to freedom. This is the argument that particularly aligns them with Sartre in his *Transcendence of the Ego* and later in his *Being and Nothingness*. This argument as much discussed in Hedayat's works, is also traceable in Beckett's almost all of his works. For example, Beckett's *Endgame*, emphasizes death from the very first lines as Clov says, "Finished, it is nearly finished" (Beckett, 1). As Lawall posits, *Endgame* describes, "what it is like to be alive, declining towards death

in a world without meaning" (484). In *Waiting for Godot,* also, Beckett focuses on the idea of "the suffering of Being." In fact, the play has been viewed as fundamentally existentialist in its approach to human life. In the lines:

> ESTRAGON: (with effort). Gogo light- bough not break- Gogo dead. Didi heavy- bough break- Didi alone. Whereas-
> VLADIMIR: I hadn't thought of that.
> ESTRAGON: If it hangs you it'll hang anything.
> VLADIMIR: But am I heavier than you?

The comical handling of such serious issues like death image makes the audiences laugh ignoring the serious treatment of the two tramps.

Not only does Beckett's sarcastic language such as word games, puns, riddles in his deliberately broken grammatical structure to express such serious existential matters, but also his philosophical humor and allusions serve to reveal the absurdity of man's rational struggles to make their lives meaningful on the irrational basis. The absurd for Beckett exhibits a blatant and deliberate disregard for logical coherence. Beckett suggests that we live in a world of stark desolation. We face blankness, cut off even from our fragmented minds (Abbotson, 7). Particularly in his early prose fiction, he depicted a deracinated world in which the potential for action and communication has been irrecoverably eroded. Beckett writes in a 1937 letter to his friend about his reductionist approach towards language: "Is there any reason why that terrible arbitrary materiality of the words surface should not be permitted to dissolve?" (qtd. in Leonard and Flynn, 56). As we will see in *Murphy*, even language itself is simply an elaborate papering over cracks, which constantly threatened to reveal those who remain either blithely unaware of their plight or numbed with despair. As we also study later, that anguish obviously exists in *Murphy*.

In short, his pessimism, nihilism and reductionism in Beckett's works aligned him with the main existentialist figures of the time, Jean Paul Sartre and others.

3.2.4. Summary of *Murphy*

The novel is about an Irish recluse, soon to be annihilated in his existential quest for the Self. It takes place in London. It starts with the eponymous protagonist, Murphy, who has tied himself to a rocking chair in his flat, rocking back and forth in darkness. This act he expresses gives him pleasure since he attempts to set his mind free in non-

existent state though he does not succeed it completely. Meanwhile, the scene passes to an earlier scene where he made conversations with his mystic tutor, Neary from Cork, about Neary's ability to stop his heart called Apmonia by him. Neary defines it as a state between heart attack and heart failure. Their conversation went on about their romantic partners. Their farewell to each other was noteworthy: Neary said: 'Murphy, all life is figure and ground.' And Murphy said 'But a wandering to find home.'

Then, the novel diverges to his lover, Celia, a prostitute and Mr. Kelly, her grandfather, her only pillar in her life. Upon Celia's untiring insistence, though he tells her that it would be his end, he starts to look for a job.

Then, the narrator interrupts the novel and directs the discussion into Murphy's mind. The narrator starts talking about Murphy's philosophical ideas explaining three zones of existence objectively.

In the mean time, a group of people from his country looks for Murphy for different reasons. Neary needs him as a friend in the absence of others. Miss Counihan, Murphy's abandoned lover, seeks him to sooth her pain, Wylie, Miss Counihan's lover, follows for his sexual inclinations towards her. Lastly, Cooper, Neary's servant, traces Murphy for money.

Murphy eventually finds a job as a nurse at Magdelene Mental Mercyseat. He thinks this is the only place where he can work since he finds the insanity of the patients soothing for his existential suffering. For Murphy, they are not insane but they are out of the system. They are free for him though not exactly.

In Mercyseat, among the patients, there is one that most interests Murphy. His name is Mr. Endon who suffers from schizophrenia. Every night, they play chess game without exchanging any words. One night, when they play chess again, Murphy feels he is withdrawn into Mr Endon's huge black eyes. At that moment, Murphy surrenders with a fool's mate and afterwards he dies in his garret with a gas explosion.

3.2.5. *Murphy*: A Western Novel

To many readers, Beckett's *Murphy* bears the marks of Western literary and intellectual tradition. It is possible to trace the contributions of different sources ranging from Greek mythology to western literary and philosophical history on Beckett's

Murphy. This is why the novel is regarded as highly challenging to understand the allusions without having necessary background. Therefore, this part aims to introduce the sources that might possibly label *Murphy* as a Western novel.

Firstly, the novel is highly rich in Greek mythological and philosophical allusions. It is clear that as a voracious reader, Beckett is familiar with Greek mythology and philosophy. As we analyze the alluded mythic figures or the referred philosophers, it is possible to realize that Beckett made use of these allusions to present the paradox between illusion and bare existence. Pervasive to all Beckett's fictions including *Murphy*, there is a closed system from which the hero attempts to escape. As Bloom notes, Murphy desires to reach beyond of this closed system (6). To strengthen this argument of closed system, it is obvious that Beckett referred to some mythological references that imply the repetitive existence such as Pythagorean cup or Ixion's wheel of fire, or the punishment of Tantalus. The common point in all these allusions implies man's imprisonment in the matrix of repetitive existence.

Secondly, in *Murphy*, it is also possible to observe the traces of some literary figures that might have influenced Beckett in his apprenticeship years. Foremost among them that influenced Beckett in terms of his stylistic success was James Joyce. Joyce and Beckett were close friends at that time. Beckett even wrote an essay on Joyce. Hugh Kenner, an important scholar on Beckett's works, claims that early Beckett was quite Joycean. He also notes that his influence from Joyce was so obvious in *Murphy* and *Watt*, Beckett's early novels, as to say them as Joycean books. To Kenner, also, Beckett's search for his own voice pushed him to write in French so that he could cease to be Joycean (23). Another writer that influenced Beckett was Marcel Proust. Proust was the other writer on whom Beckett wrote an essay. His thoughts in this essay are also traceable in his early fiction, particularly, in *Murphy*. Beckett's emphasis on two of Proustian ideas that life is a habit and alienation is the factual condition of human existence is resonated throughout *Murphy*. Beckett depicts the habit as "the minister of dullness" in the essay on Proust. Likewise, in the novel, Murphy regards life as the vicious circle with repetitive existence. His self-alienation is the direct outcome of this condition. Another important source that inspired Beckett was *Rilke's Notebooks*. Beckett as a young scholar translated the novel from French to English. To some critics, *Murphy* and *Rilke's Notebooks* share some similarities in terms of recurrent reference of

death. It is also noteworthy that this is the only common source to have influenced Hedayat, Sartre and Beckett in one way or another. Finally, Murphy also bears the traces of Dante's *Divine Comedy*. As I shall argue in the next section, Murphy's theory of three zones of existence has some similarity with Dante's. When the narrator defines Murphy's second mode of existence as purgatory, the narrator alludes to Dante's Belacqua saying; "Here was the Belacqua bliss" (111). As one can see, young Beckett in his search of voice highly benefited from the esteemed men of letters.

Thirdly and most importantly, *Murphy* is regarded as a testing ground for the ontological discussions of the Self. Beckett seemed to treat the novel as an ontological field where the protagonist, Murphy seeks out existential explanations to get to know his Self. Though Beckett did not concede this argument in a letter written to a friend, some critics like C. J. Ackerley, are rightly in agreement to claim the novel densely packed with philosophical discussions. Different examples that might surface the philosophical side of the novel are clearly observable particularly in chapter Four of the novel where the narrator drifts us into Murphy's mind. To illustrate, Murphy says; he "felt himself split in two, a body and a mind" (109). This statement implies Murphy experiences Cartesian duality of mind and body. Beckett's implicit reference to Descartes evidences the first link to the philosophical side of the novel. Another link to find is Arnold Geulincx, a student of Descartes. Beckett read his famous book, *Ethica* during his occasional visits to the library of Trinity College. His influence on Beckett is not limited to his first novel, *Murphy* but almost to all his later fiction. Following Geulincx' argument that mind was quite distinct from the body, Beckett makes this distinction of mind and body so clear that the concepts are embodied in the distinct characters, Murphy and Celia. As will be mentioned in the following part, the reader will witness Whereas Murphy seeks out ways to live in his mind, Celia stands out with her tangible side. Another philosophical link in the novel is to Berkeley's famous statement, "to be is to be perceived". The narrator in the novel exemplifies the dependency of one's existence upon the gaze of the other with the relation of a rat wanting to move and the man wanting to sleep:

> A man is in bed, wanting to sleep. A rat is behind the wall at his head, wanting to move. The man hears the rat fidget and cannot sleep, the rat hears the man fidget and dares not move. They are both unhappy, one fidgeting and the other waiting, or both happy, the rat moving and the man sleeping. (110)

Beckett obviously gives this example to show other characters' dependency upon Murphy to sustain their Self-illusion. However, the narrator emphasizes that Murphy is not a puppet. Murphy attempts to escape from this closed system. Moreover, some critics like Lance Butler rightly allege the novel is quite Sartrean (179). Murphy's sudden rupture from worldly concern, his Self-redemption from others' gaze, his rejection of the Self as an illusion and eventually his shocking confrontation with the bare existence in Mr. Endon's chaotic eyes as nothingness show some observable affinities with Sartre's ideas about others and his theory of no-Self notion though implicitly they are given.

To conclude, the novel, *Murphy* can be resembled to experimental field where Beckett searched for his own voice, testing his intellectual background as a scientist dissects the body into parts in a laboratory. In this respect, highly rich in sources and allusions, *Murphy* is quite western in every aspect. In the next part, I shall trace Murphy's no-Self quest in light of Sartrean ideas.

3.2.6. Sartrean '*no-Self*' in Samuel Beckett's *Murphy*

Nothing is more real than nothing. (Beckett, 246)

Beckett's first published novel, *Murphy* shows some concern over Sartrean argument of no-Self. Like Beckett's all of the fictions that revolve around their heroes' existential quests for the Self, the story of *Murphy* stands and falls around similar existential concern of Murphy that is the eponymous character. Using Sartrean terminology such as *bad faith, no-Self…* in this part, I shall argue how the philosophical arguments in the novel bring Beckett closer to Sartre in his theory of no-Self. Also I will attempt to trace how Murphy ends up in nothingness as "a mote in the darkness" in his existential voyage for Self-fulfillment.

As we said earlier in discussing Beckett's biographical context, the novel is set in London during Beckett's recovery period upon a nervous breakdown. His London memories from his readings to his wanderings in London streets are clearly observable in the novel. It is an anti-novel that does not bear the traditional novel characteristics. It does not have a plot and nor does it have a climax. The novel seems so chaotic that it seems purposeless. In other words, it obviously shows the fact that it was not written for an end to teach or delight the reader. Briefly speaking, it is a novel that attempts to

express man's disillusionment upon the collapse of the previously established ideals in the aftermath of war. Because of this, the novel only focuses on the bare facts of existence excluding the essence of the world.

The novel is narrated by the third omniscient voice, bodiless voice. The narrator of *Murphy* has a peculiar narration technique unlike the traditional narration techniques. His interventionist and authoritarian side enables the reader to grasp Murphy's mind from the objective critical point. As Wicker argues, thanks to the rational narration, the reader is given a chance to see the absurdity of characters and events (40). Pilling also notes that the narrator has an interventionist and interruptive role while Murphy has a passive, quietist role (40).

It is possible to see different readings of *Murphy* in line with the argument of this thesis. Butler discusses the novel in light of Sartre. He also claims that the novel can be read as Beckett's philosophical footnotes that he shared with the reader. Kiberd reads *Murphy* as the epitome of Beckett's enduring subjects such as existential angst and failure. Kiberd also regards the novel as the experimental field for his dramatic techniques, which were excelled at his later plays. Deleuze in his article, "The Exhausted" on Beckett read *Murphy* from the perspective of its exhausting language that ends the possibilities of life. As we have mentioned in the section on Deleuze's 'rhizomic' Self, life for Deleuze is based on endless deconstructions and reconstructions that give way for endless possibilities. In this respect, Deleuze in his article criticizes Murphy, the character, for he shut himself out to the world.

When we move into the novel, *Murphy*, we face with the shocking line of the third omniscient narrator as we did in Hedayat's *The Blind Owl*: "The sun shone, having no alternative, on the nothing new (1)." As Hedayat presented the repetitive existence of the world as a prison in his obsessively repeated words, Beckett also depicts the world in repetitive existence, as if it is a punishment given to Sisyphus' rolling the rock to the top of the slope each day. The circular pattern of the sun's movement in the very first line hints at the hopelessness of the eponymous protagonist, Murphy to free himself from the cage like closed system with no exit. Later in the novel, Wylie (we may call him 'Whyly' the philosopher) defines this system with these lines in his dialogue with Neary:

> I greatly fear," said Wylie, "that the syndrome known as life is too diffuse to admit of palliation. For every symptom that is eased, another is made worse. The horse leech's daughter is a closed system. Her quantum of wantum cannot vary." "Very prettily put," said Neary. (57)

Despite Murphy's awareness of the impossibility to break the deadlock of the system, his idealistic purpose to free in his mind in its detachment from the body leads Murphy to find a way to escape from the inexorability of the external world:

> Murphy sat out of it, as though he were free . . . in a medium-sized cage of north-western aspect commanding an unbroken view of medium-sized cages on south-eastern aspect. . . . He sat naked in his rocking chair… it set him free in his mind. . . (1)

Unlike the narrator in *The Blind Owl* who leaps into bad faith through opium smoke, Murphy seeks escape through meditations, inaction to achieve his nirvana or no-Self state. Like an infant rocking back and forth on his mother lad, he spins his mind in this rocking chair to let him be in non-existential state in the flux of forms, which he mentions in Chapter 6 of the novel, devoted to Murphy's mind. He supports his meditations in the rocking chair with heart stopping techniques, called as Apmonia, which he had learnt from Neary, his old mentor and friend. It is interesting to note that the etymological root of his name is 'Morph' which literally means both shape and morphine. Murphy's anesthetised mind hints at his desire to break with the established norms of the society. Though he hardly achieves, Murphy not only attempts to find solace in this primeval chaos in darkness but also to break the Self-illusion by stopping his carnal desire to phenomenal world.

As Moran suggests, all characters in *Murphy* experience a kind of Cartesian split like mind/body, words/action dualism (7). In his *Shape of Chaos*, D. Hesla argues the splitting Self is vital to Beckett's early prose fiction (21). No doubt that like Hedayat, Beckett also deliberately structures the novel upon this duality so that Murphy's existential questioning into his retreat can be observed methodically. The split Self is best recognizable in the opposite natures of Murphy and his lover Celia. They are quite like two sides of the split Self. Murphy deals only with mind with no action. On the other hand, Celia is prostitute who sells her body to make money. As the narrator sees his whore wife in *The Blind Owl*, Murphy sees Celia as his bodily side. Beckett deliberately uses the name; Celia etymologically means "heavenly body". Similar to the narrator's relation to his whore wife in *The Blind Owl*, Murphy's relation to Celia

implies the absence of the affectionate bondage between them. They just need each other as the mind does the body. Moreover, Murphy likes rocking back and forth only in the dark. However, in Murphy's absence, "[Celia] spends sitting in the rocking-chair with her face to the light" (57). Beckett clearly shows mind/body, silence/speech, reality/illusion, dark/light dichotomy in the characters, Murphy and Celia.

As one can also realize, like Hedayat's narrator, Murphy is a Self-quester (Butler, 253). Seeing life as "a wandering to find [real] home" (4), Murphy regards there are three zones of existence as the narrator objectively reflects Murphy's mind in Chapter 6. The first zone is that of light. The narrator says this zone is Murphy's confrontation with the external world. The second zone is that of half-light. This zone he describes is the interstice or purgatory between existence and non-existence. In this zone he detaches himself from the pleasures of the material world and partly achieves freedom through his meditation of rocking back and forth in the rocking chair. Zone three is "the zone of perpetual flux of forms in darkness" (112). This zone is Murphy's nirvana to achieve in his quest. He yearns to be "a mote in the darkness" (112) or in Sartrean term it is the zone of nothingness.

Murphy is like Sartre's Self- deceiving waiter. Even though he is aware of the fact that the world he lives is a lie or in Sartrean term, *Bad faith*, his attachment to Celia never lets him detach from it. He was managed to leave his home, Ireland, his fiancée, Miss Counihan, his friends but not Celia. She is always the one in the novel that brings Murphy into contact with the material world of existence. His quest for the pure mind is prevented by Celia's untiring insistence on Murphy to find a salaried employment. Though Murphy tells her many times this would be his end, she does not understand: "Celia said that either Murphy got work or she left him and went back to hers. Murphy said work would be the end of them both" (22). The more Murphy talks, less she understands. Then the narrator reveals the contrasting views over words and silence. At that moment, Murphy stops expressing his excuses since he realizes the insufficiency of words over understanding:

> She felt, as she felt so often with Murphy, spattered with words that went dead as soon as they sounded; each word obliterated, before it had time to make sense, by the word that came next; so that in the end she did not know what had been said. (40)

On the other hand, Celia thinks that silence only brings destruction. She also counsels Murphy, "avoid exhaustion by speech" (37). According to Deleuze, this is where Beckett's mistake lies. Deleuze sees the language and others as the gate to multiple possibilities (8-14). However, this is not the way for Murphy. Words, Murphy believes, are nothing but only covering of the silence. Therefore he says, "My fourth highest attribute is silence" (39).

