

**ÇANKAYA UNIVERSITY**  
**GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**  
**ENGLISH LITERATURE AND CULTURAL STUDIES**

**MASTER'S THESIS**

**WILLIAM GOLDING'S *FREE FALL***  
**AS AN EXISTENTIALIST NOVEL**

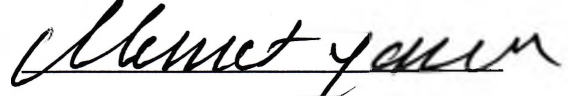
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**SEPTEMBER 2015**

**Title of the Thesis:** William Golding's *Free Fall* as an Existentialist Novel

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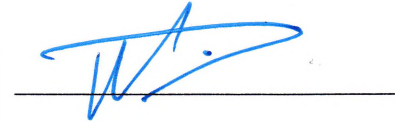
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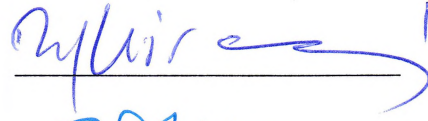
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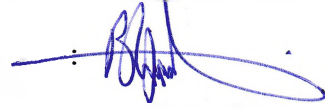


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## ABSTRACT

### WILLIAM GOLDING'S *FREE FALL* AS AN EXISTENTIALIST NOVEL

GÖRGÜN, Buket

Master's Thesis

Graduate School of Social Sciences  
English Literature and Cultural Studies

Supervisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. Mustafa KIRCA

September 2015, 108 pages

William Golding's *Free Fall* illustrates its pivotal character Sammy's self-quest symbolically as the search for self of twentieth century man. By means of Sammy, Golding wants to create an awareness in people who want to understand the world they are living in and what makes them human beings, by bringing such questions to the fore: What has happened to humanity? What has brought them to that point? Is it a fall? If it is a fall, then is it free or not? What is the role of man or God in it? Is he guilty? Is he good or evil or both of them? Is he free in his choices? If he is free, then to what extent is he free? All of these questions which create the modern man of the twentieth century, who searches his subjective meaning and the role of his free will on his choices, in a godless universe after the World Wars are the critical point of *Free Fall* and of this study. The aim of this thesis is to shed light on the predicament of the modern man by analyzing William Golding's *Free Fall* as an existentialist novel to show to what extent the novel character is free in his choices.

**Keywords:** William Golding, *Free Fall*, Existentialism, predicament, free will, responsibility, absurd.

## ÖZ

### WILLIAM GOLDING'İN *FREE FALL* ADLI ESERİNİN VAROLUŞÇU BİR ROMAN OLARAK İNCELENMESİ

GÖRGÜN, Buket

Master Tezi

Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü

İngiliz Edebiyatı ve Kültür İncelemeleri

Danışman: Yrd. Doç. Dr. Mustafa KIRCA

Eylül 2015, 108 sayfa

William Golding'in *Free Fall* adlı eseri, yirminci yüzyıl insanının II. Dünya Savaşı sırasında ve sonrasındaki benlik arayışını, roman karakteri Sammy'nin içsel yolculuğunu sembolize ederek anlatmaktadır. Bu romanıyla Golding, içinde yaşadığı dünyayı ve insanı insan yapan özellikleri anlamaya çalışan modern insanda, Sammy vasıtasıyla bir bilinç yaratmaya çalışmaktadır. Bunu yaparken de akıllara şu soruları getirmektedir: İnsanlığa ne olmuştur? İnsanı bu duruma ne getirmiştir? Bu bir düşünüş müdür? Eğer bu bir düşünüşse, özgürce bir düşünüş müdür yoksa değil midir? İnsanlığın bu felaketinde, insanın ya da tanrının rolü var mıdır? İnsan suçlu mudur? İnsan iyi ya da kötü müdür yoksa her ikisi midir? İnsan seçimlerinde özgür müdür? Eğer insan özgür bir varlıksa, ne kadar özgürdür? Tüm bu sorular büyük dünya savaşları sonrasında tanrısız bir evrende kendi kişisel anlamını arayan ve seçimlerindeki özgür iradesini sorgulayan yirminci yüzyılın modern insanını yaratmış olmakla birlikte *Free Fall*'un ve bu çalışmanın da özünü oluşturmaktadır. Bu tezin amacı; William Golding'in *Free Fall* adlı eserini varoluşçu bir roman olarak analiz edip, roman karakteri

Sammy'nin seçimlerinde ne derece özgür olduğunu yansıtmak ve modern insanın ikilemine ışık tutmaktır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** William Golding, *Free Fall*, Varoluşçuluk, ikilem, özgür irade, sorumluluk, absürd (saçma).

To my dear mother, my dear lovely sister and my inspiring angel...

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Assist. Prof. Dr. Mustafa KIRCA for the continuous support of my study, and for his invaluable motivation and eternal patience. Without his guidance and sustaining help, this thesis would not have been possible. Besides my supervisor, I would like to extend my thanks to Assist. Prof. Dr. Nil KORKUT NAYKI and Dr. Bülent AKAT for their insightful comments and constructive suggestions. Last but not least, I would like to express my greatest love and indebtedness for my mother and my sister for their constant love, endless support and encouragement throughout my life.



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## INTRODUCTION

William Golding is a modernist novelist who examines the situation of humanity through the dualities basically between rationalism and spiritualism. Golding, who experienced the late nineteenth century scientific rationalism and who lived the scientific era with all its tragic results, directly witnessed the rise of the twentieth century's rational modern man. He saw the dreadful vicious power and the evil side of man during the world wars, as a result of which he lost his belief related to the innate innocence of man and decided that "man produces evil as a bee produces honey" (Golding, 1970: p.87). For this reason, Golding's novels dwell on darkness of man and his capacity for evil. He efficiently reflects the doom of modern man in his novels. For Golding as a war writer who was doomed to live the dreadful years of the Great Wars, the central theme of his novels is the desperate state of man related to his conflicts which stem from the gap between man's reason and the unreasonable universe; mainly the duality of rationalism and spiritualism, then good and evil, body and spirit, innocence and fall which radiate from it. Philips Redpath states that Golding's main attention for man's existence "make[s] us aware of areas of existence behind or beyond man's rational being in the universe":

These areas might be metaphysical, the spiritual world, man's inner nature, the visionary, or man's intellectual life in uneasy balance with his historic past. In his daily life in the world of work and relationships man is blind or oblivious to these areas. Golding's fiction makes us see them, make us aware of their presence in the universe we inhabit. (Redpath, p.12)

Therefore, Golding has a tendency to deal with the absence of God, man's consciousness, and the roots of existence and predicaments of modern man. Especially in *Free Fall*, Golding reveals the human predicament and the duality of rationalism and spiritualism through his main character Samuel (Sammy)

Mountjoy's self-quest. Golding reflects the situation of modern man in a realistic way and with an existentialist point of view in *Free Fall*. In Golding's *Free Fall*, which we can accept as an autobiographical narrative in the shape of the main character Sammy's internal monologue, it is seen that Sammy experiences the process of change from the state of "being" to "becoming". In the light of this, Golding's *Free Fall* reveals more realistically the existentialist quest of the protagonist for freedom, his interrogation of the moment of guilt and responsibility. In this sense, the novel mirrors the quest of modern man by means of the first person narrator Sammy and a detailed depiction of his inner conflicts. The present study aims to analyze William Golding's *Free Fall* as an existentialist novel to shed light on the predicament of modern man reflected by means of the dilemmas Sammy experiences and to show to what extent Sammy is free as an existentialist hero in his choices.

The twentieth century witnessed the successions of the events which were created by man who had freed himself from God and religion and had seen himself as an absolute power at the center of the universe by desiring to reach the truth just by means of rationalism. Modern man who felt dizzy with the scientific successes put science in place of God and believed that everything is possible with man's capacity for reason. However, while being proud of scientific successes, he has ignored his spiritual sides and consequently become greedy, passionate and also a self-seeker by forgetting some virtues such as love, goodness and justice. Hence, this dull enthusiasm which has been formed as a result of pure reason has cost humanity much, by leading the world to a "cosmic chaos". "His is the dilemma of Golding's model intellectual of the twentieth century" (Friedman, p.67). Man who rejects God and becomes helpless against the potential of evil and greed of the human being has created his own predicament and hell in this world. Ultimately, in the twentieth century which was the golden era of science and scientific inventions, World Wars I-II, which were the bloodiest wars of human history, took place. These wars, in which all industrial, economic and scientific powers were used, caused the death and holocaust of millions of people. As a result, mankind has

created such a world that it has turned into a torture chamber in which right and wrong are mixed. During the wars, man's inhumanity to man caused loss of innocence and loss of trust about the meaning of everything, turning the world into an absurd place to live on. In this ambiguous and unsteady atmosphere, all values and meaning have been questioned (Crawford, p.113).

In this period, science gave weight to art and the questioning mood of the era created a philosophy which was known as existentialism in which human existence in a chaotic world that was created by man was examined. Existentialism which was born as a reaction to the systematic philosophy in the middle of the nineteenth century comes to the fore during World War II because man's existence has never been problematic as it became in the twentieth century. For this reason, man's dignity as an individual is essential for the sensitive existentialist writers of the time. As Alen Sinfield holds in his *Society and Literature 1945-1970*, it was a time in which man is regarded "as means rather than ends" (qtd. in Bhadury p.3). Thus, the individual and his quest for meaning became the major field of search for the existential philosophy emerged in the twentieth century. Especially Jean Paul Sartre and Albert Camus who witnessed the two World Wars leave their marks on this movement because they make the defining characteristics of existentialism much more specific with their adding such as Sartre's famous saying "*existence comes before essence*" (Sartre, 1948: p.26) or Camus's "absurdity". They give an outline of existentialism; Sartre in his *Existentialism and Humanism*, Camus in his *The Myth of Sisyphus*. In this sense, Sartre and Camus are regarded as the pioneers who create the principles of existentialism, and for this reason the present study will hinge on these principles in the analysis of Golding's novel.

This movement also influenced literature; and countless novels were written in order to explore the meaning of existence on earth. In this regard, William Golding has become prominent with his novels in this field of literature. Since he also serviced in the navy during World War II, he deeply felt the impact of the war and reflected them efficiently in his novels. During the same period, Golding witnessed how rational intellectual men treated each other cruelly and created an

unbearable flawed world with their pure reason. Thus, Golding focused on the limits of human reason and believed that this side of man made his evil potential come to the light. For Golding, “what it is to be human, what it is to create and simultaneously to destroy” has become significant (Dickson, p.36). Golding explains his view of the relationship between intelligence and evil in his *The Hot Gates*:

It is bad enough to say that so many Jews were exterminated in this way and that, so many people liquidated—lovely, elegant word—but there were things done during that period from which I still have to avert my mind lest I should be physically sick. They were not done by the headhunters of New Guinea, or by some primitive tribe in the Amazon. They were done, skillfully, coldly, by educated men, doctors, lawyers, by men with a tradition of civilization behind them, to beings of their own kind [...] When these capacities emerged into action they were thought aberrant. Social systems, political systems were composed, detached from the real nature of man. They were what one might call political symphonies. They would perfect most men, and at the least, reduce aberrance. Why, then, have they never worked? (Golding, 1970: p.87)

Hence, the nature of evil and man’s cruel treatment of other man is the central theme of Golding’s novels. His most well-known novel *Lord of the Flies* reflects this theme in its best way. Golding reveals the atmosphere of the world wars perfectly with his setting and characterization in this novel. By means of the boys on a desert island, he reflects the evil side of human nature and the chaos of the war. As a result of moral corruption and indifference, the children, who are supposed to be the symbol of innocence, kill each other brutally. They create hell for themselves on the island, just like the modern man who created the world wars on earth. Golding “from man’s position in the universe, has focused on man as a world in itself with the cave and the rock at each of its opposite poles” (Delbaere, pp.9-10). At first sight, the setting is an island and the characters are children; however, it is the real nature of modern man and a real war. It is “a small version of a war-torn adult world” (Dickson, p.12). After *Lord of the Flies*, Golding with *The Inheritors* also reflects the nature of evil and its connection with intelligence. Both novels have isolated settings in order to reflect the isolation of modern man. Golding, who was

born in a modern world, felt and observed the isolation and alienation of the twentieth century throughout his life and reflected this in his novels. For this reason, his characters, their predicament and fears are given in a realistic manner:

Golding seems to have had a rather isolated childhood, which partly accounts for what might be called his 'island complex'. Since he was used to being considered himself, as the centre of the world in his first schooldays, he felt an outsider among the other children (Delbaera, p.2).

In his third novel *Pincher Martin*, Golding focuses on not only potential of evil and isolation of man but also the limits of free-will. Pincher Martin, as a character who is defiled, greedy and egocentric forces the limits of his free-will. All of them as representatives of modern man, like Golding's all characters, mirror negative views of the human situation, such as darkness, dirtiness, falling and human capacity for evil.

However, his fourth novel is different from the first three. It is *Free Fall* which is a new start in Golding's career, for the human predicament and duality of rationalism and spiritualism which has been given in all novels of Golding has been revealed with a more realistic and existentialist point of view in it. In his first three novels, "the 'reversal' endings and themes" are alike (Johnson, p.62). They have ordinarily one duality of two opposites: In *Lord of the Flies*, "the irrational Jack versus the logical Piggy;" in *The Inheritors*, "the pre-rational Neanderthals set against the rational homo sapiens;" in *Pincher Martin*, "the spiritual subconscious of Pincher Martin in conflict with his rational consciousness" (Johnson, p.62). However, "in *Free Fall*, Golding continued his exploration of duality, using various characters in the life of the protagonist, Sammy Mountjoy" (Johnson, p.62). Thus, "in comparison with Golding's first three novels, *Free Fall* appears to be more 'social,' more contemporary, more concerned with the existential process of Becoming" (Dickson p.58). Sammy's "process of becoming," "process of discovery," "the reality of his present" and "satisfactorily account for it" are "the considerations that shape *Free Fall*" (Kinhead-Weekes and Gregor, pp.93-94). For this reason, Golding who has been known well as the writer of fables and myths

becomes an existentialist writer in *Free Fall*. In this sense, in James R. Baker's *Critical Essays on William Golding*, B. R. Johnson shortly states the difference of *Free Fall* in Golding's authoring:

*Free Fall*, the first novel in which Golding deliberately avoided the so-called "reversal ending" of the earlier fiction, demonstrates his abiding concern with structure as a tool that, if considered as an extension of theme, functions subtly to provide a key to the narrative's ideological dualism. (Johnson, p.62)

Two words of the title "Free Fall" are important as well. They have both scientific and theological meanings (Monod, p.135). With the title, Golding hints that science has taken the place of conventional systems and made the modern man indecisive and obscure in space. From the theological angle, it is the sin of man who was "a morally diseased creature ... a fallen being ... gripped by original sin" (Friedman, p.12). With these issues, the title symbolizes the duality of rationalism and spiritualism. In addition, it reflects the view of existentialism which is that the fall of man is inevitable due to his free-will. The problem of free-will which is vital for "becoming" is dominant in this novel. Unlike other characters of Golding's, Samuel (Sammy) Mountjoy, the protagonist of *Free Fall*, tries to understand who he really is by focusing the process of becoming and by asking repeatedly throughout the novel how he has lost his freedom. The obsession of free-will makes Sammy an existentialist character, a modern man and also universal. Golding says for his novel: "Where for hundreds of thousands of years men have known where they were; now they don't know where they are any longer. This is the point of *Free Fall*" (Friedman, p.67). Thus, Sammy as an existentialist character who is obsessed with his freedom, wants to understand where and how he lost his freedom and asks the same question repeatedly in different sections of the novel.

In order to convey the existentialist traces in *Free Fall*, chapter one titled "The Background of the Study: Existentialism" deals with the principles of the existentialist movement. In this frame, the philosophical views related to the principles of existentialist literature—absurdity, alienation, bad faith, freedom and responsibility of choice in a godless universe which are brought to the fore by the

pioneering existentialists Jean Paul Sartre and Albert Camus—are deeply revealed to examine the problem of Sammy related to his existence, free-will and responsibility.

Chapter two titled “Sammy’s Innocence and the Dual Nature of His World” tackles with Sammy’s dualities to understand the nature of Sammy’s choices and to reveal how Sammy lost his innocence and his freedom. In this frame, this part discusses Sammy’s conflicts related to “rationalism and spiritualism,” “emotion and intellect”. Based on the existentialist character Sammy’s experiences in his self-quest, this chapter mirrors how Sammy’s dualistic world symbolize the confusing atmosphere of the twentieth century. With reference to Sammy’s choosing rationalism by ignoring his spiritual nature, it is indicated that the evil actions of modern man occurred as a result of pure rationalism during the wars.

Chapter three titled “The Fall of Man and Sammy’s Free Fall” moves on to Sammy’s choices and their results in terms of existentialism. This part discusses Sammy’s free-will, bad faith and responsibility in the light of the philosophical views of Sartre who is the father of existentialism. This chapter indicates that the destructive results of the misuse of Sammy’s freedom symbolize the desperate situation of modern man during the wars in a godless universe. Sammy’s choice which causes his “fall” as a result of his self-deception is given to convey what “fall” means for modern man in a broader perspective.

In Chapter four titled “The Influence of the Wars and the Theme of Absurd,” it is specified that *Free Fall* is a small version of the war-torn world. By means of the unsupported position of Sammy who is alone with his choices and responsibilities in a helpless world, this part tackles with the absurd situation of man which stems from the gap between man’s reason and the unreasonable universe during the wars. This part examines Sammy’s predicament against an unresponsive universe within the scope of Camus’s philosophical views related to absurdity. Finally, the conclusion of the study where the main points which are argued throughout this study are summed up holds that Golding is deeply concerned with



the struggle of man between “being” and “becoming” in his *Free Fall* which displays the characteristics of existentialism.

## **CHAPTER I**

### **THE BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY: EXISTENTIALISM**

The existence of man in the universe has been the object of curiosity since very early ages in history. Besides Socrates who directs mankind to interrogate his existence by calling “know yourself,” many other philosophers dealt with the problems of existence (Alkış, p.13, translation mine). Man is always in a struggle to find himself and his position on earth. Within the process, self-concept which means the quest for self-knowledge, comes to light as the notion which occupies the mind of man who tries to understand the aim of his existence on earth. Thus, the common point of the existentialists is that they exceedingly concern themselves with the problems of their ages and the situation of humanity. As a result of the depression and the unbearable atmosphere of their times, they pondered over the existence of man. For this reason, in order to reflect man’s fear about his existence, one of the terms of anguish, anxiety, darkness, shudder, dread, nausea or boredom is frequently encountered in existentialist works.

From the nineteenth century philosophers, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche are known as the first existentialists. Kierkegaard, who puts forward the term of “existence” first, is a Christian philosopher. Hence, whilst Sartre, Camus and Nietzsche relate man’s freewill which is independent of God, Kierkegaard defends man’s free choices in the light of religion. However, like the other existentialists, he thinks that man should realize himself by his free choices. For him, there are no objective rules, so man has to create his own rights. Since man is aware that the universe does not have certainties, he feels dread. At this point, Kierkegaard advocates an individualist sense of morals by claiming that God calls every man to

form his own system of values by means of dread. Nietzsche, who claims “God is dead” in his work *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, is a writer who goes beyond his era with his existentialist views. In his works, Nietzsche also touches the dark points of existence deeply and compels the reader to think on it.

However, this topic was examined exhaustively in the twentieth century as a result of the depression and uneasiness after World War II. In this sense, existentialism becomes concrete in the philosophical and literary views of Jean Paul Sartre and Albert Camus who wrote mainly after the war. Especially Jean Paul Sartre and Albert Camus who witnessed the two World Wars leave their marks on this movement. The present study will base its arguments on the philosophical writings of Sartre and Camus only, for they shared with Golding the same atmosphere the war created and reflected this in their works. In this period, ideological crisis in Europe and the death of millions of people brutally caused all the so-called stable balances in the world to change. Man, who lost his trust in any value in a universe where all traditional values were upside down, began to question the existence of God as well. As a result of this disappointment, humanity who became stumped, felt alone and lost hopes related to the future, found himself in a meaningless space which seemed totally futile. In the ambiguous atmosphere of the period, man was certain of nothing. With the hope of finding a logical way and a meaning in a godless universe, man tended towards his inner world. In order to understand what happened to all of humanity and where he was, man looked for answers of his questions concerning “existence” in the troubled and depressed era of humanity, so the question “why do I exist?” rose as a scream. Due to the investigation of man’s own existence and bounds, “individualization” became prominent in this period. Hence, the need of the search for “self-identity” as being separated from society drives forward the stream of existentialism which is about the inconsistency between man and his universe.

Thus, we can see that the basis of existentialism which is on the rise in this period is individualism. The philosophy of existentialism defines the situation of man in the twentieth century as chaos. The lack of general morals or signs makes

everything complicated. In existentialism, in contrast to previous philosophies, there are not ready made systems or God who can guide man, so there is no meaning in life which becomes absurd. Thus, man has to create his own meaning because to existentialists “*existence* comes before *essence*” (Sartre, 1948: p.26). They reject common human nature which was believed in the previous centuries. For existentialists, individualism is very significant, in that the individual has freewill and he is responsible for his choices. Sevda Şener describes this situation with these words:

Humanity does not have coherent or regular sense of universe as it has been previously supposed. On the contrary, everything is coincidental and purposeless. Mankind sees himself in a chaos. It is impossible to explain universe by means of reason. Hence, what man can consider is only his existence on earth. The characteristics of man have not been determined before. Thus, man gains his actions with his qualities and realizes himself. (Şener, p.298, translation mine)

The existentialist thought which occurred as a philosophical stream after World War II echoed within literature as well. Instead of expressing man’s situation by means of conventional philosophical manner of telling, existentialist novelists chose literature and theatre in order to convey their ideas about man’s free existence, and in their works they managed to portray the predicament of man by the help of their novel characters in a direct and clear way, so they were able to narrate the problems of humanity on the basis of protagonists in their works. From 1930 on wars, so many existentialist novels were written; among them, with his seminal works and groundbreaking views, Jean Paul Sartre was the most well-known, and he was regarded to be the father of existentialism because he is the philosopher who makes existentialism a movement with his philosophical views. To Sartre, who was a devout atheist, there is no God but man creates himself with his free choices and because of this, he believes “man is condemned to be free” (Sartre, 1948: p.34). Man is completely responsible for his actions. In the same vein, Albert Camus, whose views contributed to the rise of existentialism, appraises life as meaningless, too. For him, man’s existence is absurd, everything is random, and there are not any respectable values. Camus thinks that man is completely strange

to the world and this space between man and his world gives way to his absurd condition. For him, man is free, but it is an absurd freedom, for he is condemned to live aimlessly, but he should nevertheless go on living without expecting any meaning in his existence.

