

**Situating the Self in the Fiction and Selected Non-Fiction of  
John Robert Fowles.**

By

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**August, 2005.**

**Situating the Self in the Fiction and Selected Non-Fiction of  
John Robert Fowles.**

**A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
for the award of the Degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**



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***I dedicate this work to  
The Supreme Being, The Most Benevolent,  
Beneficent and Merciful***



## INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, GUWAHATI

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#### Statement

I do hereby declare that the matter written in this thesis is the result of investigations carried out by me in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati, India. I have carried out my work under the guidance of Dr. (Mrs.) Krishna Barua, Associate Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences.

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## Certificate

This is to certify that Mrs. Farhana Parveen has completed her research work under my supervision, for the Ph.D. Programme of Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati. Certified further that her thesis entitled *Situating the Self in the Fiction and Selected Non-Fiction of John Robert Fowles* embodies the results of her own investigations during the period she worked here as a research scholar in strict conformity with the rules laid down for the purpose. The work has not been previously submitted for any degree in this or any other Institution or University of higher learning.

Signature:

Supervisor: Dr (Mrs.) Krishna Barua

## Acknowledgement

Working on John Robert Fowles has been a challenging experience for me. The overwhelming magnitude of the Fowlesean universe, at times made me wonder whether I could tackle the immensity of the study. It is in this crossroads, that I owe my sincere and heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor and guide, Dr. (Mrs.) Krishna Barua, for her consistent guidance beyond my expectations. Her ever stirring encouragement and moral support has carved a special niche in my remembrance. In addition to supervision, she has left no stone unturned to avail of most of John Fowles's works, especially the non-fiction, which are extremely difficult to attain.

My gratefulness goes to Dr. S. Borbora, H.O.D, Department of H.S.S, IITG; My Doctoral Committee members: Dr. A. K Srinivasan, H.O.D, Department of Physics, IITG; Dr. (Mrs.) Archana Barua and Dr. Liza Das, faculty members, Department of H.S.S, IITG, for their valuable advice and suggestions. I am particularly thankful to Mr. Angsuman Barua, for mailing me a copy of Fowles's biography, *John Fowles: A Life in Two Worlds* from San Jose, California. I owe my thankfulness to the IITG library, The Indo-American Centre for International Studies-Hyderabad, the British Council-Kolkatta, The Harry Ransom Study Centre- Austin, The North Eastern Hill University-Shillong, and The K.K. Handique Library, Guwahati University.

My thanks goes to Mr. R.K. Rajbongshi, Assistant Librarian, IITG and Mr. H. Jamginmuan, L.D.A, Department of H. S. S and Messrs. Bani Mandir, for all their support. I also take this opportunity to thank my husband, Mr. A. Rahman, without whose help and support, this work would have not been possible. Thanks go to my two wonderful daughters, Afrida and Aashika, for their understanding and patience during the tenure of my work. My thesis would not have been completed without the blessings of all my elders, my mother, and my late father.

(Farhana Parveen)

## **Chapter I - *The Author and his Works***

Post war English fictional panorama witnessed British writers reacting against the tradition of experimentations. In such a milieu, a novelist of John Robert Fowles's calibre, with his distinguished style became popular in America considerably more than in England. Undoubtedly one of the greatest British novelist of outstanding ingenious ability, he was in a number of ways a modern Thomas Hardy. Much has been said about the relevance of Hardy to the psychological dilemmas of Fowles's protagonists in his novels. Fowles's shadow like Hardy's fall across his works. An exceedingly self-conscious author, Fowles's works have earned him the accolades of scholastic critics in the English and American literary canon since the past three decades.

One of the conspicuous traits of Fowles's creative ability was his astounding capacity to create different styles according to the requirements of the subject matter in each of his works. Gifted with an exceptional individualistic visualization, his fiction as well as non-fiction, stand out as masterpieces in their own might. His oeuvre of works on the whole, project the writer, philosopher, existential thinker and ardent admirer of nature as unrivalled. The queries he raised in his works are at times unanswerable, yet they are issues indispensable to life. On reading Fowles's novels, "one of the joys we experience is that of speculating on the questions he raises, even though we know that definite answers can never be found"(Acheson 9).The canvas of Fowles's works extend from

contemporary England, to the island of Phraxos, off the coast of Greece to the supernatural wilderness of Norway, from the Dorset coast in 1867 and back to London. They resemble a huge changeable and mystifying amusement square, a Walt Disney world in illusory terms. An impotent voyeuristic kidnapper in *The Collector*, the identical twins with double characteristics in *The Magus*, a Victorian gentleman at the crossroads in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, an amnesiac writer in *Mantissa*, and a seventeenth century fallen woman turned divine in *A Maggot* are some of the characters who inhabit the world of Fowlesean fiction.

John Robert Fowles was born on the 31<sup>st</sup> of March 1926 at Leigh-on-Sea, Essex. The son of Robert Fowles and Gladys Richard Fowles, his schooling was at Allen Cour School from 1934 to 1939, and Bedford School from 1939 to 1944, where he mastered French and German. In Bedford, he became a member of Cricket First -11, as well as the Head Boy with authority over his fellow students. Under him there was a “police force of sixty...prefects and sub-prefects. You held court every morning and flogged the guilty” (Amory 33). Later in 1945, he recalls this when posted as Lieutenant in the British Marines: “Looking forward to having control of thirty marines was nothing when you had control of eight hundred little boys, whom you could court-martial at a moment’s whim” (Ibid 33).

Fowles’s upbringing was middle class and suburban, a way of life he had described as inadequate. A significant change was encountered by him in his family’s evacuation to Devon, where they lived until the outbreak of the Second World War. Devon’s

countryside gave him the sensation of being deeply spirited, and its natural landscape becomes a constant setting of his novels. Threatened countryside simply horrified him which find outlet in his works, fiction and non-fiction.

Fowles learnt the implications of the natural world in Devon, terming them as “fertile and green-golden years”(The Tree 18). In 1941, when he was just fifteen, he had undertaken writing for the first time on his personal solitude. In spite of the absence of the forays of art in these writings, “the mind and the personality of the writer-the young boy...are concretely, even poignantly present in these slim books”(Warburton 31). It was at this time that he turned his attention towards nature, stating his observations in a collection, titled *Nota Natura Res, Ipplepen*, and putting it up in his high school composition book. John Fowles, “the new writer”(Ibid 32), had nature entering deep into his perceptions, which was unusual of a young boy to have recorded in his notes the terminology of this feeling:

“...The wood is deserted and I walk quietly down the paths, listening to birds, feeling so content to be in the real country again alone...I still feel the old pantheistic sympathy...the delight in little things...the secret is slow, very slow movement, and the culmination of an intuitive sense”(Ibid 33).

It was in Devon itself that Fowles's sixth novel, *Daniel Martin* was fictionalized. In his non-fiction *The Tree* he traces his upbringing where the seed of this adulation for the natural world started. On his childhood memories with his father with contradictory feelings, Fowles writes: “He has read so much, and knows so many—isms and long words which he brandishes in conversation, mystifying, confounding or embarrassing as the case may be”(Warburton 14). Robert Fowles was also deeply interested in Bertrand Russell,

Charles Darwin and Thomas Hardy. These “philosophical heroes”(Ibid 14), influenced John and he grew up in an environment, where basic questions on life plagued him: “What is the good? What is the moral human life? What is being and not being? Is free will possible?”(Ibid 15). Perhaps these queries were the genesis of *The Aristos*, his prospective philosophical discourse. But the book that inspired Fowles throughout his life and works was Richard Jeffries’s *Bevis: The Story of a Boy*. Jeffries was an ardent poetical and naturalistic writer of the nineteenth century, who possessed a “Wordsworthian vision into nature’s transcendence”(Ibid 18), which appealed to John. He kept re-reading the book “sometimes turning back immediately from the final page to the first and starting over”(Ibid 19).

Fowles also learnt from his father that trees were indicative of the truest philosophy in the world of conceptual ideas. This adulation for trees and nature in him is close to celestial sensitivity. In a considerable matured stage of his life, he commented: “I still feel this as soon as I enter one of the countless secret little woods in the Devon-Dorset border country, where I now live...Slinking into trees was slinking into heaven”(The Tree 11). Stanley Richards, his maternal uncle and an entomologist, took him on sporadic missions in country-netting, caterpillar hunting, and teaching him the “delicate art of setting” (The Tree 10), of what they had trapped and assembled. Two of his cousins aroused in him the passion for natural history and a longing to escape to the world of nature. Understanding the natural world and its behaviorisms challenged Fowles as an intellectual puzzle:

“As a boy, John Fowles, the brilliant student, the competitive athlete, the son that embodied the family’s ambitions, also had a secret life. While alone, the shy boy could put off his public face and allow a dreamy, solitary self to emerge as he

slipped into nature or into a book of romantic fantasy and adventure. (Warburton 15)

Later, when Fowles was made an officer in the army, he seriously contemplated of continuing in the military service. Even here, he spent a considerable time in introspective observations of nature. On an occasion, Isaac Foot, the Lord Mayor came to his mess and said: “Well, only a total and utter fool and idiot would even consider a career in the military, if he had the opportunity to attend Oxford University” (Warburton 44). These observations of Foot made a deep impact on young Fowles, and for the first time he saw himself to be better suited to the university.

Serving for two years in the military service in the Royal Marines from 1945 to 1947, Fowles entered Trinity College, Oxford, where he took up French for graduation, which increased his admiration for European literature: “But when he went up to Oxford, Fowles turned on his previous life and the people who shaped it. In his new way of looking at the world, his past was deficient. He did his best to leave it behind ” (Warburton 45). Oxford introduced him to a wealth of continental philosophical ideas. It is here that he began translating the sixteenth century French poetry of Ronsard, du Bellay and Louise Labé. Haunted by Ronsard’s evocations on love, Fowles took to writing poetry. He records this as a specific moment of his life : “...the day was a turning point...the seed from which this new egoistic me grew. The seed of mission, the chosen”(Warburton 49). In spite of his will to be a poet in the mid-1950’s, *The Aristos* was already in its making.

France had a substantial impact on Fowles's prolific mind. Touring France extensively gave him the enhanced mental landscapes for writing his novels: "...what my France consists... tiny towns and lost villages...from Nantes to Nevers-La Vendee, the valleys of the Creuse, and the Vienne..."(WH 61). The French language to Fowles was better than English, making him believe in the concept that great cultures reflected each other. He was bereft on leaving his French Oxonians after graduating in 1950:

As the train rocked through the night on its way back to Paris, he tried to capture the sadness by scribbling poetry 'feverishly'...Leaning across the crowded third-class compartment, Ronnie asked gently, 'What are you doing John?' and John murmured something evasive, too shy to say 'poetry'. (Warburton 55)

Back home, his alienation with his parents grew both rationally and sensitively: "At Leigh on his long vacations, confined in the tiny house with his family, he was conscious of the unspoken gaps...the awkwardnesses... the strains in the air" (Warburton 52). He preferred not to be an "ordinary mortal" (Ibid 72), and started to fear the emptiness of his situation. Willing to create the ambiance for the life he longed for, Fowles started his "retreat into words"(Ibid 72). He began reading, and poured over Henry James, Sherwood Anderson, Samuel Butler, Homer, Oliver Goldsmith, Graham Greene, Herodotus, Marivaux, E. M. Forster, D. H. Lawrence, Shakespeare, Dante, Villon and T.S. Eliot. He planned a trip to France, aiming to launch some of his publishable works. On the eve of his departure, he had an "extremely vivid...allegorical dream"(Ibid 74). In it, an old woman showed him a map, labelled in French, having "a huge area in the centre which was absolutely without a mark... Printed

on this dark, blank area were the words *illusions infantiles*” (Ibid 74). This predictive dream became for Fowles, the voyage to the unknown.