Murphy unwillingly begins searching for a job upon her threatening insistence. Though he seeks out ways to redeem himself from the inauthentic existence of bad faith, he feels drawn to it more and more. Just like the narrator of *the Blind Owl* depicts the rabble in the preceding section of this chapter, the narrator of *Murphy* utters similar words about the others' concern in the world:

> For what was all working for a living but a procuring and a pimping for the money-bags, one's lecherous tyrants the money-bags, so that they might breed. (76)

Similar to Sartre's message given in his novel, *Nausea*, and later in his play, *No Exit*, Beckett could not hide his hatred for others in the novel. Murphy's hell is others and their world, based on Berkeley's famous dictum, "to be is to be perceived."

What is also important to highlight that like the narrator's whore wife's attachment to the Rabble in *The Blind Owl*, other characters in the novel, *Murphy*, nonsensically needs the presence of others. They feel dependent on one another such as Celia's confidence to Mr. Kelly, Neary's to Wylie. Without the presence of other, they feel desperate, lost, and fragmented. For example, Murphy is the central figure that is wanted by five characters in the novel. Celia loves him. Neary desires for Murphy's friendship. Miss Counihan seeks Murphy's love. Cooper, Neary's loyal servant, is employed to find him. Also, Wylie searches for him to recover Miss Counihan's dignity. As Wylie says, "Our medians, or whatever the hell they are, meet in Murphy" (213). In Murphy's lack, they are all tortured by the existential angst, which is mocked by the narrator. Kiberd nicely reveals Beckett's intention behind these characters' existential angst in the lack of other with these lines:

> They all seem like modern puppets who have cut the strings which once bound theirs to God and are therefore left stranded in centre-stage, trying to hold down a role. With the death or loss of God, man seems reduced to inauthentic being and all actions become stagy and hollow, once the divine source of significance is removed. (93)

Later in the novel, the narrator will also confess other characters in the novel are no more than puppets who seek out the one holding their strings. In other words, they look for ones that make their existence meaningful. The narrator here excludes Murphy from this category. Murphy is not a puppet. Like Hedayat's narrator, Murphy does not turn the blind eye to the reality. He later in the novel realizes that he does not need anyone to sustain his existence. On the contrary, He wants to dismantle the system that imprisons him since he finds out that it is this system that sets him at the mercy of others.

Murphy eventually finds a job as a nurse at the Magdalen Mental Mercyseat in north London. When he is back at home last time to get his rocking chair, he tells Celia last time:

> 'Look at me,' he said. She looked through him. Or back off him. 'Ever since June,' he said, 'it has been job, job, job, nothing but job. Nothing happens in the world but is specially designed to exalt me into a job. I say a job is the end of us both, or at least of me. You say no, but the beginning. I am to be a new man, you are to be a new woman… you have the whip, you win.' (138)

Celia's main intention is to put Murphy back into the system. However, she does not understand that his exposure to the external world doubles his retreat from the repugnancy of the world since he cannot bear the fiasco, "having once beheld the beatific idols of his cave" (Beckett, 178).

There in the hospital, his expectation to find others who managed to redeem themselves from the contingencies of the world by their indifference and Self-sufficiency consoles him. For Murphy, they are not patients but the redeemed souls who were managed to go out of the system. He calls there a 'sanctuary'. He makes a bond with the patients there. The patients do not let other patients take care of them but Murphy. Among the patients, there is one called Mr. Endon, his favorite patient who is a schizophrenic with amiable nature. Murphy admires Mr Endon's indifference to the world around. To see how he has achieved it, Murphy plays chess with Mr. Endon every night. Thinking that there is symmetry between him and Mr. Endon, Murphy just like Narcissus falls into Self-deception. Endon's psychosis was "so limpid and imperturbable that Murphy felt drawn to it as Narcissus to his fountain" (186). However, on the night of their last game, as Kenner notes, Murphy's awareness that Mr.

Endon only concerns with the permutations of the pieces on the chessboard breaks the illusion (68). Mr. Endon is indifferent to a friend's eye. What he only sees is a 'chessy eye'.

> Mr. Endon had recognised the feel of his friend's eye upon him and made his preparations accordingly. Friend's eye? Say rather, Murphy's eye… Whereas the sad truth was, that while Mr. Endon for Murphy was no less than bliss, Murphy for Mr. Endon was no more than chess. Murphy's eye? Say rather, the chessy eye. (241)

Not seeing himself in the eyes of Mr. Endon made Murphy feel as if he is engulfed in Endon's black hole while playing chess. He feels drawn into the light of darkness. At that moment, Murphy feels nothingness in Mr. Endon's eyes:

> he experiences 'Nothing'. 'His . . . senses found themselves at peace, an unexpected pleasure. Not the numb peace of their own suspension, but the positive peace that comes when the somethings give way, or perhaps simply add up, to . . . Nothing. . .' (246)

After being enlightened in darkness of the Endon's black hole, he surrenders to Endon's black side with Beckett's phrase "with a fool's mate." He destroys himself in his garret in a gas explosion. As the narrator informs the reader about the etymological root of gas that means in ancient Greece as chaos, Murphy destroys himself as a mote in the darkness of chaos.

In brief, Murphy's existential quest is trapped in Cartesian duality of mind and body, to be more specific, between Geulinx and Marlraux quotations, which Beckett used them as epigraphs to the chapters. As Pilling says, the Geulincx line from *Ethica* I: "Where you are worth nothing, may you also wish for nothing." It refers to mind leaving the phenomenal Self behind. Malraux quotation from the fourth part of the novel *Man*'s *Fate*: '…for it is difficult for one who lives isolated from the everyday world not to seek others like himself (146). It refers to material world. Murphy debilitates in this duality of mind and body and surrenders at last to primeval chaos transcending them both. That is, he destroys his Self as a mote in chaos. Murphy's will in a note having been written before says:

> With regard to the disposal of these my body, mind and soul, I desire that they be burnt and placed in a paper bag and brought to the Abbey Theatre… (269)

This legacy bears some social significance though Beckett ironically makes fun of. Therefore, a few words are necessary to utter on it. The Abbey Theatre symbolized the

start of Irish national revival. However, unlike Hedayat whose novel, *The Blind Owl* mainly concerns Iran's socio-political events of the time according to some critics, Beckett hints at his total detachment from the socio-political events and he even mocks it in *Murphy*. In the novel, we see that Murphy's remains taken by Cooper are scattered not to the intended place but to the public floor full of cigarette butts and mess.

As we turn back to our main argument in the novel, to one's realization, Beckett's reductionist approach leads Murphy to utter destruction in a contingent place. According to Butler, what Murphy's cannot grasp is that the authentic existence cannot be detached from the world (131). Murphy's mistake is to perceive the external world as a lie to be destroyed. His anguish in the face of escaping from bad faith causes him to shut himself out to the world and "come alive" in his mind. Taking this reductionist path, he is eventually drifted into an inevitable end: Nothingness.

3.3. Conclusion

In this chapter, I attempted to trace Sartrean 'no-Self' in the protagonists' existential quests in two modernist novels, Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* and Samuel Beckett's *Murphy*. I have attempted to show that the affinity in both novelists' existential arguments though different in their writing style aligned them with Sartrean 'no-Self' theory that he argued in his *Transcendence of the Ego*.

We have come to observe that Beckett and Hedayat, the contemporary novelists, both seem to have had similar experiences. Both lived in the time of national awakening. However, it must be noted that Beckett was not interested in Ireland's so much as Hedayat was in Iran's. Also, They both suffered from war conditions. They were both shaken by psychological and existential traumas upon wars. They both experienced homelessness. They both left their homes and settled in France. As for literature, they both nurtured from the decadent and reductionist ways of French literature. In brief, the similar experiences in Beckett and Hedayat's real life context are worth to be observed so that the affinity in their thoughts can be traced easily in the selected novels.

In the selected novels we have attempted to observe that the ultimate goal is the protagonists' utter destruction in Sartrean chaos in its dissociation from the world of illusions. In other words, when the antithetical forces in one's mind fail to synthesize,

and one prevails the other, self-destruction becomes inevitable. The narrator's cutting the ethereal/material girl into pieces, or Murphy's surrender to Endon's black pieces in the chess play is the result of man's owl like vision not to realize the necessity of ceaseless clash between these two forces, which is able to unleash the creative energy to balance the Self in plurality or multiplicity. In the next chapter, I shall discuss two postmodernist novels, Saul Bellow's *Herzog* and Margeret Atwood's *Surfacing*, the protagonists of which are able to regard life inherently in fragments and are able to take the Self in multiplicity for granted in light of Deleuzean 'rhizomic' Self.

CHAPTER IV

DELEUZEAN 'RHIZOMIC' SELF IN SAUL BELLOW'S *HERZOG* AND MARGARET ATWOOD'S *SURFACING*

This chapter will be an attempt to trace Deleuzean 'rhizomic' Self in the existential voyages of the protagonists in two post-modernist fictions: Saul Bellow's *Herzog* and Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing*. My further objective in this chapter will be to display the protagonists' awareness in their unconscious walkthrough that the Self is not an illusion to be destroyed but a vital construct, adaptable to the dynamism of the contemporary time. The reader will also see that both protagonists are able to take life for granted with its ceaseless ruptures and connections. In order to show how the characters regard the inherently fragmented Self as the normal condition of postmodern life, we will also take the effects of the socio-cultural and ideological dynamics of the relevant time upon both writers and their novels into consideration. Thus, as followed in the previous chapter, my outline of this chapter will be a.) introducing the writers and their selected novels; b.) presenting the readers the contextual background of the novels; and finally giving detailed analyses of the selected novels with regard to Deleuzean 'rhizomic' Self as explained earlier in this thesis.

4.1. Deleuzean Rhizomic Self in Saul Bellow's *Herzog*

4.1.1. Introduction

Discussing the postmodern notions of the Self in Chapter II, we have seen the tremendous effects of globalizing technologies on the Self in the postmodern World. World. Many intellectuals of the time have made attempts to deal with the problem of selfhood. It became the central issue in modernist and postmodern fictions. Most of them preferred the nihilistic tradition of Camus and Sartre to their writings. However, some had an urge to seek out some ways to transform the Self to the needs of

postmodern culture. Saul Bellow (1915-2005) was one of the novelists to desire to reconcile the Self with the stunning pace of life in the postmodern world. He took a positive attitude towards the seemingly chaotic Self unlike the modernists who perceived the Self a lie to be destroyed. Clayton proposes that Bellow cannot be aligned with the nihilists who stole the last hope of man concerning life from their hearts (121). He supports his proposition with Bellow's Library of Congress speech where Bellow said: "One would like to ask [Sartre, Ionesco, Beckett, Burroughs, Ginsberg] 'After nakedness, what?' 'After absurdity, what" (qtd. in Clayton, 7)? Bellow conceived the Self and life originally in multiplicity since life for him is a set of boundless possibilities. In this respect, his approach toward the Self bears some resemblance to Deleuzean rhizomic Self. In our argument of Deleuzean rhizomic Self, we have noted that the Self is in ceaseless construction in the flux of life. Thanks to Self-multiplicity, he can continually forge himself to adapt to the changing conditions as well as experiencing a wide range of relations in multiplicity of life without yielding to utter destruction. Similarly, Bellow in his quoted speech from Nobel Prize Ceremony (1976), lectures:

> A novel is balanced between a few true impressions and the multitude of false ones that make up most of what we call life. It tells us that for every human being there is a diversity of existences, that the single existence is itself an illusion in part, that these many existences signify something, tend to something, fulfill something; it promises us meaning, harmony and even justice. (15)

Bellow's view of the Self in multiplicity took the central stage of most of his novels. This corroborates our discussion of the alignment of Bellow with Deleuze in view of the Self. Although almost all Bellow's works had a similar aspect towards the Self, here, I will pay my close attention to his groundbreaking novel, *Herzog* (1964). I will aim to trace Herzog the protagonist's quest for the Self to show that his quest indirectly bears significant affinity with Deleuzean 'rhizomic' Self. Firstly, I will discuss the author, novel and the society to show the embedded relationship among them. Then, I will deal with the main argument in the next part.

4.1.2. The Biographical Context of Saul Bellow's *Herzog*

Herzog includes certain autobiographical elements from the life of his author, Saul Bellow. The reader of *Herzog* who is familiar with the author's background can easily see the connection between the author and his creation, Herzog. In fact, Bellow's

novels are somehow autobiographical. Therefore, it is better to refer to some points in the author's life to make our study more comprehensible.

As Rovit argues, Saul Bellow as a novelist, playwright, and essayist was one of the most studied writers in post-war America (1). Much critical reception has intensified on the Self-crisis on which Bellow had focused in most of his works. His treatment of the existential problem of man amidst the fast growing and changing America was sufficient to label him a postmodern writer among the critics. Sewell says, "Saul Bellow represents a post-modern writer, that is, a writer… [that] embrace[s] the inner values of the individual" (qtd. in Barbosa, 9) Another critic, Malcolm Bradbury, claims "the meeting of great intelligence and the vast and complicated energies of the postmodern world is at the heart of Bellow's writing" (Bellow, Xİİ).

Like Herzog in the novel, *Herzog*, Bellow is a displaced figure. His Russian origin family immigrated to Canada in 1908. He was born in Quebec, Canada in 1915. According to Atlas, the biographer of Bellow, when he was 9, he and his family moved to Chicago in 1924, which would be one of the favorite urban settings to most of his novels (23-26). He is already a deterritorialized figure. He left his home early in life. His nomadic life has become his lifestyle.

Chicago was a multi-cultural urban city at that time. Some critics even interpret Bellow's view of multiplicity might have partly developed from such kind of setting of Chicago since at that time, it was seen as a home to the refugees of various cultures. According to Koy's argument, Bellow interacted with many debauched groups such as African-Americans, Mexicans, Japanese… and this provided a huge stuff to the richness of his writing (157).

According to Atlas' notes, Bellow's literary career started later in his life. Bellow first got a degree on sociology and anthropology from the Northwestern University in 1937. He wanted a career in neither of the fields; after a while he decided to pursue a life in writing. He worked in WPA Writers' project. He worked as an editor in Encyclopedia Britannica (Atlas, 59-62). However, it is an undeniable fact that his knowledge from both fields was highly traceable in his writings, particularly in *Henderson the Rain King* (1959) and *Herzog*. For example, in *Herzog*, Bellow refers to some sociologist figures such as Buber or Spengler.

In the postwar era, things were changing too quickly in America what Bradbury calls the "postmodern graveyard" (Bellow, XV). As Bradbury notes, there was the booming of industries followed by postmodern abundance. America grew into superpower thanks to its advance science and technology. This also enabled America to venture into space and nuclear programs in the dawn of Cold War (XV-XX). However, these stunning changes destabilized the society. The material conversion of the traditional relationships in the cycle of commerce-consumerism led to the pervasive loss of the Self in the society. However, Some minor and suppressed groups benefited from this ideological and social uncertainty as a result of these swift transformations as we will see in the second part of this chapter when we study Atwood's *Surfacing*. In the sixties, it led to the Cultural Revolution such as Women's and the Blacks' Revolts. Bellow as a good observer witnessed all these transformations in person and bore them to his novels. He saw the novel as the sufficient form to search for who we are amidst the postmodern anxiety surrounding him and his contemporary people.

When one turns one's eyes from his social life to his private one, one realizes that Bellow's private life was not as successful as his literary career. He was deeply frustrated in his marriages. His three attempts in marriage failed. Therefore, most of his novels including *Herzog* refer to his failed marriages. Atlas notes that the earliest scripts of *Herzog* were written in hurry to express his anger to his cheating second wife, Sondra (qtd in Levy, 109). Therefore, Bellow once said that all his novels were somehow his autobiography. His frustrations in his marriages, his Jewish side, his conflicting ideas, and his philosophical discussions populated his novels.

Bellow's Jewish origin also played an important role in his life and his writings. Almost all his characters in his novel except for one, Henderson are Jewish. As it is the case, it is a necessity to write a few words on his Jewish origin and its impacts on his writings. As a child of Jewish immigrants, Bellow was able to read Old Testament in Hebrew language in his early life. He was raised according to Jewish customs. He once noted that "my first consciousness was that of a cosmos, and in that cosmos I was a Jew" (qtd. in Berger, 81). Bellow was struggling to hold onto his Jewish identity in the contemporary American society where he witnessed most other Jews became Self-alienated. From Bellow's viewpoint, American culture was a monstrous machine to undo traditions. In his high school years, Bellow read Spengler's *Decline of West*.