The twentieth century was an age in which everything changed rapidly. While the industrial revolutions and scientific successes were building the rational age, at the same time it made the modern man so arrogant that he could not realize approaching chaos. After the two World Wars, man who was proud of scientific discoveries and rational age suddenly “found [himself] in the midst of a cyclone” (Sartre, 1988: p.183) and could give no meaning to his existence. In, *Situation of the Writer in 1947* of his “*What is Literature?*” *And Other Essays*, Jean Paul Sartre describes the era as a confusion that nobody could guess. He summarizes the period which literature and history were one within the other with these words:

In the century of the aeroplane and electricity we did not think that we were exposed to these surprises. It didn't seem to us that we were *on the eve* of anything. On the contrary, we had the vague pride of feeling that it was *the day after* the last disruption of history. Even if we were at times disturbed by German rearmament, we thought that we were moving on a long, straight road and we felt certain that our lifetime would be uniquely woven of individual circumstances and marked by scientific discoveries and happy reforms. From 1930 on, the world depression, the coming of Nazism, and the events in China opened our eyes. It seemed as if the ground were going to fall from under us, and suddenly, for us too, the great historical juggling began. (Sartre, 1988: pp.174-175)

The modern man was in such a situation that good or bad, virtues or profits, world or hell, spiritualism or rationalism, shortly everything was mixed. The minds were confused and full of questions. At that point, existentialism became the voice of humanity. In this period, the existentialist writers, just like Jean Paul Sartre, became the spokesman of humanity who was messed up in the head, for they undertook to create “a literature of extreme situations” (Sartre, 1988: p.182). By means of literature, they wanted to draw attention to problematic issues of humanity. “It was about their war and their death that [existentialists] had to write.

Brutally reintegrated into history, [they] had no choice but to produce a literature of a historical character” in order to raise the awareness of the modern man (Sartre, 1988: p.177). It was the literature of a desperate scream in a world where all humanity competed to torture to each other. Under these circumstances, the aim of existentialist novels is not try to find solution for the state of the world or explain anything, but on the contrary, what is important is just to portray the predicament of humanity by means of novel characters.

According to existentialists, the predicament of humanity resulted from the ambiguity of the period. In that era, all traditional values were collapsed; mankind did not know what they would believe in. Everything, such as the existence of God, values, and even the age itself, transformed into a big question mark. Thus, this ambiguous atmosphere created the absurd condition of man. The existentialist novel characters came to be the reflection of modern man who was certain of nothing. For this reason, novel characters in an existentialist work are always in a struggle with themselves in their minds to mirror the dualities of the time. They cannot decide on the source of their wrongs and they cannot be sure whether their wrongs result from their mistakes or the situation of the world in which they live. The reader approaches such a novel with the hope of finding a solution, but he finds only an incomplete ending of the novel. This unsatisfied expectation is deemed to be a kind of reflection of the reality of the time and the condition of humanity in the twentieth century. By means of novel characters, the existentialist writers make the reader notice the problematic of his existence and the universe he has lived in. They simply hint that the world is not a place mankind is familiar with. Sartre explains the period’s reflection into the literature and novel characters with these words:

We had to present creatures whose reality would be the tangled and contradictory tissue of each one’s evaluations of all the other characters—himself included—and the evaluation by all the others of himself, and who could never decide from within whether the changes of their destinies came from their own efforts, from their own faults, or from the course of the universe. Finally, we had to leave doubts, expectations, and the unachieved throughout our works, leaving it up to the reader to conjecture for himself by giving him the feeling, without giving him or letting him guess our feeling,

that his view of the plot and the characters were merely one among many others. (Sartre, 1988: p.184)

Besides Sartre and his colleagues, many other novel writers supported the movement of existentialism in their works. The ambiguous situation of humanity on the universe began to appear in twentieth century novels. In this period, many novelists produced remarkable works which were related to man's relationship with the universe and his existence. William Golding, who experienced the Great War periods, is one of them who extensively felt the agonies of the wars. Thus, particularly his novel *Free Fall* contains all the characteristic qualities of existentialism. The title *Free Fall* itself symbolizes the situation of the modern man. It is not a coincidence that similar expressions are used to describe the period, such as "man is 'like a creature in space, tumbling, eternally tumbling, no up, no down, just in 'free fall'" (Friedman, p.67). To Sartre, "it seemed as if the ground were going to fall from under us" (Sartre, 1988: p.175). As the thinkers of modern times, both of them have the same sense of universe, though Sartre is primarily a philosopher. Therefore, as existentialist writers, they serve for the same purpose in their novels to describe the period with its despair and agonies. For them, the condition of humanity is totally a fall; even it is a free fall.

In order to reveal the sense of fall, the mood of the novels which were written in this period is dark, gloomy and shadowy like the time itself. In this atmosphere, the plot and characters are also pieces of the puzzle which consists of the relationship between the world and man. It is not easy to comprehend these novels because they aim to mirror the questions of the time and make the reader think deeply on the meaning of his existence. That's why Golding's novel *Free Fall* is also a demanding text and should be read carefully. In an essay about Golding, David Skilton says that "[Golding's novels] are complex, even equivocal, his novels give the impression of being difficult to grasp, intellectually. And they are hard to understand if regarded purely as problems demanding and admitting of satisfactory solutions" (qtd. in Redpath p.23). This quality of the novel stems from the fact that it pursues a questioning of the meaning of existence on earth. As Skilton states, Golding's novels do not present solutions specifically but they prompt the reader to

think on them in detail. In his *William Golding: A Structural Reading of his Fiction*, Philip Redpath agrees and explains the same issue by saying that there is a reality behind the obscurity of Golding's novels. Golding aims to draw the reader into the book and into his inner self, so he sheds light into the dark and deep points of man's existence by means of his characters. Golding reflects the interior of man's being under the surface of his consciousness (Redpath, p.26). Redpath interprets Golding's style in his novels as obscure. The language and depth of his novels reveal the blurred soul of the twentieth century and the reality behind it. Hence, Golding does not narrate clearly, his interpretation is hidden between the lines and the final word belongs to the reader. We can easily say that Golding does not explain or give a message simply and directly. His style absorbs the reader into the novel and while analyzing the characters, he makes the reader find some clues related to his own existence and essence. As Redpath claims, "Golding's obscurity lies in the very nature of his art" because "he confronts us with the problematical nature of any truth" (Redpath, p.25). This becomes the quality of many novels written in the same period.

Golding's characters mirror the predicament of the twentieth century. In *Free Fall*, the protagonist Sammy Mountjoy reflects Golding's style efficiently. In the novel, Golding involves the reader in Sammy's dilemma. The readers sometimes sympathize with him, but sometimes abhor in the face of what he has done as well because they cannot decide whether his falling is his fault or not. When the reader learns about the childhood of the protagonist, he may feel sorrow, but the same reader may loathe adult Sammy and think throughout the novel whose guilt it is and what brought him to that point. Is it Sammy's or world's fault? So the reader, like Sammy, finds himself in a labyrinth, which is the aim of existentialist literature and the success of Golding to convey this.

In *Free Fall*, Golding does not offer solutions, explanations, or impose truths. His goal is to deal with the issue of existence. With the non-chronological order of the events, he supports the confusion of time and space of the period. Timelessness is one of the qualities of existentialist novels in order to reveal the



modern man's suspended condition in the universe. During the novel, Sammy goes to his past frequently with numerous flashbacks to reach dark layers of his existence. The thing he did wrong caused him to lose his chance to choose and made him a fallen man. Hence, he repeatedly asks how he has lost his freedom. While searching for this moment, he realizes his self-quest in the way of building his existence. Lawrence S. Friedman describes Sammy's efforts to identify himself in following lines:

In its obsession with freedom, *Free Fall* mirrors the transcendent issue of existentialist literature. Existentialist characters invariably concern themselves with the problem of identity. Sammy Mountjoy's attempt to identify that moment when he lost his freedom is equally an attempt to identify what he is in terms of what he was. (Friedman, p.68)

Sammy's story is identical with that of the modern man. The events of the twentieth century force humanity to think on the problems of existence. The problem of free-will becomes prior among them. In *Free Fall*, Sammy interrogates his freewill on behalf of mankind. While Sammy is asking whether it is his fault or not, he gives potentiality to the reader to ask the same question for himself: Is man really free? With this question, Golding fulfills the aim of existentialist literature successfully and leads the reader to that conclusion.

### **1.1 Jean Paul Sartre and His Existentialist Views**

**“Man is condemned to be free”**

**(*Existentialism and Humanism*, Sartre, 1948: p.34)**

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, humanity underwent lots of changes and despair as a result of the destructive results of the two World Wars, especially after World War II. In the period which was supposed that man could reach every secret of the universe by means of rationalism, man believed that he would be able to dominate a more familiar world. However, this desire created more dangerous and unfamiliar world for man. With the changes which reverberate to the concepts, lifestyles and

viewpoints of man, the world became more complicated and even unbearable for people. Furthermore, through scientific improvements, man who replaced “reason” with God was dragged to a bigger disaster. It was not a natural disaster, though; it was a disaster man himself caused. It was the bloodiest two World Wars in the history of humanity. For man who ached for reasonable systems, the universe became much more casual and illogical than he desired. All of these showed that the universe was imponderable and there was no rational pattern to rely on. Thus, those dark years were the chaotic period which urged man to reconsider everything he assumed to know well before. He asked, in anxiety and despair, why humanity came to that point. For man who cannot find what he expected began the age of query; so in this barren atmosphere, another question set its seal on the age: in such a world, what is the purpose of man’s existence and life then? Hence, the situation of man who lurched among these questions produced the stream of “existentialism” and pioneer existentialist philosopher Jean Paul Sartre who is also quite significant writer, for he excellently illustrates the vain struggles of modern man who seeks a logical and meaningful universe in his works.

Jean Paul Sartre (1905-1980) was born in Paris. He is a philosopher, politician and a writer who is sensitive to the problems of the era in which he lived. As a thinker who witnessed the two World Wars, he pursued the question in his works of how man can cope with the problems of existence which emerged after the wars on such an earth. Sartre tries to find a base to live in the era of despair. In order to provide it, he unrolls widely all aspects of despair which was the reality of all humanity during the wars. As a prominent man of the modern times, he tries to display the desperate position of humanity in politics, philosophy and literature. Sartre, who defends vibrantly man’s freedom as an individual in the fields of philosophy and politics, reflects his views in his literary works as well. In order to understand what he wants to do with his literary characters, firstly it requires knowing his philosophy and how it is reflected in his works. Among his writings, particularly his speech which was published in 1946 and which is stated as a defense of existentialism is of special significance.

For Sartre, who is an ardent atheist thinker, mankind lacks all the bases which were believed in the previous centuries. He rejects human nature which was given credit in the previous centuries. In these eras, it was believed that all humanity has a common human nature, namely common essence which is the source of morality. Sartre's philosophy which he outlines in *Existentialism and Humanism* objects to this, and it is shaped completely on his well-known argument that "existence comes before essence" (Sartre, 1948: p.26). For this reason, "one will never be able to explain one's action by reference to a given and specific human nature" (Sartre, 1948: p.34). By assuming this, Sartre openly states that there is no supreme being who creates or controls the universe. The lack of any absolute power engenders the human predicament, which means that we are not what we are, but we are the consequences of our choices. Sartre explains how man only after his existence creates his essence:

What do we mean by saying that existence precedes essence? We mean that man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world-and defines himself afterwards. If man as the existentialist sees him is not definable, it is because to begin with he is nothing. He will not be anything until later, and then he will be what he makes of himself. Thus, there is no human nature, because there is no God to have a conception of it. (Sartre, 1948: p.28)

For Sartre, Dostoevsky's saying "If God did not exist, everything would be permitted" is "the starting point of existentialism" (Sartre, 1948: p.33). Thus, man is not designed previously as it is believed earlier because there is no God who projects him and his life. Sartre, also defending Nietzsche's famous pronouncement "God is dead," reveals the position of the human being as alone in a godless universe. For this reason, man is only thrown to the world. There are no systems of values or any creators who can guide him. First of all, he exists and after all he makes himself. Thus, "man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself. That is the first principle of existentialism," Sartre claims (Sartre, 1948: p.28). In this way, Sartre puts forward individualism by calling it "subjectivity" and states that "man is, indeed, a project which possesses a subjective life" (Sartre, 1948: p.28). It means that man is responsible for himself, his actions and his life. According to

Sartre, we cannot choose our parents, where we were born, or where we will die; however, we are entirely responsible for how we feel and behave. Thus, for Sartre, we are completely responsible for what we have become:

If, however, it is true that existence is prior to essence, man is responsible for what he is. Thus, the first effect of existentialism is that it puts every man in possession of himself as he is, and places the entire responsibility for his existence squarely upon his own shoulders. (Sartre, 1948: p.29)

Hence, man who lacks any greater purpose, pre-determined plan, or ultimate meaning finds himself in a meaningless world which is totally absurd. Since he feels abandoned on earth, man responds to this absurdity and burden of responsibility with anguish, abandonment and despair (Sartre, 1948: p.30). The Sartrean words responsibility and abandonment mean that man is completely free on his choices in a godless universe. For this reason, he feels anguish and despair because there is no God, values, or commands which can approve his behavior (Sartre, 1948: p.34). Thus, there is nobody who can be blamed for his actions except for himself. There is no destiny which is written before because “the destiny of man is placed within himself” (Sartre, 1948: p.44). It means that he makes his own fate with his choices. Man cannot ignore the state of choosing, as Sartre says that “he cannot avoid choosing [...] what is not possible is not to choose. I can always choose, but I must know that if I do not choose, that is still a choice” (Sartre, 1948: p.48). For this reason, Sartre defines man’s position on earth as “condemned to be free” just because “he did not create himself, yet is nevertheless at liberty, and from the moment that he is thrown into this world he is responsible for everything he does,” so man is “left alone, without excuse” (Sartre, 1948: p.34). Thus, “what Sartre calls ‘anguish’ as the name implies, is an unpleasant experience which arises because we are free” (Elwyn, p.606). The word “freedom” which has been an especially strong appeal for people who have recently become free from the Nazi Occupation is indispensable in the rules of Sartre’s existentialist theory. Obtaining freedom is man’s ultimate goal, as Sartre suggests “man is free, man is freedom” (Sartre, 1948: p.34).

While Sartre claiming that man is free, he does not moot one-sided freedom. To him, one's freedom entails the other's freedom as well. Man as a social being lives in a society; for this reason, living in a society requires considering the benefits of the others in order to prevent chaos. "And in thus willing freedom, we discover that it depends entirely upon the freedom of others and that the freedom of others depends upon our own" (Sartre, 1948: pp.51-52). For the sake of all people's welfare, man's freedom requires responsibility. Namely, every man should embrace his choices along with their results for himself and others. It means that while choosing an action, man confirms it for himself and also for all humanity. Thus, existentialism is not a philosophy which encourages egoism as it is supposed by some opponent circles. According to Sartre's argument, man's choice affects not only his life but also all humanity as well. For Sartre, if a man does not sense a sum of anxiety about his decisions, it means that he ignores his entire and profound responsibility concerning himself and all of humanity. For this reason, man is not only responsible for himself but also responsible for others. In *Existentialism and Humanism*, Sartre clearly states that:

When we say that man is responsible for himself, we do not mean that he is responsible only for his own individuality, but that he is responsible for all man. [...] When we say that man chooses himself, we do mean that every one of us must choose himself; but by that we also mean that in choosing for himself he chooses for all men. (Sartre, 1948: p.29)

However, man mostly cannot bear the burden of responsibility and tries to escape with apologies in a way. We can explain this with Sartre's "bad faith" which is defined as "self-deception" in *Existentialism and Humanism* by him (Sartre, 1948: p.51). Sartre says: "Since we have defined the situation of man as one of free choice, without excuse and without help, any man who takes refuge behind the excuse of his passion, or by inventing some deterministic doctrine, is a self-deceiver" (Sartre, 1948: pp.50-51). According to Sartre, bad faith means that man is afraid of the responsibility of free-will because of this he deceives himself by means of some external excuses or his passions to get rid of the burden of responsibility. For man who is responsible for making his own essence with his

own choices, bad faith is the greatest mistake because it causes man's self-alienation. Thus, good faith is vital for man in order that he can realize himself properly.

As it is seen, contrary to what is believed, Sartre, who makes his best of giving dignity man deserves, is not a pessimist writer in fact. When his novels are read, he is considered as a pessimist writer, due to the fact that there is no solution in the world of his troubled characters and setting is always closed. Sartre's characters cannot keep pace with the conditions of the world. That is why, they feel disgust, nausea and despair as representatives of modern man. However, all these negative feelings are the reactions of man who faces his freedom. Namely, their senses are the starting point of recovery as redemption of freedom. With his philosophy, Sartre does not detain his characters from living, promise hope or lead man to be passive. Instead of these, he gives freedom and honesty to them. In this sense, he gives modern man the nobility which he deserved, by means of his characters. He hints that man is master of his life. In addition, Sartre gives his novels the impression of incompleteness with their open-endings because the novel has not finished yet. (Bezirci, pp.41-45). It means that life is going on in spite of its all absurdity. As Sartre says in *The Flies*; "Life begins on the other side of despair" (Bezirci, p.41).

## **1.2 Albert Camus and His Concept of Absurdity**

**"Is life worth living or not?"**

**(*The Myth of Sisyphus*, Camus, 1955: p.4)**

In the twentieth century, man's all efforts about knowing the universe confronted him with a fact; the situation of man is completely absurd with his expectations and his life on such an earth. Thus, for the philosophers of the time which is difficult to intellectualize the happenings, "absurd" is the best equivalent

to verbalize the situation of man. However, when “absurd” is a matter of existentialism, Albert Camus is the first name that comes to the minds.

Albert Camus (1913-1960), who is the father of absurdity in literature and philosophy, was born in Algeria at a time of wars and changes in conventional systems (he saw the two World Wars)—a time span when it is hard for man to find meaning in life. Albert Camus says that nobody can expect the philosophers of the time to be optimistic under these circumstances (Alkış, p.33). When the period he lived in is evaluated, it is inevitable to agree with him, for millions of people died as a result of the greatest brutal wars. The tragedy of man who is sick of living against the tribulation he lives forms the core of Camus’s philosophy and his novel characters. As a modern man of that time, his life was also influenced by the adverse conditions of the age. Thus, he interrogated the meaning of life in his works. Nevertheless, Albert Camus wanted to believe in man. Despite all destructive conditions which were not promising, he tried to create reasons to be able to live. Hence, for Camus who tried to make sense of life, the crisis of meaning composed the essence of his philosophy. Thus, in his all works, Camus discussed whether meaning can be created or not in such a world.

Albert Camus’s *The Myth of Sisyphus* is an important work because in this book Camus reveals his philosophical view. For him, man’s meaningless struggle which stems from his invalid expectations of certainty is completely absurd. In that period, within the compass of scientific improvements, man was sure about trees, water, scents of grass and stars. However, it was understood not long after that they were not sufficient in order to comprehend the universe as a whole (Camus, 1955: p.14). Thus, Camus says, “whether the earth or the sun revolves around the other is a matter of profound indifference. To tell the truth, it is a futile question” (Camus, 1955: p.4). They cannot help modern man to create meaning in his life. Hence, Camus reveals the scream of humanity by insisting: “I want everything to be explained to me or nothing” (Camus, 1955: p.19). However, “the reason is impotent when it hears this cry from the heart” (Camus, 1955: p.19). Thus, as a modern man like the others, Camus simply asks, under these circumstances; “Is life worth living

or not?”—a question on which his novels and his philosophy are based (Camus, 1955: p.4). While asking this question, as a thinker of that blurred era, what Camus is interested in is the vitality of man’s unsatisfied curiosity related to the unpredictable universe. Before anything else, in such a world-shaking time in which all humanity was upset, the meaning was the crucial need in order for mankind to survive. For this reason, Camus says that “I therefore conclude that the meaning of life is the most urgent of questions” (Camus, 1955: p.4). However, “the mind aroused by this insistence seeks and finds nothing but contradictions and nonsense” (Camus, 1955: p.19). Any single meaning is not comprehensible. For just anything, “if one could only say just once: ‘This is clear,’ all would be saved, but there are no values to be confirmed by science” (Camus, 1955: p.19).

For Camus, “this world in itself is not reasonable, that is all that can be said;” and in this irrational universe, rational man’s position which cannot fit any patterns is completely absurd (Camus, 1955: p.15). This conflict “between the human need and the unreasonable silence of the world” is known as “absurdity” which is the basis of Camus’s philosophy (Camus, 1955: p.20). It is invalid for the other living things because they have no consciousness like man. “The cat’s universe is not the universe of the anthill” (Camus, 1955: p.13). Thus, neither just man nor just the universe is absurd; “in this particular case and on the plane of intelligence, [...] the Absurd is not in man (if such a metaphor could have a meaning) nor in the world, but in their presence together” (Camus, 1955: p.21). The absence of one of them abolishes the absurd. It requires the union of consciousness of man as a thinking being and the world. Thus, “there can be no absurd outside the human mind” (Camus, 1955: pp. 21-22). Therefore, what consumes man is nothing other than his own awareness; in an illogical universe he is in need of logic. In order to specify this, Camus says: “The worm is in man’s heart. That is where it must be sought” (Camus, 1955: p.5). Thus, for Camus: “The absurd is essentially a divorce” between the irrational universe and rational man—“It lies in neither of the elements compared; it is born of their confrontation” (Camus, 1955: p.21). In this sense, as long as man is alive, life is absurd. For this reason, “at any street corner the feeling



of absurdity can strike any man in the face” (Camus, 1955: p.9). For modern man who weltered in the meaningless daily routines, the monotony of life is also absurd. Camus tells about this mechanical wheel in *The Myth of Sisyphus*:

It happens that the stage sets collapse. Rising, streetcar, four hours in the office or the factory, meal, streetcar, four hours of work, meal, sleep, and Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday and Saturday according to the same rhythm-this path is easily followed most of the time. (Camus, 1955: p.10)

Man does not like the sense of space which is created by absurd. For this reason, he wants to move away from the absurd by means of hope. Thus, man shelters in future because the days which follow each other throw up meaninglessness to him. Man’s repeating daily flutter tells him that life is absurd. Camus says, “we live on the future: ‘tomorrow,’ ‘later on,’ ‘when you have made your way,’ ‘you will understand when you are old enough’” (Camus, 1955: p.10). By setting objectives like these, man tries to create meaning in his life. However, as Camus says, “such irrelevancies are wonderful, for, after all, it’s a matter of dying” (Camus, 1955: p.10). No matter how hard he tries, man is a mortal being who is condemned to death. Such an inconsistent attitude is also absurd. Nevertheless, man always plans the future as if he would never die. Related to it, Camus says, “yet one will never be sufficiently surprised that everyone lives as if no one ‘knew’. This is because in reality there is no experience of death” (Camus, 1955: p.11). Man goes on his life by ignoring the fact of death because he cannot bear the idea of limited time on earth. At that point, religion promises man a new life after death. Thus, for man who longs for eternal life, the other shelter of hope is religion, in order to escape the absurd. In addition, religion presents other facilities such as destiny, which removes the responsibility of his life from him. Man who desires the comfort of leaning his life on a pattern grasps at it. However, during the two World Wars, this relief lost its validity. Man’s extreme cruelty to man brought humanity to the point of rebellion and denying the existence of God. For Albert Camus, who refuses religion as a deed of cowardice and philosophical suicide, this kind of hope is also absurd.