Fowles taught at the University of Poitiers in France from 1950 to 1951. He changed over as a teacher at the Anargyrios College in 1951, and was there to 1953. In the University of Poitiers, Fowles had a slightly hyped year as a lecturer:

I remember vividly describing during my first lecture how Rupert Brooke had died among the poppy fields in Flanders, while my blundering through Eliot’s ‘*Four Quartets*’ must have beaten all... To worsen the already bad, I fell in love with the faculty professor’s favourite student. (WH 64)

The authorities of the University of Poitiers firmly informed Fowles that his services would not be obligatory after the academic session of 1950-51. Coming back home, and living with his parents in the suburban home at Leigh-on-Sea, he poured incessantly for service in the columns of the *Times Educational Supplement*. Attracted to nothing particular, Fowles did not realize that he had no vocation for academic teaching. His dream of being a poet was paramount: “I was intended (as if there were a God, and life could show intentions) to be a poet” (WH 65). He had always found poetry, a genre which he attempted before he took to prose writing, an enormous relief from the constant play-acting of fiction. The crisis in modern fiction, according to him was the result of self-consciousness. This is inherent in novels, since they are basically concerned with entertainment, “an artifice that allows the writer to play hide-and-seek with the reader” (Ibid 30). To him the contents of poetry were more illuminating, than that of prose fiction:

A poem is saying what you are and feel, the novel is saying what invented characters might be and might feel. Only very naïve readers can suppose that a novelist's invented personages and their opinions are reliable guides to his real self. (WH 30-31)

Fowles was rescued from the morbidity of the inhospitable rendezvous in Poitiers, by an incident. On a frosty late December night, he left a café and crossed the freezing, empty Square of the Prefecture in Poitiers at early dawn. Suddenly, he saw:

In the sky. On the roofs of the houses, there were countless thin voices, the unmistakable whistle of redwings...thin high-pitched, glistening whistle...wild, romantic whistle of a cock wigeon... the sky was full...a huge migration rush was going [...] .(Warburton 76)

Standing in this mysterious aura, Fowles felt that he was indeed chosen for a mission, “I was a link between two worlds ...I was immeasurably privileged”(Ibid 77).

Fowles had left for Greece in January 1952 to join as a teacher, engaged by the British Council in a boarding school in the island of Spetsai. The school to him was a replica of England's Eton, filled with “Byron's spirit”(WH 68). Greece was breathtakingly spectacular in natural landscapes. The time spent in Greece as a teacher was of great importance to him because it was here that he met Elizabeth Christy, his future wife. During this tenure, he began to write poetry to overcome long bouts of depression.. His visit to Greece, triggered his writing of his first conceived novel, *The Magus*, which had pre-occupied him for ten years: “I realized that they were the sperm and egg, the very genesis, of the as-yet-unwritten –indeed unconceived book” (Ibid 67).

After this brief phase in Greece, he returned to England. Retaining teaching as his profession, Fowles joined the Ashridge College, and then serving in St. Godric's College from 1954 to 1963. By this time he had started writing several novels together. Novel writing was shaky at that time. The advent of films, television and sound recording, made the novelist of the sixties aware of intruding the domain of the cinema. To Fowles, novels like any other works of art, should have integrity of their own, and a novelist might abandon or suppress ideas of his own at times: "Then he must be completely open, and we must count him brave if, like Rembrandt, Rossetti, or Van Gogh, he chooses to preserve his image for others" (Baker 168). Between 1952 and 1960, he wrote several novels, but offered none to a publisher, considering them all incomplete and lengthy. The publishing of *The Collector* in 1963, turned him into an instant celebrity. Since then it was no looking back for Fowles and he carved a niche for himself in European literature. A full time writer since 1963, John Fowles lives and still writes in Lyme Regis, in the south coast of England. He was awarded the Silver Pen award in 1969 for *The French Lieutenant's Woman*; The WH Smith Literary award in 1970, again for *The French Lieutenant's Woman* and the Christopher Award for his non-fictional book *The Tree* in 1982.

The success of *The Collector* enabled Fowles to concentrate his energies as a full time writer. Basically the conception of *The Collector* took place when he was on jury duty at the Old Bailey in May 1961:

A mental defective with five children, who had thrown the incestuously begotten baby of his eldest daughter into a furnace, stood fumbling and weeping at the

dock... I wanted to jump out and cry out. We did not judge him; he was the judge, and he judged the whole of existence. (WH 10)

The storyline of *The Collector* revolve around a young lepidopterist, Frederick Clegg, who kidnaps and imprisons an art student, Miranda Grey. He keeps her in the basement of an old country manor in suburban London. Unable to escape from the clutches of her captor, Miranda finally dies. The novel while sympathizing with Miranda on her plight, also condemns the society for germinating the likes of Clegg. Two autobiographical essays, "I Write Therefore I Am," "On Being English, but Not British," and *The Aristos*, which is a collection of philosophical aphorisms, were published in 1964. *The Aristos* was written in the form of numbered notes, modelled on the philosophical fragments of Heraclites, a pre-Socratic philosopher. Fowles's chief concern in *The Aristos* was to safeguard the autonomy of each entity in the society.

Ever since leaving Oxford, Fowles had maintained a diary, which was a haphazard collection of personal records of occurrences to him. It was exclusively on himself and in no sense a historian's version of matters. Naming the collection as *Disjoints*, he says that it was "a sort of broken and very personal record of what was happening to me...an account of a young Oxford student born in 1926" (WH 65-66). His experiences in Greece were vividly recollected here. In 1965, *The Magus* was published. Technically dissatisfied with it, Fowles brought out a more refined version of the novel in 1977, "a version, in addition, whose sex scenes are more explicit than the original's and whose ending is less ambiguous" (Binns 19). *The Magus* concentrates on the occurrences of an Englishman Nicholas Urfe, whose sojourn in Greece as a school teacher associates him with Maurice

Conchis, the magus of the title. Under his tutelage, Nicholas strives to achieve the unattainable goal, the existential authenticity. In the same year, Fowles wrote an unabashed view on women in the essay, “Gather Ye Starlets.”

The novel which Fowles published in 1969, and which established him as the most profound writer in the spectrum of modern writers is *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. It is a tale of seduction in two senses; of Charles Smithson, the respectable gentleman by the mysterious Sarah Woodruff, and of the reader by the author. The conception of the novel “arose from an image that came to his mind ...of a woman standing at the end of a quay...” (Acheson 33). Though he was in the midst of a complex novel at that time, he was perturbed by the image and broke off from his work to start this novel, setting it in mid-Victorian England, 1867. In *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, Fowles presents how Victorian ideas have affected the twentieth century contemplations. Encompassing his ideas on Darwin, Marx and Freud the and labouring classes, the novel concludes with multiple ambiguous endings in a note of suspense. In between writing novels, Fowles had concentrated on more essays during this tenure. Significant of which are; “Notes on an Unfinished Novel” in 1969, “My Recollections on Kafka” in 1970, “Weeds, Bugs And Americans” in 1970 and “The Blinded Eye” in 1971. He also translated the French version of Charles Perrault's *Cendrillon* to *Cinderella*, Marie de France's *Lais*, and Moliere's *Dom Juan* into English in 1974. *The Ebony Tower*, Fowles's fourth work in fiction, was published also in 1974, although at that period he was concentrating on *Daniel Martin* and the revised version of *The Magus*. The five stories in the *Ebony Tower* struck him as variations on his earlier fiction.

In a serialized mode, the stories in this collection are; *The Ebony Tower*, *Eliduc*, *Poor Koko*, *The Enigma* and *The Cloud*. *Eliduc* is a translation of a twelfth century French tale of Marie-de-France. The essays “Conan Doyle,” “Shipwreck,” and “Islands” were written during the early and late seventies.

In one of his visits to Hollywood to discuss the cinematographical version of the *French Lieutenant's Woman*, Fowles had an inquisitive sense of the film world's desolateness. His ponderings sparked the beginning of his next novel, *Daniel Martin*. The conception of the book spontaneously came from an image to his mind as it had occurred before writing *The French Lieutenant's Woman*: “It was of a woman standing in a desert somewhere....” (Onega 178). The eponymous hero of the book is a British playwright turned Hollywood screenwriter, Daniel. The opening chapter of the book analepsizes to Martin's bucolic childhood; a close parallel of the author's life. In his non-fictional book titled *The Tree*, written in 1979, Fowles bares his heart that, “again and again in recent years I have told visiting literary academics that the key to my fiction lies in my relationship with nature”(The Tree 35). Nature to him, especially trees goes beyond individuals, “Far more than ourselves they are social creatures...” (Ibid 31). *Daniel Martin*, *The Magus* and *The French Lieutenant's Woman* abound in Fowles's convictions on Nature.

*Mantissa*, Fowles's sixth work of fiction published in 1982, deals in themes of sex, creativity and the theory of literature which denies the death of the author. In contrast to his vivid and wide ranging scenes in previous novels, *Mantissa* takes place entirely within the mental framework of the protagonist, Miles Green. His final novel till date, A

*Maggot*, is more satisfying but less ambitious in the attempt of Fowles as a novelist. He sets it in 1736, a year poised between the French revolution and the Romantic Movement. To a publisher who had objected to the title, Fowles insisted that “I am not interested in becoming just a best selling author who always picks suitable titles...” (Baker 661).

Fowles’s wide reading of literature in every genre made him write the essay “Of Memoirs and Magpies,” in 1983. “Seeing Nature whole,” “John Aubrey and the Geneses of *Monumenta Britannica*,” “A Brief History of Lyme,” “Lyme Regis: Three Town Walks,” “Voices of the Deep,” “Thomas Hardy’s England,” “The Falklands and a Death Foretold,” “Golding and Golding,” “A Modern Writer’s France,” “A Short History of Lyme Regis,” “The Man Who Died: A Commentary” and “The Nature of Nature” were the essays written during the eighties and nineties. Among outstanding novelists, it was Thomas Hardy who fascinated Fowles. To him, “he is, so to speak, a dead neighbour...” (WH 438). In November 1996, Fowles was invited back to Spetsai by Suzie and Lilette Botasis, whom he had met in Greece forty five years ago. In a moving essay titled, “Greece,” Fowles pays his sincere tribute to the country: “I immediately found another reason to fall in love with Greece...I can’t describe it, but its deepest sense was of a kind of almost unexpected sanction”(Ibid 82).

The essays of Fowles cover wide ranging diversities, overlapping temperament of his interests and as such, do not fall into neat and convenient categories. His views on nature, travelogues, opinions on other writers, both British and continental, idealistic musings, autobiographical statements, memoirs, cultural and societal implications, and political

leanings find outlet here. These non-fictional essays are perhaps lesser known. They are scattered in periodicals, academic journals, introductions and forewords and in smaller circulations. In some cases they are now out of print. They represent Fowles's developmental views on the art of fiction; the fertile period of his career and the relationship of life and morality with literature. For example, the essay "Shipwreck," opens with a compelling line: "One day last February I stood with Rex Conwan, two divers, and a boatman in one of the most splendid seascapes of Britain..." (WH 320). The narrative draws the reader as if it was primarily written for him. Fowles's anthology of essays, ranging from a single page to substantial pieces, was compiled in the book *Wormholes- Essays and Occasional Writings*, covering the period from 1963, the year of the appearance of his first novel *The Collector*, to the present. Published in 1998, it highlights Fowles's entire matured era of his writing career. Its editor, Jan Relf comments: "The essays collected here represent a chronicle of the various matters that have plagued, preoccupied or delighted Fowles through his life" (WH xii).