According to this sensational book, European civilization had a Faustian spirit. In other words, it reached the last stage of civilization and it came to an end. However, to Spengler's view, Jewish culture is an archaic one that represents an earlier stage of humanity. Bellow was deeply hurt on reading this. But he still fought against his fate. Bellow expressed his feelings with these lines:

> Reading this, I was deeply wounded. I envied the Faustians and cursed my luck. I had prepared myself to be part of a civilization, one of whose prominent interpreters (Spengler was an international best seller) told me that I was by heredity disqualified. He did not say that I must be put to death, and one might be grateful for that. Yet he did pronounce Jews to be fossils, spiritually archaic, and that was in itself a kind of death… (Bellow, 177)

Even worse than that, Bellow wanted to position himself as a writer. Though he knew that being a Jewish writer was equal to being "shunted to siding" (qtd. in Berger, 82), he still sought out ways to combine his Jewish side, American culture and his writing. However, in America, a group of snobbish writers belonging to WASP (white-angle-saxon-protestant/persons) community lay obstacles to other prospective writers who did not belong to this community. In his review, "A Jewish Writer in America" he tells how they tested Bellow for his suitability to become a writer. They directed him to Jewish publishers. Even Jewish publishers judge his books with such criteria, "Was he Jewish enough, is he good or bad for the Jews" (Bellow, 1)? Bellow showed contempt for all these communities. He hated their limited approach towards a writer since what he only desired was to be come a writer. The dislike of Jews was growing particularly when a group of shunned writers, most of whom were Jewish called themselves New York or Chicago writers. Saul Bellow was one of them. There appeared some accusations in the newspapers towards this group. In the same review, he mentions one of the accusations laid was "American purities of speech and spirit were being contaminated by the streets of New York…" (qtd in Bellow, 2). From the viewpoint of WASP writers who saw themselves as followers of a great tradition, the Jewish writers were already losers from birth. However, Saul Bellow as a member of this newly formed group responded saying, I was, however, "an emancipated Jew who refused to deny his Jewishness…" (qtd in Sorin, 69)

In brief, Saul Bellow and other members of this group with their ingenious writing style were able to establish themselves among American literati. They proposed to reshape American literature going beyond borders.

4.1.3. Saul Bellow and His Novels

After touching briefly upon the difficulties Bellow experienced as a Jewish writer in America, the heart of materialism, we now take a look at some of his novels in general. We have come to realize that Bellow dealt with the subject concerning the tensions of Selfhood amidst the anxiety and uncertainty of postmodern chaotic life. Also, he deals with the intellectual contemporary man's struggle to reconcile his already fragmented Self with the materialistic and consumerist society surrounding him.

In his early writing, Bellow talks about his dangling Self that is nauseated in the wartime. It is the period when Bellow has suffered from his existential conflicts in the contemporary society. Therefore, his novels in this period focus on how the dangling protagonists suffer from Self-estrangement from money-oriented social values. Bellow here reflects his youth experiences with rich descriptions embellished with his great use of irony and sarcasm in his language. This case is manifest in his first and second novels, *Dangling Man* (1944) *The Victim* (1947). Both of them are quite existentialist in theme. They attempt to display the situation of the contemporary man who fails to hold on to the impersonal systems in the materialistic and complex society and thus ending up in Self-alienation. One can witness that Bellow's writing develops in technique and style, as his writing gets mature. As this is the case in his next novel, *The Adventures of Augie March* (1953), it became a success in structural design. What is striking about this novel is that the novel has no plot. Bellow seems to develop his idea of multiplicity into the structure of his third novel. The episodic side of the novel implies that life is not a coherent unity but inherently in fragments. To readers' realization, Augie in her episodic quest in the novel attempts to deconstruct and reconstruct her Self with regard to the requirement of the context-based conditions of the episodic life in order to take life for granted. Moreover, it is important to note that as mentioned earlier, Bellow as an American-Jewish writer became successful to break the powerful authority of writers of WASP (White-Angle-Saxon-Protestant) culture with his innovative style in this novel. Bellow reproaches with these lines:

> In my Jewish and immigrant blood there were conspicuous traces of a doubt as to whether I had the right to practice the writer's trade. . . . [I]t wasn't Fielding, it wasn't Herman Melville who forbade me to write, it was our own Wasp establishment, represented mainly by Harvard-trained professors. (qtd in Bendixen, 565)

Despite such an authority in literary field, Bellow was able to get the National Book Award with this novel. In his later novels that he wrote in his mature years, one can clearly observe Bellow's linear evolution in perception towards the Self-multiplicity. One can notice that his mature novels gradually reject the nihilistic tendencies and the passive acceptance of Self-victimization. Instead, they present the protagonists' struggle to survive and even their Self-creation in the multiplicity of postmodern life. This argument is best traceable in Bellow's three groundbreaking novels, *Seize The Day* (1956), *Henderson the Rain King,* and *Herzog* (1964). In *Seize The Day*, the protagonist, Tommy Wilhelm is a passive victim at the hands of the capitalist-consumerist society. He could not hold on to life due to his Self-insufficiency to adapt to the conditions of his time. Despite his realization of the reality surrounding him, (a disinterested father, A conman like Dr. Tamkin as a man of the age…), his attempt to escape into memories in order not to face it leads him to suffer deeply as a stranger in one's funeral that is unfamiliar to him. However, in *Henderson the Rain King,* unlike Wilhelm, one can realize Henderson's rebellious actions to the passive acceptance of Self-victimization and his survival attempts. Therefore, the protagonist is described as an explorer. The novel employs his journey to Africa. It is possible to realize that the protagonist's physical quest corresponds with his internal quest to answer such questions like who we really are, what this life is for. As Henderson says: "…And believe me, the world is mind. Travel is a mental travel" (Bellow, 127). Through his travel to Africa, to the heart of primitive cultures, Henderson actually travels to the darker sides of his psyche. Similar to Bellow's other novels, *Henderson* is a novel in attempt to seek out a meaning in fast moving life. It is also important to note that it is Bellow's only novel whose protagonist is not Jewish. On the other hand, unlike Wilhelm's passive Self-victimization or Henderson's quest for the Self, the eponymous character, Herzog in *Herzog*, Bellow's most acclaimed novel, is able to develop a new Self that is able to survive through the stunning changes of the age. In this respect, *Herzog* is Bellow's supreme creation. As Moynahan notes in her New York Times review, this novel reflects the struggles of Professor Herzog for the possibilities of Self-development despite his Self-disintegrative experiences (1). Failed as a husband, father,

writer, or lover, professor Herzog never yields to Self-destructive aspects of American climate of anxiety and crisis in the aftermath of war. To McConell, *Herzog* as a novel focuses on "the story of the hero's attempt to live with, survive within, the void that has opened at his feet" (10). Therefore, we admire his persevering efforts to build up a new Self in his words and actions that is able to respond to the boundless possibilities of mind and life.

In brief, all Bellow's novels display the true impressions of the contemporary man in his close relationship with the contemporary world. They seek out ways to reconcile the contemporary man with the chaotic life surrounding him. In the next part, We will closely observe Bellow's *Herzog* in terms of social, structural and existential perspectives.

4.1.4. The Social Context of Saul Bellow's *Herzog*

Saul Bellow wrote *Herzog*, his most acclaimed novel in in 1960's America. It was a time when America went through the unprecedented social transformations. In his interview to Joyce Illig, Bellow says:

> In Chicago, things were done for the first time, which the rest of the world later learned and imitated. Capitalist production was pioneered in the stockyards, in refrigerator, cars, (…), in the creation of farm machinery and with it also certain urban and political phenomena which are associated with the new condition of modern democracy. (qtd in Canales, 46)

From this quotation, one can understand that the shifting tensions of the period provided a huge stuff for the creation of such a masterpiece. As mentioned earlier, in post war II era, the growing industry and economy made the US as the greatest representative of capitalism and consumerism in the world. To describe America's excessive consumerism and fast-moving life, Irving Howe in his book, *Mass Society and Postmodern Fiction* called the US society as the Mass Society. He summarized the conversion of the traditional society into the mass one with these lines:

> A relatively comfortable, half welfare and half garrison society in which the population grows passive, indifferent and atomized; in which traditional loyalties, ties and associations become lax or dissolve entirely; in which coherent publics based on definite interests an opinions gradually fall apart; and in which man becomes a consumer, himself mass-produced like the products, diversions and values that he absorbs… (qtd. in Leitch, 94)

Such social transformation resulted in homogeneity and consumerism. The strict division between low and high cultures was broken. Also, individuals turned to consumers within this materialistic world. To illustrate from the novel, Bellow/Herzog defines the new American condition with such words:

> "Do you know what a mass man is, Himmelstein?"
> Sandor scowled. "How's that?"
> "A mass man. A man of the crowd. The soul of the mob. Cutting everybody down to size." (Bellow, 60)

Herzog as the mouthpiece of Bellow referred to what Howe termed as 'Mass Society' in many parts of the novel. In another part where Madeleine says "Mass Society", Herzog responds to her saying "Money Society" (Herzog, 73). As one can realize, Bellow here associates the Mass Society with money-based community. The alienating forces of money society pushed man to passivity. This passivity in turn created the mass society.

The appearance of new social conditions in America as a consequence of the growing technology and science also affected social relationships deeply. Life became more secularized. The traditional familial bonds were commoditized. In other words, the consumerist society put value on goods rather than virtues. People began to be seen as instruments to benefit from. Moral virtues such as honesty, loyalty, generosity became outdated. The corrosive effects of materialism on social and traditional values will be detailed with examples in the following section, but at this juncture, it is a necessity to give one example from the novel in order to show how characters except for Herzog are deeply immersed in the material world. The pervasiveness of materialism in all aspects of life can best be observed in the narrator's depictions of Herzog's brothers, William and Shura. They are depicted as the true reflections of money society of 1960's America. Herzog's utterances about William and Shura evidence this argument: "Will… has his money, position and influence and is glad to be rid of his private side" (184). And "Shura was [a] true disciple of Thomas Hobbes. Universal concerns were idiocy. Ask nothing better than to prosper in the belly of Leviathan and set a hedonistic example to the community" (50). Herzog's reminiscence of his father's funeral also represents a clear image of the crushing effects of the money society over personal feelings. Herzog remembers Shura annoyed at him when he cried before his father's

coffin: "Don't carry on like a goddamn immigrant (169). Herzog's memories and his romantic feelings make him think himself unfit for the society in which social relations accord with materialism and consumerism. In other words, Herzog as a man with deep feelings does not want to accept the fact of the materialized social relations in the community. They become so contextual that they flourish and die away all of a sudden. The stunning transience from one context to another led to the increase in the anxiety level of man amidst the uncertainty of life because there is no one truth or reality to hold on any more.

As mentioned earlier, it is significant to highlight once more that different perceptions of reality came into existence due to the highly complex network of transportation and communication means as well as the intellectuality of the post modern mind. The real began to change with the changing dynamics of the time. Fast moving life and reality pushed man to adopt contextual-based selves that can easily be disposable. Amidst such atmosphere of 1960s America, Bellow/Herzog felt the Self-crisis deeply since their traditional pillars such as religion, family…that once supported them shattered down into pieces. Though Herzog's awareness made him suffer deeply and feel alienated in the beginning of the novel, unlike the protagonists we analyzed in Chapter III, he does not yield to chaos, darkness, or death. Instead, he seeks out reconciliation of the Self with the changing society. In the next part, I will attempt to observe how Bellow/Herzog achieved Self-reconciliation rejecting the nihilistic views on the Self.

4.1.5. Summary of Saul Bellow's *Herzog*

The novel centres around the protagonist, Moses E. Herzog's quest for Self-reconciliation. It starts in Herzog's country house in Ludeyville where he isolates himself from the outside world. He is in agony because of his failures as a husband, father and professor. He suffers from two divorces. He thinks himself a bad father to his children, a bad husband to his wives. He also complains about his academic incompetency. He is deeply fragmented at the onset of the novel. He is writing unsent letters to various figures such as his family members, friends, scholars, philosophers, and dead people. Through these letters, Herzog tells his memories, intellectual debates, traumas, conflicts, and resolutions in retrospection. Herzog seeks answers to his big questions, so he travels in mind and action. From these letters, we learn retrospectively

that his wife, Madeleine, cuckolds him. She cheats him with his best friend Gersbach. After Madeleine gets divorced from Herzog, she and Gersbach move to Chicago taking her daughter, June (the daughter of Madeleine and Herzog) with them. Herzog restlessly travels from one place to another. He first travels to New York. He meets his mistress, Ramona there. Shortly after, he goes to Martha's Vineyard to visit his friend Libbie. However, he leaves there as soon as he arrives. He goes back to his house in New York; and finds a letter on his bed from the babysitter of June, his daughter. In the letter, the baby sitter tells about Gersbach's bad attitude towards his daughter. Hearing this doubles his anger towards Madeleine and Gersbach. During his travels, Herzog goes on writing letters on his valise in a train or in a metro. We notice from his letters that the last event forces Herzog to seek out ways to take his daughter's custody. In the mean time, Herzog talks about his first wife, Daisy. She is a domestic wife, well bred in Jewish tradition. He also remembers his childhood years in Montreal. This part gives important clues about Herzog's Jewish origin. Herzog here seems to confront with his past. Meanwhile, Herzog goes to courthouse to talk to Simkin, his lawyer, about his daughter's custody. He instructs Herzog about the changing face of the society. Besides, Herzog calls all people around him as reality instructors since they impose their values on others. In the courthouse, Herzog witnesses some cases. One of them is a mother who is accused of killing her own child. Herzog gets shocked with it.

Filled up with fatherly responsibility, he travels to Chicago and keeps writing ceaselessly. He writes about the theatricality of the people around such as Madeleine, Monsignor and so on. In Chicago, Moses first visits the old house where he had spent his teenage years. He gets his father's pistol to kill Madeleine and his lover. However, when he watches through the window of their house, Herzog sees Gersbach bathing June with fatherly care. He is unable to do it. Moses stays in his nihilist friend, Lucas Asphalter's house for the night. During his stay there, Herzog reacts Lucas' nihilistic views favoring life over death. In the following day, he meets with his daughter and takes her to aquarium. In their return home, they have an accident. June does not get injured but Moses faints. When his consciousness is back, he is in prison for his possession of a pistol. His rich brother, Will, bails him out. In the face of death, Moses sees life with a different eye and reconciles with it. Towards the end of the novel, Moses goes back to his country house. However, this time, he feels joy and serenity and stops

writing the letters.

4.1.6. The Structural Success of Saul Bellow's *Herzog*

Saul Bellow's *Herzog* as Bradbury notes, "has the most complicated and labyrinthine structure" (Bellow, XVI). The novel has no causal pattern, that is, it is loosely connected. It moves back and forth in time. Through these sudden shifts in time and action, Bellow creates an atmosphere of free association to best reflect the frenzied thoughts that purge out of the eponymous character, Moses Herzog's broken skull. The structural design of the novel is surprisingly similar to Deleuzean example of sprouting weeds he used to explain his rhizomic Self. The weed's sprouting is beyond control. Its nature is against any kind of blocking. It spreads horizontally like a rhizome. Though it has ruptures, it continues to make free connections. With this example, to Zdebik, Deleuze implies that the most natural process of mind functions like sprouting weeds (38). In choosing such structural design like weed sprouting, it is clear that Bellow has a deliberate intention. He not only aims to reject the destructive traditions of Sartre and Camus but also to take a positive stance towards fast moving postmodern life.

As it is understood from the novel, Bellow supports this sophisticated structural design with an extraordinary narration. The novel is told in kaleidoscopic narration. In other words, it shifts from third person to first person so often that one as a reader confuses who the narrator is. While the third person-narrator attempts to give objective account of Herzog's past and sometimes consciously speaks directly to the reader, the first person-narrator, Herzog, taking a subjective stance, attempts to depict his emotional and mental confusion that he suffered in his life through letters and interior monologues. It is possible to see this blurry narration in one of Herzog's unsent letters to Monsignor Hilton. Though Herzog gives the account of this letter in the first-person narration, the third-person narrator interrupts Herzog and makes a comment on the theatricality of Madeleine's make-up scene. As Barbosa puts it well, it is manifest that Bellow deliberately chose such blurry narration to depict Herzog's social, mental and existential traumas amidst the complexity of 1960's America (174).

Another thing that contributes to the structural design of the novel apart from narration is Bellow's treatment of time. Bellow makes a distinction between the actual time and Herzog's mental time in the novel. Thanks to this distinction, the narrator tells

the events shifting to and from two dimensions. The actual time in the novel covers only five days. The real events Herzog experienced are summarized below:

> … He had carried this valise from New York to Martha's Vineyard, but returned from the Vineyard immediately; two days later he flew to Chicago, and from Chicago he went to a village in western Massachusetts. (15)

However, Herzog's mental time includes his past, his recollections, and his ideas. Herzog's mental voyage constitutes the universe of the novel. It is the novel of ideas.