As a result of these, man who feels as if he was thrown to the world randomly and cannot harmonize with the universe feels alone on earth. That alienation, “that denseness and that strangeness of the world is the absurd” (Camus, 1955: p.11). Camus reveals man who cannot adopt the world with this following metaphor:

[...] in a universe suddenly divested of illusions and lights, man feels an alien, a stranger. His exile is without remedy since he is deprived of the memory of a lost home or the hope of a promised land. This divorce between man and this life, the actor and his setting, is properly the feeling of absurdity. (Camus, 1955: p.6)

As is understood, the situation of man who was forced more than ever before in his life and nearly came to a parting of the ways between death and living was difficult in that era. On the one hand, while millions of people were dying or being killed during the wars, on the other hand, countless people were committing suicide desperately. Camus says: “I see many people die because they judge that life is not worth living” (Camus, 1955: p.4). Hence, the situation of man who got stuck in death and life leads Camus to discuss deeply the notion of suicide in *The Myth of Sisyphus* in order to pass judgment on the meaning of life. Camus does not tackle with suicide as a sociological event. What Camus is interested in here is the relationship between personal thought and suicide. For him, every man thinks of suicide at least once in his life. Thus, he deals with it as a philosophical problem in his *The Myth of Sisyphus*:

There is but one truly serious philosophical problem, and that is suicide. Judging whether life is or is not worth living amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy. All the rest—whether or not the world has three dimensions, whether the mind has nine or twelve categories—comes afterwards. These are games; one must first answer. (Camus, 1955: p.4)

For Camus, “living under that stifling sky forces one to get away or to stay” (Camus, 1955: p.20). Thus, for man who comprehends the absurdity and feels anxiety it seems that there are two ways of solution; “suicide or recovery” (Camus, 1955: p.10). Suicide can mean that “it is confessing that life is too much for you or that you do not understand it” and “is not worth the trouble” (Camus, 1955: p.5).

However, Camus does not approve of suicide as a solution. Whereas hope means escaping from the present and taking refuge in the future, suicide means giving up living, so both of them are “the typical act of eluding”(Camus, 1955: p.7). Thus, for recovery, Camus deals with the issue of living with the absurd by means of revolt because “the absurd has meaning only in so far as it is not agreed to” (Camus, 1955: p.22). It means “living is keeping the absurd alive” (Camus, 1955: p.36). In other words, revolt by living is to challenge the absurd. Thus, absurdity requires living, not dying. It means that living is the process of creating value for all humans through revolt to overcome the absurdity of the universe. For Camus, “the present and the succession of presents before a constantly conscious soul is the ideal of the absurd man” (Camus, 1955: p.42). The solution is that man should live long as much as he can without hope but by focusing on the present. Hence, in spite of the wars and contradictions of the unreasonable world, “this hell of the present is his Kingdom at last” (Camus, 1955: p.35).

Under these circumstances, in *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Camus says: “Thus I draw from the absurd three consequences, which are my revolt, my freedom, and my passion” (Camus, 1955: p.42). Since revolt requires choosing and performing, the notion of freedom becomes prominent here. However, for Camus, “the problem of ‘freedom as such’ has no meaning, for it is linked in quite a different way with the problem of God” (Camus, 1955: p.37). To Camus, “knowing whether or not man is free involves knowing whether he can have a master” (Camus, 1955: p.37). For Camus, to mention man’s freedom in general terms requires knowing whether he has a higher power or not. However, there is a problem at this point related to the responsibility of the crimes in the world. If man admits that there is a God, then; “either we are not free and God the all-powerful is responsible for evil. Or we are free and responsible but God is not all powerful” (Camus, 1955: p.37). This contradiction caused modern man who felt alone on earth to be desperate and to revolt.

For this reason, Camus classifies revolt as metaphysical and historical. Metaphysical revolt is that man who feels himself thrown to the world revolts to

God who is responsible for his coming to this world but does not take care of him. Camus explains it in his book *The Rebel*: “The metaphysical rebel protests against the condition in which he finds himself as a man [...] the metaphysical rebel declares that he is frustrated by the universe” (Camus, 1991: p.23). The other is historical revolt, which has occurred as a result of the brutality of modern man who consumes the idea of God by murdering freely and making man slave in the stockade, for the sake of rationality in the twentieth century (Alkış, pp.59-60).

Camus’s concern is not whether there is a God or not. He discusses freedom of man with reference to God. To him, a general kind of freedom cannot be mentioned. While death is always threatening mortal man, “what freedom can exist in the fullest sense without assurance of eternity?” (Camus, 1955: p.38). For this reason, Camus says; “I cannot understand what kind of freedom would be given me by a higher being” (Camus, 1955: p.38), and adds “knowing whether or not man is free doesn’t interest me. I can experience only my own freedom” (Camus, 1955: p.37). Thus, Camus who does not mention freedom in a general sense, summarizes his concept of freedom clearly as, “the only conception of freedom I can have is that of the prisoner or the individual in the midst of the State. The only one I know is freedom of thought and action” (Camus, 1955: p.38).

Thus, for the absurd man, the only freedom he can know is the one he experiences. He has the freedom to think and to act on condition that considering the freedom of others as well. Hence, Camus makes man master of himself. He not only revolts to God but also to the all authorities. Thus, for Camus, “all that remains is a fate whose outcome alone is fatal. Outside of that single fatality of death, everything, joy or happiness, is liberty. A world remains of which man is the sole master” (Camus, 1955: p.75).

In *The Myth of Sisyphus*, he exemplifies the process of man’s creating his own fate and meaning with his choices, by means of the characters; Don Juan, Actor and Conqueror. Don Juan is a fervent character. He is an ongoing and incorrigible tempter. For him “there is no noble love but that which recognizes itself to be both

short-lived and exceptional” (Camus, 1955: p.48). Don Juan does not seduce women with the hope of finding true love. He seduces them for his own pleasure. Don Juan is an absurd man who admits that his life is meaningless and his actions have no meaning in this life. The other is the actor who portrays momentary lives for temporary fame. Camus’s third character is the conqueror, who chooses action instead of desiring infinity. He is conscious of the fact that nothing can proceed forever and no triumph is ultimate. Camus uses them to illuminate the situation of modern man. For Camus, “to create is likewise to give a shape to one’s fate. For all these characters, their work defines them at least as much as it is defined by them” (Camus, 1955: pp.74-75). It means that every man’s actions define his essence. Hence, man builds himself with his choices. By choosing himself and creating his own meaning, he becomes the master of his life.

In order to describe efficiently the absurd situation of modern man, Camus characterizes the legend of Sisyphus, who was punished with a vicious circle which would last forever by gods for the fact that he challenged them. Camus defines Sisyphus as an “absurd hero” because of “his scorn of the gods, his hatred of death, and his passion for life” (Camus, 1955: p.76). In response to these, his punishment is pushing a rock to the top of a mountain and when it reaches the top it will roll down again. Sisyphus is condemned to go down in pursuit of the rock and start the same action repeatedly. This persecution will last everlastingly. Thus, Sisyphus is a man who is condemned to live a meaningless existence. For Camus, “this is the price that must be paid for the passions of this earth” (Camus, 1955: p.76). In this sense, for Camus, Sisyphus is an absurd character who illustrates the absurd situation of modern man.

You have already grasped that Sisyphus is the absurd hero. He is, as much through his passions as through his torture. His scorn of the gods, his hatred of death, and his passion for life won him that unspeakable penalty in which the whole being is exerted toward accomplishing nothing. This is the price that must be paid for the passions of this earth. (Camus, 1955: p.76)

In this myth, the vital point Camus is interested in is Sisyphus's attitude "during that return, that pause" because "that is the hour of consciousness" for him (Camus, 1955: p.76). Although Sisyphus knows that the rock will roll down again and he has to push it to the top again and again, he goes on his deed under the pain of his action. Moreover, he has no hope related to triumph. It means that Sisyphus accepts the absurd. At this point, instead of obeying the absurd, he revolts by going on his deed. The rock has been the fate of him since then and he is conscious of his fate. Thus, "he is superior to his fate. He is stronger than his rock" (Camus, 1955: p.77). Sisyphus shows that, "There is no fate that cannot be surmounted by scorn" (Camus, 1955: p.77). He is a man who makes his fate "human matter" by invalidating predestination. In this sense, Sisyphus's revolt symbolizes the story of modern man who believes in no fate and struggles in the lack of hope in that godless universe.

It echoes in the wild and limited universe of man. It teaches that all is not, has not been, exhausted. It drives out of this world a god who had come into it with dissatisfaction and a preference for futile sufferings. It makes of fate a human matter, which must be settled among men. (Camus, 1955: pp.77-78)

Camus as a writer who believes that man should live in spite of all troubles and the results of the wars describes Sisyphus as happy. In his life and his works, Camus wanted to create meaning in a meaningless life. For him; "there is no sun without shadow, and it is essential to know the night" (Camus, 1955: p.78). Thus, the way of finding meaning for him to accept life fully with its all confusions, pains and pleasures and to live as much as you can. Thus, "the absurd man says yes and his effort will henceforth be unceasing" (Camus, 1955: p.78). For Camus, the man who admits the reality of absurd and his personal fate becomes free by breaking his chains. Hence, absurd man who has justified the pride of revolt is a happy man, so "happiness and the absurd are two sons of the same earth" (Camus, 1955: p.77). Camus argues that "it happens as well that the feeling of the absurd springs from happiness" (Camus, 1955: p.77). Thus, one should think of Sisyphus as happy:

But Sisyphus teaches the higher fidelity that negates the gods and raises rocks. He too concludes that all is well. This universe henceforth without a master seems to him neither sterile nor futile. Each atom of that stone, each mineral flake of that night-filled mountain, in itself forms a world. The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy. (Camus, 1955: p.78)

## CHAPTER II

### SAMMY'S INNOCENCE AND THE DUAL NATURE OF HIS WORLD

#### 2.1 Sammy's Innocent World in *Free Fall*

**“Innocence is the child”**

**(Thus Spoke Zarathustra, Nietzsche, qtd. in Chapko p.26)**

*Free Fall* is set in England in the twentieth century in a “deep and muddy pool” of rural slums (Golding, p.112). Samuel (Sammy) Mountjoy, the hero of *Free Fall* which is “a *Bildungsroman* whose settings range from a slum to a prisoner-of-war camp,” is the representative modern man whose story illustrates the discovery of becoming and quest for self-knowledge (Raine, p.101). As an existentialist character, he examines the meaning of existence and exercise of free-will by analyzing of his past and trying to make sense of his life, himself and humanity in general. Samuel Mountjoy who was born in a slum as a bastard is a gifted painter. However, he is a confused man because he seeks the precise moment in which he lost his freedom throughout the novel, and indicates what happens when it is lost. As the first person narrator of the novel, Samuel Mountjoy tells the perplexities of his childhood, the heavy responsibilities of his adulthood and the effect of war on them, from his childhood days to being a prisoner in a German Nazi Camp, with long flashbacks instead of a chronological order. Sammy glances at his past life, picks and regulates his memories to conceive a definable pattern which will give meaning to him and answer his question. *Free Fall* consists of 13 sections. Sammy tells the events with long flashbacks, by focusing on them back and forth. “The real historical chronology of Sammy’s bildungsroman rests on the following sequence



of the sections in the book: 1,2,3,8,11,12,4,5,6 (here, a still unbridged time-gap), 7, 9, 10, 14, 13” (Monod, p.138). His timeless narration means the symbolic journey of Samuel Mountjoy into his own memories given according to their importance for him:

It is a curious story, not so much in the external events which are common enough, but in the way it presents itself to me, the only teller. For time is not to be laid out endlessly like a row of bricks. That straight line from the first hiccup to the last gasp is a dead thing. (Golding, p.6)

The narrative technique of *Free Fall* confronts Sammy with his multiple becoming in different parts of the novel. The shift of time enables Sammy to present the happenings according to their significance. Sammy looks back at his childhood in the first three sections. He tells that he was born as an illegitimate son of a prostitute, in a dirty and poor slum—Rotten Row of England. He also mentions that he misbehaved with his two friends—Johnny Spragg and Philip Arnold. Then his narration leaps to his school days in London in section 4, 5, 6 in which he meets Beatrice—whom he admires madly at first, but later forces her to become his insufficient lover and then leaves her when he falls in love with another woman—Taffy whom he will get married to later. In section 7, Sammy takes a leap to another moment in which he finds himself as a prisoner of war in a German Nazi Camp, while being interrogated by prominent psychologist, Dr. Halde. Sammy rejects to reply his questions and then he is locked up in a darkroom. His tormenting tale in the dark cell is told in section 8 which starts with the question, “How did I come to be so frightened of the dark?” (Golding, p.154). Here, he mentions Father Watts-Watt who is a polite but ludicrous clergy man. After the death of his mother, Sammy was adopted by him. His experiences related to the cold world start near him because Father Watts-Watt is paranoiac who believes that enemies pursue him continually. His odd behavior which results also from his anguished side by his homosexual tendencies, add irrational fear of the dark to the boy Sammy. In this section, his time in the dark cell allows him to answer a lot of questions related to his childhood and his adolescent days in Art School. Sections 9 and 10 complicate his involvement in the dark cell. In Section 11 and 12, he goes to the grammar

school days with flashbacks to complete the memories of his adolescent time. In these sections, Sammy mentions two important people of his life—Nick Shales, who teaches Science, and Miss Pringle, who teaches Scripture— they have crucial roles on the formation of Sammy’s identity. The last section takes him to the post war period when Sammy finds Beatrice in a lunatic asylum with no hope of recovery. The last section turns to the end of the dark cell section that reveals one crucial fact that the horror of the cell has been made up by Sammy’s own mind and dreads. To Sylvere Monod, this technique helps Sammy to catch cause and effect relationship between the events:

The technique has some traditional weight and significance. In fact, the resulting time-pattern is both psychologically and morally convincing: psychologically, because as far as we know, the human mind is much less methodical than any form of printed narrative; memory never yields a continuously chronological sequence of events; it jumps back and forth, juxtaposes and conflates episodes, etc. Morally, the quest for guilt and responsibility is much assisted by the potentialities of such a time-pattern. (Monod, p.138)

As a very little child Sammy Mountjoy is happy in Rotten Raw which is the slum he lives in despite the poverty and without never knowing his father. This place means “Garden of England” for him because Rotten Raw is the innocent world of Sammy’s childhood (Golding, p. 22). He enjoyed his life as an innocent child in the slum which was his Eden (Golding, p.20) under the “the majesty and central authority of Ma and Evie” (Golding, p.29). His mother was a kind woman who “shared pleasure round like a wet-nurse’s teat, absorbed, gustily laughing and sighing” (Golding, p.15). His life was happy because his Ma with her affection and his best friend Evie with her fantastic stories were Sammy’s “twin towers” (Golding, p.29). Thus, he mentions this place happily:

I crawled and tumbled in the narrow world of Rotten Raw, empty as a soap bubble but with a rainbow of colour and excitement round me. We children were underfed and scantily clothed. I first went to school with my feet bare. We were noisy, screaming, tearful, animal. And yet I remember that time as with the flash and glitter, the warmth of a Christmas party. (Golding, p.17)

In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche says, “innocence is the child, and forgetting, a new beginning, a game, a self-propelling wheel, a first movement, a sacred Yes” (qtd. in Chapko p.26). Accordingly, Sammy associates innocence with his childhood because it is a prosperous process which is full of possibilities and dreams in his life. He has boundless imagination and creativity which are far from any restrictions and mean freedom as well. In this sense, the world is peaceful and full of happiness for him.

After his mother’s death and his being adopted by Father Watts-Watt, the unhappy days start for Sammy. His schooldays also share the darker side of his childhood. He meets with the sense of guilt in those years. In elementary school, with the malicious effect of his friend Philip Arnold who “is a living example of natural selection and fitted to survive in this modern world as a tapeworm in an intestine,” Sammy acquires stealing and forcefulness (Golding, p.49). They bully the small boys for their precious fag-cards of the King of Egypt. Philip is a cunning boy who knows Sammy’s sore points and encourages him to make incorrect things. For instance, he persuades Sammy to spit upon the alter of the church. The other friend of him, Johnny Spragg, is simple “chunky, active and cheerful” (Golding, p.37). They have fun by watching the airplanes. Sammy has the memory of wrong things with Johnny as well. They trespass on the airfield and witness an air crash. After that, they trespass into the general’s huge mansion which is on Paradise Hill, oversees Rotten Row. When Sammy’s such childhood memories given in the novel are taken into consideration, Sartre’s statement—“there is no such thing as an ‘innocent’ child”—points out Sammy’s situation (Barnes, p.297). In spite of all negations, Sammy nevertheless feels innocent in those days because he is far from the responsibility of consciousness. There is a sense of guilt but it is a state of being unaware about any corruption or misdoing. Hence, during his childhood, the world is totally different from the eyes of Sammy because he is not aware of the evils of the world. Since his soul and mind have not yet been fouled, he feels blameless and naive. That unconscious period lacks guilt, sin or mistakes for him. For this reason,

Sammy describes that time of his life as the “days of terrible and irresponsible innocence” (Golding, p.25).

Sammy continues glancing at his memories in order to understand where he lost his innocence. He knows that his losing innocence is related to his free-will. Sammy remembers one specific scene from his childhood. He starts telling his memory by saying that “I put the day in the park first in my story, not because I was young, a baby almost; but because freedom has become more and more precious to me as I taste the potato less and less often” (Golding, p.6). In spite of the unfavorable conditions, that time is splendid for him. He is little and at the center of a park. Every path of the park is spreading from the point where he sits. It means for him as if he was at the center of the universe and capable of doing everything because he says “for once, I was free. I had power to choose” (Golding, p.5). While telling that scene, Sammy uses refreshing words and vivid colors such as; “the pool,” “bright sunlight,” “banks of red and blue flowers,” “green lawn,” “the splash and splatter of the fountain” and “warm stone”. With the power of these words, he describes the moment at which he encounters his freedom. He explains his feeling related to freedom by saying that; “free-will cannot be debated but only experienced, like a colour or the taste of potatoes” (Golding, p.5), and he narrates his experience with the following words:

I was very small and I was sitting on the stone surround of the pool and fountain in the centre of the park. There was bright sunlight, banks of red and blue flowers, green lawn. There was no guilt but only the splash and splatter of the fountain at the centre. I had bathed and drunk and now I was sitting on the warm stone edge placidly considering what I should do next. The gravelled paths of the park radiated from me: and all at once I was overcome by a new knowledge. I could take whichever I would of these paths. There was nothing to draw me down one more than the other. I danced down one for joy in the taste of potatoes. I was free. I had chosen. (Golding, pp.5-6)

However, when Sammy looks into his adulthood, he sees “a burning amateur, torn by the irrational and incoherent, violently searching and self-condemned” (Golding, p.5). Somewhere, some time he chooses freely doing

something bad, then the blossoming and innocent period of his life ends with that choice—experience of guilt. He understands that once guilt is experienced, innocence ends. For him, it means realizing consciousness and ultimately becoming an adult. Hence, Sammy defines his innocent childhood “clear as spring water” which is full of potentials of freedom. However, the same Sammy describes his adulthood as “a stagnant pool”. He goes on writing his story as it appears to him, to go back and find a relation between the little Sammy and the adult one:

Perhaps, to understand must include pictures from those early days also. Perhaps reading my story through again I shall see the connection between the little boy, clear as spring water, and the man like a stagnant pool. Somehow, the one became the other. (Golding, p.9)

As an existentialist character, Sammy investigates how he lost his freedom. In various places and at various times, he continually asks the same questions: “When did I lose my freedom?” (Golding, p.5) or “How did I lose my freedom?” (Golding, p.6). His repeated answer to these questions is; “Here, then? No. Not here” (Golding, p.132), “Here? Not here” (Golding, p.217). In this sense, “*Free Fall* becomes a sort of detective story in which various pieces of evidence are examined and discarded until the mystery is solved” (Friedman, p.68). Sammy’s effort to pinpoint that moment when he lost his freedom is correspondingly an endeavor to recognize what he is in the sense of what he was. Sammy tries to identify the critical moment of his decision which is made freely and costs him his freedom: “Somewhere, sometime, I made a choice in freedom and lost my freedom” (Golding, p.192). Therefore, he continues searching his other memories, by saying that “I look for the point where this monstrous world of my present consciousness began” (Golding, p.78).

## 2.2 Sammy's Dualistic Nature

**“Time is two modes”**

**Sammy Mountjoy (Golding, p.6)**

As an existentialist character, Sammy wants to understand his own being and nature of his choices. Sammy, who is always in need of fulfillment, has the battles of conflicts related to his inner world caused by the duality between rationalism and spiritualism. “Duality” is a notion which denotes fundamentally the struggle of two conflicting forces in a body. For this reason, the two components of duality cannot be separated because they are complementary of each other. In this novel, Golding illustrates desperate situation of modern man who perceives “rationalism and spiritualism” which is the main duality of the period as “rationalism or spiritualism”. This perception related to “this or that” makes modern man to choose rationalism and causes the two World Wars by unveiling evil within him. Hence, as representative of modern man, Sammy tries to explore the bridge between the two worlds of rationalism and spiritualism, struggling between his “being” and “becoming”. Sammy's world is torn with the conflicts caused by this duality, and his consciousness symbolically hovers between two opposites; good and evil, spiritualism and rationalism, fate and free-will, reasonable and unreasonable (man's consciousness and silent world), spirit and body, emotion and intellect, pleasure and pain, love and selfishness, etc. Golding, who reveals in *Free Fall* the duality of rationalism and spiritualism as complementary in a body, states his view related to it in B. R Johnson's *Golding's First Argument: Theme and Structure in Free Fall*:

It seems to me that we do live in two worlds. There is this physical one, which is coherent, and there is the spiritual one. To the average man—with his flashes of religious experience, if you like to call them that—that world is very often incoherent. But nevertheless, as a matter of experience, for *me* and I suspect for millions of other people, this experience of having two worlds to live in all the time—or not all the time, occasionally—is a vital one and is what living is like. (qtd. in Johnson, p.66)

In *Free Fall*, Golding reveals Sammy's conflicts by means of several characters in the novel in order to mirror conflicting features of time and the human being in general. Golding, who writes on one single duality of two opposites in his earlier novels, uses various characters to symbolize various conflicts in his *Free Fall*, in which "the two forces of duality come to merge with one another so that to distinguish between the two becomes a quest relying on a twentieth century provisional exercise to capture a 'shifting, incomprehensible, ambiguous' reality" (Johnson, p.62). While Golding is revealing the conflicts of Sammy with different characters, he mirrors the obscurity of time as well. In this sense, he creates a more realistic and existential character. From his childhood to adulthood, all other characters who cause the conflicts of Sammy symbolize the complication of his consciousness and his self-quest in an inexplicable world. As a modern man, he flounders among them with the hope of finding a bridge. Thus, he interrogates his past and himself. Johnson explains Sammy's efforts to find a bridge to create a meaningful life as:

This duality, as in the earlier novels, served not primarily as a vehicle of conflict, nor rigidly to delineate two antipathetic worlds (revealing Golding, as a world-weary pessimist), but more importantly served as a tool to explore the possibility of finding a bridge between the two, if not reconciling them to one another then at least establishing lines of communication between them. Golding, then, in *Free Fall*, dramatizes a complex interrelationship between the two forces, tracing the duality from its most simplistic (as Sammy perceives it in his childhood) to an increasingly complex rendering as the narrator explores his past and those who have most influenced him—all brought to bear on his quest for redemption and freedom. (Johnson, pp.62-63)

Sammy preludes to his story with two ways of comprehending time. Sammy, having "two competing natures present within his one consciousness" (Johnson, p.64), defines the dualistic nature of the time concept as objective and subjective: while one is the objective time as an "effortless perception"—implying "endemic of the physical world," the other is the subjective memory as "shuffle fold and coil"—relating to the spiritual world which is derived from the leaps backward and forward in time in which important events appear in human mind first (Johnson,

pp.67-68). These two opposites are concurrently existing. Sammy explains these two modes of time and shows how one's memory is important in the process of becoming:

Time is two modes. The one is an effortless perception native to us as water to the mackerel. The other is a memory, a sense of shuffle fold and coil, of that day nearer than that because more important, of that event mirroring this, or those three set apart, exceptional and out of the straight line altogether. (Golding, p.6)

When Sammy shuffles back to his life to search the connections of the events, a compound and rich scene of the characters appears in his mind. Sammy reviews all people in his life and his relationships with them. He wants to know “the point where this monstrous world of [his] present consciousness began” and how he lost his freedom by means of them (Golding, p.78). Sammy gains more coherent results related to his becoming in his search of human relationships. In each section, the characters are represented as two opposite people, one of whom he rejects. These characters symbolize the conflicting dualities of Sammy's consciousness. On his infant school days, he adores his classmate Evie and despises Minnie, who urinates in the classroom when she is asked her name. In elementary school years, he has two friends: One of them is Johnny Spragg, who is simple and extrovert, and the other is Philip Arnold, who is subtle and cunning. The two churchmen, one of whom is the powerful Father Anselm, and the other is paranoiac local priest Father Watts- Watt who adopts Sammy after his mother died. Sammy has love affairs with two women: One of them is pure and religious Beatrice Ifor, who is seduced by him and lost her sanity; the other is the entirely secular and swearing Taffy, whom he gets married to. The most influential of these characters in Sammy's life are Nick Shales and Miss Rowena Pringle, Sammy's school teachers who stand for the opposing worlds of rationalism and spiritualism. The duality of these characters symbolizes not only Sammy's looking for a bridge between the rationalist and spiritual worlds but also the unstable and perplexing reality of the twentieth century. All of them serve as a vehicle of conflict.