Since 1985 Fowles had been embroiled in financial difficulties. His Belmont house was robbed and Tim Gilbert, one of his closest friends had expired. To add to his woes, some trees of his garden were cut by one of his neighbours. The pressure took its toll, and in January 1986, Fowles was diagnosed of suffering from high blood pressure. Under this affecting and psychological strain, he started conceiving his new novel, *In Hellugalia*. This novel as he had elaborated in his diaries is set in the Balkans about a voyage:

Through a huge, flat, marshy garrigue-like sort of landscape to a coastal town. A mysterious central character...vague notions moods...an old woman in a lonely sea-cottage; irises; folk-musicians; a seduction; a cold anti-hero [...] . (Warburton 423)

In January 1990, his wife Elizabeth Fowles was down with advanced pancreatic cancer. She had only a fortnight to survive. But Fowles was informed erroneously, “It was nine days”(Warburton 435). Nursing his wife on her last few days, the “bewildered” (Ibid 435), Fowles hoped that the chemotherapy she received, would prolong her life for some days more. But on the first of March, Elizabeth lost her speech and movements. When her death came, “John then, half crouched in the bedroom doorway, his hands held like paws in front of his face. He howled”(Ibid 437). Each evening when darkness prevailed, he was trounced by the “bitter waves of being alone”( Ibid 439).

Fowles had given a convincing interview to Dianne Vipond in 1995. The interrogation named as *An Unholy Inquisition*, was like “a resistance fighter being questioned by the Gestapo or an atheist by the Inquisition”(WH 433). In a question by Vipond that he had half a dozen unfinished novels at hand, and readers were anxiously waiting for their publication, Fowles commented on his future work, *In Hellugalia*: “This is a pleasant experience for a unique and only reader (myself) but a nightmare for anyone else, including publishers. I experience this book (temporarily titled *In Hellugalia*) as I might a living dream” (Ibid 435). *Tesserae* is a kind of an existential mosaic of what it was like in the 1950’s to be poor and unfocussed. Apart from cinema and painting, the visual arts highly fascinate Fowles. Listening to selected music like Chicago jazz, Turko-Greek,

Bach and solo instrumentals are his pet pastimes. His favourite writers are Jane Austen, Thomas Love Peacock and Thomas Hardy: “The shadow of Thomas Hardy...the heart of whose ‘country’ I can see in the distance from my workroom window, I cannot avoid” (Ibid 25). Elaborating on his narrative technique, Fowles had commented: “if there is one thing in all the books I like, it is narrative; and if there is an author whose star I am, it is Defoe” (Amory 34). Like Daniel Defoe, Fowles had tremendous narrative drive: “he once wrote a novel in eighteen days, and wrote the first drafts for *The Collector* and *The Ebony Tower* in one month each ”(Halpern 40).

Will Frederick Clegg, the perverse clerk in *The Collector* rape Miranda, the gorgeous art student he had imprisoned? Will Nicholas Urfe of *The Magus*, make his way securely through the godgame that the baffling Maurice Conchis has chosen to participate with him? Will Charles Smithson of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, leave his fiancée, Ernestina Freeman for Sarah Woodruff? Such questions pursue the reader not only in these novels, but in all the rest of his fiction. In American literature, Fowles likes Saul Bellow and Joseph Heller. All his fiction have been commercially successful; a fact that has freed him from financial worry. Avoiding literary conflicts by refusing to review novels, he evaluates books on nature and ornithology. In relation to the psychological exploration, Fowles's leanings towards Freud and Jung is definitely marked. He generally goes to the subconscious, partly to the worlds of these two psychoanalysts: “I've always said that if I knew myself to be deeply disturbed, I'd rather go to a Freudian psychoanalyst, but that Jung is infinitely more valuable for an artist” (WH 440).

A deep believer in silence, we find the concept recurring through several Fowlesian fiction. *The Magus*, *Daniel Martin* and *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. To him silence is "the positive role of the negative" (Ibid 442). His odd compilation of private writings since his Oxford days, was published in 2003, titled *The Journals: Volume 1*. In this first volume, his student days in Oxford from the late 1940's, till the next half century, are included. Today his non-fictional writings, particularly *The Aristos*, *The Tree* and *Wormholes* in addition to his novels, have attracted critical acclaim, giving him the status of a formidable writer.

A novelist who is mostly described as existential by the critics, Fowles's theme in his novels is precisely cultural distillation and also the Herculean task of highlighting the path in which consciousness and structural coherence covers all parts of the society to promote unity. In his works, fiction or non-fiction, certain amount of social ills have been pointed as causes of violence and aggression. He hints that the truth one should strive for is the principled truth and applicable reality, to engage oneself for social change. On his leanings to Left-Winged viewpoints, he comments: "I have always felt much closer to socialism, even the old Marxism" (WH 444). Expounding on the subject of writing fiction, Fowles had said in an interview to Mel Gussow, a critic for the *New York Times*: "There's something terribly feminine about novel writing. When you create characters, all processes are analogous to childbirth, including post-natal depression. When a book is reviewed, it is like the weaning of children" (Gussow 84).

The theme of eroticism and sex feature as prominent features in Fowlesean novels, which enhance their stature as best-selling books. To a question in this facet by Diana Vipond, Fowles candidly confesses:

I confess to your 'element of eroticism.' I did once (very spasmodically) collect eighteenth-century 'pornography.' Certainly France taught me that the usual Anglo-Saxon and the American unbalance over sex... I'd rather say I am implicitly erotic! (WH 442)

*The Collector* narrates a young man's kidnapping of a girl for what he imagines are romantic, but in reality for perverted sexual purposes. *The Magus* explores the seduction of a series of young women by the protagonist, who find such relationships more satisfactory than having a long term association of fidelity. The hypocritical pretense of sexual Puritanism in the Victorian age is revealed in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. *Mantissa* deals with sexual therapy of an amnesiac writer. One of the characters in *A Maggot* is a fallen woman. Sexual perversity and voyeurism are found in abundance in Fowlesean fiction, and he treats the sensitive subject with considerable seriousness of purpose. Fowles includes the erotic in his novels because, as he had said, "I teach better if I seduce" (Sage 35). The actuality he seeks to teach us is the importance of striving, to understand ourselves better, and of finding relationships on trust, rather than just on sexual attraction. Relationships can be accurate and educational if men come to terms with their sexuality. As Sarah Benton endorses, "The crude things in men should be educated out of them and jettisoned" (Benton 19).

The novels of Fowles, situated in the present or previous centuries, are characterized by the influence of women. To him, the male and the female are the two biological principles in society and their smooth interaction is one of the chief signs of social health. The selfish tyranny of the male causes “sickness”(The Aristos 142). Women have the power to inspire men. The impact of one solitary astounding female, plays a meaningful role in derivative traditional eras. In this regard, he says, “I am a novelist because I am partly a woman, a little lost in mid-air between the genders, neither one nor t’ other” (WH 435). Amusingly he had commented to Catherine Tarbox that, “My wife would deny point blank that I’m a feminist”(Tarbox 188). Sarah Woodruff in *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*, Rebecca Lee in *A Maggot* can be cited in the light of this issue. Sarah broadens the mind of Charles Smithson, a conventional Victorian and finds her way into the Eve-dominated society of the Rossettis. Rebecca Lee, her counterpart in *A Maggot*, is at first a common woman, but brings to the society of the Adams in the eighteenth century, the mystery and wonder of an extraordinary vision. For Fowles, it is appropriate that the classical Muse, the source of various kinds of imaginative inspiration is a female. This theme has been highlighted in his short novel, *Mantissa*. In it, “Erato - a Muse, makes herself known to the writer Miles Green in a variety of forms” (Benton 19). Fowles fondly recollects his mother in an interview to Dianne Vipond in 1995: “...my mother, now several years dead, I have slowly grown into a realization of how much I owe her... I am happiest that she came of Cornish-or Celtic stock” (WH 439). He is of the opinion that the women in his books usually stand for other things as well: “I’ve used a phrase in *Daniel Martin*, ‘right feeling,’ which I derived from Jane Austen” (WH 452). Women still remain ambiguous to Fowles, and this mysteriousness has an

erotic impact on him. His new novel underway, *In Hellugalia*, envisage woman as the protagonist. As he commented, “If ever I do finish *In Hellugalia*, the central character will be female “(Ibid 453).

Existentialism interested Fowles since his Oxford days, which finds a considerable weight in his early novels. The existentialists’ views on authenticity and personal freedom, particularly interested him. Jean Paul Sartre, Albert Camus and Simone de Beauvoir had influenced and strengthened him. Camus’s existentialist testimony was imperative to him about the sensitive and the intelligent, who throw off the shackles of convention freely to discover their authentic selves. *The Collector* as an introductory novel is significant in exposing this theme. Miranda Grey scrutinizes all her basic assumptions, and makes if not all, some progress towards achieving existential freedom from the snobbish influences of her conventional upbringing. But death cuts her efforts short. Nicholas Urfe in *The Magus*, struggles for authenticity in the complexity of human relationships in an existential world. The issues of freedom and hazard in the novel strike a chord that Nicholas must struggle with the anguish of freedom in an infinitely complex world. Yet there is a hint that things will turn out well for him and Alison in the Joycean phrase, “an anagram made flesh”(Joyce 217). As his father had done, John Fowles began arguing on these philosophical matters in journals, kept by him in fragmentary composition books.

The characters in *The French Lieutenant’s Woman* are the exponents of conventional mid-Victorian values, and not the free self-aware individuals they could have become. Its

protagonist, Charles Smithson does not achieve existential authenticity in the critical time when he makes a choice between Ernestina and Sarah, but realizes in a delayed consequence that he has an alternative. To Fowles: "...he had not the benefit of existential terminology, but what he felt was really a very clear case of the anxiety of freedom-that is, the realization that one is free, and the realization that being free is a situation of terror"(Gilder 40). The stories in *The Ebony Tower* project parallelisms in their themes, containing the first signs of Fowles's declining tendency in existentialism: "I think of existentialism as a kind of literary metaphor...I long ago began to doubt whether it had any true philosophical value..."(Bigsby 117). The anecdotes are apprehensive about his views on existentialism and becomes tangential in his concerns on the theme. *Daniel Martin*, his next work, published in 1977, reveals his doubts about the philosophical value of existentialism and basically discards his early fascination with the philosophy to survey fresh and diverse areas of awareness.

Societal implications find a dominant feature in Fowlesean works, in both the genres; fiction and non-fiction. He is perhaps a meliorist and an existential humanist. To Roy Newquist, Fowles comments: "I have always wanted to illustrate the opposition of the Few (*Aristoi*) and the Many (*hoi polloi*)... the very complex tension in this human condition" (Newquist 218). The overriding theme of the Few and the Many gives vent in his debut novel, *The Collector*: "The girl represents good humanity, hope for the future, intelligence and love. The young man represents the opposites... in a world where the children eat earth" (Mockbridge 21). Given the dubious achievements of modern weapons and technology, the Few must help to educate the Many if both groups are to

survive. The philosophy of Fowles in this regard can be seen that he is akin to the viewpoints of Sartre and Camus. Fowles's last novel till date, *A Maggot* is also a clear representation of the Many, though it is revealed almost at the end of the novel, when Rebecca Lee, the female protagonist is seen to possess exceptional knowledge. This is derived from what may have been a profound religious experience, which finds a berth of respect among the Few. Mythical elements are also prevalent in the Fowlesean novels. Greek myth makes inroads in his novels like *The Magus*, *Daniel Martin*, *The French Lieutenant's Woman* and *Mantissa*; Celtic myth is woven in the accounts of *The Ebony Tower*.

Fowles is among one of those Englishmen who complained about the discomforts of residing in a country where the weight and pride of its past heritage threaten to burgle in the personal and social evolution of a writer. His non-fictional essays stand as a support to this. Being confronted with stubborn stolidity in England, he chose exile abroad in France, Greece and America for a time being. After the attainment of a choice, he came back home. This decision is mirrored in almost all his works: "Those unhappy stories in which English youths of superior endowment struggle against their real identity and its responsibilities ... "(Baker 166). In his "Notes on an Unfinished Novel," he describes his mind to be set in this issue: "various things have long made me feel an exile in England" (WH 27).