Last but most important contribution to the structural design of the novel comes from Bellow's use of letter writing. Bellow wisely uses the epistolary style in the novel to convey Herzog's mind. It helps the reader to get an insight into his suffering mind. It also functions as a free channel to make boundless connections. Though his action is crippled because of the betrayal of his friend Gersbach and his wife, Madeleine, he is able to cope with social, psychological traumas through the healing power of words. He becomes a nomad in his thoughts flying one moment to another, from one memory to another, from one philosophical debate to another thanks to his letter writing. This is what Deleuze calls "nomadic flight" (Deleuze, 13). Bellow enables Herzog to see life in multiplicity through his use of epistles.

In brief, Bellow builds the novel on a floor where the hero can make free associations to cope not only with emotional and social matters on the surface but also with existential ones beneath them. It is supported with well-thought structural design and with wisely chosen narration. On examining *Herzog*, in the following part, we will attempt to trace Herzog's voyage for the 'rhizomic' Self that is able to cope with the ambiguities of life.

4.1.7 Deleuzean 'Rhizomic' Self in Saul Bellow's *Herzog*

As argued before, Saul Bellow's *Herzog* can be read in light of Deleuzean 'rhizomic' Self. Despite lacking explicit connections to Deleuzean Self notion, the novel bears significant similarities in thought to Deleuzean viewpoint. As discussed before in Chapter Two, central to postmodern Self-notions and specifically to Deleuzean rhizomic Self, life is a flux of paradoxes under ceaseless construction within swift changing dynamics of postmodern world. In other words, life is itself multiplicity and therefore, there can be no central, fixed, permanent thought, belief or the Self. We

will notice that such similar argument is highly traceable in the protagonist, Herzog's Self-quest in the novel, *Herzog*. Taking this argument for granted, in this part, I aim to show that though not directly influenced, Bellow's similar perspective in Self-notion in *Herzog* puts him in line with such postmodern Self-theorists, particularly with Deleuze. The novel is built around its eponymous protagonist, Moses E. Herzog whose struggle to confront with the Self-crisis that surrounds him. He is Bellow's chosen character in terms of exploring the deepest crisis in his personal life and more generally in the social and intellectual history of man. He is a highbrow intellectual as most of Bellow's protagonists are. He is more like an essayist, or critical thinker to discuss contemporary issues of the time. However, if we make a comparison with Bellow's other protagonists, Herzog seems more conscious. As Clayton notes, Herzog epitomizes the symbolical representation of Western civilization since the Renaissance (Clayton, 224-227).

Moses Herzog is a searcher like his namesake prophet, Moses, the liberator of Jewish people from the tyrannies of the pharaoh, Ramses II of Egypt. Unlike the Jewish prophet, he is in Self-exile and he tries to liberate his Self, not the fellow Jewish people from the total demise of the Self in the chaos of contemporary society full of impersonal, superficial, material, and transitional social relations.

Herzog is a man of suffering in his mind and action. He suffered from two divorces, the second of which has a traumatic effect on his already disjoint mind, from the custody problems, his childhood memories, his lovers and social and psychological ideologies. Those problems might bring him on the verge of questioning his own insanity. As the narrator states in the starting line, everybody thinks he is cracked. However, Herzog doubtlessly enjoys his moments away from the society since Herzog, as a professor on romantic philosophy is getting sick of the society's dwarfing indifference to human values. This sickness causes him great pain. Staying away from this sickness gives him some comfort. That is why he calls himself 'the suffering joker' (Bellow, 11). As a man of Jewish origin, he is aware of the fact that true wakefulness is only achieved through pain and suffering. Herzog says:

> I know that my suffering, if I may speak of it, has often been … a more extended form of life, a striving for true wakefulness and an antidote to illusion (189).

At the opening lines of the novel, one comes to realize that Herzog has already been in the process of deterritorialization after a sudden rupture in his past, which caused that his thoughts were disjointed. Even though it gives him great pain, as noted above, the temporary situation of his disjointed mind sets him free from all constraints of time and space: "If I am out of my mind, it is all right with me, thought Moses Herzog" (1). He attempts to turn this situation into advantage lying what is in his head on the table.

The question is what led Herzog to feel restless, nauseated, shaken and to put him on the verge of insanity? After his divorce from his second wife, Madeleine, his seemingly permanent life has been distorted. Herzog compares himself to Ozymnadias in Shelley's poem, once a mighty king, now in despair (Bellow, 311). He recoils from social life, friends, job, and ideologies... He feels Self-alienated. He shuts himself into his house in Berkshires. The description of the house might be seen as an indication of his Self-alienation from the society. It seems to have direct relevance to Herzog's mood:

> Herzog was alone in the big old house… he slept on a mattress without sheets —it was his abandoned marriage bed—or in the hammock, covered by his coat. Tall bearded grass and locust and maple seedlings surrounded him in the yard. (15)

Herzog is in desperate shape as his old house is. His territory is overgrown with weeds. It is important to note here that Deleuze associates the rhizomic interactions with the growing weeds. As Deleuze argues, the growth of weeds in one's territory might usually be seen as chaotic, unwanted, intolerable, but it is the natural condition of life. As a reader, one may rightly think that Bellow deliberately aligns Herzog's chaotic Self with the chaotic appearance of the house with the overgrown weeds. In the beginning of the novel, this chaotic appearance gives him shudder since he is not able to cope with the ambiguities of his life and the contemporary society in general. However, as the novel gets closer to end, one will witness that the same chaotic scene gives him great joy and peace due to Herzog's Self-reconciliation with his seemingly chaotic Self, that is, with his rhizomic Self in "the mixed condition of life" (87).

The question is how is he able to survive through his chaotic world, deeply in fragments? As said before, Herzog sees his Self-exile as an occasion to confront with ambiguities in his life. His Self-exile does not let him reduce to Self-destruction on the contrary it enables him to have as Deleuze notes, nomadic flight from one place to

another, from past to present, from one idea to another. This is most striking particularly in his thoughts that flow in his letters, memories, and interior monologues... all these are of great importance in terms of being the rhizomic connections to help him expand his territorial horizon to the extent that his mind can flow. Herzog defends his writing letter with these lines:

> I must be trying to keep tight the tensions without which human beings can no longer be called human. If they don't suffer, they've gotten away from me. And I've filled the world with letters to prevent their escape. I want them in human form, and so I conjure up a whole environment and catch them in the middle. I put my whole heart into these constructions. But they are constructions. (64)

Although they are constructions, these nomadic letters written to family, friends, acquaintances, scholars, writers, and the dead give him chance to see multi dimensional truths. The realization of this fact pushes him to divest himself of all personae, which constrain his energy. This is why he gets pleasure from the state, what people call 'madness'. The letters may seem formless but they constitute the base on which Herzog's chaotic life coexists with the universal problems of Western man. Thanks to this, he finds a way to cleanse himself of his rotten thoughts in his troubled Self and mind. He knows that his water is clear no more as it was. It is blurred now.

Using his unsent letters, he firstly attempts to reveal the reasons that blurred his mind, filtering through his memories and his intellectual and historical debates of mankind. Herzog's situation here resembles to bee's rhizomic quest at its early stage in Deleuze's famous example as mentioned earlier. The bee leaves its beehive flying from one flower to another to seek out some pollen. Similarly, Herzog makes a nomadic flight from one letter to another to examine his own past and the Western man's. His letters in this respect function as a bridge. On the one hand, he digs out his past memories not only to face the realistic view of his and Western man's nihilistic state but also to find out the reasons that caused it. On the other hand, he attempts to restructure his Self by trying to adapt his Self to the new conditions of the contemporary time. Unlike Murphy and the Narrator, the protagonists, we analyzed in Chapter Three, Herzog has no intention to yield to Self-destruction. He seeks out ways to survive for the salvation of the Self. Therefore, Herzog's letters as Sewell notes function as "a plausible means for the protagonist's engagement in the process" (qtd. in Barbosa, 57).

We can count lots of reasons behind Herzog's writing the unsent letters, but the prime question that gnaws at Herzog's mind and pushes him to write ceaselessly is the ontological one "what it means to be a man?"

> … What it means to be a man. In a city. In a century. In transition. In a mass. Transformed by science. Under organized power. Subject to tremendous controls. In a condition caused by mechanization. After the late failure of radical hopes. In a society that was no community and devalued the person. Owing to the multiplied power of numbers which made the self negligible. (125)

From these lines, one can deduce some of the reasons that might alienate Herzog from his friends, family, lovers and more generally from the newly born society in post-war time. In his deterritorialization process, thanks to his letters and interior monologues, Herzog interprets that such new conditions as mechanization, bombardment of knowledge, consumption and so on are the alienating forces of the society that might crush the Self. As we noted in the preceding part, he argues these forces turn man to passive consumers whose authentic Self will be lost in time. Therefore, Herzog is not able to make sense out of the new social form; rather, he resists making sense out of it since it is against what he has been bred to believe or his Jewish traditions. This new order consumes everything that Herzog still values as a traditional man. Therefore, he travels restlessly in mind and action to seek an answer to the question "what are we?" (50). Other characters in the novel are of great significance in that they act like these embodied forces of this new social order based on material relations. To Herzog, they carry on inauthentic lives. As the Narrator in *The Blind Owl* views the rag-and-bone man as a reality instructor, Herzog views them as "reality instructors" who try to impose their view of reality on others. Like the rag-and-bone man, they are also egoist people whose only interest is money. Bradbury describes them with these lines:

> He makes his way among the Reality Instructors, the exotic gallery of those around him who define his madness, interpret his condition, tout the void, offer current versions of being: 'the cheap mental stimulants of Alienation, the cant and rant of pipsqueaks about Inauthenticity and Forlornness'. (Bellow, XVIII)

As the novel proceeds, we realize Herzog is able to face his biggest fears and achieve the true sense of human existence in his mind clash with these figures.

Therefore, it is important to refer to some of them that play crucial roles in Herzog's voyage.

These "reality instructors" are like actors in the social theatre. Madeleine, his second ex-wife, is the leading and central instructor that represents Herzog's antagonistic nature. Herzog talks about her saying "Madeleine was not just a wife but education" (120). She represents the age in general. She is such a character that can quickly adapt her to new conditions. She moves from one role to another. She is a wife, mother, and an intellectual one when appropriate. From Herzog's mouth, she is a bitch, but from Herzog's mistress, Ramona's mouth, she is " a frigid, middlebrow, castrating female" (115). Unlike his first wife, Daisy who symbolizes domesticity, stability, symmetry, and order, Madeleine represents chaos, disorder, and extravagancy. Through her, Herzog has moved into chaos. To tell her chaotic side, Bellow again makes a spatial connection but this time with Madeleine. In one of Herzog's recollections, Herzog talks about Madeleine's chaotic side associating it with the chaotic appearance of their bedroom: "one night in the disorderly bedroom, when they were both naked, and Herzog, lifting the sheet, made a sharp remark about the old books underneath…" (45). This quotation shows the traditional roles have been destroyed for Madeleine. She does not value the holiness of marriage bed. Unlike Herzog who yearns to see traditional family roles, She is the killer of the traditional family. She shows contempt for Herzog's traditional mind:

> Madeleine said quickly, firmly, and accurately, "You'll never get the surroundings you want. Those are in the twelfth century somewhere. Always crying for the old home and the kitchen table with the oilcloth on it and your Latin book. (82)

From Herzog's memories, one can learn about Madeleine's character in detail. She does not have past worth to remember. Her father was once a famous actor who lost all his possessions. She hates him, but she's got all her theatrical talents from him. To Herzog, her catholic conversion is a sign of her theatrical ability: "Conversion was a theatrical event for Madeleine… the art of […], opportunists, would be aristocrats" (75), he says. In one of his recollections, Herzog reminisces how she disguised herself utterly through make-up before she went to work in the Church: "She had a job at Fordham, and the first requirement, to her mind, was to look sober and mature, long in the church" (Bellow, 74) Herzog observes her disguise into an old lady when she has her make-up.

He watches her with careful attention and sees how an expert she is:

> Now she began to apply her cosmetics… She became a woman of forty- some white, hysterical, genuflecting hypochondriac of the church aisles… the parts had been distributed. She had her convert's face… (74)

One can see Madeleine as Herzog's mentor in his Self-improvisation. The difference is Herzog's is a distanced role-playing while Madeleine's is unconscious and internalized.

Madeleine's theatricality is not limited to her appearance. It diffuses into her words and actions. In their flirtation days, Herzog remembers, Madeleine asked him to marry in the church and to baptize their child. However we learn from the narrator's comments that all was only demagogue: "when all was said and done, Madeleine didn't marry in the church, nor she baptize her daughter" (79).

Despite her emptied out religiosity, Madeleine is a worldly woman suitable for the contemporary world, which is led by money. Her extravagant expenditure and her interest for material pleasures evidence it:

> For a week or two, Field's delivery truck was bringing jewelry, cigarette boxes', coats and dresses, lamps, carpets, almost daily. Madeleine could not recall making these purchases. In ten days she ran up a twelve — hundred dollar bill. (45)

For Madeleine, all ways are permissible if they lead her to a better social position. Her greedy tendency to material life devoid of morality is the driving force behind Herzog's near-insanity situation. She can be seen as the incarnation of the contemporary society's destructive side. Herzog's observations on Madeleine's cheating words, actions and pretentions in retrospection lead him to comprehend some knowledge about the emptied-out values and illusion of family in the contemporary age. Herzog thought he could keep up a traditional father role in the family. However he has realized that "the family man, father, transmitter of life… was out of fashion" (125). Through Herzog's descriptions in his letters and monologues, one can quite understand that Madeleine is a perfect suit for this new world order.

Herzog goes on digging out in his letters about his failures in his life in order to reach a complete awareness of his turbulent situation caused by the reality instructors, true representatives of the changing dynamics of the contemporary society. As the narrator notes, awareness was his work; extended consciousness was his line, his

business" (111). He is well equipped to bear the sufferings of awareness. Other reality instructors in the novel also represent the contemporary world as Madeleine does. Their indistinct attitudes also confuse Herzog. However, their contributions are undeniable in Herzog's reaching Self-realization. They all instruct him about the pragmatic side of the contemporary age one way or another.

Gersbach, another reality instructor in the novel is his most trustworthy friend. He has stabbed Herzog on his back sleeping with his wife, Madeleine. Whereas Herzog has seen him as the most confident friend in his need. Whenever Herzog needed consultation, he usually got it from Gersbach. Simkin once ridicules him saying, "You named him executer and guardian." Herzog responds, "I did? Yes... I remember now. I guess I did" (130). Herzog suffers from his gullibility in giving too much importance to the values of the past such as family, friendship loyalty…that have already been gone. Like Madeleine, Gersbach also gives him advice about morality and religion. After he knows their betrayal, Herzog says:

> Valentine Gersbach, who also gave me advice and consolation, religion. He brought me books (by Martin Buber). He commanded me to study them. I'm sure you know the views of Buber… God comes and goes in man's soul. And men come and go in each other's souls. Sometimes they come and go in each other's beds, too. You have dialogue with a man. You have intercourse with his wife. You hold the poor fellow's hand. You look into his eyes. You give him consolation. All the while, you rearrange his life. You even make out his budget for years to come. You deprive him of his daughter. (49)

Gersbach gives Herzog some lesson about the social relations in the contemporary age. He gives Herzog a book of Martin Buber to read. Bellow here makes an irony of Martin Buber's philosophy I-thou relationship by turning it into I-it. The ironical situation here is that the one who recommends the book is his best friend, Gersbach who sleeps with his wife secretly. What Bellow intents is to satirize on the erosion of the values in the modern society. He casts aspersions on the commodification of social and humane values. Herzog realizes that Gersbach is another social actor like Madeleine whose words are opposite to his actions. The meanings are emptied out from his words. Friendship, trustworthiness, kinship has no value to them. Herzog, a man of emotions, has turned into an instrument at the hands of these utilitarian social actors. In his letter to Dr. Edvig, he says: "she and Gersbach managed and planned every step I

took. They figured a headshrinker could help to ease me out—a sick man, exceptionally neurotic…" (43).

Dr. Edvig, the Chicago psychiatrist of both Herzog and Madeleine, is another figure that represents the age. Herzog thinks he also betrays him siding with Madeleine because of his sexual inclinations towards her. Herzog describes Edvig in his letter with these lines:

> So, Edvig, you turn out to be a crook too. How pathetic? (...) I was allowed to choose my own psychiatrist. Naturally I picked one who had written on Barth, Tillich, Brunner, etc. Especially since Madeleine, though Jewish, had a Christian phase as a Catholic convert and I hoped you might help me to understand her. Instead, you went for her yourself… (43)

Herzog is disgusted by his protestant Freudianism. In other words, Herzog sees him as a man whose interests are money and sex. Like Madeleine, Edvig also lacks in moral values. He does not have any sense of professionalism.