### 2.2.1 The Two Distinct Worlds of Rationalism and Spiritualism

The major conflict appears in two of Sammy's grammar school teachers; kind Nick Shales, who teaches Science, and sadistic Miss Rowena Pringle, who teaches Scripture, have big roles on Sammy's identity. When he is an adult, he understands that they play a significant part in shaping his identity, and because of this, he calls them "my parents not in the flesh" (Golding, p.250). For this reason, he reviews deeply his relationship with them and he tries to understand their natures in order to understand himself: "These two people, Nick Shales and Rowena Pringle, loom larger behind me as I get older. Mine is the responsibility but they are part reasons for my shape, they had and five finger in my pie. I cannot understand myself without understanding them" (Golding, p.214). Sammy hates Rowena Pringle who is "a middle-aged spinster" because of her unfair, cruel and vicious nature (Golding, p.194). She teaches religion mercilessly and cannot make children love it but fear:

She ruled, not by love but fear. Her weapons were no cane; they were different, subtle and cruel, unfair and vicious. They were teeny, arch sarcasms that made the other children giggle and tore the flesh. She was a past-master of crowd psychology and momentum. She could give our giggles a touch at the right moment, wait, touch again, like man with a pendulum, wait, touch, wait, touch until her victim was savaged by the storm of derision, was grasping for breath in the wretched flayed flesh—was on the hooks. (Golding, p.195)

Nevertheless, Sammy is interested in her courses because of his interest in the spiritual world. For Sammy, "she was a good teacher. She told her stories with the vivid detail," for this reason Sammy says, "I was with her" (Golding, p.196). However, Miss Pringle has a private detestation for Sammy and shows her hatred whenever possible towards him. Since she likes Father Watts-Watt but he turns his attention to Sammy after adopting him, Miss Pringle takes her suppressed emotions out on Sammy. Hence, Sammy states that his teacher's hatred is "partly because I [Sammy] was hateful and partly because she was hateful and partly because she had a crush on Father Watts-Watt—who had adopted me [Sammy] instead of marrying her" (Golding, p. 194). Despite his eventual hatred for Miss Pringle, Sammy thinks:

“I was still innocent of the major good and evil; I thought no evil, I believed when she made me suffer that the fault was mine” (Golding, p.195). Sammy, as a “simple and incredibly still innocent” child, always interrogates this: “What did I do that I should always be her target?” (Golding, p.197). Although Sammy is the most eager student and joins to her courses willingly, she humiliates Sammy in front of the class on all occasions with her uncharitable and sarcastic religious teaching. However, while she is reprimanding him in front of the class, Sammy is looking at her with begging eyes and these thoughts are passing in his mind:

Don't you understand? I'm on your side, really. I know that the openings are more important to you than the silly plausibilities of explaining away. I know that the book is full of wonder and importance. I am not like Johnny on my left who will take it as read, or Philip in front who is looking at you and wondering how he can learn to use you. My delight is your delight. (Golding, p.202)

However, she ignores his interest. Therefore, Sammy becomes her “blameless victim” (Golding, p.197). Miss Pringle always punishes Sammy by saying, “come out here in front of the class” (Golding, p.202), in order that he “should not contaminate the others by [his] presence” (Golding, p.209). She always reminds him with her sense of class distinction that he has come from a slum: “Do you suppose that I really don't know what you're like? We all know where you come from, Mountjoy, and we were willing to regard it as your misfortune” (Golding, p.203). Sammy was accusing himself related to this, and he could not find the right words to express himself to her but later he will understand that “she would not have accepted even the most elaborately accurate explanation. She would have dodged it with furious agility and put [him] back in the wrong. She was clever and perceptive and compelled and cruel” (Golding, pp.203-204).

Besides her sense of class distinction, Miss Pringle is troubled and unfortunate about sex as well. Since she knows that Sammy is an adolescent boy, she estimates newly sprouting sexual impetus in his mind. Thus, she needs to “crucify” the boy Sammy (Golding, p.210). Since the naked human flesh is filthy in the eyes of her, “for Miss Pringle to touch human flesh would be defilement”

(Golding, p.195), so “Sammy is made to feel wicked for his mere humanity” by her as well (Boyd, p.75).

In opposition to Miss Pringle, Sammy mentions Nick Shales with admiration although he is not interested in his course because Nick as a very kind and patient teacher loves children and teaches charitably. Near Nick, the boy Sammy feels himself in comfort and at home. Whenever Sammy is sad, Nick relieves him with his soft, friendly and confidential nature. As a very decent and respectful man, he cares not only for Sammy but also for all people. Thus, Nick attracts Sammy not with his course of science but with his good being. For this reason, Sammy declares Nick flatteringly:

Nick was the best teacher I ever knew. [...] He had a vision of nature and a passionate desire to communicate it. He respected children too. [...] They were just human beings and he treated each one with serious attention indistinguishable from courtesy. He kept discipline by ignoring the need to enforce it. (Golding, pp.210-211)

Sammy finds Nick Shales’s courses boring because the universe that he teaches about is a realistic one. This explains why Sammy is more interested in Rowena Pringle’s spiritual world because Miss Pringle’s universe is magical for Sammy. Thus, he searches about Old Testament and Moses eagerly. He does not wonder about the scientific world of Nick. He says: “I am deeply interested in Moses. He is more important than the composition of water. I am willing to be told about water when we get to Mr. Shales’s lesson but Moses is far more important. I want to know all about Moses that can be known” (Golding, p.197). However, after Miss Pringle’s last torture in the class, Sammy comes to the parting of the ways which will affect all his life. Sammy as a talented boy for art, draws landscape pictures on his rough work book. Miss Pringle, who watches for an opportunity to rip into him on all occasions, notices it and degrades Sammy by placing his desk apart from the rest of the class and complaining about him to the headmaster. Being very much ashamed, Sammy is comforted kindheartedly by Nick Shales. In this sense, Sammy makes his vital choice. He rejects the spiritual world of Miss Pringle and chooses Nick’s rationalist universe by what he was, not by what he said: “Yet

I didn't choose a materialistic belief, I chose Nick," he says (Golding, p.226). By this decision, unlike his spiritual nature, Sammy shuts the door on the spiritual realm until he is imprisoned in a German Nazi Camp. Henceforth, Sammy continues his life with his mere rationalism without being aware of the destructive results of it for him, for people around him and for the world as well. Sammy comments on this critical moment which leads up to his vital fault:

This was a moment of such importance to me that I must examine it completely. For an instant out of time, two worlds existed side by side. The one I inhabited by nature, the world of miracle drew me strongly. To give up the burning bush, the water from the rock, the spittle on the eyes was to give up a portion of myself, a dark and inward and fruitful portion. Yet looking at me from the bush was the fat and freckled face of Miss Pringle. The other world, the cool and reasonable was home to the friendly face of Nick Shale. I don't believe that rational choice stood any chance of exercise. I believe that my child's mind was made up for me as a choice between good and wicked fairies. Miss Pringle vitiated her teaching. She failed to convince, not by what she said. Nick persuaded me to his natural scientific universe by what he was, not by what he said. I hung for an instant between two pictures of the universe; then the ripple passed over the burning bush and I ran towards my friend. In that moment a door closed behind me. I slammed it shut on Moses and Jehovah. I was not to knock on that door again, until in a Nazi prison camp I lay huddled against it half crazed with terror and despair. (Golding, p.217)

These two people, Nick Shales and Miss Pringle, are the people of two competing natures in Sammy's consciousness. While Nick Shales is standing for dull rationalism, Rowena Pringle symbolizes the mysterious spiritual world. They belong to completely different universes. Thus, Sammy describes the time of his changing classes as crossing "from one universe into another" (Golding, p.211). They are the two components of one duality for Sammy. However, they compose this duality in Sammy's mind by not true representations of their beliefs but their being. Hence, Sammy's critical choice between the two dogmas for creating his own meaning is not rational; the predictive factor in determining his side is simply "a choice between good and wicked fairies" of his childhood (Golding, p.217). As a man who is thrown to the world, Sammy makes his choice between two dualities

of him in a patternless universe without knowing that this choice and the results of it will cause his fall.

### **2.2.2 The Two Worlds of Emotion and Intellect**

Since Nick Shales and Miss Pringle are not ideal models for their dogmas, Sammy's world is vitiated by them. When Sammy glances at his past from his adulthood, he sees a man who is torn between his emotion and intellect. He chooses Nick's rational universe because of his nature, not because of his view. He also rejects Miss Pringle's spiritual universe because of her nature, not because of her dogma. Thus, Sammy comprehends it by saying that he does not choose rationalism intellectually; he chooses it emotionally. Like Sammy, Nick Shales who has come from a poor slum also makes his choice emotionally. As different from his dogma, Nick is good, merciful and thoughtful because his saintly father brought him up in this way; "Nick had a saintly cobbler as his father and never knew that his moral life was conditioned by it" (Golding, p.226). For this reason, he is good; "he found it easy to be good" (Golding, p.214). For Nick,

There was no place for spirit in his cosmos and consequently the cosmos played a huge practical joke on him. It gave Nick a love of people, a selflessness, a kindness and justice that made him a homeland for all people; and at the same time it allowed him to preach the gospel of a most drearily rationalistic universe that the children hardly noticed at all. (Golding, p.213)

Nick Shales chooses rationalism because he is introduced with a cruel image of God in his childhood, so he rejects him and goes on with dull rationalism in spite of his morally goodness. Hence, like Sammy, Nick also chooses rationalism irrationally. Despite his spiritual nature, he decides his side emotionally. For this reason, Sammy says that "our decisions are not logical but emotional. We have reason and are irrational" (Golding, p.222). Their situations indicate that man's reason is inadequate because he is alone with his reason in an unresponsive universe. For this reason, he is imbued with his dualities on such an earth. Thus, rationally or emotionally, he is always in a state of choosing to make himself and

he is condemned to bear the results of his choices. Sammy explains the reasons for Nick Shales's choice in a patternless universe:

You didn't choose your rationalism rationally. You chose because they showed you the wrong maker [...] The maker they mimed for you in your Victorian slum was the old male maker, totem of the conquering Hebrews, totem of our forefathers, the subjectors and quiet enslavers of half the world. I saw that totem in a German picture. He stands to attention beside the cannon. There is a Hindu tied across the muzzle and presently the male totem of the Hebrews will blow him to pieces, the mutinous dog, for his daring. The male totem is jackbooted and topee'd and ignorant and hypocritical and splendid and cruel. You rejected him as my generation rejects him. (Golding, p.250)

In this sense, Nick Shales, who accepts himself as a rationalist, is in fact a humanist who behaves according to the humanistic view and directs his life with his love of people. Thus, "Nick's stunted universe was irradiated by his love of people" (Golding, p.226). As a polite and selfless man, he behaves respectfully towards all people. Hence, Sammy finds Nick Shales as an esteemed man and for this reason he is misled by him. Since Sammy who is fascinated more by Nick himself than by the beliefs of him, chooses rationalism emotionally not intellectually. In this sense, with his confusion related to his nature and dogma, Nick Shales destroys Sammy indirectly. Thus, Sammy who realizes the reality says that "our mistake is to confuse our limitations with the bounds of possibility and clap the universe into a rationalist hat or some other" (Golding, p.9).

Sammy's second spiritual parent, Miss Pringle's universe is set up completely upon the truths of the spirit, and her dogma is the result of her insight and emotion; two sensations which are the opposite of the rationalist view. However, like Nick Shales, she has a stunted universe which is irradiated by her psychological and sexual frustration. While as a religious woman she should have been calm and peaceful, she is full of hatred actually. Thus, Miss Pringle hates Nick Shales who has chosen goodness because he "found it easy to be good" (Golding, p.214). For this reason, Sammy says that "the beauty of Miss Pringle's cosmos was vitiated because she was a bitch" (Golding, p.226). Her belief does not help her

because as different from her life she held, she is “the so-respectable school marm with her clean fingers was eaten up with secret desires and passions. No matter how she built up the dam on this and that, the unruly and bilious flood of her nature burst forth. May she not have tortured herself in despair and a self-loathing every time she tortured me?” (Golding, p.214). For this reason, she is the other character who destroys Sammy with her confusion. However, different from Nick Shales’s indirect effect, Miss Pringle, as a “wicked fairy,” has a direct destructive role in Sammy’s life because she produces evil with her sense of hatred.

Under these circumstances, “Nick’s universe of cause and effect, his soulless universe fitted like a glove” to Sammy—with one difference; from now on he behaves only with his rationalistic side but as a loveless creature because as different from Nick Shales, Sammy is instilled guilt by his “mother not in the flesh”—“Miss Pringle, whose lessons made Sammy’s feelings about sex, religion and class such a deadly mixture of attraction and repulsion, love and hate. The guilt that was her gift to him prompted his guilty actions” (Boyd, p.75). As an existentialist hero, Sammy also does not evaluate his situation as wicked or evil but by the term “guilt” that was Miss Pringle’s gift to him and provoked his guilty actions towards his falling. Thus, he says: “Guilty am I; therefore wicked I will be [...] Guilt comes before the crime and can cause it” (Golding, p.232). Sammy, who is tortured by Miss Pringle and learns to loathe himself, gets an earthbound sense of love. He “cared for nobody” (Golding, p.58) by “using people as a punchball” (Golding, p.53). However, Nick Shales is not “caught in the terrible net where [...] guilty ones are forced to torture each other” (Golding, p.250) because he is full of love for humanity. “You were innocent, you were good,” Sammy says about him (Golding, p.250). On seeing his difference from him, Sammy says: “I was more intelligent than Nick. I saw that if man is the highest, is his own creator, then good and evil is decided by majority vote. Conduct is not good or bad, but discovered or got away with” (Golding, p.218). By gaining cruelty with his guilt ridden intellect, Sammy walks to the hell of his creation step by step. He is consequently guilty as a result of misusing his free-will related to his emotionally decided rationalism

because of his sense of guilt. Johnson reveals how Nick's confusion leads Sammy to his own misinterpretation of rationalism which causes him to lose his freedom:

In equating Nick and his philosophy, Sammy mistakes love for his teacher as love for rationalism, a mistake derived from a confusion between emotion and intellect. Sammy's book, impelled by this one moment of having made a wrong choice in full freedom, traces the sacrifice of freedom even while acknowledging that freedom itself is the means of its own destruction. (Johnson, pp.63-64)

### **2.2.3 The Two Worlds of Good and Evil**

For Golding, it is a matter of critical choice man makes between good and evil. Golding, all of whose novels include the conflict between good and evil, analyzes the forces which affect man's own nature, other people and as related to it, the condition of the world. In *Free Fall*, Golding reveals the duality of good and evil by classifying the people Sammy knows as good, wicked and guilty. These three kinds appear as a result of the view of them related to their perceptions of rational and spiritual dimensions. "Evil" is basically the opposite of good, while innocence is a state in which evil is wholly absent, and the consequence of a kind of sin which results from entire reason by discounting good and intuitive sides of man such as love, respect and intuition as well. "Wickedness" can be seen as a result of an evil act which is totally based on reason. "Guilt" is also the result of an evil act; however, the concept of guilt relates particularly to the indecisive human consciousness which struggles between reason and sense—by extension good and evil. Thus, guilty man is prone to make a mistake because of the ambivalence. Since good and evil exist side by side, these qualities of human existence build a frightening and complex world full of despair. Thus, in such a world, people impose pressure on and disturb each other through imposing their views, limitations and confusions, as Garcin in Sartre's famous play *No Exit* observes: the perception of man is that "hell is other people" (qtd. in Delahoyde). In this play, the setting is a closed small room symbolizing the world in which the characters progressively become the foes of each other. Here, Sartre argues that man is incapable of



improving real views about his becoming by himself but by others' judgements. For Sartre, man has choices, of course, but as Miss Pringle makes Sammy loathe himself by instilling guilt, others can impose negation on man with their views or judgements. In this sense, "others" become "hell" for creating and causing evil. For this reason, in *Free Fall*, Golding evaluates all characters by means of Sammy's shuffling back to his past in order to reveal the interrelation of all dimensions and their effects on man's nature, on others and the world in which they live. In *A Conversation with Golding*, Douglas M. Davis explains his views concerning this in an interview:

I'm not saying anyone is evil. I set out to discover whether there is that in man which makes him do what he does, that's all. When I was young, before the war, I did have some airy-fairy views about man [...] But I went through the war and that changed me. The war taught me different and a lot of others like me. (qtd. in Farley p.2)

Thus, the source of evil in this novel is man's common failure to recognize the state of his own nature and then self-alienation by trying to impose external patterns on himself. It is symbolically seen that Sammy's misinterpretation of others and then betraying his own nature creates a guilty man who is prone to evil. Sammy's self-quest through his past also sheds light on the other characters of the novel; Miss Pringle, Nick Shales and also Father Watts-Watt who do not comprehend their actual situations and cause the troubles of others directly or indirectly with their confusion, like Sammy.

As Miss Pringle and Nick Shales, Father Watts-Watt is another character who does not get in harmony with his belief and has a finger in the pie of Sammy's troubles by his being. As a clergyman who agonizes his homosexual tendencies, he turns into a paranoiac who is convinced that enemies pursue him constantly. Thus, he is an anxious man who does not perform his job properly and live peacefully. Like Miss Pringle, with his confusion, he produces evil and damages Sammy as well. Sammy who is instilled with a sense of guilt by Miss Pringle and irrational rationalism by Nick Shales gains a sense of darkness which prepares the suitable basis for Sammy's evil act by Father Watts-Watt as well.

As a result of their additives, Sammy-Beatrice relationship is also the result of Sammy's indifference to his own nature and his attempt to impose an external pattern on his nature. These characters in *Free Fall*, who try to live with their beliefs, deceive themselves about their own natures and the world. Their misinterpretations and disappointments create evil because any beliefs alone cannot involve the human existence as a whole. Man's spiritual and rationalist sides attend only as part of man in his body as unit. These views as alone limit man's insight. Thus, *Free Fall* reveals the destructive results of the limitations of beliefs and patterns which are imposed by man on his existence. Golding argues that it cannot be limited if it is limited each one deludes man and makes him defenseless to definite evils. Since they limit man's perceiving of the world as it is, these confusions turn into sources of evil in man. Therefore, in *Free Fall*, Golding expresses that evil is within man, and states that those sources of evil embrace man's fear of the unknown; his limited capacity to comprehend himself and his inability to explain the universe and his condition obviously. According to Sartre, this situation of man creates his despair and the destructive results of his actions:

As for "despair," the meaning of this expression is extremely simple. It merely means that we limit ourselves to a reliance upon that which is within our wills, or within the sum of the probabilities which render our action feasible. Whenever one wills anything, there are always these elements of probability. (Sartre, 1948: p.39)

With these compulsions, Sammy, who walks with his pure reason by ignoring his emotional side in parallel with not having a moral concept, falls in love passionately with his schoolmate Beatrice Ifor who "is the most mysterious and beautiful thing in the universe" towards the end of their grammar school (Golding, p.84). He adores her pure and indescribable beauty. Beatrice, who is neat and conservative, seems inaccessible for Sammy. He is obsessed with possessing her with deep longing, with a sort of sublunary love which means only sex. By seeing her only as a "white, unseen body" (Golding, p.235), he wants to make Beatrice his sexual possession. Sammy does not respect her as a person. He is "a young man certain of nothing but salt sex" (Golding, p.108) but Beatrice, who is conservative and religious, does not respond to his lustful desires. However, Sammy insists on

convincing her to become his. Thus, his behavior towards Beatrice becomes ever more depraved, by conducting him down into a guilty hell of his own making. He seduces her by saying that he will get married to her in the future. If she does not agree, he says that he will kill her. By executing psychological torture on Beatrice, Sammy convinces her to become his lover, but as a religious girl, she cannot respond to Sammy's violent passion. When Beatrice is his, there is little pleasure in their relationship. Whenever Sammy asks; "Don't you feel anything?" her answer is always "I don't know. Maybe" (Golding, p.119). As a result of this, their relationship turns into a one-sided love affair. Beatrice has become the victim of Sammy's exploitation for two years. Not only he treats towards her very cruelly and immorally, but also he insults her by saying: "Aren't you human, then? Aren't you a person at all?" Poor Beatrice's answer to him is one word, "Maybe" as usual by looking at him "with doggie eyes" (Golding, p.121). Thus, "the lovemaking was becoming an exploitation" (Golding, p.120). His ideal love is now entirely obedient to Sammy's desires:

She remained the victim on the rack, even a rack of some enjoyment. But there was nothing in this that we could share, for poor Beatrice was impotent. She never really knew what we were doing, never knew what it was about [...] Her clear absence of being leaned in towards me, lay against me, clung. (Golding, pp.119-121)

Thus, Sammy accepts her only as "a white body" (Golding, p.121). Once as an artist, he makes her picture by saying that "I shan't paint your face at all. I just want your body". Beatrice symbolizes just an object for him. Sammy says: "When the drawing was finished I made love to her again. Or rather, I repeated what my pencil had done, finished what my pencil had begun. The lovemaking accepted that she was unable to take part" (Golding, p.120).