The achievements of John Fowles have proved to be an intricate task for proper assessment. He is an immensely popular writer and his masterpiece, *The French*

*Lieutenant's Woman*, is becoming popular text in different universities of the world. His fiction and non-fiction display problems, anxieties as well as entertainment textured with flamboyance. Romance and gothic stories, are narrated with a dexterity. As Peter Conradi writes:

He is a paradoxical figure; a didactic and coercive libertarian; an evolutionary socialist ... his existentialism is called upon to validate; an apologist for the female principle; a writer of fables of erotic quest... as a bourgeois pornographer expert in the aesthetics of frustration. (Conradi 16)

The history of Fowles's writing career shows experimentation and an evolution in his themes. His later works show this testing with style, accompanied by the maturity of an existentialist with an aesthetic vision. Like Charles Dickens, he is a rare blend of an entertainer; like Saul Bellow, a serious truth-seeker. Impulsive, he is always breaching conventional narrative, seeking innovative accesses. Accompanying these features is Fowles's curiosity of delving in the self of his characters. To him: "Man is wedged between being a social creature and being an individual. I think the *nemo*, the sense that you are nothing or anybody, can drive us to violence and unreason" (WH 444).

Every individual in Fowles's fiction is in the quest of searching his own self. The trouble is that they misplace tracks, through human vices which envelope them. A great believer in freedom of the self, he is of the view that "disbelieving in set form is how I feel free" (WH 448). A supporter of the dictum of Socrates, he comments, "We still haven't beaten Socrates's most famous piece of advice: *Know thyself*" (Ibid 445). His premises in

creative and non-fictional works, can be summed as the ambiguity of truth, the dualistic concept of reality, alienation of the modern man and the art as self realization; all overtopped by the dominant theme of the discovery of the self. They are supported in their presentation by the non-fiction, principally strengthened by the philosophies in *The Aristos*, *The Tree* and his essays.

In 1998, Fowles married Sarah Smith who had been a steady acquaintance to him, since Elizabeth's death. Through her practical arrangements, "he continued his ongoing interests in local history and preservation projects. His health, never good, was well managed through his new wife's loving and sensible attention"(Warburton 461). John Robert Fowles breathed his last on the 5<sup>th</sup> of November 2005 in Lyme Regis in his beloved Dorset, after prolonged illness. In spite of our complexities, we can make an evaluation of this magnanimous writer. Valid to call him an existentialist, having respect for the French tradition of letters with influences from Socrates, Heraclites, Sartre and Camus in the domain of his fiction. The same sense of crisis and weights of responsibility as his masters flavour the recipe of his writings. We can reiterate his vision as a writer in the words of Camus in *The Wager of Our Generation* as quoted in Baker:

The aim of art, the aim of life can only be to increase the sum of freedom and responsibility to be found in every man and in the world. It cannot, under any circumstances, be to reduce or suppress that freedom, even temporarily. (Baker 165)

The most versatile of writers in the English language in the present epoch, the Nobel Prize for literature eluded Fowles; something which still quizzes the minds of Fowlesian fans. The reason may be hidden, but the neglect was rather surprising.

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## Chapter II - The *Beginnings*

### Fiction

#### *The Collector*

Published in 1963, *The Collector* stands out as a brilliant piece of writing, not having any flavour of apprentice work, in spite of being Fowles's debut novel. He uses it as a model of the Heraclitean opposition between "a moral and intellectual elite or the *aristoi*, the good ones, and an unthinking conforming mass, the *hoi polloi*" (*The Aristos* ix). The *aristos* is embodied by Miranda, an art student; the *pollos* by Frederick Clegg, a lepidopterist and clerk, whose literary ancestry goes back to the "inarticulate hero... James Dean and all his literary children and grandchildren, like Sallinger's Holden Caulfield, and Sillitoe's Arthur Seaton..." (Newquist 218). But this does not exhaust the novel's base. It is suffused with literary echoes ranging from a fairy tale to the gothic romance, concrete literary works like Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Jane Austen's *Emma* and *Sense and Sensibility*, basic tenets of existentialism, with Freud and Jungian psychoanalysis. The working class hero frustrates the possibility of his own and Miranda's self maturation, transforming from a lepidopterist to a calculated murderer. *The Collector* appeared on the *New York Times*'s best seller list in the very year of its publication, and was made into a successful film in 1965.

During the fifties, Fowles had written the first drafts of a few novels including *The Collector* and *The Magus*. Undertaking the completion of the work on *The Collector* became apparent as in his words, "it seemed more immediately publishable" (Baker 6). It

was accepted for publication in July 1962, and appeared in 1963, catapulting the book and its author to immediate fame. The crucial plot of *The Collector* is the modern retelling and admixture of two tales; the fairy tale *Beauty and the Beast*, and the French playwright Bela Bartok's play, *Bluebeard*. Written by Charles Perrault in the late seventeenth century, the original tale of *Beauty and the Beast* is the story of the hideous and deformed lord of the manor, capturing a princess against her will and ultimately teaching her that his ugliness is only skin-deep. The new found affection of the princess for the beast reflects her own psychic maturation. The emblematical drama of their union represents the struggle of the self to achieve oneness. Less prominent in the narrative's literary parallels are the references to two of Jane Austen's novels, *Emma* and *Sense and Sensibility*. Suffering from arrogance like Emma, Miranda also has Emma's virtues of self-critical honesty and capacity for self-expansion and moral growth.

The significance of the myth of *Bluebeard* has been documented by Fowles, and its impact in *The Collector*:

I went to see the first performance in London of Bartok's opera, *Duke Bluebeard's Castle*...the man imprisoning the women underground. The dangerous propensities of sex in the book, its strange secrets...with violent and destructive emotions...might well be kept hidden behind a permanently locked door. (Newquist 219)

The protagonist in *Bluebeard* is a "ferocious aspect of the animus in the most diabolical form"(Grace 247). Bent on possessing, he "cannot love his partner, and neither can anyone love him" (Bettelheim 303). In addition, Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and Samuel

Richardson's *Pamela*, function as literary allusions to the book. *The Tempest* represents a metaphorical strand woven in the design of *The Collector*. An extended commentary, Shakespeare's drama provides a rich source to gain a deepened awareness of Fowles's purpose and intention. Richardson's *Pamela*, may be viewed as a reworking of *The Beauty and the Beast*, which ends on a happy note, while Fowles fortifies it to a tragedy in *The Collector*.

The story of *The Collector* revolves around the obsession of Frederick Clegg with Miranda Grey. This adulation from afar makes him embark upon the unnerving idea of abducting her. The straightforward love and admiration moulds into obsession, taking Clegg into a world of fantasy, where nothing but Miranda fills his dreams, giving him the vital edge to seize her, like his prized catches of butterflies, "Seeing her always made me feel like I was catching a rarity..." (TC 7). Winning a large sum of money at the pools, he gives a concrete outline to a malevolent plan. Purchasing a house in a secluded country manor near London, he abducts Miranda. She falls in the dragnet of the psychologically twisted clerk. The novel progresses with the clash of minds, sentiments and ideologies of the protagonists brought out by the novelist, culminating in a macabre end. Miranda fails to break away from the clutches of her abductor, and like a butterfly in the grip of a lepidopterist, dies in confinement. To an informal reader, the surface title of book implies to an individual who collects things. But Fowles makes it correspondingly composite and realistic, leaving the reader purging in the Aristotelian concept of catharsis. The minor characters of the book are George Paston, whom Miranda develops a fascination, and

who takes the role of the mentor and a father figure like Prospero in *The Tempest*. Clegg's aunt Annie and uncle Dick, their daughter Mabel, and Miranda's parents, who do not project themselves before the reader, but are estimated in the narrative.

The protagonists Clegg and Miranda narrate their verbal confusions, personal logical positivism, sentiments, ideologies and emotions in the four sections of the novel. Clegg's account contains the bulk of the total narrative; sections one, three and four. Miranda's on the other hand, is brought only in the second section. The first and third sections of the novel comprise the bulk and its framework. It takes the reader a few days before Miranda's death, retracing the same events from her diary in the second section. Encircled by Clegg's, Miranda's narrative symbolically brings out the theme of captivity. After the kidnapping and the subsequent imprisonment of Miranda, no metamorphosis is basically undergone by Clegg in the whole sequence of the novel, save that his love for her develops into a kind of hatred. It is at the penultimate chapter of the novel, that the narratee comes to the horrifying truth of Clegg's determination not to grant her freedom. Miranda exclaims in anguish, "I don't want to die...I shall always want to survive" (TC 214 ). His self still lepidopterically inclined, Clegg observes her failing in degrees, mentally and physically with sadistic contentment. Miranda thus moves from a single isolated house to a bolted room and from the room finally to the coffin. To Peter Conradi: "A great deal of care is evidenced in these social impersonalisation, and the skillful verisimilitude they create, is responsible for the phantasmagoric intensity of the book as it approaches its macabre crises" (Conradi 34). The confrontation between the Few and the

Many is the crucial point in determining the compartmentalization of the self in *The Collector*. In the Preface to *The Aristos*, Fowles comments on this issue:

My purpose in *The Collector* was to attempt to analyze, through a parable, some of the results of this confrontation. Clegg the kidnapper, committed the evil was largely, perhaps wholly the result of bad education, mean environment, being orphaned: all factors over which he had no control. (*The Aristos* ix-x)

In the tradition of determining the specificity of the self, it can be connoted that survival cannot be measured in terms of the self alone, but the self in relation with others. The first person pronoun 'I' or the self, is methodically ambiguous. It may stand for one's own self, the subject of what he is, and it can also be referred as his ego. There is no set way of distinguishing all these. The self, is the "ego clothed with the garments of society" (Nantanson 17). It lives, acts and grows in real time and history. A person is a concoction of the subject, an ego and a self, without much ways of differentiation among them. To philosopher J.N. Mohanty: "Without being a subject, without having the possibility of that reflexive loneliness...without enjoying that social and historical identity which belongs to a self, a person would not be a person"(Mohanty 74). To elaborate his concept, Mohanty quotes Hume:

It must be some one impression that gives rise to every real idea. But the self of a person is not any one impression, but that to which our several impressions and ideas are supposed to have a reference. If any impression gives rise to the idea of a self, that impression must continue invariantly the same, throughout the whole

course of our lives. But there is no impression constant and variable. (qt Mohanty 77)

The self is thus the impulsive behavior of an individual, which requires a source giving organization and unity in varied ways and integrated aspects of philosophical and psychological functioning. It is a realization through experiences. The self may vary with situations, and may include manifold identities.

*The Collector* begins with the symbol of captivity brought out in the very first lines of the narrative:

When she came home from her boarding school, I used to see her almost everyday sometimes, because their house was right opposite the Town Hall Annexe. She and her sister used to go in and out a lot, often with young men which of course I didn't like [...] . (TC 7)

That Frederick Clegg led a life of drudgery in the modern British society can be gathered from the narration, the “files and ledgers” (TC 7), being symbols of mental imprisonment. The circumstances seem uncomplicated, but it forms the mainspring of the action. Miranda seems to be favourably disposed in this aspect, arousing a dormant jealousy in him. As the novel unfolds itself, we come to know that being an orphan Clegg lived with his Uncle Dick, his Aunt Annie and cousin Mabel. The retrospective nature of Clegg, in the initial stages of the novel, shows an elegiac mood which analepsizes to his innocent days before his pools win, with a glimpse of the disastrous days to come, “Perhaps that was when it all started...” (Ibid 9). The narrative also hints at Clegg having a forehand, a premonition of the entire sequence of events from first seeing Miranda, through her

captivity and death and his final revulsion on her attitude. He gradually started being subjected to forces beyond his control, “the whole idea was sudden, like the stroke of a genius, almost” (Ibid 15).