Likewise, Simkin and Himmelstein, Herzog's New York and Chicago lawyers, are cynical pragmatists that are true representatives of the worldly society. Simkin brazenly describes himself saying, "I'm a greedy old money-grubber—I don't claim I'm a candidate for sainthood, but … well, that's just the frenzy of the world" (131). Simkin instructs Herzog to give up his questioning of truth. Simkin finds it unnecessary. He advises Herzog not to pursue "… the true, the good, beautiful like Herr Goethe" (131). Like Simkin, Himmelstein is devoid of professional dignity. In one of his memories when Madeleine has kicked him out, Herzog remembers staying at Himmelstein's house for a while. During his stay, Himmelstein describes the image of a virtuous figure in the society. The virtuous figure in the contemporary society, he argues, is a whore. He says, "we're all whores in this world" (60). Himmelstein's "whore" concept to describe the contemporary society is highly critical for Herzog to see that this concept is deeply instilled into "the soul of the mob" (60). Herzog realizes that the condemnation of the past has become the heroic feature of the present age. He is getting aware of the fact that virtues of the past such as honor, dignity, and morality… are gone. Though this fact doubles his Self-alienation, he still struggles to survive.

One can encounter lots of reality instructors more than the aforementioned ones above. All figures are in one way or another the incarnations of the alienating forces in

all aspects of society. Herzog dares to face each of them in his quest for Self-realization through his letters, memories and monologues. Though they cause Herzog to recoil, Herzog thinks that they are all able to suit the needs of society best through their characteristic of changing Self with regard to different situations. Herzog's description of Gersbach can be exemplified here:

> … He makes all sorts of people feel that he was exactly what they've been looking for. Subtlety for the subtle, warmth for the warm. For the crude, crudity. For the crooks ,hypocrisy. (...) Whatever your heart desires. Emotiona1 plasma which can circulate in any system. (133)

Herzog implicitly admires Gersbach's changing Self though he lacks in honor and virtue. Here, one may infer that Herzog gradually shifts his anger from others to his own incapability to reconcile his Self with the society. It is important to note here that unlike the degrading narration of the newly born Self in the novels mentioned in Chapter Three, the narration in *Herzog* has a tendency to celebrate the birth of this changing Self though implicitly. While others can be seen as the cause of the protagonists' Self-destruction in the novels analyzed in Chapter Three, they are seen as the driving force for the protagonist's Self-creation in *Herzog*. One may rightly think that the starting point for all the protagonists mentioned here has a nauseating point that has resulted from the fragmentation of what they have regarded as the permanent, fixed, unchanging, central Self. Herzog like the narrator in Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* or *Murphy*'s the eponymous protagonist, Murphy, has had some sufferings in life that have pushed him to question "who are we?" (50). As mentioned before, he has two divorces, the second of whom has left a deep scar on him, custody problem, failures in his job and life. He recoils from all his friends into his house in Ludeyville. To this point, the happenings that have caused their Self-alienation are somehow similar. However, the difference is in their attitudes towards life and death. Unlike the protagonists we have analyzed in Chapter Three, Herzog does not regard life as a lie to be destroyed; rather, he has a positive attitude towards it. Moreover, he rejects the notion of death as the gate to freedom. Herzog's ideas on the rejection of nihilistic tradition towards modern civilization and death corroborate my argument here. In one of his longest letters to Shapiro, a so-called highbrow friend to Madeleine, Herzog harshly criticizes Shapiro's mere aesthetic view of history and his Wastelandish outlook of the modern civilization:

> Are all the traditions used up, the beliefs done for, the consciousness of the masses not yet ready for the next development? (...) But we mustn't forget how quickly the visions of genius become the canned goods of the intellectuals. The canned sauerkraut of Spengler's "Prussian Socialism," the commonplaces of the Wasteland outlook, the cheap mental stimulants of Alienation, the cant and rant of pipsqueaks about Inauthenticity and Forlornness. I can't accept this foolish dreariness. We are talking about the whole life of mankind. The subject is too great, too deep for such weakness, cowardice—too deep, too great, Shapiro. (54)

The quotation above implies that Herzog rejects the pessimistic view of modern life. Like Bellow himself, as mentioned earlier, his mouthpiece, Herzog does not want to be part of the nihilistic tradition that has collapsed upon modern civilization. If one searches for a character as the incarnation of the nihilistic tradition in the novel that upholds our argument, it is worth to mention Herzog's childhood friend, Nachman. In Herzog's letter to Nachman, we learn that he is a nihilistic character who suffers from his wife's death and the illusions of contemporary society. We also notice in Herzog's letter that he resists kneeling before the values of materialist society, what he calls "the fat Gods" (87). To Nachman the modern civilization is "a crude world of finery and excrement" (87). Herzog shockingly observes the transformation of Nachman from a lively childhood to a nihilistic life. To one's realization, it seems that Nachman is a deliberately chosen character in Bellow's design in order to make a critic of this nihilistic legacy of existentialist philosophy. Unlike Herzog who is able to cope with "the mixed condition of life" through his nomadic flight in his letters, Nachman like the protagonists in Chapter Three sees death as the gate to freedom. Deeply sick of this feigned world, he says; "Release me, God, from this meanness" (87). Herzog's response to Nachman shows how positive he is towards life: " it isn't as bad as you make out" (87). This quotation displays Herzog's Self-transformation in positive sense.

Herzog's constructive attitude toward life can also be noticed in his speech about death to Lucas Asphalter, a friend of his. Asphalter mentions Herzog a sort of method in which he needs to imagine himself as a dead man lying in a coffin. Asphalter praises this method with these words:

> It all goes back to those German existentialists who tell you how good dread is for you, how it saves you from distraction and gives you your freedom and makes you authentic. God is no more but Death is. (163)

Herzog criticizes the existentialists' "old-fashioned" attitude once more. He

recommends Asphalter not to “abuse yourself too much” (163). Herzog sees this sort of attitude a threat to “the heart of civilization” (163). He still keeps up his belief in life and others. Despite all treachery others have made on him, he still has faith in them. In Chapter Three, we have studied that the protagonists see others as their hell, however; Herzog sees them as possibilities to a better future: “I really believe that brotherhood is what makes a man human. If "Man liveth not by self alone but in his brother's face..." (164). This quotation hints how Herzog gives value to the others despite all his sufferings he has had from others. As readers, we have come to realize that Herzog is able to overcome his existential nausea and Self-alienation. He tells Asphalter his secret for survival through his chaos:

> What can thoughtful people and humanists do but struggle toward suitable words? Take me, for instance. I’ve been writing letters helter-skelter in all directions. More words. I go after reality with language. (164)

If we speak in Deleuze terms, Herzog’s process of reterritorialization begins when he is aware of the fact that his existence is not one sided. He says, “if existence is nausea then faith is an uncertain relief” (Bellow, 71). In his nakedness of his Self in his deterritorialization process, Herzog resolves how to handle the ambiguities of life. Late in the novel, Herzog in his letter to Dr. Edvig writes: “I am much better now at ambiguities” (182). We realize that he is able to grasp life and the Self originally in multiplicity thanks to his free association of ideas, memories, people, and historical figures in his rhizomic letters. Through them, he regards life as a series of ceaseless connections and ruptures. Towards the end of the novel, after all his confrontations in his letters, Herzog experiences the fear of death in the car accident. In addition to the ones in his letters, his confrontation with death makes him realize that the Self is inherently in pieces. All these happenings help open his eyes and let him see the Self under ceaseless construction. He goes back to his country home and the pleasant weather. He feels he does not need to write any more letters since he is able to bridge his individual Self with the society on the basis of ceaseless ruptures and connections. One thing here to note that the chaotic nature that disturbed him and caused him to write ceaselessly at the onset of the novel finally comforts him in the end and he stops writing.

4.2. Deleuzean Rhizomic Self in Margaret Atwood' *Surfacing*

4.2.1 Introduction

> [woman] is defined and differentiated with reference to man and not he with reference to her; she is the incidental, the inessential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute - she is the Other. (De Beauvoir, 16)

In the presence-absence dichotomy while *Presence* occupies a position of dominance in Western thought based on power relations; *Absence* means the devalued presence by the powerful other in the society. With this idea in mind, the other is always associated with a derogatory meaning: subject-object, man-woman, white-black, culture-nature, and reason-emotion. To put it simply, the other is located in the periphery position orbiting the center, which is dominated by the powerful presence. If this is taken for granted, in the dualistic and patriarchal social order based on power relations, woman's Selfhood has long been exposed to suppression, oppression and has fallen into oblivion in the Western history. Till modern times, in male-oriented society, they have been dressed with roles such as a good wife, an affectionate mother, and a lovely daughter. They have defined themselves only in their reflections from a male figure's mirror (father-husband-son…). While man has been expected to deal with social, intellectual issues, house duties and raising children have been seen within woman's responsibility. They have been labeled as the angel in the house. To say briefly, they have been denigrated, subordinated and shun to periphery position. Deleuze, classified as feminist thinker by some, criticizes the role of woman in the section of his book entitled as "Woman Becoming". He is highly critical of the dualistic social stratum that creates 'opposable organisms' (276). In this section, he argues that woman can only move from being to becoming with the elimination of gender roles that occurs naturally within the multiplicity of modern world (276-78).

Earlier, discussing the postmodern notions of the Self, I pointed to the transformations in the stunning pace of life that have had tremendous effects on the traditional roles of man and woman. One of them is that the multiplicity of roles has led to the breakdown of the dualism in the society. This has a homogenizing effect on the traditional society, which gradually changes into 'Mass Society'. All people disregarding social dualism have turned into what Haraway terms, 'cyborgs' within this new world (57). Within the newly emerged condition, as Deleuze argues, the gate to

Self-becoming has been opened to the devalued other in the society as well. These developments have enabled the debauched groups such as the blacks, the Jews, the women… to awake from a long sleep. They all venture into Self-becoming quests.

As mentioned in Bellow's part above, numerous writers have begun to write novels of Self-discovery. They have been the voices of the suppressed groups in the oppressive society with its alienating forces. Among these writers, while Bellow has been the voice of the Jews, Margaret Atwood, another Canadian origin writer, comes into prominence as the voice of Women. Like Bellow's Jewish protagonists as mentioned in the preceding part, Atwood's heroines, though being victimized by the alienating forces of the oppressive, patriarchal society, struggle for change and Self-becoming. Her heroines do not confine themselves to confront with the forsaken Self-image in the patriarchal history. They even seek out Self-reconstruction that is able to keep up with the social dynamism of the time by surviving through the social and patriarchal exploitations. Within this context, Atwood's visionary of the Self-image that she portrayed in her novels and her non-fiction, *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature* (1972) shows some parallelism with Deleuzean image of Self-becoming or 'rhizomic' Self. To see the contextual parallelism more closely, the novel to be considered in this part is Atwood's *Surfacing* (1972), written in the same year with the aforementioned non-fiction book. To corroborate my argument, I will attempt to trace Deleuzean 'rhizomic' Self in the heroine's Self-becoming quest. The organizational pattern will be the discussion of the author's life, the social context of the novel and finally the novel itself in light of Deleuzean 'rhizomic' Self.

4.2.2. The Autobiographical Context of Margaret Atwood

Margaret Atwood, a well-known author, poet, and critic, was born in Ottawa, Canada in 1939. Atwood spent her childhood years in the wilderness of Northern Quebec because her father was an entomologist. She later remembered how Americans commented on this account of her childhood as "woodsy, isolated, and nomadic" (qtd in Staines, 12). Therefore, it is no surprise to see that Atwood's writing and nature are deeply intertwined. Unlike the scientific tendency of her family, Atwood's desire to have a writing career developed at an early age in her high school years:

> Up to 1956, I'd thought I was going to be a botanist, or, at the very least, a Home Economist . . . There was nothing at Leaside High School to indicate to me that writing was even a possibility for a young person in Canada in the twentieth century. We did study authors, it's true, but they were neither Canadian nor alive . . . I contemplated journalism school; but women, I was told, were not allowed to write anything but obituaries and the ladies' page; and although some of my critics seem to be under the impression that this is what I ended up writing, I felt that something broader was in order. University, in short, where I might at least learn to spell. (qtd in Staines, 13)

Her desire to write was not exposed to any familial suppression. On the contrary, she was highly motivated by her parents. Unlike the society's expectations of the woman to have traditional roles such as good wife, affectionate mother, her mother inspired her disavowal of the society's expectations. Atwood attributes her rejection of the gendered roles in the society to her mother with these lines: "I didn't grow up feeling that being female needed to mean having your feet bound" (qtd in Mehta, 10). With an urge to write, Atwood attended to Victoria College to study literature. Among the lecturers, there was Northrop Frye, one of the most notable literary figures of the time. Most critics of Atwood see Frye's influence behind her frequent use of myths and archetypes in her novels and poetry. As Davidson states, "The new feminism, a myth-centered poetry, Frye's criticism and the growing nationalism of the early sixties all helped to shape Atwood's literary inheritance" (qtd in Mehta, 12).

Later, Atwood began to read her poems at Bohemian Embassy. With her collection of poems entitled as *Double Persephone*, she won the E.J. Pratt Medal in 1961. After her graduation, she first started to study literature at Radcliffe College in Cambridge and then moved to Harvard University. She got her master degree in 1962-63, but she was not able to finish her Ph.D. at Harvard. Her literary career forestalled her academic career.

During her Harvard years, Atwood experienced gender-based contempt. When she mentioned her urge to write to her friends, she observed their facial expression looked creepy. Atwood says, "It was like saying you were going to pee in the men's washroom: either daring or in bad taste" (qtd. in Mehta, 16). Atwood was also shocked to hear one of the libraries at Harvard Universities was only accessible to men. All these gender bias experiences made her quite distressed but at the same time more determined.

In her return to Toronto in 1963, she had different work experiences. Firstly, she worked at a coffee shop and then started at Canadian Fact Marketing. In her free time, she preferred to write poems and novels. In 1964, she published another collection of poems called as *The Circle Game*. She wrote her first published novel, *The Edible Woman*, in 1965 but published in 1969. In 1967, she married to Jim Polk. That year, she got the Governor's General's Literary Award for her collection of poems, *The Circle Game*. One year later, she published another collection of poems, *The Animals in That Country*. In 1970, after her divorce from Jim Polk, she made her second marriage to Graeme Gibson, a novelist. They still live together. They have three children. Her novels will deliberately be spared from the biographical context to give more special attention in the next part.

4.2.3. Margaret Atwood and Her Novels

Atwood has published more than 15 novels till now. All her novels orbit her protagonists' Self-becoming and survival in the oppressive, capitalist society with no exception. In most of her novels, she seeks woman's liberation not only in the destruction of the traditionally created Self-image of the woman, but also in the making of the new Self that would enable woman to cope with the new conditions of the capitalist-consumerist society. She published her fist novel, *The Edible Woman* in 1969. This novel talks about the heroine's struggle against the consumerist patriarchal society. It criticizes the consumer- the consumed relationship in man's attitude toward woman. It discusses the conditions of woman a consumer society. The protagonist, Marian McAlpin suffers from anorexia that means eating disorder. Atwood here associates her gradual loss of the Self with her physical disorder. However, later in the novel, the heroine survives and is able to eat once more despite all tormenting exploitations of woman in the consumerist society. Her Second novel is 1972 novel, *Surfacing*. It can be seen as the visible manifestation of woman's voyage from being to becoming through her confrontations with her past. Like *Surfacing*, her 1976 novel, *Lady Oracle* tells the heroine's Self-creation despite many failures in her life. In 1979 novel, *Life Before Man* talks about the values of the past such as family, loyalty… have faced to extinction in the consumerist society and it emphasizes the birth of a new age. In *Bodily Harm* (1981) and *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), Atwood tells the heroines, Rennie's and Offred's Self-assertions and their reactions against the impositions of the oppressive society. In

Cat's Eye (1989) the heroine, Elaine Risley's quest for Self-realization through questioning of her past is told. Atwood's another novel, *The Robber Bride* (1993), tells the story of a castrating female, Zenia who steals three heroine's husbands. Thanks to Zenia, a worthy enemy to them, these heroines develop Self-understanding about who they really are. *Alias Grace* (1996), awarded by Canada's Coveted Giller Prize, tells the story of Grace Marks who is accused of killing her boss. It is regarded as Atwood's historical novel since it places Canada's culture knitted together with its historical parts. *The Blind Assassin* (2000), awarded with the Booker Prize, is a novel within a novel that depicts the pretentious society, full of treacheries and infidelities. *Orxy and Crake* (2003), regarded as the first of the trilogy, presents the catastrophic results of the genetic interference. It is a critique of today's genetic researchers' playing God. *The Penelopiad* (2005) is the retelling of *Odyssey* from Penelope's and the twelve maids' point of views. *The Year of the Flood* (2009), the second novel of the assumed trilogy, tells the story of two traditional women, Toby and Ren's struggle to adapt to the new world order. *MaddAddam* (2013), regarded as the last novel of the trilogy, concludes the voyage of Toby and Ren with a dramatic but heroic end. *The Heart Goes Last* (2015) is a dystopian novel. The protagonists, Stan and Charmaine seek out Self-redemption by breaking the totalitarian world governed by Positron Project. Atwood's latest novel, *Hag-Seed*, was written last year in 2016. This novel is an exception since the novel's protagonist is a hero named, Felix. The novel tells Felix's incredible fight against the unfair treatments in life and his success by regaining his position as a director at Canadian Theatre Festival.