This insufficient relationship goes on until Sammy falls fervently in love with swearing Taffy who is a member of the communist party as well. Taffy's full participation makes their lovemaking "a complete preoccupation and dependence" (Golding, p.110). Then, Sammy immediately leaves Beatrice without an explanation, by relieving himself with a reasonable but cruel expedient:

What was I to do about her? What could I do? Give Taffy up? Presumably that would be the standard reply of the moralist. But was I now to live the rest of my life with Beatrice, knowing all the time that I was in love with Taffy? In the end I did nothing. I merely ensured that they should not meet. But poor Beatrice bored me. The old magic, the familiar nerve was deadened or burned out. I no longer desired to understand her, no longer believed that she had some secret. I was sorry for her and exasperated by her. (Golding, p.127)

Although Sammy knows that Beatrice is looking for him despairingly, he ignores her efforts for that he knows she is not pregnant by him. Thus, Sammy without explaining his disappearance, gets married to Taffy. Poor Beatrice who is upset by his betrayal deeply loses her sanity and lands in a lunatic asylum where Sammy has found her after some years.

Under these circumstances, as a result of his alienation to his own nature, Sammy's guilt ridden basic instincts bring his mouth "the taste of evil" and misusing of power create evil in his manners (Golding, p.226). Thus, Golding reveals Sammy's sexual instinct as the first source of evil in the novel. His sexual instinct stimulates Sammy in his longing for Beatrice who withstands Sammy's desires but later obeys his insistence because of his threatening of going mad. After losing her mental health, Beatrice's inability to control her urinating in front of Sammy in the lunatic asylum—like that of his classmate Minnie—symbolizes the fact that man on an instinctual level is no more than an animal. Sammy also confirms it after his affair with Beatrice, by saying that he feels "to be anthropoid" (Golding, p.219). Kenneth, the psychiatrist of Beatrice, summarizes the costs of Sammy's selfish instinctual impulses for his own satisfaction. Dr. Kenneth who also loves Taffy and knows the relationship of Sammy and Beatrice, declares the truth by saying: "You and your bloody pictures. You use everyone. You used that woman. You used Taffy. And now you've used me" (Golding, p.246).

Sammy understands that his selfish sexual drives which ensue as a consequence of his imposing external patterns on him, makes him evil and leads him into his own created hell. Thus, he says: "Sex thrust me strongly to choose and

know. Yet I did not choose a materialistic belief, I chose Nick. For this reason truth seems unattainable. I know myself to be irrational because a rationalist belief dawned in me and I had no basis for it in logic or calm thought” (Golding, p.216). Sammy accepts that as a guilty man he has created evil instead of good because he is a man who struggles between his reason and emotions. However, he feels a sense of good after he is set free in German Nazi Camp because as an indecisive guilty man he still has the possibilities of goodness. He understands that good is possible in man’s world only when he practices it. He conveys his experience:

This substance was a kind of vital morality, not the relationship of man to remote posterity not even to a social system, but the relationship of individual man to individual man—once an irrelevance but now seen to be the forge in which all change, all value, all life is beaten out into a good or a bad shape. This live morality was, to change the metaphor, if not the gold, at least the silver of the new world. (Golding, p.189)

In this novel, Golding states that beside evil, good is also initiated within man. Sammy’s words that “people are the walls of our rooms, not philosophies” reveal that the sense of good is not intangible; it is a manner man possesses and performs (Golding, p.226). Man’s appreciation of good is spiritual rather than intellectual. He instinctively behaves towards others with love, benevolence and esteem. Golding also perceives the good ones as innocent because they are unable to make an evil act. In *Free Fall*, the characters who experience good and show this deed in their manners are Sammy’s Ma, Beatrice, Nick Shales and Johnny Spragg. Sammy mentions about them admiringly because they are incapable of any cruel act. For example, Sammy’s Ma is a kind woman who does not use other people for her own purposes. As a simple being, she only knows how to enjoy the preferences of the moment. “She terrifies but she does not frighten. She neglects but she does not warp or exploit. She is violent without malice or cruelty. She is adult without patronage or condescension. She is warm without possessiveness” (Golding, pp. 15-16).

Like Ma, Johnny Spragg lives for the moment as “careless of what has been and what is to come” (Golding, p.131). Sammy reveals the difference between him

and Johnny Spragg with the comprehension of natural goodness within him; “I understood how there had been in him what had been missing in me; namely a natural goodness and generosity so that even his sins were peccadilloes because all the time the root of the matter was in him. But either I had been born without this natural generosity or I had lost it somewhere” (Golding, pp.190-191). Like Johnny, Beatrice is also good as “simple and loving and generous and humble” (Golding, p.191). Nick Shales is good with his inherent respect and love as well. For Golding, the source of good in them is a spirit which “breathes through the universe and does not touch it, touches only the dark things held private, incommunicado, touches, judges, sentences, and passes on”(Golding, p.253). Golding never reveals this spirit as God. It is only goodness; a dimension in which “love flows along until the heart, the physical heart, this pump or alleged pump makes love as easy as a bee makes honey” (Golding, p.188). Sammy says that the good live as being “not caught in the terrible net where [...] guilty ones are forced to torture each other” (Golding p.250). They do not suffer from that tension because they live instinctively with sense of love. The guilty ones torture each other because they get confused between rational and spiritual laws. They cannot escape the confusion of the dualities. They know both worlds but they never belong to any of them. They are undecided between depending on rationalism alone as it is for the wicked, and depending just on spiritualism as it is for the good. Hence, they are continually torn between the two opposites. For this reason, the guilty ones are prone to fall because they are trapped by that uncertainty.

The world of the wicked is absolutely destitute of uncertainty and different from the good’s world because they entirely serve to reason, so they only hear the evil sound of their inner selves. Thus, they are incapable of good because they are unaware of love, respect and kindness. The wicked ones, like Miss Pringle, ignore humanistic values because they direct their lives selfishly in order to live just for their own requirements and longings. Therefore, they can only create evil acts such as lust and greediness. Feeling and emotions are disregarded by them for the sake of their egocentric reasons. In this sense, they damage the rights and truth of other

man. Hence, the two World Wars which happened as a result of pure rationalism are the work of the wicked. In this novel, it is symbolically revealed in the frame of the relationships of the characters and clearly seen how the evil acts—so-called rational acts of the wicked cost the humanity dear and create hell in this world.

In *Free Fall*, Golding evidently expresses that the universe is totally beyond man's control. The man who lives by knowing the value of love is good. The man who is totally blind to emotions is wicked. The man who knows the existence of spirit but is inept of letting it direct his life is guilty. As all existentialist thinkers would share, all of them want to give meaning to their lives by creating patterns. However, in this novel, it is seen that the efforts to explain life by means of an externally imposed system does not work. The respondent actions of the characters prove that the view of "rationalism or spiritualism" fails. Instead of this, the code of the universe requires accepting it together as "rationalism and spiritualism" for balance. Thus, Sammy says that "a man is a whole continent and each consciousness is a whole world" (Golding, p.249). In this sense, the novel indicates what happens when the patterns are created to clarify the universe by man and how the results of these distinctions restrain the possibilities and disclose the sources of evil within man causing chaos.

## CHAPTER III

### THE FALL OF MAN AND SAMMY'S FREE FALL

**“How did I lose my freedom?”**

**Sammy Mountjoy (Golding, p.6)**

William Golding's *Free Fall* hinges on the concept of “fall of man” that constitutes the gist of existentialism. In the title of the novel, the two words “free” and “fall” come to be important because they possess, “both theological and scientific connotations” (Monod, p.135). “Fall” as a result of a sin theologically refers to a conscious betrayal of godly law. Golding's title wordily and scientifically denotes the uncontrolled movement of body which complies with the law of gravity and falls freely. It also suggests theological fall of humanity. However, for Golding sin means violating a “moral good” which the existentialist character Sammy realizes with his own choice. Thus, Golding emphasizes the fall of man as “free” in order to underscore the problems of “free choice” and “free-will” in this novel. He connotes that “free fall” occurs as a result of the free choice of Sammy. For this reason, Sammy repeatedly asks himself the same question: “When did I lose my freedom?” (Golding, p.5) This tension between the two connotations of the title associates also the duality of “spirit and flesh,” “rationalism and spiritualism” which is central in the novel.

The twentieth century is the era of the “fall” in space for humanity who interrogates the meaning of life; while doing this, man faces himself only to comprehend that he does not have any foundation in the universe, and finally has difficulty understanding his own role on the events. Thus, “fall of man—with its



usual connotations of pride, revolt, lost innocence and the triumph of evil” is generally used during and after the two World Wars by the existentialist novelists in order to describe man’s desperate position on earth because the problems of the novel characters are identical in this period (Dierickx, p.12). They reveal that the “fall” is the common perception of humanity in these years. For this reason, they symbolize the guilty actions of modern man, and they begin their self-interrogation by losing their innocence, experiencing the fall and then confronting with themselves. As the protagonists of these nightmare years, they symbolically reflect modern man’s situation which was hung in the air. They are the heroes who experience the relationship between freedom and responsibility by standing face to face with themselves. Thus, the “fall” is the reality of humanity and subject matter of the existentialist novels in this unfortunate era. For this reason, as a modern man of this period, Sammy says that “the world around us was sliding on and down” (Golding, p.95). In *The Fall* which is also a product of this period, Jean-Baptiste Clamence of Camus’s exactly confirms Sammy by saying: “How can I express it? Everything slid off” (Camus, 1956: p.17). Jean Paul Sartre’s Antoine Roquentin of *Nausea* is also between these fallen men with his depression, uncertainty, self-hatred and anguish. As existentialist novel characters of the same period, they share the same sense of alienation from themselves and universe. As a result of their fallen states, they question themselves and the world in which they live. Each one “draws his own portrait and there is nothing but that portrait” (Sartre, 1948: p.42). As the products of these nightmare years, they reflect the predicament of modern man. These characters as “given the guilty past, anguished present, and uncertain future” illustrate the story of man who makes a choice consciously, ignores his responsibility and then loses his freedom (Friedman, p.70). In this regard, when the matter is to pinpoint for the exact moment of the fall, these novels move on the inner interrogation of the protagonists. Thus, they “are first-person confessions designed to investigate the existence and exercise of free-will” (Friedman, p.71).

Sammy’s guilt and fall stem from his ignorance while Beatrice is falling from the state of the human being to the animal like state. The result of Sammy’s

guilt is irreversible because Beatrice loses her sanity. Thus, Sammy experiences the fall as a result of this mistake. The nature of his mistake confronts him with the problem of freedom and responsibility. The reader witnesses his confrontation with truth, related to his own self. For this reason, “*Free Fall* with its detailed account of Sammy’s childhood and adolescence makes such explanation possible: the responsibility for the fall and its consequences may be sought and found within the human world of the novel” (Boyd, p.64).

Hence, this period is so odd that it brings man to the state of fall because of his evil acts in full freedom, not because of the theological original sin of Christianity. For the Christian belief, “fall of man” stems from the first man Adam and the first woman Eve’s disobedience to God. With their mistake, their innocent status transforms into a guilty one and it is believed that their guilt has brought sin to the world and mankind has been born as sinful since then. Thus, man comes to the world as guilty because of his first ancestors’ fault. This event is named as the original sin, so every man is sinful since he was born. Hence, “fall” involves all humanity, for this belief. However, for the existentialists, “fall” is the situation of man who lost his innocence as a result of a guilt which stems from man’s own mistake committed with his free-will as an individual in a godless universe. It means that there is no one except for himself to blame. For this reason, the movement of existentialism objects to the belief of original sin because for the existentialists who defend “man is free, man is freedom” if man is *destined* to sin since he was born, he is not actually free (Sartre, 1948: p.34). Thus, for the existentialists who claim that “*existence* comes before *essence*” only man himself can determine his being guilty, wicked or good with his own free choices (Sartre, 1948: p.26). Man who is equipped with free-will can only himself decide the values by which he lives because he is different from the rest of the universe as a rational and conscious being. He is always free to give his life whatever meaning he chooses. Hence, there can be no original sin which includes all humanity for them. For the view of existentialism, the fall of man might be inevitable just due to his free-will. Thus, as Sylvere Monod says; “As the loss of freedom and the fall result

from a man's use of his free-will, the whole problem is one of guilt and responsibility" (Monod, p.136).

In this sense, "fall" for the existentialists, is associated with man's choosing the wrong with his free-will without knowing that it is wrong. For this reason, as an existentialist character, "Sammy Mountjoy is concerned to examine first things, the fall from innocence to experience, the beginning of serious, of perhaps irremediable sin and the responsibility for it" (Boyd, pp.63-64). Thus, *Free Fall* is built on two interrelated pursuits—"for the point where this monstrous world of [Sammy's] present consciousness began" (Golding, p.78) and "the decision made freely that cost [him his] freedom" (Golding, p.7).

### **3.1 Freedom and Responsibility in *Free Fall***

The matter which brings the fallen character Sammy to that point is the nature and the results of his choices. When the subject matter is "choice," the problem of God and absence of the fundamental patterns to rest on, and then the question of freedom and the burden of responsibility accompany it. Sammy makes a critical choice in his quest. What makes his choice vital is his finding himself in a fallen state. Thus, Sammy leaves no stone unturned in his past for determining how he lost his freedom. He interrogates how he created his own hell. He reveals man's attempt to get bearings on earth which he feels alone.

Thus, freedom comes to the fore in this novel. In this sense, Sammy who "is obsessed with the loss of his freedom" deals with freedom widely (Boyd, p.68). Sammy who says "free-will cannot be debated but only experienced, like a colour or the taste of potatoes" understands that freedom is how precious but heavy deed because man who chooses himself as a free master naturally engages in the burden of responsibility (Golding, p.5). Hence, Sammy reveals that freedom means responsibility. By means of him, Golding like all existentialist novelists whisper to the reader "man is responsible for what he is. [...] the entire responsibility for his existence squarely upon his own shoulders" (Sartre, 1948: p.29).

### 3.1.1 Man is Responsible for Himself

Sammy, who interrogates his relationships in his past for “looking for the beginning of responsibility,” sees a man being always in a state of choosing one of the two characters in his life (Golding, p.47). As an existentialist character, he experiences Sartre’s view that “he cannot avoid choosing [...] what is not possible is not to choose [...] if I do not choose, that is still a choice” (Sartre, 1948: p.48). Furthermore, he sees that there is no guarantee before-during-after his choices. Thus, Sammy who is in a position of making his own choices and being obliged to put up with the results of them by himself, comprehends that he is alone with his choices and free-will. For this reason, the state of Sammy who says that “freedom was my curse” (Golding, p.13) shows his being “condemned to be free” just because “he did not create himself, yet is nevertheless at liberty, and from the moment that he is thrown into this world, he is responsible for everything he does” so he is “left alone, without excuse” (Sartre, 1948: p.34). As a modern man, Sammy expresses his abandoned position on earth by saying that “there is no spirit, no absolute” (Golding, p.226). He means that it is a godless universe in which there are no such things as the values or a pre-determined plan. In such a world, Sammy is in a state of making his own essence and destiny with his own decisions because “every man, without any support or help whatever is condemned at every instant to invent man” (Sartre, 1948: p.34). Thus, he describes the world as, “amoral, savage place in which man was trapped without hope” (Golding, p.226). Since God, any values or commands that can legitimize man’s behavior do not exist, Sammy legitimizes Sartre’s technical words “anguish,” “abandonment” and “despair” because the lack of systems of patterns or guaranteed values creates a meaningless world which is defined as “absurd”. This absurdity creates the sense of being in space in which the twentieth century’s modern man—Sammy gets confused as an unhappy man. On the last day of his grammar school, the headmaster emphasizes Sammy’s being a hopeless man by saying to him: “You aren’t happy. Happiness isn’t your business” (Golding, p.234). By agreeing with him with his reply; “No, sir,” Sammy corroborates that he is an existentialist character in despair.

As an existentialist hero, in order to create his own identity, Sammy thinks that “right and wrong are a parliamentary decision like no betting slips or drinks after half past ten. But why should Samuel Mountjoy, sitting by his well, go with a majority decision? Why should not Sammy’s good be what Sammy decides?” (Golding, p.226). Hereby, he confirms that “*existence* comes before *essence*” (Sartre, 1948: p.26). It is up to him to define himself. Later, Sammy as a man who is an uncompleted project, in the process of creating himself, says that “Nick Shales and Rowena Pringle, loom larger behind me as I get older. Mine is the responsibility but they are part reasons for my shape” (Golding, p.214). It means Sammy accepts that they can be caused the unfavorable foundation of his life, but nevertheless the one who makes these choices is none other than just him. By admitting that the responsibility of his choices belongs to him, Sammy confesses: “I cannot be blamed for the mechanical and helpless reaction of my nature. What I was, I had become” (Golding, p.132). As an existentialist character, Sammy confirms that man is nothing else but what he lives. About it, Sartre says:

Man is nothing else but what he purposes, he exists only in so far as he realizes himself, he is therefore nothing else but what his life is [...] What we mean to say is that a man is no other than a series of undertakings, that he is the sum, the organization, the set of relations that constitute these undertakings (Sartre, 1948: pp.41-42).

### **3.1.2 Man is Responsible for His Passions**

In the Sammy-Beatrice relationship, Sammy is a man who is enslaved by his passions. With the obsession of having Beatrice, Sammy feels “lost, caught and trapped” (Golding, p.81). He cannot think of anything except for Beatrice. For this reason, he thinks repeatedly that he is “not entirely free” in the process of seducing her (Golding, p.79). In the section in which Sammy goes to Beatrice’s school to meet with her, throughout his travel on his bike, he thinks that he is “a little nearer to a complete loss of freedom” (Golding, p.83). At traffic, Sammy stops at red light on the bridge of South London. The “bridge and “red light” symbolize the last exit before his fall (Golding, p.79). While Sammy is waiting for the green

light excitedly, he is unaware of that going ahead means taking a step for losing completely his freedom. However, Sammy, without waiting more for the green, goes through the red light and the bridge by saying; “I had left my freedom behind me” (Golding, p.79). Sammy tells about this moment of transition:

Still the traffic lights said stop. I became aware that the roads were filled with a jam of traffic—so the lights could break down then. We were held up. There was still time to turn round and go away again. A few days and the feelings would sear themselves out. But even as that possibility presented itself I knew that I should not go back; felt myself get off the bike, lift it on the pavement and wheel it under the red light. (Golding, p.80)

From this day on, Sammy and Beatrice begin to date. However, Beatrice, who is conservative and vulnerable, stands aloof from Sammy during their meetings. Sammy goes crazy by his passion for having her. During these days, Sammy and Beatrice, who are nineteen years old, graduate from the grammar school. While Sammy is attending to the Art School, Beatrice attends to the training college. On the last day of his grammar school before going to the Art School, Sammy’s headmaster warns him about his self-centered and deceitful personality by giving him vital advices. Firstly, he praises Sammy’s artistic ability by saying that “you have an exceptional talent that makes you as distinct as if you had a sixth finger on each hand” but he goes on: “You’re dishonest and selfish as well as being a—whatever you are” (Golding, p.234). By saying this, the headmaster makes his divinatory warning about Sammy’s egocentric nature and passions which are prone to evil, by uttering: “If you want something enough, you can always get it provided you are willing to make the appropriate sacrifice. Something, anything. But what you get is never quite what you thought; and sooner or later the sacrifice is always regretted” (Golding, p.235). Sammy who finds his advice suitable for his own lustful wish ignores the “regret” part of the conversation. About the aim of satisfying his sensual lust, he contemplates and asks by himself: “What is important to you? ‘Beatrice I for.’ [...] ‘If I want something enough I can always get it provided I am willing to make the appropriate sacrifice.’ What will you sacrifice? ‘Everything’” (Golding, p.236). By saying this, Sammy “invites damnation. His

decision to risk all for earthly lust is [...] reflected in his voluntary and hazardous descent into hell” (Friedman, p.76). Sammy invites his fall by making his unfortunate choice without knowing that it will cost him his freedom. As Sartre argues, Sammy “interprets the sign as he chooses” because he is a man “without any support or help whatever, is condemned at every instant to invent man” (Sartre, 1948: p.34). Thus, Sammy chooses to have Beatrice’s body by conveniently misunderstanding his headmaster’s “prophetic warning that ‘the sacrifice is always regretted,’ Sammy now makes the fatal decision—to sacrifice everything to possess Beatrice—that costs him his freedom” (Friedman, p.77). Hence, with the influence of his passionate desire, he does his best to seduce Beatrice without knowing that her physical loss will become his spiritual loss. Sammy as a man who is enslaved by his passions says that, “once a human being has lost freedom there is no end to the coils of cruelty. I must I must I must” (Golding, p.115). Thus, he uses every trick to seduce her. He threatens her with killing or his going crazy. When they do not work, he says that he is going to get married to her. Ultimately he achieves his aim by making Beatrice obey him. However, as a conservative girl, poor Beatrice cannot satisfy Sammy’s desires. Thus, Sammy who knows passionately no bounds for cruelty torments her psychologically. For this reason, as his headmaster says, what he gets is never what he thinks—Sammy’s sacrifice is regretted. With his conscious decision, by being unaware of the destructive results of it, Sammy, in fact, chooses to fall unwittingly. Sammy sacrifices his freedom for the sake of his passion. Hence, he says: “I had lost my power to choose. I had given away my freedom” (Golding, p.132). As an existentialist character, Sammy’s analysis of himself with the obsession of freedom is his effort to realize and identify himself. In his quest, Sammy accepts his own responsibility for his passion by saying: “What I was, I had become” (Golding, p.132). In this sense, *Free Fall* reveals the issue of existentialist literature, as Friedman claims:

In its obsession with freedom, *Free Fall* mirrors the transcendent issue of existentialist literature. Existentialist characters invariably concern themselves with the problem of identity. Sammy Mountjoy’s attempt to identify that moment when he lost his

freedom is equally an attempt to identify what he is in terms of what he was. (Friedman, p.68)

In this novel, Golding reveals “passion” as a central evil for man. By means of Sammy-Beatrice relationship, Golding displays the destructive effect of passion for man. In the world of modern man who is overwhelmed by his passion, “the existentialist does not believe in the power of passion” (Sartre, 1948: p.34). Thus, *Free Fall*, as a novel mirroring the existentialist issues, emphasizes Sartre’s saying that “man is responsible for his passion” for the sake of the welfare of humanity (Sartre, 1948: p.34). In relation to it, Sartre says that:

In other words, feeling is formed by the deeds that one does; therefore I cannot consult it as a guide to action. And that is to say that I can neither seek within myself for an authentic impulse to action, nor can I expect, from some ethic, formulae that will enable me to act. (Sartre, 1948: p.37)

### **3.1.3 Man is Responsible for Others**

As it is seen, Sammy’s situation symbolizes the situation of the modern man who is responsible individually for his choices, actions, emotions and passions without appealing any written values or orders in a godless universe. He decides his life with his own free-will, but Sammy forgets another significant point which will cost him to lose his freedom. As time passes, Sammy’s unhappiness turns to anguish as a result of his choices because Sammy is unaware of knowing that what he chooses to do for himself means choosing for everyone else at the same time; i.e., by seducing Beatrice with a conscious choice, he also chooses her destiny by seriously destroying her. His passionate and irresponsible actions affect not only his life but also Beatrice’s as well. His choice, which is a result of his insistent sexual desires to have her body, causes him to lose his freedom and Beatrice to lose her mental health. While Sammy is suffering in the prison of his consciousness, Beatrice continues to live in a lunatic asylum.