Fowles's first female protagonist Miranda, is the helpless woman who epitomizes an influential figure, albeit helpless in the grip of an impotent voyeur. Like her subjugator, she also plays the role of a narrator, narrating the events of her plight under complex circumstances. In *The Aristos*, Fowles maintains that “she is arrogant in her ideas, a prig, a liberal-humanist snob, like so many university students” (*The Aristos* ix). After her detention, her reminiscences with the forty plus London artist, George Paston, reinforces her preceding snobbish tendencies, but eventually helps to arrive at a clearer understanding of her self. Miranda's diary in section three of the novel identifies her as a sensitive, hesitant, confused, but a multifaceted young woman. Adhering to strict grammar, she manages to secure her own language and thoughts, throughout her narrative, verbalizing her feelings very openly to Clegg and the reader, whereas Clegg writes in fragments. At times she is vain, but her accounts assign her self very candidly. Her early narrative envisages her as an art student who is controlled by George Paston, and his philosophy on art, “He so often seems young in a way I can't explain...he's made me look at myself and see what I believe is old and stuffy” (TC 150). By the end of her narrative, she tries to

break from the shackles of his intellectual domination, “His inhibitions, its absurd...All the dotty irrationalists” (Ibid 175).

To Clegg, Miranda is “elusive, sporadic and very refined-not like the other ones”(TC 7). On the other hand there are “vulgar women such as Crutchley’s girl from Sanitation”(Ibid 10), or the hostesses Clegg visits in London, all of whom are very different from her. To Karen Lever, “the Fowles protagonist ...suffers from that infamous Victorian problem, the Madonna /whore complex. He separates love and sex, dividing women into two types to match”(Lever 90). Clegg represents this tendency in its most extreme form. Every woman Clegg is attracted, gravitate towards one or the other pole. Miranda occupies the Madonna slot. A perilous position for her is in her forthright views on love and sexual category, which exacerbates her situation, because Clegg has a sexual instinct, though of a perverted kind. In due course he comprehends that his Madonna in question is probably not so. This is his demoralizing switchbox, which destroys his own self, as well as Miranda’s.

In the introductory chapter to *Wormholes*, a collection of Fowles’s non-fictional works, editor Jan Relf comments :

One of the bees in Fowles’s bonnet is the ‘lethal perversion’ of the collector....

Clegg, the repellent hero of *The Collector*, is the archetype of all those natural – history collectors who ‘in the end collect the same thing: the death of the living’-

a statement central to Fowles's relationship to nature and the natural world. (WH xxii)

Clegg perpetuates himself to be a victim of male power, making us view all men as collectors, possessors and controllers: "Anyone who still collects (i.e.) some field of living life just for pleasure and vanity has all the makings of a concentration-camp commandant" (Wolfe 66). Clegg's mentality of collection is a kind of compensation to his sense of deficiency. Shielding his impotency, he desires for "higher aspirations" (TC 13), and wants to reject the "crude animal thing I was born with" (Ibid 13). But ironically, he has a fascination for pornography and sex as a passive consumption, manifesting these two things in his dreams of Miranda. The nice dreams are the ones where he fantasizes both of them engaged in a middle class marriage. The other dreams are those in which he visualizes her with other men, "I let myself dream I hit her across the face as I saw it done once by a chap in a telly play" (Ibid 8-9). It can be argued that Fowles's men, as can be seen in *The Collector*, and the other fiction, cannot see what they are doing to other people because of a "constitutional self-centered egoism which is central to the social legacy of masculinity" (Woodcock 29).

After the kidnapping, Clegg claims the reasons of the abduction as the prompting of forces beyond his control, "I took a risk...perhaps I wanted to give fate a chance to stop me" (TC 25). On another occasion he muses, "I didn't know what to think, my head seemed to go bang, bang, bang..." (Ibid 248). Throughout the entire period of her captivity, Clegg refused to let Miranda know any news of the outside world. A reading of the book *Secrets of the Gestapo*, makes him follow the dictum followed by the Nazi

interrogators. Accordingly, the Nazis “didn’t let the prisoners know anything ....they were cut off from the old world...that broke them down” (Ibid 40). Masquerading as an interrogator, he tells Miranda that he is “only obeying orders” (Ibid 30) from a Mr. Singleton, the manager of the Barclays bank, to abduct her. Miranda questions him: “You’re telling me that Mr. Singleton is a sex maniac and he kidnaps girls and you help him?” (Ibid 31). Taken aback by her firm belief in the manager, Clegg hurriedly winds off, “There’s other things I can’t tell you. I’m in his power” (Ibid 32). As a precondition for her release, Clegg says that she should marry him. On her refusal, he rashly takes back his offer of release. She tries to dash away and overpowering her, he takes her down to her room chloroformed, clicking her nude photographs.

The pornographic photographs of Miranda, is also excused by Clegg with the comment that, “I’m not really that sort and I was only like it that night because of all that happened and the strain I was under” (TC 126). After developing the snapshots, he says the best among them were the ones “when she stood in her high heels, from the back. The tied hands to the bed made what they call, an interesting motif” (Ibid 122). “The strain” (Ibid 126), which Clegg refers to is the principle pivot, the twist the fiction takes and from where Miranda and the reader face with silent horror the ultimate truth of Clegg’s impotency. Clegg on this occasion feels that “Things were never the same again, in spite of all that happened”(Ibid 95). The fear of sexual relations in him is embodied in pornography. William J. Palmer argues that the pornographic syndrome operates “as a symbolic motif representing the anti existential, dehumanizing impulse that lurks just beneath the surface of modern life ...” (Palmer 40).

Clegg's refusal to accept responsibility for his crime is yet another indication of his self, diverging from existential inauthenticity. This vulnerable position in him, denies countering his evil self. Miranda tells him, "...you've got to shake off the past. You've got to become a new human being" (TC 82). But for Clegg, whose very language speaks of overconfidence and assurance of self-knowledge, becoming a metamorphosized individual was an intricate subject he can never arrive at. The highlighting issue of his inauthenticity is the lacking of self-awareness of a rational being and the appropriate understanding of his love for Miranda. Although at the end of his narrative, he mentions *Romeo and Juliet*, on his daydreaming about killing himself on Miranda's death, he makes it appear like a suicide pact and the reader abhorrently obliges to the truth that the man never loved Miranda. The whole sequence rested on Clegg's lepidopteristic and voyeuristic self. He refuses to facilitate medical help for her when she lay dying, "I just sat there, listening to her breathing and mutterings" (Ibid 246). At the end of the novel's narrative, he is still unaware of his self-contradiction when on Miranda's death he says, "I knelt and said a prayer... not that I believed in religion, but it seemed right" (Ibid 247).

The parallels between Miranda and the butterflies are also worked out in some detail, which enhances the lepidopteristic instincts in Clegg. After capturing, he chloroforms her as he does to his butterflies, and imprisons her in the cellar, just like he arranges his insects in glass cases. Satisfied with his day's work on the day of the abduction, he soliloquizes: "...that night was the best thing I ever did in my life...It was like catching the Mazarine blue again or a Queen of Spain Fritillary, once in a lifetime..." (TC 29). His

*modus operandi* of catching butterflies, brings out the unnerving aspect of his self, as he compares this with Miranda's capturing:

It was like not having a net and catching a specimen you wanted in your first and second fingers...coming up slowly behind and you had it, but you have to nip the thorax, and it would be quivering there... And it was twice as difficult with her, because I didn't want to kill her. (TC 38)

The mentality of a lepidopterist can be regarded as a major evil. Fowles in his narrative brings out the special paradox of collecting. To Loveday: "The collector seeks to possess, things of value...Butterflies are a particular apt choice to illustrate this point because they are living things which the collector must kill..." (24). The word 'cleg' is a horsefly. Miranda in her utter anguish laments, "He showed me one day what he called his killing bottle. I'm imprisoned in it. Fluttering against it" (TC 189). On another occasion, her frustrations collide in sheer exasperation: "If only I had the strength to kill you I'd kill you. I'd kill you. Like a scorpion. I will kill you when I'm better. I'd never go to the police. Prison's too good for you. I'd come and kill you" (Ibid 105) .

During her detention, Miranda tries all achievable strategies to escape, but realizes corporeal aggression would not convert Clegg. Psychologically she senses that her life and Clegg's are irreversibly joined together in a bizarre and mystical way, "Its weird.

Uncanny. But there is a sort of relationship between us" (TC 131). Indeed to the reader,

they seem fated to undergo a strange ritual of initiation. Miranda's logic tells her that if

she can effectively escape through Clegg's psychic defense mechanism, gets him to trust her, she might successfully make him a total man, an enhanced individual. At this point, she attempts to practice a kind of sex therapy on Clegg, as his basic neurosis originates from his sexual frustrations and inhibitions, which in turn manifests in a compulsive need to wield power over women. "I've got to give him a tremendous shock that he'll have to release me...I must fight with my weapons...Therefore with generosity (I give myself) and gentleness ...Even a baby-his baby, anything. For freedom" (TC 96). In a sense Miranda's offering herself to Clegg is chosen to sacrifice her honour for a greater help, but the consequences prove fatal. He is false to himself as well as Miranda, and this brings with it a greater self-deception which is so total and absolute, that he goes on living to prey upon another suspecting woman, Marian.

The plot of *Bluebeard* parallels that of *The Collector* in psychical ways. In psychoanalytical terms, the story relates to both male and female psyches: "...if you are male, then the story projects problems with the anima: if you are a female, then the ferocious aspects of the animus..." (Grace 247). The fundamental moral of *Bluebeard* is that concealment of crime must be challenged, revealed and punished. Clegg suffers from a repressed sexuality that leads to his decidedly puritanical attitudes and sexual perversion as Miranda comments, "Oh! God, you're not a man, if only you were a man" (TC 105). Psychologist R.S. Laing discusses the tribulations what schizophrenic

personalities experience when they persist to cut themselves off from any kind of meaningful interpersonal interactions. In the *Divided Self*, Laing gives a view of a troubled individual, whose problems appear quite similar to those of Clegg :

The substitution of an interaction with the other (i.e. the avoidance of any experiences with reality), results in the individual coming to live in a frightening world in which dread is unmitigated by love...he feels he will be exhausted, emptied, robbed and sucked dry. The isolation of the self is a corollary....of the need to be in control. (Laing 83)

It is a prolonged and sustained emphatic immersion in the subjective experience in the self, which shows Clegg's motivated power to be based upon self-deception and not self-knowledge. It is a method of understanding and explanation offered from his own data gathering. Information obtained by other modes of listening are neither suppressed, nor otherwise excluded but are consciously subordinated in the effort of getting hold of his individual experiences. To Abraham Maslow, "Freud's greatest discovery is that the great cause of much psychological illness is the fear of oneself... fear of knowledge of oneself is very often isomorphic..."(Maslow 60).

In the early part of the novel, Miranda argues with Clegg of attempting to seek maternal instincts in her, "You want to lean on me. I can feel it. I expect it's your mother. You're looking for your own mother" (TC 56-57). However Clegg is attracted to Miranda as a potential anima, and psychologically underdeveloped, he is still unable to move beyond the mother-son relationship. Hence Miranda's sexual offering to him poses as a threat. Instead

of being a good mother, Miranda becomes a symbol of an appalling one to him. She later records in her diary, "he was looking for the mother he never had" (Ibid 129). This is how the Freudian implications of this relationship are brought out in Clegg. Clegg sees every woman as a part of his mother, and he cannot change this into lover or even into a wife. This dilemma is additional to the Madonna /whore complex, and the psychological search for the good anima for Clegg reflects the need for a proper muse to reach his unattainable goal: "The mother is the archetype and the gateway to the unconscious, which is a rich seedbed for the creator" (Beatty 76).