In brief, Atwood's novels function as a lighthouse to enlighten the reader about the necessity of a new Self-image that is able to accord with the new changing world. In the making of a new Self, her protagonists firstly confront with the alienating forces in the society that have fragmented their traditional selves. Their Self-realization through their confrontations lead them to celebrate the Self-becoming.

4.2.4. The Social Context of Atwood's *Surfacing*

> I live in the society; I also put the society inside my books so that you get a box within a box effect. (Atwood qtd. in Tolan, 1)

There occurred some important developments when Atwood published *Surfacing* in late 1960s and 70s. One of them is that Canada was in the process of

building a national identity. Atwood was one of the greatest literary architects of the nation's Self-awakening. Atwood in *Second Words*, the collection of essays states: "I have always seen Canadian nationalism and the concern for women's rights as part of a larger, non-exclusive picture (282). She associates the situation of oppressed woman under the hegemony of man with the situation of colonized status of Canada under the domination of capitalist America. To speak generally, she became the representative of Canadian literature.

Atwood's non-fiction, *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature* (1972) was her greatest contribution to Canada's national identity and literature. This book aroused great interest in the Canadian literature. In this book, Atwood classifies the victim profile into four categories. In the first category, the victim does not face up to his/her victimization. Secondly, one admits that s/he is a victim, but one attributes one's victimization to outer forces. Thirdly, despite one's acceptance of one's victimization, one ignores its inescapable condition. One's confrontation with one's victimization and survival through it is the last one. Most of Atwood's protagonists fall into the last category. They go beyond fighting it successfully by manufacturing a new Self that responds to the needs of time. As will be studied later, the heroine of *Surfacing* epitomizes this theory.

Surfacing, written in the same year with this groundbreaking non-fiction book can be regarded as the experimental field of this theoretical book. As Tolan argues, Atwood criticizes the colonial ideology, imposed on Canada by America (38). To illustrate this, David, depicted as the embodiment of the colonizing mind of America brings forth the commercial and colonizing impact America has on Canada's natural setting with these lines: "this country is founded on the bodies of dead animals. Dead fish, dead seals... the beaver is to this country what the black man is to the United States. Not only that, in New York it is now a dirty word, beaver. I think that is very significant" (40). As one can see, the colonizer, America, has victimized Canada as they once did to black people. The narrator sees America as the colonizing force that enslaves nature, animals and even humans. At the beginning of the novel, *Surfacing*, the narrator says, "The white birches are dying, the disease is spreading up from the south" (1). What the narrator means saying "the south" is America and where the industrial cities locate. The narrator thinks that Americanism spread like viruses that turn

everything into the commodification of the capitalist system. The narrator does not label the nationality here. On the contrary, she calls anyone, infected with Americanism, as Americans. In *Surfacing*, the narrator sees a heron, shot dead and hung in a crucified position by a group of campers whose boat has a sticker of American flag. She first thought them as the American colonizers. Though she later realizes that they are Canadians, she does not change her attitude towards them as these lines show: "It doesn't matter what country they're from", says the narrator, "they're still Americans" (123). To Tolan, the American frontier motif symbolizes the aggressiveness and the colonizing perspective while Canada symbolizes the survival motif (40). Likewise, the narrator as the embodiment of Canada does not have passive role. She acts in the fourth category, that is, in the survival phase against the colonizing ideology of America.

Moreover, to many critics, Atwood's *Surfacing* has been the subject of ecofeminist studies. Ecofeminism was a newly emerged discourse when Atwood published the novel, *Surfacing*. This newly flourished movement in 1970s focuses on the wholeness and interconnectedness of all living organisms in the universe. It flourished as a fierce attack on the Cartesian duality of the Western world. In this dualistic world, both woman and nature have been explained by means of the rational thought of Cartesian philosophy. Francis Bacon pointed out "nature is like a woman whose secrets should be revealed by force" (qtd in Mies, 176). Furthermore, the Enlightenment, with its emphasis on rational thought pursued a similar attitude. Male dominates the realm of science and rational thought, leading to the exploitation of woman and nature and abuse of their resources to discover their secrets. Thus, revolutionary science, the capitalistic economy and the annihilation of the animistic nature through the spread of Christianity undermined the image of organic cosmos. The sanctified view of nature was overshadowed by the view that nature is a chaos that must be domesticized.

> Nature, as the excluded and devalued contrast of of reason, includes the emotions, the body, the passions, animality, the primitive or uncivilized, the non-human world, matter, physicality, sense, experience as well as the sphere of the faith, irrationality, and madness. (Plumwood, 19)

Nature was rendered to be knowable with a set of Newtonian laws. Nature was reduced to the status of object to be acted upon. Man with colonizing mind struggled to subdue nature/woman, to know her secrets, to tame her wilderness and to put nature to work in the service of human enterprise. As Seager notes, male literary canon is rife

with metaphors of raping the wilderness, penetrating virgin lands, conquering a capricious nature, mastering the wild and subduing the untamed lands (120-130).

On the other hand, Ecofeminism celebrates the life-giving power of woman and nature, which enables the organic wholeness beyond the dualistic understanding based on presence-absence relations. This dynamic system consists of various life forms and diversity. The fact that nature consists of various forms of life interconnected to each other is closely related to woman and the female power of giving birth. What soil stands for in nature is what the womb does for woman. Both soil and womb signify fertility in addition to their capacity to give birth to various species. To Mies and Shiva in their book, *Ecofeminism*, it celebrates woman and nature's creative capacities (499). To others, it involves developing a greater appreciation of interconnectedness, community and immanence to transform our relations with nonhuman nature, generating more harmonious relationships, respect, and intrinsic value for nature.

Life is regarded as an interconnected web, not a hierarchy acoording to Ecofeminists. Human life has no greater value than nonhuman life. In this respect, it is not wrong to claim that one of the theoretical roots of this movement is Deleuze's 'rhizomic' theory. To Alamio, the notion of interconnectedness has its roots in Deleuze 'rhizome', which "connects any point to any other point (Deleuze, 23)", in the universe (Alamio, 135). To Grosz's argument, thanks to rhizomic connection, it is possible to distrupt the binary logic that draws distinct boundaries between the opposites such as culture/nature, mind/body, subject/object, and man/woman (167). Rhizome, which always values the Becoming in the process, dissolves the boundaries and inherently connects non/living states in the universe. This notion is key to understand how Atwood merges the rational/mechanical/masculine world with creative/organic/feminine nature in the main discussion of *Surfacing*.

4.2.5. The Summary of Atwood's Surfacing

The nameless narrator returns to her hometown, Quebec, to search for her lost father after a long time. She goes there with her friends, Joe, her boyfriend, David and Anna, a married couple. Thanks to Evans, a guide, they arrive at her father's island. Tracing clues, she draws the conclusion that her father turns mad, but he is still alive. On the island, they decide to stay for a week. In the meanwhile, we learn that the narrator is an illustrator. She is illustrating a book of fairy tales. Through their

conversations, we are also informed about other characters. We learn Anna always wears make-up upon David's insistence. Joe has proposed to the narrator, but she has refused him telling him that she has left her husband and her child. However, Joe's insistence keeps on throughout the novel.

Paul, an acquaintance of her family visits them with a man called Malmstrom from Detroit Wildlife Agency. Malmstrom wants to buy the island, but the narrator rejects this offer saying to Paul that her father is still alive. David who considers himself a patriot, but actually not in action accuses Malmstrom of working for CIA to exploit Canada. In the mean time, the narrator remembers her past, her family through flashbacks in her family's cabin. Thanks to these flashbacks, she questions the roles of man and woman imposed by the society. Also through her memories of her mother, she gradually comes to realize her mother's natural power. Meanwhile, There in the cabin, the narrator finds her father's map on the table. She sees her father has spotted some locations on it. She realizes that her father was looking for wall paintings in the spotted areas. She and her friends go on a camp to these located areas to see the wall paintings. On their way to campsite, they see a decaying heron, shot dead and hanged by a nylon rope. David records it with his camera for a movie called "Random Samples". The narrator's first impression is that Americans must have killed it. They also encounter a boat with American flag but later they are surprised to see the ones in the boat are Canadians. Despite this, the narrator goes on to label them as Americans. Meanwhile, they cannot see any wall paintings there.

They return to the cabin. The narrator decides to go to the second spotted place on the map. But this time, the wall paintings are under the water. She has to dive to see them. Meanwhile, David forces Anna to strip so that he can record her for his movie. Though the narrator resists his humiliating act towards Anna, he says he does it because she cheats on him. Later, the narrator goes to the lake to dive. In her diving, she sees her aborted child and she feels terrible. When she comes to surface, she sees Joe before her. She changes the story she has told about her leaving husband and child to another story about her affair with a professor and an aborted child.

The narrator's confrontation with the aborted child juxtaposes with the discovery of her father's dead body. She comes on the verge of madness. However, this insane situation lets her become decentralized. She traces her feminine power in her mother's footprints. She begins to search for clues her mother has left to her. She

finds out a painting of her own from her childhood. On that painting, there is a pregnant Mother, with her great "moon" stomach and “opposite to her sits a man with horns on his head. Thanks to this painting, the narrator realizes that the Self constitutes as a ceaseless dynamism of the two sides (feminine and masculine) of the psyche. She sleeps with Joe in the forest to be pregnant again to substitute her aborted child. In the last day, she leaves everything behind destroying everything in the cabin and also David’s film. The narrator, stripping herself of everything, and living like an animal on the island, surfaces the repressed feminine power in her. After her Self-discovery, she feels powerful. She returns as a powerful woman.

4.2.6. The Structural Design of Atwood’s *Surfacing*

Although the structure of Atwood’s *Surfacing* is not as complex as Bellow’s *Herzog*, the contribution it has made to the narrator’s quest for the Self-becoming is highly remarkable. The structure of the novel can be thought as the subverted form of the traditional romance. Unlike the romance where the hero/knight is in search of a grail, usually associated with woman, Atwood subverts this form giving the female an active role and the male a passive one. The narrator in the novel is a heroine who is in search of her lost father. Nina Baym in her essay, written in 1986 sees this quest narrative a necessary form where “a [heroine] will be able to achieve complete Self-definition” (qtd in Tolan, 40). However, unlike the traditional romance, the novel is, as Macpherson compares, like a palimpsest, a rewriteable parchment (33). The text is moving and shifts from one context to another. In other words, the narrator draws a contextual painting to the reader. She erases and reshapes her story depending on the conditions of the context. In one context, she knits a story, which tells she has divorced and left her child with him behind. She still wears her wedding ring around her neck. In another context, the reader faces another story of her adultery of a married art professor and her perforce abortion. The reader also realizes she has not been married before. She just wears the ring to have an easy access to hotels. The narrator excuses this situation saying:

> It was all real enough, it was enough reality forever, I couldn’t accept it, that mutilation, ruin I’d made, I needed a different version. I pieced it together the best way I could, flattening it, scrapbook, collate, pasting over the wrong parts. (137-38)

The shifting points in her story confuse the reader. The reader is totally shaken by the unreliable narrator because of her jigsaw-like narration. A critic of the novel,

Irvine says, "ambiguity pervades the atmosphere of *Surfacing*" (266). This ambiguity obviously seems to be Atwood's deliberate creation. As Bellow did in *Herzog*, Atwood blurs the traditional boundaries of the narrator to make way for the possibilities of the Self-becoming. Through this, As Howell notes, she helps the reader transcend beyond the dichotomies of the Western world (5).

Moreover, to Wilson's claim, the postmodern elements the novel includes such as metafiction, intertextuality, parody, irony and magic realism also help the narrator transgress the distinct boundaries of the rational World (178-180). Allusions to the myths of renewal, fairy tales, werewolves as well as fragmentation, incoherence, inconsistencies in the narration all contribute to the narrator's evolving vision of the Self.

The narrative in the novel also contributes to the narrator's development of a new Self. Kokotalio in his 1983 article argues, the novel seems to be a collection of memories, observations, or opinions (1) rather than a narrative with an ordered structure. Like the narrative in *Herzog*, it accords with the chaotic mind of the narrator and so it moves from one place to another without a causal pattern. This enables the narrator to make free association between the things quickly. Thanks to this non-linear pattern of free association that takes place in the narrator's mind, she is able to grasp the fluidity of the Self at the end of the novel.

4.2.7. Deleuzean 'Rhizomic' Self in Atwood's *Surfacing*

> In Position Four, creative activity of all kinds becomes possible. Energy is no longer suppressed (as in Position One) […] you are able to accept your own experience for what it is, rather than having to distort it to make it correspond with others' versions of it (particularly those of your oppressors). (Atwood, 38)

This quotation, taken from Atwood's theoretical work, *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature* describes the creative non-victim position, as the most dynamic phase in the category of basic victim positions. Within this phase, as Foley argues, the victim is able to overcome the obstacles that have blocked his/her energy. Thus, through the unrestricted desire, the victim transcends his/her victimization in the oppressive capitalist world and is able to create a dynamic, multiple, fluid Self (54). Through Atwood's hypothesis of creative non-victim, the victim destabilizes the traditional, fixed, gendered Self and aims to free interactions from any center. The

striking point here is that Atwood's creative non-victim position seems to bear some parallelism with Deleuzean 'rhizomic' Self. As mentioned before, Deleuzean rhizomic Self does not have a beginning or end. It is always in the middle. In other words, it is always in the process of becoming. Similar to Atwood's creative non-victim hypothesis, the source of Deleuzean rhizomic Self is the creative and dynamic energy that sets the Self free from all constraints. Therefore one can claim that Both Atwood and Deleuze take a positive stance toward the Self-notion and base the Self upon the dynamic interactions and free-flow relations. Within this context, to see the parallelism in both Atwood and Deleuze's Self-notions in more concrete way, this part aims to trace Deleuzean rhizomic Self in one of Atwood's most famous novels; *Surfacing* that best illustrates Atwood's creative non-victim hypothesis. As applied before in Bellow's *Herzog*'s analysis, some key Deleuzean terminologies such as rhizome, deterritorialization, reterritorialization and nomad thought will be used in this part as well.

Like all other protagonists, studied in this thesis, the nameless narrator of *Surfacing* is surrounded with natural and emotional wastelands in a state of disintegrated psyche at the onset of the novel. The destructive relationship with her former lover/husband and the ensuing abortion/the abandoned child has left her emotionally violated and fragmented. Disillusioned with the patriarchal society that has victimized her, the narrator is actually in a quest to alienate herself from this patriarchal entrapment and to renew the wasteland she has created just as a hero sets out in a road of trials to find one's true Self. This nomadic quest helps her confront the existential torments, mainly caused by her past life.

Unlike Herzog's use of unsent letters to survive through his existential nausea and to set his energy free, the narrator in *Surfacing* achieves it in action while keeping track of her lost father. The disappearance of her father, the symbol of patriarchal society gives her an occasion to decentralize her mind and thus putting her unconsciously in the process of deterritorialization. In her symbolic quest, the narrator sets the flashbacks for the reader to show how she ends up with this existential nausea. By using flashbacks to her memories, Atwood here attempts to create a stage to improvise on the narrator's existential throbbing.

The narrator's voyage to her homeland in order to find her father is the

symbolical dimension of her descent into her unconscious to face the memories of the past that have victimized her at the hands of masculine society. Through her memories, the reader witnesses the things that caused her existential torments. The more she digs her memories, the more courageous she becomes to set out the shamanic descent into her dark paths of her unconscious mind.

The narrator calls her hometown as a "foreign territory" (9). Her hometown becomes strange to her. The narrator has lost her sense of belonging in the opening pages of the novel. She is cast adrift. She feels deeply alienated from the rest of the society. She recoils from everything around.

As Bellow did in *Herzog*, Atwood makes a deliberate correlation between the wasteland setting and the narrator's emotional state at the beginning of the novel. It contributes to her rupture with the capitalist society:

> Nothing is the same, I don't know the way anymore. I slide my tongue around the ice cream, trying to concentrate on it, they put seaweed in it now, but I'm starting to shake, why is the road different, he [her father] shou1dn't have allowed them to do it, I want to turn around and go back to the city and never find out what happened to him. (12)

The narrator is afraid to face the fact that everything has changed. Thus, she just wants to leave everything behind and go back to the city life where she can disguise herself. Although it hurts her to see how her homeland that she associates with her childhood has changed, She decides to stay and bear it, which leads her to face her past that caused her Self-alienation.