Sartre, who says, “I bear the responsibility of the choice which, in committing myself, also commits the whole of humanity” (Sartre, 1948: p.48), explains this situation with “inter-subjectivity”—“It is in this world that man has to decide what he is and what others are” in his *Existentialism and Humanism* (Sartre, 1948: p.45):

When a man commits himself to anything, fully realizing that he is not only choosing what he will be, but is thereby at the same time a legislator deciding for the whole of mankind—in such a moment a man cannot escape from the sense of complete and profound responsibility. (Sartre, 1948: p.30)

Sammy understands that “a man is a whole continent and each consciousness is a whole world”, and all worlds exist side by side in one world by affecting each other’s life with their imperfections (Golding, p.249). In this novel, Golding demonstrates the small version of the chaotic world by affirming virtually Sartre’s saying; “man is the future of man” (Sartre, 1948: p.34). Golding hints, by means of his characters in *Free Fall*, that choices of man can cost all humanity. Cruelty is probable merely when man neglects his responsibility for other individuals or disregards his social responsibility for the prosperity of people. Thus, *Free Fall* illustrates the penalties when a man or mankind neglects social responsibilities. The selfish neglect of Sammy as representative of modern man who causes the wars, is responsible for many cruelties, due to the fact that the willful neglect of man has created the brutal wars. The relationship between Sammy and Beatrice symbolizes it with one individual’s malice in his management of another human being. By means of them, it is shown in the novel that the rational mind of man destroys everything by torturing others and creating his self-inflicted hell. Thus, for William Golding this kind of irresponsibility is mankind’s greatest sin. As Sartre says, “in thus willing freedom, we discover that it depends entirely upon the freedom of others and that the freedom of others depends upon our own” (Sartre, 1948: pp.51-52). Consequently, man is not only responsible for himself but also responsible for others. If man does not have a sensation of anxiety while making his decisions, it means forgetting his own responsibility towards himself and all of

humanity. For this reason, neglecting human responsibility for others creates the other central evil—man’s cruel treatment of other men in *Free Fall*.

Although William Golding does not intend for writing an existentialist work, *Free Fall* emerges as an existentialist novel from the viewpoint of confronting the fallen man Sammy with his intentions, passions and responsibilities for himself and for others. As becoming in the process, Sammy interrogates his being by reaching the darkest wrinkles of his consciousness. During his quest, Sammy reveals that man is responsible for designing himself without help. As Sartre says; “man is, indeed, a project which possesses a subjective life” (Sartre, 1948: p.28). It means that, as an existentialist character, Sammy accepts his being as an uncompleted project in which just his free-will, his choices, his responsibilities for himself, his actions, his life and others take place.

### **3.2 Bad faith in *Free Fall***

For man who is “condemned to be free” in a godless universe, the days are dreadful because of heavy responsibility. For this reason, man wants to escape from this burden by accusing of others or conditions. In *Free Fall*, Golding hints responsibility as the burden of freedom by means of Sammy. He is the character who suffers as a result of his choices. He has difficulty in accepting his responsibility of freedom like all mankind because it is always easier to accuse of the external world. Thus, man is always in tendency to find suitable excuses for his wrongs for that man generally rejects to pay the penalty of his actions in a way. Hence, he searches for a shelter, which is self-deception.

From the viewpoint of responsibility, Sartre defines “the situation of man as one of free choice, without excuse and without help”. Thus, for him “any man who takes refuge behind the excuse of his passion, or by inventing some deterministic doctrine, is a self-deceiver” (Sartre, 1948: pp.50-51). Sartre means that self-deception, in other words, “bad faith” forms a basis for the “fall” of man by distorting him from realizing himself. In Golding’s moral world, it is an action

which creates evil as well. As an existentialist character, Sammy's fall bears the traces of bad faith. Hazel Estella Barnes explains Sartre's "bad faith" in her *Humanistic Existentialism: The Literature of Possibility*:

If we are to understand their literature, we must know why existentialist writers believe that man generally feels unable to face the truth about himself and seeks various modes of escape. Essentially the position is this: that man cannot bear the realization that all the values he lives by, his purposes, his projects are sustained by his own free choice; he finds it too great a strain to accept sole responsibility for his life. Therefore he takes refuge in the belief that somehow the external world is so structured that it guarantees the worth of its objects, it provides specific tasks which have to be done, it demands of each person a definite way of living which is the right one. Whether God, Nature, or a transcendent Society is responsible, the order of things is absolute. It is a serious world" [...] Sartre says that man escapes into the Serious World by bad faith. (Barnes, pp. 48-50)

For Barnes, who is a popular existentialist and the translator of Sartre's works, man's honesty to himself is vital to be able to create his essence without any excuses or guaranteed patterns of the society. She says that "sincerity may be easily defined as the determination to be for oneself and for others whatever one really is. At first thought, sincerity appears to be the evident antithesis of bad faith" (Barnes, p.52). Hence, man can only realize himself by shouldering the responsibility of his choices instead of escaping into the structured guarantees of the world. As she says, "presumably a man in good faith will assume responsibility for his actions even though he has no assurance that he is right, and he will carefully distinguish between what he believes (even if he only believes) to be true and what he (only) believes to be false" (Barnes, p.54).

Thus, for the existentialists while man is shaping his life, there is one and only sin for him; it is "bad faith." It is quiet convenient to call bad faith as sin because it is the situation of man's disobedience to his own being. It means that man who has bad faith behaves out of his real intention by deceiving himself. In this sense, man who does not show the courage to shoulder his responsibility, betrays his own being and embraces determinism. Thus, he loses his soul and cannot

realize his essence. For this reason, Hazel Estella Barnes, as an existentialist writer, calls bad faith the original sin of existentialism:

For the existentialist, bad faith is almost original sin. One is not, to be sure, born in it. But bad faith, is so prevalent in the world that one can hardly escape its contagion. Moreover, the philosophical vision required if one is to avoid bad faith is such as could hardly be attained by one living in a state of complete innocence. The existentialist hero comes face to face with the truth about himself when he recognizes within him the structures of bad faith—in much the same way that the Christian convert is saved from sin at the moment when he acknowledges that his soul must be cleansed of it. (Barnes, p.55)

The other existentialist writer Stefano Elio D'Anna, supports this view in his book *Tanrılar Okulu*. For him, the actual sin is choosing to be coward instead of his own responsibility for man. It means as a rational being giving up his paradise in exchange for anxiety and misery by accusing external world with fear (D'Anna, p.272). In this sense, for D'Anna, the fatal fall of man symbolizes the rise of dependent, ordinary, liar and irresponsible man who gives up his freedom and prefers dependence (D'Anna, p.331). In Ancient Greece, committing a sin means “deviate” etymologically (D'Anna, p.272). For D'Anna, deviating from his own being by rejecting his responsibility and giving his free-will to an outsider power is a deadly sin. Thus, for D'Anna, the biggest unforgiven only sin is believing in being created and not to make a claim to free-will and responsibility. Thus, as it is stated in Ian Gregor's *He Wondered': The religious imagination of William Golding*, man who is in the manner of self-deception “will never continue in a mere state of innocence; he is sure to sin, and his literature will be the expression of his sin” (Gregor, p.84).

Sartre also explains “cowardice” in his *Existentialism and Humanism* as man's betraying his own self by escaping his responsibilities by stating that “a coward is defined by the deed that he has done,” and he goes on: “Whereas the existentialist says that the coward makes himself cowardly, the hero makes himself heroic; and that there is always a possibility for the coward to give up cowardice and for the hero to stop being a hero” because man makes himself with his choice,

cowardice is also a choice (Sartre, 1948: p.43). However, for man, it is easier to complain of the situation of him by accusing of the external world instead of taking responsibility of his actions. Thus, in order to escape his responsibility, man prefers being coward since he was born. Sartre reveals man's taking the easy way out with excuses, by means of explaining cowardice in his *Existentialism and Humanism*:

If people condemn our works of fiction, in which we describe characters that are base, weak, cowardly and sometimes even frankly evil, it is not only because those characters are base, weak, cowardly or evil. For suppose that, like Zola, we showed that the behavior of these characters was caused by their heredity, or by the action of their environment upon them, or by determining factors, psychic or organic. People would be reassured, they would say, "You see, that is what we are like, no one can do anything about it." But the existentialist, when he portrays a coward, shows him as responsible for his cowardice. He is not like that on account of a cowardly heart or lungs or cerebrum, he has not become like that through his physiological organism; he is like that because he has made himself into a coward by his actions. There is no such thing as a cowardly temperament. (Sartre, 1948: pp.42-43)

In the light of these, we can explain Sammy's "fall" with "bad faith". Sammy, as a man who is one of the immoral members in the communist party, with the wish of "the social security of belonging to the tribe," in the war atmosphere as well, is a dishonest person (Golding, p.218). By "using people as a punchball," Sammy who says that "I cared for nobody" does not care for himself either (Golding, pp.53-58). Since he has no sincerity for himself and others, Sammy cannot analyze his choices properly before deciding about them. Thus, it can be said that Sammy's flawed love for Beatrice is "self-deception". He claims he loves her insistently, but in fact he sees her only as a "white, unseen body" and just desires to have her sexually (Golding, p.235). In this sense, Sammy's counting his passion as an excuse to have Beatrice means his running at full gallop to his "fall". For this reason, by his choice for Beatrice, Sammy loses the possibilities of his other choices. Because of his bad faith, he loses his freedom and his power to choose. However, his fall knows no bounds. As he masks his lustful passion with excuse of his love to obtain Beatrice, he tries to create another excuses to leave her as well. By taking refuge behind the excuse of war conditions in which millions of people

died, he says; “why bother about one savaged girl when girls are blown to pieces by the thousand?” in order to avoid his conscience and responsibility for her (Golding, p.132). However, he cannot avoid his own created hell because Beatrice’s suffering disturbs him. One day, Sammy sees on the road a cat nearly killed by a car which is screaming in agony:

A car had caught a cat and taken away about five of its nine lives, and the poor, horrible thing was dragging away and screaming and demanding to be killed; and I ran away, my fingers in my ears until I had put the writhing thing out of mind and could play supposing again [...] For, after all, in this bounded universe, I said, where nothing is certain but my own existence, what has to be cared for is the quiet and the pleasure of this sultan [...] What else could I have done but run away from Beatrice? [...] I could do nothing but run away. I could not kill the cat to stop it suffering. (Golding, pp.128-131)

Sammy is disturbed by his incapacity to perform an act of compassion. He has to confront with his excuses, sense of guilt and choices which cause his fall in the prison of his consciousness. He loses his power to choose by causing Beatrice to suffer. Sammy understands that he destroys not only her but also him. He sees that he “reinforced the reality of physical life and destroyed the possibility of anything else” (Golding, p.123). When Sammy understands that his excuses are just ticket for escaping from his fault, he comprehends that everything is vitiated not because of the external world, but just because of him. In this sense, his real being hit him like a ton of bricks in his own created hell. He comprehends that what he has become results from what he is by understanding that he is guilty because of his selfish nature. In this regard, by gaining sincerity, Sammy takes his own responsibility for his actions. As Barnes says, “Sartre is right in pointing out that sincerity may easily become an avenue leading into bad faith. With regard to the past, sincerity is possible and necessary; if a person is to be in good faith, then he must admit that he has been what he was, he must acknowledge his own acts” (Barnes, p.54). Thus, as an existentialist character, Sammy accepts that what he is results from what he was by facing the truth about himself with his sincerity.

At the end of *Free Fall*, Sammy Mountjoy realizes how he makes Beatrice an instrument of his selfish nature. Although Dr. Kenneth Enticott evaluates the situation of Beatrice in the lunatic asylum as “heredity,” Sammy nevertheless knows that he is responsible for her mental illness (Golding, 1956: p.245). Sammy understands the source of his wrong, but the result of his action is irreversible; Beatrice cannot return to life again mentally. All that is left is his apprehending related to the fact that there is no such thing as fate—it is a man-made process with free choices. In such a world, there is no rehearsal of life. However, if there were, nothing would change because as Sammy starts to understand that he becomes what he is.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE INFLUENCE OF THE WARS AND THE THEME OF ABSURD

#### 4.1 Sammy's Warlike World as a War Artist

**“This war as the ghastly and ferocious play of children”**

**Sammy Mountjoy (Golding, p.150)**

In *Free Fall*, it is implied that a considerable part of Sammy's condition is the result of the entire changes of the twentieth century social environment that World War II created. Thus, as an existentialist character, Sammy's situation is the natural result of absurd conditions which stem from the war which ruined all conventional systems, beliefs and the throne of God as well. The war drags man such an awful frustration that his whole world turns upside down because his so-called rational actions create an irrational world for him as a result of the modern man's motto of “this or that”. In such a dull world, all systems of values collapse; man loses his meaning. Thus, in a meaningless world, Sammy, who interrogates the process of “being” and “becoming” in relation to whether a bridge can be found between rationalism and spiritualism, is the representative of modern man who had antipathy about life and distrust in God during World War II. As Terry Eagleton says, the novels of this period are not the products of their writers' imaginations or psychologies; like *Free Fall*, they are just evidential values of a depressed and chaotic era:

To understand literature, then, means understanding the total social process of which it is part. As the Russian Marxist critic Georgy Plekhanov put it: ‘The social mentality of an age is conditioned by



that age's social relations. This is nowhere quite as evident as in the history of art and literature.' Literary works are not mysteriously inspired, or explicable simply in terms of their authors' psychology. (Eagleton, p.208)

Thus, in his "*Writing, Reading, and the Public*" Sartre claims that the existentialists' literature reveals the condition of modern man of the twentieth century by uttering: "Similarly, the function of the writer is to act in such a way that nobody can be ignorant of the world and that nobody may say that he is innocent of what it's all about" (Sartre, 1990: p.83). For this reason, under the dreadful impact of the wars, Golding, as a sensitive writer who also experienced World War II, loses his belief about the innate goodness in man, and mirrors the soul of the era in *Free Fall* with his narrative craftsmanship. In this sense, Mark Kinkead-Weekes speaks highly of Golding about his fictional talent by claiming; "we may say that sight is nothing without insight, and may deceive like words; that is only when the physical eye is 'made quiet' by some deeper kind of perception that we can for a moment 'see into the life of things', wordlessly. Golding's fiction says *both*" (Kinkead-Weekes, p.65). He means that Golding not only illustrates the brutality of war wordily, but also adumbrates which mood of man causes this violence in *Free Fall*. As Kinkead-Weekes says, Golding brings the reader in gaining an insight related to the harshness of the war in *Free Fall*. In this sense, Golding, who suffered man's murdering and tormenting each other cruelly, clearly states in this novel that man's lust and greed are responsible for this scandal. He reveals it by his view of that "man produces evil as a bee produces honey" in a patternless world and creates the violence of the wars. Golding explains what he means in *Free Fall* in his *The Hot Gates*:

I must say that anyone who moved through those years without understanding that man produces evil as a bee produces honey, must have been blind or wrong in the head. He was supposed not to have in him, the sad fact of his own cruelty and lust [...] I believed then, that man was sick—not exceptional man, but average man. I believed that the condition of man was to be a morally diseased creation and that the best job I could do at the time was to trace the connection between his diseased nature and the international mess he gets himself into. (Golding, 1970: p.87)

For Golding, man's "diseased nature" results from his alienation to his nature by exchanging his morally sides with external patterns. In *Free Fall*, he reveals it by means of Sammy's struggle between his being and becoming—rationalism and spiritualism. While doing it, darkness dominates the novel as it dominates the world during the war. Hence, in the novel, he creates a small version of the "morally diseased" world which is plunged into darkness. This central theme of darkness in his novels reveals Golding as if he is a pessimist writer. However "the war itself and other terrible events that may be invoked by means of only a few words—Stalin, Hitler, the Holocaust, the Bomb—made up a trial of preparation in which Golding, who served in the war, came to disillusionment with his youthful humanistic beliefs" (Baker, 1988: p.1). For this reason, Golding, as he states in his *Nobel Lecture 1983*, "may have turned that gloom into profound dark; dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon, irrecoverably dark, total eclipse" (qtd. in Baker 1988: p.149). For this reason, Golding is not a pessimist writer. He is just a sensible author who reveals deeply the facts of his time for only to create a more beautiful world. Hence, he goes on his speech by uttering: "I named myself a universal pessimist but a cosmic optimist" (qtd. in Baker 1988: p.150).

Golding in his essay "Belief and Creativity" states that "we are in hell [...]. To be in a world which is a hell, to be *of* that world and neither to believe in nor guess at anything *but* that world is not merely hell but the only possible damnation; the act of a man damning himself" (qtd. in Briggs p.172). He means that the sick situation of the war-torn world is not the issue of god or fate; it is just a man-made process. For him, the misuse of free-will becomes the bane of the world in these years. The excessive results of the war indicate that man has created his own hell with his own choices and actions. In this sense, by creating a character who is in trouble with his free-will, Golding traces the existentialist literature in *Free Fall*. In this novel, Golding summarizes what he means: Sammy's own created hell is not his fate, it is the consequence of his alienation to his own nature and misuse of his free-will. William Golding states his view related to it in a literary magazine as:

I am very serious. I believe that man suffers from an appalling ignorance of his own nature. I produce my own view, in the belief that it may be something like the truth. I am fully engaged to the human dilemma but see it as far more fundamental than a complex of taxes and astronomy. (qtd. in Hynes p.13)

In this sense, as a war writer who experiences these dreadful conditions, Golding reflects how modern man has realized this tragedy with his own choices by means of Sammy's own created hell in *Free Fall*. Namely, Sammy is the spokesman of Golding in the novel. Golding himself also confirms it in a dialogue with Arnold Johnston in his *Of Earth and Darkness*: "*Free fall* was an invention. All the terms of my life were turned upside down [...] I said to myself, you were in the navy, well; this man has to be in the army. You are a writer; you will have to make this man a painter" (qtd. in Bhadury p.25). As a war writer, Golding creates *Free Fall* with his war experiences. As an artist, Sammy also creates his own hell as the subject matter of the novel. From the viewpoint of existentialist literature, as an artist, his life is a blank canvas to paint in a patternless world; as a painter, his brush is his free-will and his canvas is his own destiny. With his brushstrokes, Sammy creates the painting of his life. Like Golding who is influenced by the wars and writes war novels, Sammy mirrors the effect of war into his life in which the wicked and the guilty torture each other. However, as different from Golding, Sammy uses being a war artist as a good substitute to get rid of his responsibility for destroying Beatrice's life and her mental health, like the war commandants who murder people publicly by alleging the wars. Thus, Sammy says that "there is no peace for the wicked but war with its waste and lust and irresponsibility is a very good substitute. I made poor use of destruction because I was already well enough known to be a war artist" (Golding, p.132). As a man who observes the awful conditions of the war, Sammy reflects the influence of war into his world. In such a world, of course there is the effect of the social influences on Sammy as well; such as his illegitimate birth, Ma's death, living in a poor slum, the influences of his sadistic teacher and evil friends around him and being a member in the Communist Party. These are the issues which expose evil to him. However, these are just external factors which prepare the foundation for Sammy's fall. The good

like Johnny Spragg and Nick Shales also live in the same world but they are “not caught in the terrible net where [...] guilty ones are forced to torture each other” (Golding, p.250), for they do not choose ignoring their emotional sides, but Sammy chooses being cruel by choosing the rationalist belief. As Barnes says, as an artist of his life, Sammy could have chosen giving another direction to his life:

There is always the possibility of initiating a change in the regulations or of playing an entirely different game. To use another analogy, man is like an artist—in this case one forced to paint something. If the artist to produce the picture he has in mind, he will have to observe certain principles of composition, of form, of color. But he is free at any moment to change his artistic purpose and so adopt an entirely different set of criteria. (Barnes, p.49)

Other factors which occur as a result of the wars, such as man’s fear of the unknown, his basic instincts and his limited ability to comprehend himself and his situation obviously, are the internal sources of evil. Thus, what is essential in this novel is the limitations and the belief of man who supposes that he can control his universe with his reason only. Golding, who profoundly mirrors the realities of his cosmos, wants to reveal the destructive results of this pure rational belief which causes the brutal world wars and leads the modern man Sammy to his fall in *Free Fall* as well. Hence, James Gindin says for Sammy: “He reflects his generation’s scepticism, as the Second World War is about to begin, concerning the dogmas and political absolutes of either the left or the right” (Gindin, p.44). In this sense, Sammy’s attitude of “this or that” between rationalism and spiritualism symbolizes the small version of the war-torn world. He is a man who has lost his freedom as a result of his choice of pure rationalism. For this reason, he has the dissatisfaction of human life in his own created ego-centric world which is based on reason. Thus, as a man who ignores his emotional sides, he has the capacity of torturing people. His cruel situation symbolizes the world’s situation in which people tortured each other brutally during World War II. In the novel, Sammy is a man who tortures an innocent Beatrice like a German Nazi of the war. Sammy who is desensitized in the social environment of the twentieth century does not care about Beatrice by evaluating the situation as normal in the wartime. He sees the destruction of one

single Beatrice as unimportant by reasoning that millions of people are being killed in the war, contending: “Why bother to murder in a private capacity when you can shoot men publicly and congratulated publicly for it? Why bother about one savaged girl when girls are blown to pieces by the thousand?” (Golding, p.132). In such a world, man begins to see cruelty as normal. Sammy loses his sensibility for the other as a result of his sense of space and the brutality of the twentieth century. Thus, Sammy says “what men believe is a function of what they are; and what they are is in part what has happened to them” (Golding, p.212). Sammy, as a dualistic man, vitiates his own world with his choices. As a man who is torn among his conflicts, creates his own hell in the atmosphere of the war. For this reason, he cannot decide that which one has produced the other:

I welcomed the destruction that war entails, the deaths and terror. Let the world fall. There was anarchy in the mind where I lived and anarchy in the world at large, two states so similar that the one might have produced the other. The shattered houses, the refugees, the deaths and torture—accept them as a pattern of the world and one’s own behavior is little enough disease. (Golding, pp.131-132)

As Baker says; “Sammy is also a creation caught in the ‘free fall’ of twentieth-century rationalism” (Johnson, p.65). By behaving only with his rationalistic side, he is doomed to lose his freedom and be a fallen man like a bird which tries to fly with one wing and crashes to the floor. This fallen situation of Sammy symbolizes the position of modern man who wants to create a rational world and crashes to the floor by the results of the wars. Sammy’s rational decision, though freely taken, makes an end of power to choose and brings to his mouth “the taste of evil” (Golding, p.226). As it becomes during the wars, a wrong use of freedom has cost Beatrice, has cost all humanity because “everything was relative” (Golding, p.150). Sammy is in such a situation that “realising the unhappiness of one other human being, realising that it has come to that other being through one’s own act, is the most agonizing experience imaginable” (Monod, p.143) Thus, Sammy sees himself “as a very ugly creature” and he feels “to be anthropoid” in his own created hell (Golding, pp.218-219). In *Free Fall*, it is implied that the wars

are just the works of these “ugly creatures” who are morally diseased but rationally complete.