In his essay, "Hardy and the Hag," published later on, Fowles describes the nature of the fantasy of the schizophrenic syndromes from which Clegg suffered along the lines of the Hardy's "tryst" (WH 170). Hardy analyzes this as a meeting of a man and a woman per chance in a secluded place, as seen in his own novel, *The Well-Beloved*. In *The Collector*, Fowles draws this implication in a similar way:

Though I gained the outward theme of *The Collector* from a bizarre real-life incident in the 1950's, similar fantasies had haunted my adolescence-not, let me quickly say, with the cruelties and criminalities of the book, but very much along the lines of the Hardy's tryst. (WH 170)

Clegg suffers from a repressed sexuality that leads to his puritanical attitudes and also his sexual perversion. An incapable voyeur, he believes that the sexual act is something to

be abhorred. It is partly Clegg's idealized and juvenile outlook on sexuality that brings about the tragedy. Veiling his own sexual inadequacy in a web of shady anger, he mistakenly believes it to be the truth on sexuality. For him, sexuality is something to be forever repressed and locked away in a darkened room of the intellect, to be rounded up periodically for purely prurient reasons when the flesh is the weakest. The voyeur in Clegg observes Miranda only as a specimen, an object. As Barry Olshen puts it: "The voyeur observes the nature as he would a butterfly, reducing her free and vital nature in his mind's eye to the status of an object: a specimen in a collection" (Olshen 17). Even this most dreadful necrophiliac side of Clegg, has a kind of fierce passion. Olshen continues: "Hating life, his activities are largely destructive: he seemingly possesses the capacity to transform all that he touches into something dead. This is what Fowles has so concretely and economically embodied in figure of *The Collector*" (Olshen 28).

Clegg's narrative does not have the flavour of confession. The tone does not bear the tenor of unburdening his self of his wrongs and redeeming or liberating him with promises of deliverance. The self in him is open without implications to the reader. Is he a supervisor of penal complex, a Jesuit cleric, or a psychiatrist? Or is it an obstinate kind of a possessed lover's declaration of guilt? Michael Foucault emphasizes the tones of confession in the

#### *History of Sexuality:*

Its veracity is not guaranteed by the lofty authority of the majistry, not by the tradition it transmits, but by the bonds, the basic intimacy in discourse between the one who speaks and what he is speaking about...the agency of domination does not

reside in the one who speaks ...but in the one who listens and says nothing: not in the one who knows and answers, but in the one who questions and is not supposed to know [...]. (Foucault 62-63)

Throughout Miranda's captivity, Clegg does not mature in psychical awareness. The warped psyche in him does not for a split second release its shackles. On Miranda's death, he unnervingly says, "...the last day came...it seemed specially arranged, most appropriate, seeing she passed away so peacefully..."(TC 247). If he had learned something from his experience, one could perhaps rationalized his living while Miranda dies. The sympathetic reader could have regarded him as a tragic psychic figure. Fowles is of the opinion that there is a genuine affinity between a man and a woman, and a divine union, with a blending and sharing of body and spirit: "The shadow personifies everything that the subject refuses...to acknowledge about himself directly or indirectly- for instance, inferior traits of character and other incompatible tendencies" (Jung 284-285). As the resultant aspect of Miranda's scheme becomes more agonizing to Clegg because of his confirmed impotence, he takes note with horror of her accusations: "You're breaking every decent human law, every decent human relationship, every decent thing that's ever happened between your sex and mine" (TC 103). Obliterated from his fascinations after Miranda's sexual offering, Clegg's illusions are shattered, "She killed all

the romance, and she had made herself like any other woman" (Ibid 99). As a result he feels elated on his taking of her nude photographs. Mention can be made here of the same perversely psychic quality as Robert Browning's portrait of an equally possessive and destructive male lover in *Porphyria's Lover*, misinterpreting her fidelity.

In both the narratives, Miranda's and his own, Clegg is portrayed as a misplaced man with manifold desires and alienated subjectivity. His schizophrenic disposition implies a great many contradictions; he wants Miranda to love and marry him, yet he imprisons and treats her as he treats butterflies. Wanting to buy a modern house, he ends up buying a seventeenth century secluded country manor to imprison her. Thus in the degrees in which we neglect the demands of the psyche for individuation and submit to the upbringing of our shadow selves, we must all share a fractional accountability of Clegg's bleak failure. He lives in a world, which he can never share with anyone. What he desires is a pagan victory over Miranda, serving her as he would a deity, a woman both beautiful and sensuous, who should preserve her sexuality. Ultimately his immature, semi-romantic dreams become nightmares. The chilling truth is that Clegg allows Miranda to die, "...I though it was her fault. She asked for everything she got" (TC 248). He suffers as a counterfeited self, which is essentially a divorce of the self from the body, from reality, from the true self. He is false both to himself and his dreams. Ultimately his falsity to Miranda brings with it the microbe of a bigger self-deception, a ruse so total and absolute that he goes on living on his voyeuristic disciplines to prey upon another unwary woman, to continue the cycle of lepidopterism. If Clegg could have verbalized the first incipient

signs of a psychological metamorphosis, *The Collector* would have resembled more than the fairy tale, which forms its backbone. But this was not Fowles's blueprint.

Clegg bears a similarity to a self that lies concealed in some dim curve of the intellect, whose ferocity and savagery is a necessary psychic element only when it is robbed by urgent necessity or danger. Otherwise, if he comes out in the light of day, it is with the forces of anarchy and the resultant factor is death. On his future kidnapping of Marian, Clegg muses: "I thought I was going mad... I was mad; everyone else could see it only I couldn't keep on looking how people at Lewes seemed to look at me sometimes, like the people in the doctor's waiting room. They all knew I was mad" (TC 249). Thus it is the destructive capacity of a confused perception of the self. A crucial flaw in Clegg is that his inability to detach dreams from realism. As he says in the beginning of the text, "That was the day I first gave myself the dream that came true. It began where she was being attacked by a man and I ran up and rescued her... what I pretended was really going to happen" (Ibid 16). His fantasizing and imagining of dissimilar worlds with Miranda, turns him into a kind of self-idealized hero, who gives free rein to his dreams. They are jarred when Miranda become defensive, as Freud maintains, "every dream is yoked with its contradictory opposite ... " (Freud 468). Clegg's dreams of a happy marital life with Miranda turns into opposite implications, which ultimately gives him the urge to kill her for fear that the police might come to the house. He has another distressing dream, "I had

a horrible dream one night when they [the police] came and I had to kill her before they came in the room" (Ibid 84). This leads to the development of anxiety in Clegg and one night he wakes up in a sweat. Hence he eventually lets the girl die, refusing to give her suitable therapeutic management. He pursues his dreams through the self-conscious construction of alternative worlds that confront the reality of his everyday world. At the very centre of his dreams and his fantasies, is his difficult and awkward self.

Miranda is the mirror through which Clegg sees his self; he sees in her only his inner reflection and then disregards her. Clegg's malevolence is alleviated by Fowles's biological view of the human condition. He cites this aspect as a debate in *The Aristos*:

The psychiatric patient is not cured, but made less abnormal, by understanding the contradictions of his own nature. Dimly he sees how the forces that use him can be used. To understand is not only to forgive; it is to control. (*The Aristos* 60)

In a later non-fictional book *The Tree*, Fowles describes the supra-scientific vitality of consciousness:

Ordinary experience...is in fact highly synthetic and made of a complexity of strands, past memories and present perceptions, times and places, private and public history...it corresponds very closely-despite our endless efforts to 'garden', to invent disciplining social and intellectual systems –with wild nature. ( 40-41)

From Fowles's analysis, it is assumed that collecting is antagonistic to the primitive wildness, which is suggested by Clegg's nickname, Caliban. He is a collector in exactly the estranging, numbing way that Fowles condemns in this passage from *The Tree*. This

collecting is precisely articulated in the novel's narrative, voiced by Miranda, Clegg's first human assortment. She speaks intelligently and explicitly on this subject. On one of her aggravated moments she says, "I could scream abuse at him all day long: he wouldn't mind at all ...He's a collector" (TC 150-51). Fowles himself had collecting habits earlier in his life, but came to abhor such pursuits, however useful they may claim to be scientifically, since they bring out the very worst in man.

The temperament of good and evil of the self is explored in *The Collector* by Fowles, who inevitably characterizes these intangible concepts in existential vocabulary. The protagonist who rejects life is eventually evil because, he will always refute accountability for his actions. Concisely the protagonist who accepts life in all its diversity, is responsible for his actions, and contributes something of value to a world, which is indifferent from that of Clegg's. Fowles raises this issue in *The Collector* on the insinuation of good and evil as Nietzsche has before him.

For all the value, the truthful, the selfless may deserve, it would still be possible that a higher and more fundamental value for life might have to be ascribed to deception, selfishness and lust... these good and revered things is precisely that they are related, tied to, and involved with those wicked, seemingly opposite things, maybe even one with them in essence. (Nietzsche10)

Nietzsche further argues in *Beyond and Evil* that all of man's notion about value are merely falsehoods and misrepresentations. To possess doubt, to hold everything familiar and comforting up to question is difficult, because one must place in this midpoint of doubt one's most esteemed presumptions and treat all of one's ideals, values and axioms

as if they must be simply facile illusions. Nietzsche like William Blake suggests that the self must learn to see beyond the petty conception of good and evil, and what constitutes a truth for one may be false to another. There is no absolute truth for all men. Nietzsche might well say of Clegg; “a living being that seeks above all to discharge its strength” (Nietzsche 21).

A fundamental reason for inserting Miranda’s diary in *The Collector* might have been Fowles’s intention to put into practice the existential principle, that the free will of others ought to be respected. She provides the author substantial medium to project a number of his philosophical ideas, “I hate god. I hate whatever made this world. I hate whatever made this human race” (TC 231). Her love for existential freedom is also expressed, “I love honesty and freedom...I love being to the full” (Ibid 191). Her attack against the modern society, her adoration of nature, are the values which Fowles cherish, and which enhances Miranda’s self, heightening the pathos of the entire circumstances. Inserting alone Clegg’s narrative would have highlighted only his identity. In giving Miranda a voice, Fowles restores her independent existence as a person. He manipulates her diary to aim at a greater intensity of pathos and tragic irony by allowing her self to be more optimistic in the final pages of her narration, at a time when we come to know her as a fully metamorphosed person, marked down for death: “I don’t want to die. I feel full of endurance. I shall always want to survive. I will survive” (Ibid 214).

Miranda’s outlooks also give an intersecting viewpoint on Clegg’s account, which enhances in understanding of the rigid dichotomy in the self. Her opinion on Clegg gives the reader a crosscheck, filling the gaps in his account which gives another angle in an

agreed set of events, essential to arrive for a proper scrutiny of his self. Miranda comments, "He's solid, immovable, iron-willed" (TC 189), which carries a moral didactic weight. Again she feels, "Why should we tolerate their beastly Calibanity? Why should every vital and creative and good person be martyred?" (Ibid 191). Clegg does not mention his reading of *Catcher In the Rye*, which is mentioned in Miranda's diary. She keeps her events in the form of a record and Clegg's is cast in the form of a chronicle, written some way after the events it recounts, takes place. The impulsiveness of Miranda's account is brought out in a number of ways. Each entry is dated which reveals that she writes down things as they happen to her. A great deal of her diary is written in the present and present perfect tense, emphasizing that her own self is still developing, "I'm a moral person" (Ibid 209). Her diary is often unfinished, at times disjointed and recurrently evocative. Generally speaking it records her feelings as they come: "Oh God, if there is a God..." (Ibid 232). This is a way of clarifying her thoughts. For all these motives, Miranda shows her self to be of complete candor, progressing towards authenticity. Fowles had himself said of Miranda: "The girl in *The Collector* is an existentialist heroine, although she doesn't know it" (Newquist, 225). The self in Miranda grows to the level like a psychiatric consultant for a patient. She is aware of a kind of social responsibility towards Clegg, in spite of his neurosis: "I know its pathetic, I know he's a victim of a miserable non-conformist suburban world, and a miserable social class" (TC 151). But paradoxically she cannot touch him without destroying her own self, without catching his disease and demeaning her; hence the gothic flavor of the impeccable tragedy, "He's just gone...He's beastly, sarcastic" (Ibid 224). The macabre

designs of Clegg and his nihilism do kill her, but she moves to a greater perception of realization.