Like Bellow, Atwood also uses some symbolical figures that represent the alienating forces of the contemporary society. The narrator's companions such as the married couple, David, and Anna, Joe, the narrator's boyfriend and also her ex-lover, her family figures… all contribute to make her voyage understandable for the reader since through their reflections, the reader can possibly realizes the narrator's existential sufferings and Self-alienation.

To begin with the narrator's companions, they represent the superficial, artificial, commoditized values of the contemporary society. At the very beginning of their journey, the protagonist signals the fact that she does not belong to the society she seems to be a part of. She states:

> David says they can't afford a newer one [car], which probably isn't true. He is a good

> driver; I realize that, I keep my outside hand on the door in spite of it. To brace myself and so I can get out quickly if I have to. I've driven in the same car with them before but on this road it doesn't seem right, either the three of them are in the wrong place or I am. (8)

The narrator feels weird among them. The narrator's ironical relationship with Anna evidences this. She remarks, "She's my best friend, my best woman friend; I've known her two months"(10). Their friendship is seemingly close, but actually fake. Atwood here attempts to show the superficiality and artificiality of the social relations in the contemporary society.

The artificiality of social relations can also be observable in the marriage of David and Anna. The narrator first interprets their closeness as the sign of love between them. She even asks Anna "the secret formula" of sustaining a good marriage. Later, She realizes that Anna is another victim. She is pictured as an object with traditional Self-image as a lovely wife. This view is strengthened by her husband's control over her appearance in the novel with these lines. "He [David] doesn't like to see me without it [make-up]," He doesn't know I wear it [make-up]" (44). She needs to mask her real face; that is, her real Self, with make-up. However, she has been doing this for so long that she thinks David does not even recognize that this is not her real face:

> I get dressed as fast as possible and go out to start the fire. Anna is there, still in her sleeveless nylon nightgown and bare feet, standing in front of the wavery yellowish mirror. There's a zippered case on the counter in front of her, she's putting on makeup. I realize I've never seen her without it before. (43)

David wants her to cover herself with an artificial face. He wants her to always have a good appearance, which signals woman's association with tenderness, emotions and beauty. Her face is transformed into another face, an artificial one shaped by a man's desires. She is also a Self-alienated figure like the narrator, but she is a passive victim that might be categorized in the second phase in Atwood's basic victim positions. In this phase, as mentioned earlier, the victim is aware of his/her victimization. However, s/he does not get into action. Anna's passivity can best be seen in her reaction to the narrator's illustrations of fairy tales. She says, "They shouldn't let kids have stuff like that" (58) since she knows the illusion of "living happily forever" would eventually destroy their dreams. Through Anna, Atwood criticizes the woman image, created in man's gaze.

In their marriage, if Anna represents the victimized side in the society, David is a tyrannical figure from the ground up. He is the embodiment of the colonizing mind of the capitalist society. He is a seemingly patriotic figure of Canada. His words attack the American capitalism but his action is quite American. Throughout the novel, he calls Americans as "Rotten capitalist bastards- the fascist pig Yanks" (9). However the narrator says he has a "Woody Woodpecker laugh" and he loves baseball (138). She also says "Second-hand American was spreading over him in patches" (152). Vevaine in her article depicts him as "garbled" and infested" with American life (91).

David does not give value to marriage. He humiliates Anna saying, "What I married was a pair of boobs, … [He] gave a Woody Woodpecker laugh" (Atwood, 138). His demeaning behavior towards woman is best seen in his force of Anna to strip for his movie called "Random Samples" that he is filming with Joe. Camera here has a symbolical significance. Atwood aligns it with the gaze of male. The narrator feels outrageous before this humiliating event. Towards the end of the novel, she breaks the camera into pieces and throws it into lake although Anna warns her saying "you better not do it he'll kill you" (177). The narrator's rebellious action shows that she is moving from being to becoming.

The narrator's covert story of adultery and abortion, later surfaced in the novel also contributes to her Self-isolation from the society. We learn through the narrator's interior monologues that she is an illustrator of children's books. However, her ex-lover, another symbolical figure of the male-dominated society like David, has aborted her creativity mentally and physically. Her ex-lover, a married art professor, has made her pregnant. Then he has forced her to abort the child. Moreover, he has imposed man's language on her since he thinks woman's language is wrong. As the narrator says, "lettering was one of the things he taught" (41). However later in the novel, through her critical reflections to her memories, the narrator recognizes that man's unreliable language represents the patriarchal world where woman is oppressed. She remembers "he said he loved me, the magic word, it was supposed to make everything light up, I'll never trust that word again" (41). She realizes that the language does not belong to her. As the novel proceeds, when she hears the same words second time by her present boyfriend, Joe, she responds saying, "it was the language again, I couldn't use it because it wasn't mine" (100). As Macpherson argues, the realization of this fact doubles her Self-alienation (47).

Her relations with her family are similarly fundamental in showing her distancing from the existing society. She feels a great aloofness between herself and her family and she feels the restlessness this breach creates. She notes "that won't work, I can't call them "they" as if they were somebody else's family: I have to keep myself from telling that story" (14) She not only calls her parents "they" but is muddled about her own fragmented Self. She states:

> I look around at the walls, the window; it's the same, it hasn't changed, but the shapes are inaccurate as though everything has warped slightly. I have to be more careful about my memories, I have to be sure they're my own and not the memories of other people telling me what I felt, how I acted, what I said [...] (73)

As said earlier, she does not have a sense of belonging, either to her parents or to her past. Her sense of belonging is distorted. She does not even have a name. She is isolated in the male-oriented world in which men want to dominate and control women by their vicious masculine power. This can be best illustrated in her relationships with her father and brother. Through the narrator's observations, we see how they are distanced from each other.

The reader may find out that there seems to be a gap between she and her brother, since her brother seems as one of "the others" for her. The narrator's recollections to her brother are related to her brother's interest to military power and destructiveness, which is one of the reasons why she criticizes the patriarchal society.

> It was my brother's: explosions in red and orange, soldiers dismembering in the air, planes and tanks; he must have been going to school by then, he knew enough to draw little swastikas on the sides. Further on there were flying men with comic-book capes and explorers on another planet; he spent hours explaining these pictures to me. (90)

However young a male child is, his imagination reflects his identification with the roles of the explorer to conquer another planet or a soldier with his gun. She also remembers her brother dissecting animals in his so-called laboratory: "He kept them in jars and tin cans" (125).

Like her brother, her father also symbolizes patriarchal rationalism in the society. The narrator's father has deep knowledge about trees and vegetation. In his house she finds:

> [...] a lot of paperbacks on the shelves in the bedrooms, detective novels mostly, recreational reading… He admired what he called the eighteenth century rationalists… (38)

Her father is seen as the Renaissance man of the rational mind who believes in the superiority of man and his knowledge over nature. The narrator follows the footsteps of his father. She trails her father's locations in the island. As she follows her father's footsteps, she realizes that there is something missing in his father's approach to find out the cause of her Self-infliction. She does not gain a new insight to recover her fragmented Self. She needs to question her father's status. The narrator realizes she cannot release herself from the male orientation toward logic as long as she believes him to be a kind of god. Logic provides her with psychological defense mechanism to disguise her wounded Self in armor but as for healing the Self, she understands logic is inadequate. What she discovers is that knowledge and logic, qualities of the so-called rational world of man, are insufficient.

Her shamanic descent into the lake to find out her father's body enables the narrator to face off her aborted child whom she repressed deep in her psyche. It is interesting to note that Atwood juxtaposes the surfacing of her father's dead body and her repressed feelings. Kristeva terms this intersecting point as "abjection". To Kristeva, abjection occurs when the repressed feelings surface. She also notes that the abject blurs the vision between the other and I. Kristeva asks, "How can I be without border?" her answer is through death (qtd. in Tolan, 83). The narrator's confrontation with her father's death enables her to reach and surface her repressed psyche.

The dive into the lake is not only the surfacing of the unconscious, but also a vivid realization of the failure of the logical, male-dominated world and its Logos oriented consciousness. As Wall suggests, the failure of the narrator to conform to the contemporary society to which her ex-lover, her father, David and the Americans represent takes her to another path for her quest (165).

The narrator does not know what to do once she abandons the male centered logic. After the failure of logic, she needs to know "how to act." Surfacing of the repressed psyche after her dive into the lake leads her to a search for the feminine knowledge. Now disillusioned with the male approach to her problems, she seeks the guidance of her mother. However, the narrator finds no connection to her mother. The

narrator says her mother has a world of her own in which she keeps diaries and she does not uncover herself even to her daughter. Thus, the narrator and mother lack a close mother and daughter relationship. When her mother is dead, the narrator is in need of a sign of her mother's love towards her in her diary. However, she cannot find it. She remarks, "When I got outside I leafed through it, I thought there might be something about me, but except for the dates the pages were blank, she had given up months ago" (22). She is disillusioned when she faces the fact that her emotionally calmed mother did not write about her in her diary even before she died. Her estrangement from her mother affects her psychology badly. The narrator's feminine origin is highly repressed under her father's masculine, rational power.

However, the narrator still pursues the female knowledge of her mother, who is symbolically identified with nature, the body, and the feminine and emotion. Atwood has embodied the narrator's mother with many qualities of the Great Goddess. She is part of the natural world, part of its cycles, which she records and reflects; her illnesses are only "natural phases" (35); she disappears into the forest during the afternoons she spends alone. The narrator thinks she has enigmatic powers. The most reminiscent episode is the one in which she seems to cast a spell over a hungry bear: "She yelled a word at it that sounded like 'Scat!' and waved her arms, and it turned around and thudded off into the forest ... She knew a foolproof magic formula: gesture and word" (79).

The narrator's mother has discovered the power of silence against man's logo centric language. Through the narrator's memories, we learn that she gives no answers. Part of her mystery is her powerful silence and her gestures. It is her gestures and silence that make the narrator, feel sure that she has answers. The childhood picture that her mother has saved and purposefully misplaced provides the narrator with guidance, yet she must be able to read the picture; in fact, the picture itself comes from her: "It was mine; I had made it" (158). The drawing literally depicts the narrator's birth, but she perceives it to be a vision of her rebirth as well. The drawing depicts the pregnant Mother, with her great "moon" stomach and "opposite to her sits a man with horns on his head" (165). The narrator turns her attention from the sun, her father to the moon, her mother. The pictograph has given her the formula for reconstructing her fragmented Self.

The narrator tries to set the balance between the moon and the sun by having a ritual union with the substitute God, Joe when she seduces Joe that evening. Joe can impregnate her and "undo" the most wasteful act of her past; only she can rescue and save herself. Consequently, as Wall notes, it is she who takes the sexual initiative, not Joe. Atwood echoes this by giving her female heroine some of the god's power, his knowledge, his logic, as well as allowing her to lead Joe into the forest on the night of their union (167).

As Wall states, the moon in great myths is usually pictured in the moments of initiation or rape of the female figure. But in this scene, both the moon and the sun are evoked: "I lie down, keeping the moon on my left hand and the absent sun on my right" (161). As in the drawings from her childhood, which indicate a continual preoccupation with fertility and renewal, the moon is placed on the left. It is associated with the unconscious and the intuitive. The sun on the right is associated with consciousness and reason. As Wall argues, what the narrator is seeking is a balance between the two principles of Logos and Eros, of sun and moon (167). Hutcheon similarly thinks that the narrator seeks out a marriage between masculine and feminine qualities, between logic and intuition (144).

The rebirth of her wounded psyche is to come in the form of the child she believes she has conceived. As she and Joe make love, and her aborted child surfaces, the emotional wounds inflicted by the abortion and her past begin to heal. The narrator thinks that the coming birth of the child will signal the birth of a new Self: "The baby will slip out as easily as an egg, a kitten, and I'll lick it off and bite the cord, the blood returning to the ground where it belongs; the moon will be full, pulling. In the morning I will be able to see it: it will be covered with shining fur, a god, I will never teach it any words (Atwood, 165).

The narrator experiences an exile, but it is an exile she chooses. What she chooses to separate herself from is the image of woman, which Anna represents. The objective of her exile is a discovery of the balance and poise needed in the very threatening real world. She must achieve this sense through identifying with the natural world. As one can realize, the narrator moves from victim position to a creative one. She no more takes shelter in the past or the patriarchal world. By breaking David’s

camera, she has destroyed the woman image, created through male's gaze. It can be inferred that the narrator moves from the reflected object in the mirror to a reflecting one, not like a mirror, but like a lens. Atwood refers to the difference between mirror and lens with these lines:

> A lens isn't a mirror. A lens can be a magnifying or a focusing lens, but it doesn't merely give a reflection… I recognize my work more as a distillation or a focusing. (qtd in Tolan, 8)

As Wilson rightly argues, the narrator is able to negate the patriarchal gaze and consequently is able to get an artist vision with a magnifying lens (178). Her self-awareness of her Self-creativity puts her into re-territorializing her fragmented Self. As Wall also notes, wanting to grow fur, wanting to give birth like an animal, wanting most of all to discard and transcend human boundaries of house, garden, paths, essentially results from her creative vision (168). Decentralizing her Self with a new vision and moving beyond the victim position to creative one, the narrator is able to identify with the nature outside. When she is outside in the nature, the narrator realizes, "everything is made of water, even the rocks" (181). The water image here symbolizes the fluidity, the multiplicity in nature. In other words, it does not have any central point to orbit. It is a place where free-flowing relations, free interactions are possible. She also realizes that despite this plurality, everything is so interconnected and interdependent to each other in nature. She wants to merge with it. She says, "I lean against a tree, I am tree leaning" (181). The fact is that her evolutionary interaction the narrator develops with nature implies the rhizomic one. Though the narrator and the tree belong to the different realms as the wasp and the orchid do, they share a common zone of proximity where classification is indiscernible.

Consequently, the narrator becomes part of the forests (181). The narrator's rhizomic Self develops as a result of her transgression beyond her dualistic psyche. Roberta Rubenstein notes the narrator's efforts to balance the masculine and feminine within herself with these lines: "In establishing identification with both the feminine (maternal, generative) and masculine (knowledge, wisdom) principles, she generates her own creative potentiality through rejoining the severed halves of her being." Her mother and father, the sun and the moon, are part of what she seeks -- a workable balance between the masculine and the feminine (398). As Wall states, stepping into her father's

footprints, feeding the jays as her mother did, she is able to see the dynamic relation of the two sides of her psyche. (169)

The narrator calls herself a place where she can bring her fragmented parts together and hence creating an organic unity in multiplicity. “I must be getting used to it [hunger], soon I will be able to go without food altogether (186). Once she purifies herself from the artificial city habits, she completely identifies herself with nature. “I am not an animal or a tree, I am the thing in which the trees and animals move and grow, I am a place” (181). The narrator becomes a rhizomic place where endless possibilities might occur.

In brief, the narrator’s shamanic descent into her repressed psyche in order to redeem herself from the chains of the patriarchal society brings her closer to nature where she is able to achieve the Self in multiplicity and where she is able to find the organic wholeness in Self-multiplicity. This eventually sets the balance between the feminine and masculine sides in the psyche. Thanks to this, she finds the healing power within her to restore the existing wasteland.

4.3. Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to show the proto/types that unconsciously have been able to achieve the realm of the ‘rhizomic’ Self in two postmodern novels by two Canadian origin novelists: *Herzog* by Saul Bellow and *Surfacing* by Margaret Atwood. Both novelists are nomadic and displaced figures. Their nomadic lives let them witness the shifting tensions of the period closely. They both employ the crushing effects of the capitalist-consumerist postmodern world on the Self-fragmentation in their novels. However, we have observed in their selected novels that both of them have taken a positive stance towards the Self-multiplicity, a postmodern condition. They both reject the wasteland outlook and the nihilistic view of the Self in their novels. Thus, I have aimed to observe that their view of the Self has some resemblances with Deleuzean rhizomic Self though not directly. Within this context, I have attempted to trace the protagonists’ existential quest for the Self in light of Deleuzean rhizomic Self.

We have observed that the protagonists in both novels, though unconsciously, are able to develop the rhizomic Self that regards life as ceaseless ruptures and connections. We have also realized that both protagonists’ existential torments are

mainly brought up by their past lives. Therefore, we have come to conclude that both protagonists have attempted at self- reconstruction by first experiencing an existential crack and then delving into their past.With the necessary insight into the protagonists' grasping life as the endless possibilities of the existence and as the dynamic interplay of the destructive and creative forces in one's mind and society, we have come to realize that both protagonists are able to cope with the inherently fragmented Self. Unlike the protagonists, Murphy and the Narrator we have discussed in Chapter Three, who saw Self-destruction as an inevitable end to break the life-illusion and to become a mote in darkness of chaos, the protagonists in both novels, discussed in this chapter are able to cling to life rather than yielding to chaos despite their disjointed minds.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this dissertation, as stated in the introduction, was to trace the shift in Self-notion from modern to postmodern period in general and specifically from Sartrean 'no-Self' to Deleuzean 'rhizomic' Self in four selected novels; Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl*, Samuel Beckett's *Murphy*, and Saul Bellow's *Herzog*, Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing*. We hope to have achieved this through the analysis of the protagonists 'existential quests for Self-discovery amidst the changing dynamics of the contemporary societies in which they have lived.