#### **4.1.1 The Rationalist Dr. Halde as the Representative of the Wars**

Gestapo commandant Dr. Halde, who questions Sammy about the escape plan and imprisons him in the Nazi Camp, is the representative rational wicked of the merciless war. In the novel, while Sammy is a guilty man who is torn between two dimensions—rationalism and spiritualism, Dr. Halde is a wicked man who chooses his side as pure rationalism. Sammy is also a man who chooses rationalism but his choice is made emotionally because of his sympathy for the goodness of rationalist Nick Shales. As different from Sammy, Dr. Halde chooses rationalism logically. While he has a position in university, he leaves it with his radical choice and joins to German Nazi to serve as a war officer. Sammy sacrifices his freedom to have Beatrice; however, Dr. Halde sacrifices his university career with the awareness of creating a logical world. He is a man who chooses his side decisively. Thus, while questioning Sammy, Dr. Halde who notices Sammy’s conflicts says: “One must be for or against. I made my choice with much difficulty but I have made it” (Golding, p.140). Dr. Halde who defends “this or that” is the typical intellectual man of the twentieth century. To Johnson:

Dr. Halde is an incisive portrait of twentieth-century man whose villainy derives not from some innate absence of spiritual compassion [...] nor from a misunderstanding of his own inner nature (as Nick Shales), but rather from his deliberate choice to sacrifice his spiritual capacity and to serve only his reasoning faculty. (Johnson, p.64)

Dr. Halde who chooses rationalism very rationally is far from uncertainty as a wicked man. Since he completely serves reason, he is only capable of creating evil. Thus, he has no warmth or no humanistic values. His voice is also inhumanly cold. Dr. Halde’s inhumanity results from his limited view, as he lives only for his selfish longings. Thus, as a wicked man of the twentieth century, he creates a world in which people have tortured each other in the war. However, Dr. Halde claims

that his severe interrogation tactics are used only “for the sake of humanity” (Golding, p.142). He also sees himself as a “civilized man” (Golding, p.137). He defends the war and his actions by putting them in a very rational hat. For this reason, he proudly tells about that they kill millions of people of different countries:

We have beaten the world. We have hung in a row the violated bodies of Abyssinia, Spain, Norway, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, France, Holland, Belgium. Who do you think we are? Our Fuehrer's photograph hangs on the wall behind us. We are the experts. (Golding, p.176)

However, both of them create evil –Sammy as a guilty man, Dr. Halde as a wicked man. Thus, during the questioning in Nazi Camp, a strange sympathy occurs between them. While Sammy says “I liked him,” Dr. Halde says “there is already a certain indefinable sympathy between us” (Golding, pp.134-137). In their conversation, Dr. Halde talks as if he is Sammy's inner voice. Hence, the Nazi Camp becomes the place of redemption for Sammy. Dr. Halde talks so incisively that he nearly reminds Sammy of his evil acts for Beatrice. After saying that Sammy's two friends who try to escape from the camp are killed, Dr. Halde asks almost cynically: “Do you feel nothing then?” Against the question once upon a time he asks Beatrice, Sammy gives the same answer: “Maybe” (Golding, p.142). Dr. Halde goes on his tormenting by touching Sammy on the raw:

You oscillate jerkily from day to day, from hour to hour. Only the things you cannot avoid, the sear of sex or pain, avoidance of the one suffering repetition and prolongation of the other, this constitutes what your daily consciousness would not admit, but experiences as life. Oh, yes, you are capable of a certain degree of love, but nothing to mark you out from the ants or the sparrows. (Golding, p.145)

The merciless commandant Dr. Halde nearly throws up Sammy's wrongs to him by needling him. Dr. Halde who comprehends Sammy's weaknesses and the similarity between them hints that they are in this camp as a result of their choices. Thus, he says that; “I should be in my university. You should be in that studio” (Golding, p.137). However, Dr. Halde means that he is in the Nazi Camp as a result of his logical choice, but for Sammy the situation is different. He is in the camp, being interrogated by Dr. Halde because Sammy makes his choices as a result of

his confusions. Thus, Sammy is, in fact, in the prison of his consciousness. By seeing this, Dr. Halde shuts Sammy into a cell along with the hell of his consciousness by saying these:

I shall explain you to yourself. No one, not a lover, a father, a schoolmaster, could do that for you. They are all inhibited by conventions and human kindness. It is only in such conditions as these, electric furnace conditions, in which the molten, blinding truth may be uttered from one human face to another. (Golding, p.144)

#### **4.1.2 Sammy's Confrontation with Himself**

When Sammy is locked in a dark cell by Dr. Halde in the German Nazi Camp, his inner chaos comes to a climax with the influence of terrifying atmosphere. He supposes that he is in a torture chamber and there are instruments of torture around. He touches a soft thing on the floor, and with the effect of his sexual guilt, he perceives it as the penis of a dead body which has been cut off by the Germans. In fact, the Germans do not torture him; he tortures himself in the hell of his own consciousness. After going out, he will understand that the cell is only a broom closet and the thing he senses as the penis, is a damp mob in real. "Thus hell is the closet cell where Sammy's fear for his 'privates' turns a scrap of cloth into a severed penis. That his hell is evoked in sexual terms recalls the sin that cost Sammy his freedom" (Friedman, p.74).

In the dreadful darkness, he interrogates how he came to this point. All memories of him attack his mind. He thinks how he lost his freedom in a series of long flashbacks. When he comes to the critical point of understanding by "the flake of fire fall, miraculous and pentecostal" (Golding, p.5), he shouts with panic: "Help me!" (Golding, p.184). This cry "was instinctive" (Golding, p.184). At this time, the door of the cell is opened by the commandant of the camp. Sammy describes the moment of his crying for help:

I cried out not with hope of an ear but as accepting a shut door, darkness, and a shut sky. But the very act of crying out changed the



thing that cried [...] When a man cries out instinctively he begins to search for a place where help may be found; and so thing that cried out, struggling in the fetor, the sea of nightmare, with burning breath and racing heart, that thing as it was drowning looked with starting and not physical eyes on every place, against every wall, in every corner of the interior world. "Help me!" But there was no help in the concrete of the cell or the slime, no help in the delicate, the refined and compassionate face of Halde, no help in those uniformed shapes. There was no file for prison bars, no rope ladder, no dummy to be left in the pallet bed. Here the thing that cried came up against an absolute of helplessness. [...] But in the physical world there was neither help nor hope of weakness that might be attacked and overcome [...] The thing that cried fled forward over those steps because there was no other way to go, was shot forward screaming as into a furnace, as over unimaginable steps that were all that might be borne, were more, were too searing for the refuge of madness, were destructive of the centre. The thing that screamed left all living behind and came to the entry where death is close as darkness against eyeballs. And burst that door. (Golding, pp.184-185)

After that, Sammy remembers the exact moment of his childhood when he shut the door on the spiritual world of Miss Pringle and chose the rationalistic world of Nick Shales. In this sense, he understands that with this decision of him, his life has changed and he has turned into a loveless creature since then. By opening the door of the spiritual world again, Sammy sees the universe as "brilliant and fantastic crystals" with his new sight (Golding, p.186). Thus, he defines his situation as "a man resurrected" (Golding, p.186). Just then, he understands good and its source. He distinguishes that the surrounding huts comprise "sceptered kings" because he understands the dignity of man. At this time, he celebrates the wonder of creation:

I lifted up my arms, saw them too, and was overwhelmed by these unendurable richness as possessions, either arm ten thousand fortunes poured out for me. Huge tears were dropping from my face into dust; and this dust was a universe of brilliant and fantastic crystals, that miracles instantly supported in their being. (Golding, p.186)

In this novel, Sammy as a guilty man of his actions has the chance of being "resurrected" by shouldering his responsibility. However, the wicked rationalist Dr. Halde does not have this chance because for him there is no doubt about uncertainty. Thus, as an existentialist character, Sammy discovers the failure of rationalism to

provide a viable system. The end of the novel also summarizes the inadequacy of rationalism. In the last line, the commandant of the Nazi Camp says for the rationalist Dr. Halde, who claims that he is an expert about humanity: “The Herr Doctor does not know about peoples,” for he is a man who lacks humanistic values and emotions (Golding, p.253). By means of Dr. Halde, it is also clearly seen that pure rationalism does not work for humanity.

Sammy understands that “a man is a whole continent and each consciousness is a whole world”, and all worlds exist side by side in one world by affecting each other’s life, with their imperfections (Golding, p.249). In this sense, Miss Pringle, with her sadistic manners, causes Sammy to fall by imposing him guilt and leading him to choose rationalism irrationally; soon after, Sammy damages Beatrice with his pure rational loveless sight. As a result, the wrong usages of their freewill cause the innocent Beatrice to dissolve mentally. This is Miss Pringle and Sammy’s common work. This is the world’s work. This is the rationalist Dr. Halde’s work for all humanity during the war. The most remarkable example of the brutality when man neglects his social responsibility for the welfare of humanity in *Free Fall* is World War II, which is the background for the Nazi camp scenes between Dr. Halde and Sammy. The death of Sammy’s two friends who try to escape is an explicit instance of this cruelty as well. Thus, Golding sees the wars as horrifying and fierce play of children as he mirrors the violence of savage children in his *The Lord of The Flies*. In this novel, Sammy also reveals this dangerous play which results from misusing of freedom and power:

I could see this war as the ghastly and ferocious play of children who having made a wrong choice or a whole serious of them were now helplessly tormenting each other because a wrong use of freedom had lost them freedom. Everything was relative, nothing absolute. (Golding, p.150)

With his awareness, Sammy wants to visit Nick Shales, Miss Pringle and Beatrice who is in the lunatic asylum, in order to ask their forgiveness because he realizes that “something to forgive is a purer joy than geometry. It is a positive act of healing, a burst of light” (Golding, p.74). When Sammy goes to see Nick Shales,

he finds him ill in a hospital and he cannot talk to him. The rationalist Nick Shales's ill situation in the hospital also symbolizes that pure rationalism does not work for humanity. Then, Sammy goes to the lunatic asylum to see Beatrice. However, Sammy cannot talk to Beatrice as well because he finds her in a miserable, pale and insane situation there. When he attempts to talk to her, Beatrice urinates on his feet like his stupid classmate Minnie from the infant school. He suffers for poor Beatrice who becomes the symbol of the irreversible result of his mistake. Thus, Sammy goes to Miss Pringle's small house in a village, with the intention of making this speech to her:

We were two of a kind, that is all. You were forced to torture me. You lost your freedom somewhere and after that you had to do to me what you did. You see? The consequence was perhaps Beatrice in the looney bin, our joint work, my work, the world's work. Do you not see how our imperfections force us to torture each other? Of course you do! The innocent and the wicked live in one world [...] But we are neither the innocent nor the wicked. We are guilty. We fall down. We crawl on hands and knees. We weep and tear each other. (Golding, p.251)

However, Sammy realizes that making this speech to her is useless, for Miss Pringle does not feel guilty for anything; even she proudly claims that Sammy has become a famous artist for the sake of her. From now on, Sammy realizes that "her world was real, both worlds are real. There is no bridge" (Golding, p.253). Friedman summarizes this situation and the inadequacy of rationalism in the frame of *Free Fall*:

[Sammy's] his spiritual parents, Nick Shales and Rowena Pringle [are] avatars of rationalism and religion respectively. To Nick he wants to explain that unmediated rationalism spawns the male totem [...] whose modern incarnation is the jackbooted Nazi. But Nick has been reduced by illness to "the image of the laboring mind" and lies "dying of a tired heart." Implied by the atrophic imagery is the exhaustion, even the impossibility, of rationalism as a viable philosophy. What breathed life into Nick's essentially nineteenth-century rationalism (and that of Golding's father) was the inherent morality of its adherents. Lacking their moral stature, modern man (e.g., Sammy) succumbs to his baser nature. (Friedman, p.80)

In *Free Fall*, Golding implies that, with Dr. Halde and the descriptions of cruelty in war, pure rational man ironically falls to the level of animal like, due to the fact that, at this level, his instincts come to the light. In this regard, "*Free Fall* underlines the total selfishness and greed of the creature who thinks his consciousness and satisfaction the single measure of all humanity" (Gindin, p.43). Thus, *Free Fall* highlights man's ignorance about the potential of his spiritualist side. Man whose impulses are harshly physical becomes incapable of being good. Therefore, man's misusing of his free-will for his own satisfaction makes him cruelly ignore the others. For this reason, Golding reveals some evils which comprise selfishness, hatred, lust, insincerity and murder in *Free Fall*. For Golding, who is a "cosmic optimist," these evils are the creator of the ferocious play of the wicked and the terrible wars which mean nightmares by the light of day for humanity. In the light of these, *Free Fall* becomes a platform in which Golding reveals his views related to the war and its creators; it is the novel of the epic fail of the twentieth century's pure rational modern man who is damning himself with his free actions in a helpless and absurd universe.

#### **4.2 Absurdity in *Free Fall***

**"I have searched like all men for a coherent picture of life and the world"**

**Sammy Mountjoy (Golding, p. 77)**

The twentieth century in which *Free Fall* was written is an era in which millions of people died and all conventional systems changed as a result of the dreary conditions the greatest brutal wars caused. The time was so dark that every perception was blurred. Modern man was not sure about himself and the world he lived in. In such a world, the lack of the systems of values alienates man from his known universe. Not only science but also any beliefs can submit any certainties or foundations, so he cannot make sure of anything including himself. "Maybe" is the word which is used frequently like as it is used many times in *Free Fall* of Golding. As Sammy says nobody is sure of anything: "For 'maybe' was sign of all our times.

We were certain of nothing” (Golding, p.108). Thus, it is a universe in which man is condemned to live without any foundations for mankind. In the twentieth century itself, everything was upside down, there was nothing for mankind to rely on. It is such a world depicted in Golding’s novel.

In this chaotic atmosphere, the evil actions of man which demonstrated themselves firstly as scientific developments, later as rationalistic wars, caused man to interrogate everything—all patterns, values, and the existence of God as well. However, man’s desperate seeking for a pattern and order confronts him with the chaos of existence. Thus, this period blurred with questions was the time meaning of life was interrogated the most. For this reason, “the meaning of life is the most urgent of questions” in this era (Camus, 1955: p.4). As Albert Camus, the father of absurdity, states that science classifies and describes the world by telling its mechanism and explains that “wondrous and multicultural universe can be reduced to the atom and that the atom itself can be reduced to the electron [...] an invisible planetary system in which electrons gravitate around a nucleus” (Camus, 1955: p.14). However, all these scientific facts are insufficient for modern man to be sure about the rest which is related to his seeking meaning. “It is because humans demand in an unresponsive world that the absurd exists, and concrete human problems arise in our acute awareness of this dichotomy” (Baker, 1993: p.2). As Camus contends that “if one could only say just once: ‘This is clear,’ all would be saved,” however, there are no values or patterns to rest on (Camus, 1955: p.19). Thus, “this world in itself is not reasonable, that is all that can be said” (Camus, 1955: p.15); and in this unreasonable universe, rational man’s situation which cannot fit any patterns is completely absurd. Camus, who asks under these circumstances; “Is life worth living or not?” –a question which is the base of his novels and his views (Camus, 1955: p.4), explains his philosophy related to the “absurd” in *The Myth of Sisyphus* by these words:

There are absurd marriages, challenges, rancors, silences, wars, and even peace treaties. For each of them the absurdity springs from a comparison. I am thus justified in saying that the feeling of absurdity does not spring from the mere scrutiny of a fact or an impression,

but that it bursts from the comparison between a bare fact and a certain reality, between an action and the world that transcends it. The absurd is essentially a divorce. It lies in neither of the elements compared; it is born of their confrontation. (Camus, 1955: p.21)

This confrontation with the absurd creates a meaningless space between man and the universe, for man as a thinking being has consciousness, and he wants to fulfill his consciousness with logical explanations. However, in a world where all known systems are oscillated everything is open to questions. Thus, this vagueness creates a sense of alienation, groundlessness and unhappiness for modern man. What drives a wedge between the universe and man is this obscurity of the twentieth century. Modern man who is tightened by this ambiguity feels the absurd to the hilt. For Sartre, this disruptive sense creates “nausea”. In *Nausea*—Sartre explains the absurd universe in detail—as a modern man Antoine Roquentin feels “nausea” everywhere and describes his disgust with these words:

Sometimes the blue which surrounds them slips over and covers them completely: I stay an instant without seeing them. But it is merely a passing wave, soon the blue pales in places and I see the small island of hesitant purple reappear, grow larger, rejoin and reconstitute the suspenders. Cousin Adolphe has no eyes: his swollen, retracted eyelids open only on a little of the whites. He smiles sleepily; from time to time he snorts, yelps and writhes feebly, like a dreaming dog. His blue cotton shirt stands out joyfully against a chocolate-coloured wall. That too brings on the Nausea. The Nausea is not inside me: I feel it *out there* in the wall, in the suspenders, everywhere around me. It makes itself one with the cafe, I am the one who is within *it*. (Sartre, 1938: p.14)

For Camus who says that “at any street corner the feeling of absurdity can strike any man in the face,” the result of the absurd which disturbs man is also “nausea” (Camus, 1955: p.9), as it is the “awareness of existence” for man who is alone with his unsatisfied consciousness in a patternless world (Baker, 1993: p.33). Hence, “nausea” is the reaction of the confrontation of man’s unanswered questions and silent universe. Namely, “nausea” is the evidence of absurd which stems from the space between unreasonable world and reasonable man. For this reason, it is not coincidence that Sartre and Camus use the same word—“nausea” to describe

the “absurd”. Camus describes the “nausea” as a result of absurdity in his *The Myth of Sisyphus* as well:

Men, too, secrete the inhuman. At certain moments of lucidity, the mechanical aspect of their gestures, their meaningless pantomime makes silly everything that surrounds them. A man is talking on the telephone behind a glass partition; you cannot hear him, but you see his incomprehensible dumb show: you wonder why he is alive. This discomfort in the face of man’s own inhumanity, this incalculable tumble before the image of what we are, this “nausea,” as a writer of today calls it, is also the absurd. (Camus, 1955: p.11)

This concern which makes modern man feel “nausea” against the absurd stems from the problem of his “free-will” and “responsibility” in a baseless universe. Thus, the situation of man who is thrown into the helpless world as “condemned to be free” is entirely absurd and the novel genre is the best mediator to reveal the absurd situation of modern man (Sartre, 1948: p.34). In this sense, *Free Fall* is one of the novels which examine the desperate position of man on earth. Golding, who is deeply interested in man’s absurd situation in the patternless world of the twentieth century, traces also the absurd literature by means of Sammy who struggles between his competing dualities and experiences that seeking a suitable pattern is futile in an unresponsive universe. When viewed from this aspect, Sammy as a character who experiences the existentialist absurdity tries to understand his being by examining the process of his becoming, and desires finding a bridge between his dualities in this period’s world, which presents no values or systems to rely on and man has to create his own meaning. To Camus’s philosophy, Sammy’s effort, as a fictional character, “is not a matter of explaining and solving, but of experiencing and describing” (Camus, 1955: p.61). Thus, Sammy is a character who “defines himself by his make-believe as well as by his sincere impulses” (Camus, 1955: p.9). For this reason, Sammy’s interrogating his past memories to comprehend the nature of his transformation from being “clear as spring water” to a “stagnant pool” serves to identify himself (Golding, p.9). Therefore, in terms of “what [he] was, [he] had become” Sammy perceives that he is a being in process (Golding, p.132). Since absurdity requires process in action, Sammy is an absurd man in this context as well. In this sense, as a writer of these despairing years,

Golding, whose novels move on the struggle of modern man between the world and his being, examines especially in *Free Fall* whether in the process of becoming in such a world meaning can be created or not and when man attempts to create meaning what happens by means of his dualistic character Sammy.

#### **4.2.1 Sammy's Attempt to Find a Pattern in a Patternless World**

Sammy, as a modern man who tries to create his own meaning in a meaningless world, interrogates his own existence and the universe in which he lives in order to identify himself in his quest. In a godless universe in which “there is no spirit, no absolute,” as a rational being, Sammy’s intelligence needs to create patterns to give meaning to the existence of him (Golding, p.226). Thus, “In *Free Fall*, Golding moves from creating a pattern to writing about the ways in which a narrator/artist seeks to find or create a pattern in experience” (Whitley, p.177). In order to compose his own pattern, Sammy reviews all systems in the form of a row of useless hats. He describes the process of his seeking patterns thus:

I have hung all systems on the wall like a row of useless hats. They do not fit. They come in from outside, they are suggested patterns, some dull and some of great beauty. But I have lived enough of my life to require a pattern that fits over everything I know; and where shall I find that? (Golding, p.6)

By hanging all systems on the wall, Sammy argues “I want to wear a hat in private. I want to understand” (Golding, p.7). Sammy’s desire to understand reminds us Camus’s insistence of “I want everything to be explained to me or nothing” (Camus, 1955: p.19). Sammy’s attempt for a suitable hat is an attempt to find a clear and reasonable pattern to rest on. By asking himself the question, “why should Samuel Mountjoy, sitting by his well, go with a majority decision? Why should not Sammy’s good be what Sammy decides?” Sammy wants to create his own reasonable meaning as well (Golding, p.226). Friedman also explains Sammy’s attempt which stems from the modern world of the twentieth century to seek a pattern in a baseless universe:



Sammy begins where many pattern seekers in modern fiction end: with the conviction that any neat scheme is inadequate and that only “cosmic chaos” lies behind it. A first- person narrator “translating incoherence into incoherence,” Sammy Mountjoy is Golding’s representative modern man whose story illustrates “the patternlessness of life before we impose any patterns on it.” What Sammy hopes to find out to resolve the basic problem of modern man: “learning to live fearlessly with the natural chaos of existence, without forcing artificial patterns on it.” (Friedman, pp.67-68)

However, his hope to reach certainty causes him to struggle among his dualities and then “crisis of despair” (Friedman, p.68). In order to fulfill his expectation for clarity, he chooses Nick’s rationalist hat, but later he experiences with the destructive results of his choice that as a pattern pure rationalism does not work. In fact, he sees that no pattern can fit man to understand the existence and universe, for he comprehends that it is an unreasonable world which cannot fulfill man’s requirement for an order. In such a universe, Sammy realizes that the position of man who desires pattern is no more than “translating incoherence into incoherence,” since as an absurd man he interrogates all systems and he sees that no system is alone useful (Golding, p.8). All of them are limited within themselves and incompatible with universe. Thus, none of them is responsive alone for man’s needs to understand the universe and create meaning because for Sammy, not only Nick Shales’s rational universe but also Miss Rowena Pringle’s spiritual universe is not separately adequate for a viable system. Therefore, Sammy describes the time of their changing class between the classes of Miss Pringle and Nick Shales as: “We crossed from one universe into another when we came out of her door and went into his. We held both universes in our heads effortlessly because by the nature of the human being, neither of them was real” (Golding, p.211). For the students, none of them is real, for any of them “was not enveloping; each small experimental result was not multiplied out to fill the universe” (Golding, p.212). Neither Miss Pringle’s “burning bush that burned and was not consumed away” nor Nick’s “real things” including that “water rose and filled the space once occupied by oxygen” is sufficient for perceiving the universe as a whole (Golding, pp.211-212). That’s why

Sammy realizes that any external beliefs alone do not embrace man's needs and this situation is absurd.