To John Neary, a comparison can be drawn between Camus's analysis of a lover's desire for a total possession of his beloved, which he considers a prototype of the rebellious demand for absolute order and unity, with *The Collector*, where an analysis of Clegg's demand that Miranda should become a dead butterfly to be added to his collection, rather than a living, unpredictable woman:

The desire for possession is only to endure; it is this that comprises the important delirium of love... every man devoured by the overpowering desire to endure and possess wishes that those whom he has vowed were either sterile or dead. This is real rebellion. (Camus 261)

To Neary, Camus's protagonist "Sade", is much more Satanic than Fowles's clerk. Sade's destructive self seeks to have power over the whole universe and that nature has the need of crime, destroying in order to create and we must help nature create from the moment we destroy it ourselves. Miranda, in Camusian terms, is "the novel's rebellious slave (and at least metaphorically, a metaphysical rebel), while Clegg is merely a repressive master..."

(Neary 12). The systematized and secured arrangements of Sade's prison castles are very much like the meticulously sealed prison of Clegg's manor: foolproof with an exhaustingly complicated security system. The terrible and necrophiliac aspects of Clegg's character, which seem to be so utterly condemnable, have an existential significance. His world, Neary maintains is like Sade's, based on an absolutely negative form of rebellion; a total

rejection of god and a divine cosmos. The house he finds is a kind of a lost domain. Satisfied with its secrecy, Clegg fortifies himself, turning into a Camusian rebel, "What water is to the Body, Purpose is to the mind" (TC 20). The soft-spoken clerk turns to a fiend out of a thriller. In the early part of the novel, Clegg had voiced a blasphemous creed that God's existence or non-existence did not matter to him. And he voices this belief in the last part of his narrative, showing that his self, to be precise, never grows at all, "I think we are just insects, we live a bit and then die and that's the lot. There's no mercy in things. There's not even a Great Beyond. There's nothing" (Ibid 250).

Miranda in Sartrean terms, is something like the pinprick of freedom, which slips into the wedge of nothingness that is created, or as Sartre puts it, as being nihilated by the intersection of being-in-itself, which corresponds to that part of Clegg's world, mechanical and dead. The nihilation of the one by the other, creates the space of nothingness, as Sartre says, is liberty itself;

Freedom in its foundation coincides with the nothingness which is at the heart of man...it is perpetually wrenched away from itself and because it has been separated by nothingness...It is free finally, because its present being is nothingness in the form of the reflection-reflecting [...]. (Sartre 568)

This is not to suggest that *The Collector* is a kind of an uncomplicated presentation of the self in Sartrean philosophy, any more than a straightforward allegory of Camusian or a Heraclitean philosophy. Though not a pure Sartrean narrative, the novel ends up with a

Sartrean vision; a vision of nothingness. A particular narration, where Miranda most eloquently reveals her self, which requires the nothingness of Clegg:

A strange thought: I would not want this not to have happened. Because if I escape I shall be a completely different and I think better person. Because if I don't escape, if something dreadful happened, I shall know that the person I was and would have stayed like this. (TC 229)

If Clegg had attempted to imprison her for his salvation, he succeeded only in entangling himself his own self in a macabre web.

The paradigms of subjectivity is manifested in *The Collector* through Miranda's development and her efforts to free herself, psychologically from George Paston, the man she loves and from Clegg, the man she abhors. For Clegg, Miranda is perceived as that unobtainable woman from whom he wishes to learn something about his own sexuality. For him, femaleness is like the Orient for the Orientalists: "The Orient seems still to suggest not only fecundity but sexual promise and threat, untiring sensuality, unlimited desire, deep generative energies, is something on which one could speculate" (Said 12). Unlike Miranda, who finds an inner perception in the course of her ordeal, Clegg's self remains pathetically a wreck to the last part of the novel. It is in the penultimate chapter of the novel that the narratee comes to the horrifying truth that Clegg would never grant her freedom, "It's the dead me that he wants. He wants me living, but dead" (TC 188). Clegg is certainly false to his dreams. Eventually his falseness to Miranda brings with it the germ of a large self-deception, a deception so complete that he prepares uncannily for his next victim. He is still unaware of his self-contradiction, when he on Miranda's death he says,

“I knelt and said a prayer, not that I believed in religion, but it seemed right” (Ibid 247). Like John Milton who was unconsciously in Satan’s favour, glorifying him in *Paradise Lost*, Fowles perchance had sympathy for his twisted clerk, caught up in the tussle between the Few and the Many. On his jury duty at the Old Bailey in May 1961, Fowles narrates a vital circumstance, which had instigated his writing of *The Collector*:

A mental defective with five children, who had thrown the incestuously begotten baby of his eldest daughter into a furnace, stood fumbling and weeping... he had no money...nothing except his heavy dirty-nailed hands, and his tears. I wanted to jump and cry out. We did not judge him; he was the judge... I knew by reason that cannot be a God. (WH 9-10)

Frederick Clegg is also paralyzed as Fowles mentions in *The Aristos*, by hazard and the forces that lie behind the evolutionary process, in the continuation of survival. Principally by hazard. Thus, all of Clegg’s plans for the future does not exactly bring success to him, but as kinds of trials in continuity. Fowlesian critic, James Baker raises the question on the possible redemption of Clegg, keeps in mind the essentials of *The Aristos*: “Translated into Shakespearean metaphor...is it possible for Prospero, the redemptive magician, to redeem even the dark Caliban?” (Baker 166). To Baker, the Prospero of today are the humanistic psychologists like Carl Yung and Abraham Maslow. Even these gifted men may find the prospect of changing the psychical framework of the Many quite daunting. Until the Many desire positive change, neither education nor legislation can mandate a shifting in their basic concepts: “Prospero...is a theurgist, whose Art is to achieve supremacy over the

natural world by holy magic" (Kermode xi). The problem in *The Collector* is that the novel does not contain an all-seeing Prospero to save Miranda from Clegg's terrible clutch. The forces of ignorance and brutality overwhelm her. Clegg/Caliban has his way, and society takes a backward plunge into darkness, like the evil Erebus against Apollo in Greek myth.

Nature is woven as an undercurrent in *The Collector*, though nature is not so visible in the literary context of the novel. Fowles's non-fiction *The Tree* analyzes this echo, which expands in *The Collector*. Considering science and materialism to be the forces, which deprive man of their basic human instincts, the Fowlesean protagonist here is a rebellious self, rebelling against mass culture and science, which analyzes and create a dividing wall. Nature's wildness to Fowles is not distasteful, but an antidote to the suffocating human consciousness: "The return to the green chaos, the deep forest and refuge of the unconscious is a nightly phenomenon, and one that psychiatrists-and torturers-tell us is essential to the human mind. Without it, it disintegrates and goes mad" (*The Tree* 76).

The paradigms of ironic and embryonic situation of the self in Chapter I, with its manipulating and enticing conditions, echoes imprisonment and the freedom that is elusive, biologically and sociologically. It represents the dehumanizing impulse of the self, against which men of morality must rebel. The self here, instead of being illuminated, is hidden; shrouded by those irrational and an uncontainable force that drives the primal

credentials of man. In writing *The Collector*, Fowles laid his finger on an issue which is very susceptible in recent criticism. As Bruce Woodcock comments, "...male instinct against woman and its relation to male sexuality...the book invites almost a voyeuristic interest for the reader" (Woodcock 27). Clegg is the ultimate negative representation of Sartre's principle: "...man is to himself his own nothingness" (Sartre 45).

The very term evolution is ambiguous for Fowles, inspite of the technological and educational advancement. The forces that propel evolution also contain a negative undercurrent, which hinders genuine social awakening of the self. Materialistic advancement should try to precede spiritual awakening. *The Aristos* sustains this view: "It is not by accident that the discovery of self is not encouraged by the state... and the discovery of the self is also often the discovery of what the state really is" (*The Aristos* 152). The austere future which Fowles prophecies for the self in *The Collector* is for the privileged, threatened by multitude of the coarse and the vicious. This genetic divergence in the self is something, where the healthy products are in an embattled condition. Hence the ambiguity in the self. As the author himself admits:

And it seems madness that man himself should continue blindly to propagate this vicious virus in our world instead of trying to limit it. This was the deeper message in *The Collector*...Whatever it may be it is not, I think you will agree. (*The Aristos* vii)

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### Chapter III - *I Write Therefore I Am*

#### **Non-Fiction:**

*The Aristos*

“I Write Therefore I am”

“On Being English, But Not British”

The emphasis on the depiction of the ensnared self in *The Collector*, takes a deviation prior to Fowles's publication of his next novel, *The Magus*. Absorbing himself into the possible questions which had beleaguered him on the backlog of religion, superstition, inequality and mysticism, he took a hiatus from fiction writing for a time, trying to establish imperatives in his next endeavor, *The Aristos - A Self Portrait in Ideas*. His

philosophy in this book becomes a reflection of his creative works, and a keen reader of *The Aristos* will find it a valuable support to comprehend his fiction.

This chapter also includes two of Fowles's essays written in the same time as *The Aristos*: "I Write Therefore I Am," and "On Being English, But Not British." These essays are the elaborations of his philosophy laid down in *The Aristos*. Extremely personal and interlaced with strong opinions, they replicate Fowles's notions of enriching the self, with views on the artist and human nature as the prominent ends.

*The Aristos* published in 1964, is a collection of aphorisms Fowles had started writing as an undergraduate in Oxford. Here he lays down the foundation of the premises and thoughts of his later fiction, and the importance he attaches to his individual philosophy. *The Aristos* was the second work published after the success of *The Collector*, and advisors were serious to promote his image and popularity, and contemplated that a book like *The Aristos*, could impair his career as a novelist. They argued that : "How could a man with such ideas emerge and prosper as a literary entity in an England preoccupied for more than three decades with the revolt of the labouring masses...?" (Baker 167). Reading this out as a common-place book, some were astonished and perchance annoyed to "encounter a mind that does not seem to belong to a more congenial popular novelist..." (Baker 167).

These qualms were confounded because, although *The Aristos* was not extensively read, it gave Fowles more magnitude, casting aside the fears of the critics. He wrote a revised edition in 1968, and a preface for its re-issue in 1980. The key projection in *The Aristos*, is his apprehension in the preservation of liberty of the self. As he comments, "My chief

concern in *The Aristos* is to preserve the freedom of the individual against all those pressures-to-conform that threatens our century...” (*The Aristos* vii). The original impetus for this non-fictional endeavor, came from the essentials of Heraclitus, a pre-Socratic philosopher, who lived in Ephesus, Asia Minor, 500 B.C. It is said that Heraclitus came from a ruling family, but declined to rule. Not believing in the curriculum of schools, he educated himself. He preferred playing with children and “wandering about the mountains, listening to the glossy platitudes of his eminent contemporaries” (*The Aristos* 187). Although the philosophies of Heraclitus is available only in obscure fragments, Fowles considers him to be the “grandfather of modern totalitarianism”(Ibid ix).

The title itself indicates that the self can arrive at the aristos through alteration and recognition, by accepting each other’s freedom, responsibility and humanizing them. The title also reveals the author’s wish to foster the development of a nucleus of like-minded individuals, who will be the elite of a new category, “enlightened, responsible, moral, yet at all times detached, not only from the mass of humanity, but even from their fellow *aristoi*” (Loveday 140). In the light of such a situation under the principles of existential reality, Fowles hints that the self should try to achieve and arrive at the aristos. The idea of biological disparity is repulsive to a humanist, which Fowles foresees as a extra-terrestrial discrepancy and turmoil.