To begin with, this study has firstly investigated the historical background of the Self from the medieval period to the postmodern period in order to render the main argument of this study more comprehensible. The results we have found through our investigation have revealed that the Self might be exposed to constant change due to the effects of the changing social, ideological, economical forces in each relevant period. Therefore, our observations have shown that different interpretations of the Self have flourished in different periods. We have found out that in early modern period, the Renaissance Self who became a Godlike figure regarded himself as the measure of all things after he lost his home in God. We have also examined the social, economical, ideological forces that necessitated the birth of Renaissance Self in the early modern period. In the Enlightenment, we have observed the shift in the vision of the Self from early modern period to the Enlightenment. It has been explored how the boundless energy of the Renaissance Self was reshaped according to the mechanic aesthetic and the rationalists' movement of the time. It has also been noticed that the boundless energy of the Renaissance Self was canalized into the rational boundaries and thus, the Self began to be perceived to have a dualistic nature. In the romantic period, we have witnessed the rise of the romantic Self with its ever-creating form against the

mechanical life. In the modern period, we have realized that Self-fragmentation increased due to the effects of the bloody world wars, colonization, and pervasive materialism. The Self eventually began to be associated with nihilism and nothingness in general. In this aspect, we have dealt with Sartrean 'no-Self' to see the nihilistic air that collapsed on the modern period. This study has attempted to take a critical stance towards Sartre's 'no-Self ' theory as pessimistic, nihilistic, destructive and reductive as the general critical reception of Sartre has. In this line of thought, we have argued that Sartre's 'no-Self' sees life and the Self as illusions to be destroyed. Therefore, we have attempted to show its failure to cope with the constant dynamism in one's mind and the society. In the postmodern period, however, we have realized that the complex network of relations due to the mass media, swift transportation in the consumerist world have introduced a wide range of Self-notions. We have seen that the postmodern Self-theorists have adopted the positive stance toward life and the Self and celebrated the Self-fragmentation as Self-becoming since they have seen life and the Self originally in fragments. Within this frame, we have featured Deleuzean 'rhizomic' Self. We have studied that Deleuzean 'rhizomic' Self has drawn attention to the Self that is multiple, changeable, fluid, nomadic, and situational. In this aspect, we have aimed to show Deleuzean 'rhizomic' Self might be seen as an alternative to Sartre's 'no-Self'. We have also aimed to show Deleuzean rhizomic Self might be a remedy for the suicidal and nihilistic man in order to keep up with the stunning pace of life in the contemporary world rather than yielding to the total destruction of the Self.

To corroborate this argument, this study has mainly attempted to trace the shift in Self-interpretation from modernism to postmodernism in general and from Sartre to Deleuze specifically in two modernist novels, Sadegh Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* and Samuel Beckett's *Murphy* and in two postmodernist novels, Saul Bellow's *Herzog* and Margaret Atwood's *Surfacing*.

What is common in all four novelists is that these novelists have witnessed the existential angst their contemporary societies have suffered amidst the social, ideological, economical transformations of the relevant time. Through their novels with multi-layered structure that reflect the complexity of contemporary modern societies, we have realized that they all at the bottom attempt to seek out ways to struggle with the Self-crisis.

Moreover, they all attempt to show the fragmentation of the traditional Self within the new social dynamics of their contemporary societies no matter what approaches they have towards the Self. Upon Self-fragmentation due to the traumatic pace of modern life, the protagonists in the selected novels are all described as displaced, self-alienated and dissociated from their social environments at the onset of the novels. They all have lost their shelter in God, family, traditional roles mostly because of the social, cultural, ideological and economical undercurrents in the society they lived. Thus, they are all depicted as Self-questers. Consequently, the selected novels in this study have had similar points at the center.

However, to our realization, as also mentioned earlier, the similar roads taken by the novelists have come to divergent ones in the selected novels in terms of their modernist and postmodernist interpretations of the Self. As noted before, while Hedayat and Beckett have shared similar nihilistic views with the modernists, specifically with Sartre on the Self, Bellow and Atwood have developed a positive attitude and thus celebrate a life through a Self in 'becoming', inherently in fragments as most postmodernists, specifically Deleuze has. This point has allowed us to see how different interpretations of the Self might develop regarding the conditions of the relevant time. Therefore, considering the novelists' similar stances with regard to Sartrean no-Self and Deleuzean rhizomic Self, this study has classified Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* and Beckett's *Murphy* in one category and Bellow's *Herzog* and Atwood's *Surfacing* in another. Therefore the comparative nature of this study has mainly attempted to trace whether the selected novels have shared any similarities/differences in terms of the Self-notions with Sartre's 'no-Self' and Deleuzean 'rhizomic' Self. With this aim in mind, the protagonists have been compared and contrasted within the same novel and across other novels, discussed in this study.

In our discussion of Hedayat's *The Blind Owl*, and Beckett's *Murphy* in Chapter Three, this study has attempted to reveal how the affinity in both novelists' view of the Self aligned them with Sartrean 'no-Self'. We have observed that both novelists have experienced psychological and existential traumas in the aftermath of the wars during the national awakening years. Both nurtured particularly from French existentialism that is decadent, nihilistic, and reductive. In addition, in their novels, we have realized that it is possible to see the novelists' own existential cries in disguise of the protagonists

throughout the novel. We have seen that both novels for both writers are the fictional settings where they can make their own existential quests to highlight their nihilistic view of the Self.

Moreover, in both novels, we have noticed that the heroes' existential cracks in their lives resulted from their detachment of the Self from the outside world. As we have seen that both heroes feel as if they are the living corpses caged in the material world. Both become strangers to their surroundings since they both have perceived that life is a meaningless bunch of prefigured performances as Sartre argues. Therefore, they both have attempted to seek escape from the predetermined roles the society has imposed on them.

We have also observed that both heroes' existential quests have been trapped in Cartesian duality of mind and body. They believe they can find freedom in the pure consciousness detached from everything as Sartre claims it in explaining his theory of nothingness. To achieve this, they both eventually realize that death is the ultimate solution to set man's socially suppressed energy free.

What's more, both characters attempt to cut off all connections with the outside world around in order to get to know themselves. However, as we have recognized, the methods they have used gradually drift them to nothingness. Each time they look for a purpose in life, they find themselves closer to Self-destruction. To illustrate, Murphy gets a job in a mental hospital called Mercyseat where he commits suicide. On the other hand, the narrator in the *Blind Owl*, gets reduced to gradual destruction as he states: "the wounds eat into the soul like cancer and grind it down little by little in seclusion" (quoted in Hamshad, 15).

The results we have concluded from both novels have revealed that neither of the protagonists can cope with the existential nausea since they could not see life as the constant fight between the antithetical forces in one's mind and society. In other words, they could not grasp life based on ceaseless deconstruction and reconstruction. As Wylie says to Neary; "Humanity is a well with two buckets, […], one going down to be filled, the other coming up to be emptied" (Beckett, 58). Neither Murphy nor the narrator in *The Blind Owl* is able to see this fact. They attempt to strip the Self bare from the outside world. In this reductionist method, what they have found out is no-Self.

On the other hand, we have attempted to trace Deleuzean rhizomic Self in two postmodernist novels, Bellow's *Herzog* and Atwood's *Surfacing* in Chapter Four. Though indirectly, we have witnessed that both novelists' positive view of Self-multiplicity in both novels has some resemblance with Deleuzean 'rhizomic Self'. Both novelists like Deleuze reject the wasteland painting of the contemporary age and the nihilistic tradition that has prevailed in the aftermath of the wars. We have mentioned before that they both experienced the wind of positive change toward the Self in the 60s. Therefore, they both aimed at dumping the nihilistic tendency toward the Self.

Moreover, we have also observed that both Canadian origin novelists are keen observers of their contemporary age and its great impacts on the widening fragmentation of the traditional Self. Through their complex narrative and narration skills as noted earlier, they both highlight the Self-crisis, experienced amidst the changing conditions of the contemporary life. Therefore both protagonists in both novels deeply suffer from the Self-crisis at the onset of the novel.

We have explored that both protagonists have some characteristics in common. Both Herzog and the nameless Narrator have inferior positions in their contemporary age. While Herzog is a Jewish, the nameless narrator is a female heroine. Both of them feel suppressed in the capitalist-consumerist society. Also, they both suffer from the existential nausea, caused by their past. Therefore, both of them are already displaced in mind and action at the onset of the novel. However, unlike the protagonists we have studied in Chapter III who have yielded to Self-destruction, both Herzog and the nameless narrator struggle to survive through the Self-crisis and to develop a new sense of the Self that is able to cope with the stunning pace of life. In doing so, they become nomads in mind and action. While Herzog uses his letter writing to cope with the existential torments that have agonized his Self, the nameless narrator does it in action through her search for her lost father. Through their nomadic flights, as we have noticed, both protagonists are unconsciously able to achieve the rhizomic Self, based on ceaseless ruptures and connections. We have realized that both protagonists are eventually able to grasp life and the Self as the dynamic interplay between the destructive and creative forces in one's mind and the society unlike Beckett's Murphy and Hedayat's Narrator in Chapter Three who regard life and the Self as illusions to be destroyed. Through their awareness of the dynamism of the forces in one's mind and the

society, both of them are able to regard Self-becoming or rhizomic Self as the inherent condition of life. Toward the end of the novel, we have noticed that both protagonists are able to develop rhizomic connection with the nature, which seemed chaotic to them at the onset of the novel. Through the rhizomic connection, they are able to find solace and salvation and also able to come to terms with the society without accepting the social conformity.

Let us now try to see some alternative Self theories that point to the same issue, raised in this thesis. Bertalanffy in his *General System Theory* defines the Self as a construct, engineered by the functioning understanding of the capitalist system. To his system theory, the Self is a self-regulating machinery like computers. It has to be "mechanized, conformist, controlled and standardized" (Bertalanffy, 13). Similarly, Sorokin compares the Self to a cogwheel in the system that can easily be controlled by the dominating forces in the society (Sorokin, 558). Kennedy terms this puppet like Self as the "protean" Self (Kennedy, 10). The romantic Self is thought of an inappropriate entity for this functioning system. Thus, social systems have designed their structures in such a way to rehabilitate the rebellious individual. Such systems also consider that the flexible notions of the Self that celebrate the multiplicity pose a huge threat to the big machine. Therefore, It is the system that tries to familiarize the individual with the possibilities of a protean mode of the Self and existence. Because of this notion, the individuals are canalized into the predetermined spaces, roles by the totalizing institutions of the society. On the other hand, the individual sees the protean mode of the Self as a threat to his uniqueness. S/he attempts to break the roles, imposed on them.

In the novels, discussed in this study, it is possible to see the protagonists' struggle to distance themselves from these predetermined roles. They have showed that they all reject to be the willing prisoners of the society. All are aware of the fact that the institutionalized roles, prefigured by the society are used as a means to suppress the unbridled energy of the Self. That is, they all realize that the social systems perceive the unconditioned Self or the romantic Self as a potential threat to the social conformity, so the social systems use the Protean Self or the prefigured roles to control the boundless energy of the romantic Self. In this study, the Protean Self manifests himself as the reality instructors of the existing order such as the odds-and-ends seller in *The Blind Owl*, Murphy's Celia in *Murphy*, Herzog's wife, Madeleine in *Herzog*, or David in

Surfacing. They internalize the predetermined roles so willingly that they become the willing prisoners and ironically the guardians of the existing order.

To Smith, this conflict between the individual and the society can also be evaluated in light of Hegel's syllogism, (the universal, the particular, and the individual) that he explained in his book, *Scicence of Logic*. Smith attempts to analyze the conflict between two extremes in association with Greek tragedy and comedy (Smith, 24-30). In his discussion, Smith points out that in Hegelian form of tragedy, the gods ('the capital system' in secularized form) act like a kind of controlling mechanism that limits the any possible free acts of the individual. But he also adds that Gods are just the illusory masks the actors have to perform on the stage. Due to the deeply internalized roles, any attempt to unmask the illusion leads to Self-destruction. In Hegelian sense, Smith discusses that this kind of reductive attempt is a failure before any possible reconciliation between the universal and the individual. The reason behind this failure, Smith sees, is the perception of the Gods as the alien force (Smith, 34). However, Smith champions Hegelian sense of comedy for a path to celebrate the possible reconciliation. He argues that the actors slip off the masks of Gods at the end of the play and realizes that the Gods or illusions are of their creations. This unmasking of the illusions as a Self-distancing act to roles helps materialize this reconciliation possible (Smith, 126).

We have seen that the protagonists' attitudes towards such fact of having to act in social roles vary in the novels we have studied. As we have studied in Chapter Three, both the Narrator in *The Blind Owl* and the eponymous protagonist of *Murphy* regard the social life as the absolute illusion or in Sartrean terms, "bad faith". For both Murphy and the Narrator, life is just a social stage of acting predetermined roles to suppress the unconditioned freedom. Both believe that wearing masks in the illusory life means the denial of this unconditioned freedom. Therefore, they both seek freedom in the utter destruction of life and the Self. Their solipsistic, destructive and nihilistic nature results from this fact. To speak in general terms, as Kennedy notes, the modern novels feature the solipsistic and suicidal tendency to seek out ways to release the unbridled freedom from the castrating social constraints of life (47). Consequently, both protagonists totally refuse to act in the society. On the other hand, both Herzog in Bellow's *Herzog* and The Narrator in Atwood's *Surfacing* do not totally deny playing roles in the society due to their realization of the outside world of others. Both accept the recognition of the

external world of others beyond their consciousness. Therefore, both see the necessity of acting to sustain the social relations in the society. However, to both, playing roles can only be justifiable if they are consciously held. In other words, both Herzog and the Narrator actively engage in the creative side of the Self-dramatization that gives way for Self-becoming or rhizomic Self unlike the reality instructors who internalize the society's predetermined roles. Both are able to act in distanced role-playing to attain the realm of rhizomic Self. Thus this distanced role-playing as a means of rhizomic Self, enables both Herzog and The Narrator to be able to keep up pace with the world of others without accepting the accepted moral values of the period. Consequently, it can be said that role-playing can be evaluated in two possible contexts with regard to Smith's discussion of Hegelian tragedy and comedy. Distanced Self-dramatization serves for the creative realm of rhizomic Self while the latter, the internalized acting of predetermined roles makes the way for the protean Self that seems to function as a castrating means of social systems in order to paralyze Self-becoming. In this respect, the results have revealed that unlike the elegiac or suicidal tones in the aforementioned novels towards the loss of Self-creativity or Self-multiplicity, one can find a more positive tone that celebrates Self-becoming or rhizomic Self in both Bellow's *Herzog* and Atwood's *Surfacing*.

The primary contribution this dissertation has hoped to make is to let readers observe the shift in Self-interpretation from modernism to postmodernism in general and specifically from Sartrean 'no-Self' to Deleuzean 'rhizomic' Self in four selected novels. This dissertation has enabled the readers to see how Deleuzean rhizomic Self might be seen as a more positive alternative to Sartrean no-Self that is interpreted as reductive, destructive, nihilistic by Sartre's critical reception. Thanks to the comparative nature of this study, the readers have found the chance to trace this argument in the cases of four protagonists in four selected novels. In their tracing, as discussed above, the readers have found out that Herzog in Bellow's *Herzog* and the nameless Narrator in Atwood's *Surfacing* have seen life and the Self as a fluid, multiple network of endless possibilities through their creative Self-dramatization while the Narrator in Hedayat's *The Blind Owl* and Murphy in Beckett's *Murphy* have had nihilistic inclinations toward life and the Self. The readers have also witnessed that in times of crisis, Herzog and the Narrator in Chapter Four are able to cling to life through their nomadic flights and

rhizomic connections while the Narrator and Murphy in Chapter Three are reduced to Sartrean nothingness with suicidal acts. The comparative approach towards the existential quests of the protagonists in the selected novels in light of Sartrean no-Self and Deleuzean rhizomic Self has eventually let the readers realize that Herzog and the Narrator in Chapter Four are able to synthesize the antithetical forces in life and the Self. They are able to realize the dynamism in life and the Self unlike Murphy and the Narrator in Chapter Three who focus on the destructive side of their quests and ultimately fall into Sartrean chaos. As a result, this dissertation has attempted to help the readers see the source of existence as the dynamic interplay between the opposing forces in one's mind and in the society.

This dissertation has some limitations in terms of its interdisciplinary nature and its generalizability. Due to the interdisciplinary nature, this thesis only negotiates the key points related to the study's main argument rather than discussing the detailed analysis of the selected novels. Co-existing different approaches from different scopes is highly difficult as well as creative. As for the generalizability of the study, only four novels are selected analyzed in order to trace the shift in Self-interpretation from modernism to postmodernism in general and from Sartrean no-Self to Deleuzean rhizomic Self specifically. Therefore, this shift should be traced in more novels to corroborate this study's argument in more concrete and general level. My humble hope is that these limitations make the way for more productive studies in the future.

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