Hence, Friedman describes Sammy's situation by claiming: "His is the dilemma of Golding's 'model intellectual of the twentieth century' whose 'particular poignancy' derives from his inability to commit himself to any system of values" (Friedman, p.67). As a result of the "contradictions between the rational mind and felt experience," Sammy experiences that this universe is not understandable (Baker, 1993: p.4). As Camus says, "the mind aroused by this insistence seeks and finds nothing but contradictions and nonsense" (Camus, 1955: p.19). Because of his meaningless struggle which stems from his invalid expectations of certainty, Sammy undergoes the conflict "between the human need and the unreasonable silence of the world" which is known as "absurdity" (Camus, 1955: p.20). Thus, Sammy's situation indicates that neither just man nor just the universe is absurd; it is "in their presence together" (Camus, 1955: p.21). "The absurd is the lack of communication between the two" (Baker, 1993: p.2). However, as Sammy says, in an absurd universe man "hopes hopelessly to understand and to be understood" because "to communicate is our passion;" yet, against the silence of the universe it becomes "our despair". This non-communication of man and the universe creates the "unnameable, unfathomable and invisible darkness that sits at the centre of" man's heart (Golding, p.8). For this reason, as Camus states: "The worm is in man's heart" not in the universe (Camus, 1955: p.5). Sammy explains the "worm" which means tediousness of absurdity in man's heart with these words:

It is the unnameable, unfathomable and invisible darkness that sits at the centre of him, always awake, always different from what you believe it to be, always thinking and feeling what you can never know it thinks and feels, that hopes hopelessly to understand and to be understood. Our loneliness is the loneliness not of the cell or the castaway; it is the loneliness of that dark thing that sees as at the atom furnace by reflection, feels by remote control and hears only words phoned to it in a foreign tongue. To communicate is our passion and our despair. (Golding, p.8)

Hence, Sammy as a modern man who tries to choose alternatives which are desired to be suitable for his needs says that: "I have searched like all men for a coherent picture of life and the world" (Golding, p.77). However, he finds out that "all patterns have broken one after another, that life is random and evil unpunished" in a cruel world (Golding, p.25). For Camus, "it is that divorce between the mind that desires and the world that disappoints" (Camus, 1955: p.33). "This divorce between man and this life, the actor and his setting, is properly the feeling of absurdity" (Camus, 1955: p.6). Thus, Sammy, by perceiving his absurd and helpless situation says "we have reason and are irrational" (Golding, p.222) in an unreasonable universe, and in such a world asks: "Do I still expect a pattern? What am I looking for?" (Golding, p.25) In this sense, Sammy who realizes that he is alone in a chaotic universe experiences the meaningless position of his existence in an unsatisfactory world. It means that Sammy confronts with the absurdity of the universe. Richard E. Baker defines Sammy's this sense of absurd in his *The Dynamics of the Absurd in the Existentialist Novel*:

[...] a sense of the absurd is a recognition that the world appears to be meaningless, yet one continues to live on as if it were not so, like the condemned prisoner who asserts the right to live even after sentence is passed. It is the confrontation of our desire for unity and clarity and the world's disunity and irrationality. (Baker, 1993: p.3)

For this reason, free-will becomes man's damnation in such a futile world. Also, the world becomes the torture chamber of the human being because in the lack of objective values the modern man tries to create his own subjective meaning. Sammy, who calls himself as "amateur" in the way of making his identity, describes the situation of the human being who is alone with his freewill in the universe, as "haunted" (Golding, pp.5-13). Sammy realizes that the modern man is helpless in the universe in which he has to behave and choose with his freewill, but has to bear the consequences of his action. Thus, he defines freedom as his "curse" (Golding, p.13). For this reason, Sammy reaches the awareness of the situation of man who is "condemned to be free" in an absurd universe (Sartre, 1948: p.34). Hence, as Camus says "this hell of the present is his Kingdom at last" (Camus, 1955: p.35). By rising against man's damnation with his free-will which causes the free fall of man in the

universe, Sammy revolts: “Haunted by what or whom? You have conceded freedom to those who cannot use freedom and left the dust and the dirt clustered over the jewel. Mine is the world of sin and redemption since freedom was my curse” (Golding, p.13). This revolt which rises in his heart summarizes the absurd situation of Sammy in a godless universe. However, “the reason is impotent when it hears this cry from the heart” (Camus, 1955: p.19), for he is a man who is thrown into the world and has to make his own fate with his own choices; crown all, he has to shoulder the responsibility of his own choices. As a man who creates his own hell with the misuse of his free-will, he looks for a guilty party, but he cannot find anybody to blame except for himself. Thus, at the point that he reaches, he sees that he himself chooses to suffer with his own choices, so he perceives that being free in a godless universe is totally absurd.

Sammy who confronts the absurdity in the hell of his consciousness realizes that “consciousness and the guilt which is unhappiness go together” (Golding, p.78), for in a helpless world as a conscious being he has to bear the results of his choices. Thus, he accepts that his situation is absurd in an absurd universe. In this sense, Camus’s question, “Is life worth living or not?” finds repercussions in the novel when Sammy also asks, “What sort of universe is that for our central darkness to keep its balance in?” (Golding, p.9)

#### **4.2.2 Sammy’s Negotiation with Absurdity**

For Camus, “living under that stifling sky forces one to get away or to stay” (Camus, 1955: p.20). It means that for man who experiences the absurd there are two reactions; one of them is obeying the absurd by “committing suicide,” the other is revolting which means the beginning of “recovery”. At this point that Sammy reaches, Sartre’s statement echoes in Sammy’s ears: “You are free, therefore choose—that is to say, invent. No rule of general morality can show you what you ought to do: no signs are vouchsafed in this world” (Sartre, 1948: p.38). Thus, the solution is: “When Descartes said, ‘Conquer yourself rather than the world’ what

he meant was [...] that we should act without hope” (Sartre, 1948: p.39). In this sense, Sammy prefers to stay by refusing patterns, hopes or shelter. It means that Sammy chooses “recovery”. To Camus’s philosophy, recovery requires living with the absurd by means of revolt, for “the absurd has meaning only in so far as it is not agreed to” (Camus, 1955: p.22). It means “living is keeping the absurd alive” (Camus, 1955: p.36). Namely, instead of committing suicide, living in spite of the meaningless world means challenging the absurd. Thus, absurdity requires living, not committing suicide. It means that living is the process of creating value for man through revolt to overcome the absurdity. For Camus, the solution is that man should live as much as he can without hope and without contemplating suicide but by focusing on the present. In this sense, after his imprisonment in the German Nazi Camp, Sammy, who illuminates the spiritual nature of the new realm of being he practiced, observes the inner harmony of the universe:

I raised my dead eyes, desiring nothing, accepting all things and giving all created things away. The paper wrappings of use and language dropped from me [...] Everything is related to everything else and all relationship is either discord or harmony. The power of gravity, dimension and space, the movement of the earth and sun and unseen stars, these made which might be called music and I heard it. (Golding, pp.186-187)

When Sammy goes to the lunatic asylum to visit Beatrice, at the gate, he understands that he has created his own hell in this world because the lunatic asylum in which the insane Beatrice is treated was once upon a time the general’s huge mansion on Paradise Hill. This mansion which Sammy and Johnny Spragg trespassed on days of their innocent childhoods welcomes Sammy as the lunatic asylum, which means “the house of the pay-off” for Sammy now (Golding, p.237). At the gate, “the stuffed lions” and “the stuffed goat” which symbolize “the yellow eyes of lust” throw up Sammy’s lustful passion for Beatrice (Golding, p.237). Thus, Paradise Hill which symbolizes the heaven in his innocent childhood now symbolizes his “self-created hell” (Golding, p.122), as it is described in the following lines:

The center's choice of pain, its choice to create its own hell, gives it a tragic dimension that is linked, as Oldsey and Weintraub have pointed out, to Satan's assertion in *Paradise Lost* that "The mind is its own place, and in itself / Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven. (Whitehead, p.53)

Sammy who cannot talk to Beatrice, Nick Shales and Miss Pringle finds out that "Nick's universe is real. Her world was real, both worlds are real. There is no bridge" (Golding, pp.252-253). Consequently, Sammy comprehends that struggling for the possibility of finding a bridge between his two competing dualities of spiritualism and rationalism, is a futile effort since the beginning. As Friedman states: "Lest it appear that the unbridgeable gap between flesh and spirit perceived by Sammy after his shattering visit to Beatrice and his inconclusive meetings with Nick Shales and Rowena Pringle constitutes prima facie evidence of an absurd universe" (Friedman, p.84). Thus, Sammy accepts the universe as it is: "I did not know existed, but which I had forgotten merely; and once found, the place was always there, sometimes open and sometimes shut, the business of the universe proceeding there in its own mode, different, indescribable" (Golding, p.187).

In spite of the absurdity of life, Sammy, nevertheless, never turns his back on life in disgust. He accepts it with its good and bad. He goes on living in the present by getting married to Taffy. His efforts to understand himself and others leads him to confront his self-deception and live in good faith. For Camus, "to create is likewise to give a shape to one's fate" (Camus, 1955: p.74). Sammy also does so. In this way, he becomes aware of his free-will and shoulders the responsibility of his own life. When viewed from this aspect, his passion and consequences of it remind us of the Sisyphus of Camus. By accepting that life is absurd, he challenges to absurdity, goes on living and creates his own meaning, so Sammy becomes the master of his life like Sisyphus.

Golding is a writer who never gets desperate in absurdity. Like Camus, he prefers to believe in man because he profoundly attaches importance to the dignity of man. For this reason, by creating *Free Fall* which mirrors the quest of modern man, and creating a character like Sammy who struggles between two opposites in

an absurd world, he reveals the incomplete position of man in the twentieth century. By means of Sammy's futile struggle which moves on "rationalism or spiritualism," Golding puts a spotlight on a war-torn world which is caused by pure rationalism. In the novel, by making Sammy say that "two worlds existed side by side" for rationalism and spiritualism, he defends that absurd requires balance in the patternless universe (Golding, p.217) because "both worlds are real. There is no bridge" (Golding, p.253). Thus, Golding defends that the absurd situation of the universe requires accepting it as it is without imposing artificial patterns. As Richard E. Baker also mentions in his *The Dynamics of the Absurd in the Existentialist Novel*, balance is the only possible way for achieving peace and harmony in an absurd universe:

All is not despair and anguish as one confronts the absurd because happiness and joy can be a product of it. In retrospect, the balance and harmony that Camus describes in the first half of *The Myth of Sisyphus* is now fully apparent: a person can experience sorrow from the absurd, but can also experience happiness (Baker, 1993: p.132).

In *Free Fall*, Golding also demonstrates that the absurd universe forces man to have self-knowledge in his self-quest because for unaided man in a godless universe, there is no one who can be a guide except for himself. The novel's conclusion, which seems as if it is uncompleted, also indicates that man's being is an uncompleted project of his own as long as he lives. In the process of his quest, Sammy possesses his own life by confronting with his self-deception and shouldering the responsibility of his own choices like Sisyphus. In this sense, Sammy who accepts the absurd and the silence of God becomes the master of his life with his free-will. By saying that "in the physical world there was neither help nor hope," he understands that there is no base or hope to rest on (Golding, p.185). Thus, in an absurd world "one always finds one's burden again," his personal fate and the responsibility of his free-will is his rock like Sisyphus and he is condemned to live in this vicious circle (Camus, 1955: p.78). For this reason, he proves that "his fate belongs to him" (Camus, 1955: p.78). By approving his personal fate, he overcomes the absurd like Sisyphus. Since "there is no higher destiny," "he knows himself to be the master of his days" (Camus, 1955: p.78). Thus, in a universe

“happiness and the absurd are two sons of the same earth” one must imagine Sammy happy as well (Camus, 1955: p77).



## CONCLUSION

In this thesis, the predicament of modern man during and after World War II in the twentieth century was reflected by analyzing William Golding's *Free Fall* as an existentialist novel to show to what extent the novel character is free in his choices. In this study, it is claimed that this novel is existentialist because in this novel, Golding investigates the tragic situation of modern man, the role of him in the formation of this situation, and the problem of free-will. For the sake of it, Golding's main character Sammy interrogates his existence, his choices, the significance of free-will and his process between his being and becoming. These issues are also the subject matters of the movement of existentialism because the existentialists also try to understand how modern man created his own hell on earth and they point out man's responsibility in it. Thus, in order to understand existentialism, the philosophical views of two important names—Jean Paul Sartre and Albert Camus—are examined in the first chapter "The Background of the Study: Existentialism" and used in this study to analyze Sammy's quest for his seeking meaning because as the pioneers of existentialism during World War II, they are among those who lived these dreadful years and witnessed the brutal wars with their destructive results like Golding himself. Hence, these three names, Albert Camus, Jean Paul Sartre, and William Golding, come close together in this thesis to reveal the desperate situation of Sammy, and modern man in general.

*Free Fall*, as a realist novel, is set in the social environment of the twentieth century. Thus, the gloomy atmosphere which is peculiar to this era reigns in this novel. This motif of darkness is so dominant that it is felt throughout the novel. The reason for this is that it is the novel in which the troubled situation of modern man who is overwhelmed by the chaotic atmosphere stemming from the brutal wars is demonstrated. In *Free Fall*, Golding illustrates the desperate situation of modern

man through two portraits. One of them involves Sammy individually in order to reveal the painful struggle of modern man who is imbued with his dualities and tries to create his meaning in a meaningless world between his being and becoming as a result of the ambiguity of the era. The other one portrays the tragic and meaningless situation of humanity in general to display heavy and confused realities of the time. In this novel, through these Golding indicates how they create each other with their imperfections and turn the patternless world to hell with their choices.

For this reason, in the light of Camus's and Sartre's philosophical views, Sammy's choices and their results are discussed. The nature of Sammy's choices symbolizes the period because as the representative of modern man, he is full of conflicts. This time is also full of conflicts because it is a period right and wrong are mixed up and everything is upside down. It is a patternless period which lacks systems of values. Thus, in order to understand the sources of Sammy's choices, Sammy's dualities are illustrated profoundly in the chapter "Sammy's Innocence and the Dual Nature of his World". In this chapter, it is indicated how Sammy's state of innocence changes into the fallen state of him. Sammy's basic duality which is related to "rationalism and spiritualism" is analyzed as the duality of the period as well. In this novel, like the modern man of the period in this baseless universe, for the sake of creating his own meaning Sammy symbolically chooses rationalism by ignoring his spiritual side as an emotional being and this choice of him creates other dualities of him—"emotion and intellect" and "good and bad". These are the dualities of the modern man in the twentieth century as well. In this regard, after choosing rationalism, Sammy fulfills the known story of modern man. By alienating from his own nature and ignoring his humanistic emotions, he goes to his fallen state step by step like the modern man of the twentieth century. In this chapter, it is indicated that Golding reflects the reality of the twentieth century by means of Sammy.

Hence, in the chapter titled "The Fall of Man and Sammy's Free Fall," Sammy's free-will and the results of his choice are analyzed to demonstrate his responsibility for himself, for his passions and for the welfare of others because in

this novel, Golding clearly states that if a person tries to create his own meaning with his pure reason, the result of this choice becomes the brutal world wars and Sammy's fallen state. In this chapter, Sammy's choices and their results are illustrated in the light of Sartre's philosophical views which are about man's freedom, responsibility and bad faith because Sartre also claims that one's freedom is other's freedom as well, and irresponsible freedom of man can cause the disaster of others. For this reason, in this chapter, man's desperate situation which is described as "fallen man"—not with its known meaning related to original sin, but with its meaning related to losing innocence—is discussed by means of Sammy to indicate that man lost his innocence in these years because he misused his free will and created evil. The destructive results of their evil created fallen state of man. Thus, Sartre, Camus and Golding use the same word "fall" while describing the period and the position of man in it. Therefore, the twentieth century's events indicate that irresponsible freedom of man created a torture chamber and then an ambiguous and ruined environment which is full of questions. For this reason, Golding in this novel clearly hints that there is no excuse for man. As Sartre says, man creates himself with his own choices and he is totally responsible for his choices and their results. Not only man is responsible for himself, but also he is responsible for the welfare of all humanity. While man is choosing his own destiny with his choices, he also chooses other's destiny because as a whole everything is related to each other. In this regard, Golding claims that man who thinks that he can solve everything with his reason is responsible for this ambiguous and desperate era.

This view of Golding's given in Sammy's quest becomes definite with the rationalist Dr. Halde. They convey the situation of humanity as a whole. By means of them, Golding indicates that both of them have realized themselves as a result of their private choices, not because of the predestination of God. Since Sammy and Dr. Halde choose their sides in the concept of "this or that" by ignoring their spiritual sides, their ignorance creates evil actions such as lust, greed, and violence by quenching the humanistic values such as love and compassion. In the novel, it is

claimed that the wars of the era are created by this choice and ignorance. For Golding, this “diseased nature” of man who “produces evil as a bee produces honey” creates a “morally diseased” world (Golding, 1970: p.87). As a result of this “wrong choice,” they are “helplessly tormenting each other because a wrong use of freedom had lost them freedom. Everything was relative” (Golding, p.150). Thus, Sammy says: “The consequence was perhaps Beatrice in the looney bin, our joint work, my work, the world’s work,” and then he summarizes the situation of humanity: “We are guilty. We fall down. We crawl on hands and knees. We weep and tear each other” (Golding, p.251).

In this sense, for the existentialists and Golding, man’s miserable situation stems from man’s being alone with his free will and burden of responsibility in a patternless universe because “*existence* comes before *essence*” (Sartre, 1948: p.26). There is no common human nature. Man is not created by a supreme power. Man creates himself with his own choices. It means man can create his own hell or his own heaven. However, the twentieth century’s wars and as a modern man Sammy’s situation in *Free Fall* indicate that man preferred creating his own hell by behaving with his pure reason. Thus, as a result of man’s misuse of his free will, freedom becomes his damnation. For this reason, Sammy’s “haunted” and “cursed” situation which is about his obsession with freedom is explained with Sartre’s famous statement “man is condemned to be free” in this chapter (Sartre, 1948: p.34).

This condemnation in a baseless universe, confronts modern man and novel character Sammy with Camus’s absurdity. Thus, in this thesis, the absurd situation of man is explained with Camus’s absurdity in the chapter titled “The Influence of the Wars and the Theme of Absurd” because Sammy is a character who supposes that he can solve everything with his reason. However, by confirming Camus, Golding states that this universe is silent to man’s needs. Thus, man cannot solve the universe with his pure reason. By means of Sammy, Golding demonstrates that if a person behaves with his pure reason, he forgets his humane side and he causes chaos in the world. Thus, Golding approves Camus’s ideas by claiming that pure reason cannot solve the universe but creates disorder. It means that man who forgets

his humanistic values vitiates everything. Thus, in the novel, Golding conveys that the patternless and absurd situation of the universe requires “balance”. Therefore, man should accept the universe as it is. Sartre also emphasizes that man is not composed of just flesh, he has also the instinctive side by uttering: “If values are uncertain, if they are still too abstract to determine the particular, concrete case under consideration, nothing remains but to trust in our instincts” (Sartre, 1948: p.36).

For Golding and the existentialists, man’s being rational as different from other creatures actually means that he has power to improve himself. Since “happiness and the absurd are two sons of the same earth,” to create a hell or paradise is bound to man’s own choices (Camus, 1955: p77). Thus, the Greek belief “know yourself” becomes prominent in *Free Fall* which illustrates man’s struggle to find himself and his position on earth. Within the process, self-concept which means the quest for self-knowledge appears as the notion which concludes the novel. This motto of “know yourself” which has occupied the minds of the man who has tried to understand the meaning and aim of his existence on earth since the ancient times has been seen in many sources as “nosce te ipsum” in Latin or “know thyself” in English. Even in Ancient Greece, it was written with golden letters as “Gnothi Seauton” on the entrance of the Temple of Apollo in Delphi, where the pilgrims had come to find an answer for their future. It means: “Do you want to know your future? Then, know yourself!” This oldest motto of intellectual history merely emphasizes the importance of self-discovery and also free-will. It is closely hinted that all answers are hidden in man, not in the universe. Socrates, the great scholar, also asserts that man should know himself in order to know the universe (D’Anna, p.87). Thus, Sartre holds: “You are free, therefore choose—that is to say, invent. No rule of general morality can show you what you ought to do: no signs are vouchsafed in this world” (Sartre, 1948: p.38). For this reason, the solution is: “Descartes said, ‘Conquer yourself rather than the world’” (Sartre, 1948: p.39). Thus, in the novel, the “resurrection” comes to Sammy when he accepts that he is the master of his life.

Since he is aware of the absurd and the silence of God, Sammy as a modern man becomes the master of his life with his free-will. He knows that there is no foundation or hope to lean on. As long as he lives in such a world, he accepts that “one always finds one’s burden again” as Sisyphus permanently found his rock (Camus, 1955: p.78). The modern man of the twentieth century is condemned to live in this circle. His personal fate and the responsibility of his free-will is his rock as it was illustrated in the legend of Sisyphus. He will push it up to the top, heaps of times, till the end of his life. In this sense, “his fate belongs to him. His rock is his thing” (Camus, 1955: p.78). To Camus, approving personal fate means overcoming the absurd by revolting like Sisyphus: “If there is a personal fate, there is no higher destiny, or at least there is but one which he concludes is inevitable and despicable. For the rest, he knows himself to be the master of his days” (Camus, 1955: p.78). Thus, man’s free-will “is the price that must be paid for the passions of this earth” (Camus, 1955: p.76).

In conclusion, William Golding in his *Free Fall* portrays through his pivotal character Sammy the miserable situation of mankind who is alone with his free-will and the results of his choices. In order to clarify this, Golding clearly states that Sammy is individually and symbolically responsible for himself, for his passions, and for others. Namely, man is responsible for the disastrous World Wars. There is no God or no one to blame except for himself. In a universe there is no more excuses, the situation of man is absurd because all answers are hidden in him, not in the external world which is unresponsive to his needs and questions. However, as Camus says “the absurd has meaning only in so far as it is not agreed to” (Camus, 1955: p.22). It means that man should live despite this. Sartre completes this view by saying, “Life begins on the other side of despair” and Golding clearly claims, this universe is alone meaningless but man can create his own meaning in this meaningless world by shouldering responsibility of his choices for himself and for others. Man cannot know the universe with his reason only but he can know and realize himself. He cannot be the master of universe but he can be the master of himself as rational, free and responsible being. The choice belongs to him; he can

use his rational potentials to improve himself or to create a hell. As it is seen, he is completely free. In this sense, Golding's emphasis related to free-will, responsibility and man's self-quest mirrors the realities of the twentieth century. While all these issues are making modern man his own master, they make *Free Fall* an existentialist novel and Sammy an existentialist character.

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