The Preface of *The Aristos*, elaborates the division of mankind by Heraclitus, “the intellectual elite, or the “*aristoi*...and an unthinking, conforming mass-the *hoi polloi*...”

(*The Aristos* ix). The Preface also elaborates on the nucleus of *The Collector*, the dichotomy between the Few and the Many, that had plagued Fowles, as it discriminated between the talented and the ungifted, the intelligent and the unintelligent. The dividing line drawn between the Few and the Many, runs through each individual, not between groups. This is a suggestion that there exists an interrelated view of this social conflict, precisely in the externalization of “cerebral conflicts” (Fawcner 32). Fowles in the Preface, comments: “One cannot deny that Heraclites has been used by reactionaries; but it seems to me that his basic contention is biologically irrefutable” (*The Aristos* ix). This statement is pertinent in the understanding of his fiction, because it holds the key “to a three fold structure (old man, hero and heroine) which in one transformation or another recurs in every one of his full-length fiction”(Loveday 3). In this regard, the wise old men in Fowles’s fiction are Conchis in *The Magus*, Dr. Grogan in *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*, Breasley in *The Ebony Tower* and Professor Kirnberger in *Daniel Martin*, who represent Fowles’s the Few, or the *aristoi*. Around them are the intermediates who are between the *aristoi* and the *hoi polloi*: Clegg, Nicholas, Charles, David and Daniel, who undergo tribulations and soul-searching ordeals to find their inner selves. The object of their symbolic quest are the Fowlesean women: Miranda, Alison, Sarah, Diana and Jane. This pursuit of the basic theme of his fiction, is to a large extent, the pursuit of the self.

*The Aristos* is structured in the form of numbered notes, termed as aphorisms or maxims, which to its author is a technique to “suppress all rhetoric, all persuasion through style” (*The Aristos* 3). It is divided into eleven headings, sub-divided into rubrics or sub-headings, enhancing the importance of the headlines. *The Universal Situation* is the

introductory heading, having seventy-six aphorisms. The rubrics under this heading are: The Wreck and the Raft, The Necessity of Hazard, The Godgame, Finitude and Infinity, God, The Contingency of Matter, Mystery and Atheism. *Human Dissatisfactions*, the second heading, has seventy-four maxims. The rubrics here are: Death, Having only This, The Myth of a Soul, Isolation, Anxieties, Hazard, and Envy are elaborated in this heading. The third heading, Fowles calls *The Nemo*, consists of forty-six maxims. The Political Nemo and The Necessity of the Nemo, being the rubrics here. *Relativity of Recompense*, the fourth heading comprise of twenty-five aphorisms. Happiness and Envy, are the rubrics here. *Doing the Good* is the fifth heading consisting of sixty aphorisms. The sub-divisions are Gratuitous Acts, The Purpose of Relative Freedom, Inability to Enact Good, Counter-supporting, Good Equals Evil, Why so Little Good. The sixth headline titled, *The Tensional Nature of Human Reality*, has eighty-four aphorisms. The Counterpoles of 'I', Tension, The Mechanism of Tension, The Manipulations of the Tensions, Transposition, International Tension, and The Ultimate Tension, are the rubrics here.

*Other philosophies*, the seventh heading has Christianity, Lamaism, Humanism, Socialism, Fascism and Existentialism as the rubrics, bearing seventy-nine aphorisms. *The Obsession with Money*, the eighth heading, has with sixty-seven aphorisms. Wealth and Poverty, The Monetization of Pleasure, The Automation Vacuum, The Duties of Leisure, and Death by Numbers are included as the sub-divisions. *A New Education*, the ninth heading, is elaborate with hundred and fifty aphorisms. A Universal Language, The Three Further Aims of Education, Nationalism, Art and Science, Games, Culpability, Adulthood, Adam and Eve, Sexual Freedom, The Inward Education, The Importance of

the Now, Inward Knowledge and The Synoptive Education comprise the rubrics here. *The Importance of Art*, the tenth heading has ninety-five maxims. Time and Art, The Artist and His Art, Art and Society, Artists and Non-Artists, The Genius and the Craftsman, The Style is not the Man, Poetry and Humanity, are the rubrics. The concluding heading, *The Aristos in the Individual*, contains twelve aphorisms.

The opening heading, *The Universal Situation*, heightens Fowles's viewpoint on the essence of existence. The first pronouncement of this heading questions what had basically preoccupied Fowles: "Where are we? What is this situation? Has it a master?" (*The Aristos* 5). In the rubric, The Wreck and the Raft, Fowles parallels humanity, floating on a raft, where seven men inhabit ; the cynic, the self-centered, the idealist, the onlooker, the altruist, the stoic and finally the child, the one with the perfect ignorance. The self is a seeker in this mysterious raft who faces God, the face behind the mysterious mask of "being and not being" (Ibid 7). Laying emphasis on the necessity of hazard in life, he articulates in the rubric, The Necessity of Hazard that, "All our pleasures are dependent on it..." (Ibid 90). A foremost aspect of his later fiction, hazard is conspicuous as a feature in the quest of maturity of the self. In an essay, written later in 1995, "The Nature of Nature," Fowles finds that the self requires hazard as a counterpoint to develop subsistence with audacity, "Our human freedom lies in allowing or admitting that this hazard is like rain in our lives" (WH 427).

In the rubric Godgame, Fowles remarks: "Imagine yourself a god, and lay down the laws of a universe. You then find yourself in the Divine Predicament: good governors must govern all equally, and all fairly" (*The Aristos* 9). On God he says, "God is a

situation. Not a power, or a being, or an influence”(Ibid 12). Books and views of literary critics have tried to establish Fowles as an atheist. The contradiction has been levelled against him that he does not have any established deity or a religious figure. On this issue, he clarifies his stand: “Such fairy-tale figures are for children...I do respect and sometimes admire many religious images...but I am by trade an inventor of fiction, almost a professional liar”(WH 412). In an interview to Diana Vipond, Fowles firmly reiterates his concept: “I know by reason that there cannot be a God...” (WH 10). His two basic notions on God, finds a similar analogue to Camus’s conception of God. To Camus, “Metaphysical upheaval is the movement by which man protests against his circumstances...and its alleged Creator” (Camus 23). Camus’s description is similar to Fowles’s notions on atheism. Camus maintains that the act of rebellion seems like a demand for clarity and unity. As Camus elaborates:

The slave protests against the condition in which he finds himself within his state of slavery: the metaphysical rebel protests against the condition in which he finds himself as a man. The rebel slave affirms that there is something in him that will not tolerate the manner in which his master treats him: the metaphysical rebel declares that he is frustrated by the universe. (Camus 23)

Fowles’s negative response to God, Christianity, and scientific notions, support his radical views on existentialism, aiming to pave the way for nothingness and ultimately for the self to be free. On the constituent of Mystery, a vital rubric under the present heading, Fowles says: “Mystery, or unknowing, is energy. As soon as a mystery is explained, it ceases to be a source of energy” (*The Aristos* 17). Fowles quotes Erigena, otherwise known as Johannes Scotus (815-877 B.C.), a philosopher and theologian, who

had said that the question of God's existence is in itself a mystery. If God could define himself, He would be finite: "What is created is his knowledge, what is potential is his mystery" (*The Aristos* 17). Fowles seems like the actual magus, more than Conchis of *The Magus*, leading his apprentices to self-discovery, amidst the mystery of the universe and God.

In the second heading, *Human Dissatisfaction*, Fowles views dissatisfaction as, "...essential to our happiness since they provide the oil from which it grows" (*The Aristos* 19). In the rubric Death, he says: "We hate death for two reasons. It ends life prematurely; and we do not know what lies beyond it"(Ibid 19). The purpose of death to him, is to put anxiety in life. In the rubric, The Myth of a Soul, Fowles believes that human life "is the price we pay for death, not the reverse. The worse our life, the more we pay; the better, the cheaper" (Ibid 27). On his notion on Anxiety, Fowles considers that, "Anxiety is the name we give to an unpleasant effect on us" (*The Aristos* 29). Death, responsibility, otherness, ambition, social position, money, time, work health are the causes of anxiety. The concept of otherness to Fowles is something different from the potentiality of creativity. An alien self sometimes creates an estrangement within his or her own consciousness. This echoes in *Mantissa*, Fowles's sixth fiction. As Fawkner comments on this issue, "The resultant difference is amnesia, expressing and denying itself in *Mantissa* as the entropy of discourse: the incestuous marriage of totalitarian narrator and blank page" (Fawkner 33). There is a considerable amount of "external estrangement" (Neary 32), in the Fowlesean novels, yet this is "essentially an externalization of an internal alienation" (Ibid 32), that the self senses. As Fowles says: "I

am made constantly aware of the otherness of things. They are all in some sense my counterpoles. A Sartrean existentialist would say that they hedge me in, they tyrannize, they encroach on my selfhood” (*The Aristos* 69). Yet in Fowles, this otherness can be very different from the prospectives of ingenuity.

On the complications of adversaries in human life, the rubric Hazard, defines its necessity. Hazard or peril is a necessary facet in life for evolving: “The purpose of hazard is to force us, and the rest of matter, to evolve. It is only by evolving that we, in a process that is evolving, can continue to survive”(Ibid 31). In the rubric Envy, Fowles discusses this human impulse, “that is optimistically given to positive consequences” (Salami 256). Deploying envy as a kind of honest competition, he contradicts that sometimes it is in the reverse. We envy others in order to become equal to them, and because of this we justify the means: “Humanity is this envy, this desire on the one side to hold, this desire on the other to take” (*The Aristos* 44). Envy to Fowles is also that great force to make the self more human, a situation allowing responsibility.

A major premise described in the third heading, is a complicated system in individuals, which Fowles calls the “*Nemo*” (*The Aristos* 35). He defines it as the fourth element in the human psyche. It is a “state of being nobody-nobodiness” (Ibid 35). The complicated system of social inequality in Western society, made him formulate this anti-ego disorder. The *nemo* symptom appears as the result of the wide gap between the Few and the Many and grows in strict relation to the senses and knowledge of universal and individual disparity. This psychologically complex attitude is the perception of the self’s own

reasonableness, ineffectiveness and ephemerality, “of his viral nothingness” (Ibid 47). The *nemo* symptom is connected to the capitalist consumer society and their desire for extreme materialism, “We are part of a chain. We are nemo-tyrannized...” (Ibid 50). Fowles states the assassination of President Kennedy by Lee Harvey Oswald as an example of the dissidents fighting against the *nemo*. Oswald had killed Kennedy because he had been dictated, “...to kill his real enemy: his *nemo*... What drove him to kill was the poisonous injustice of both his particular society and the whole process” (*The Aristos* 50).

The history of President Kennedy’s assassination is indeed filled with twists, because of the criminalization of the C.I.A, who acting in the directions of the state ideology did not sanction the social reforms that Kennedy had lived and died for. To Fowles however, like the passion of envy, the *nemo* appears essential to the self, both as an inert horror of his state and the vigorous basis of the power needed to medicate it . As a evolutionary force of the self, the *nemo* is as vital as the ego. Preferring it to the ego, Fowles considerably honours its “uncertainty, plurality, unknowability and openness, unlike the ego, which is knowable, definite, and determined” (Salami 257). In a question by Diana Vipond on this concept, Fowles upholds that the human self is wedged between being a social entity and an individual: “I think the nemo, the sense that you are nobody, can drive all of us to violence and unreason. Through all human history it has been the hidden motive-to prove oneself somebody”(WH 444). In the rubric The Political Nemo, under the present heading, Fowles feels that, “We have no political power at all” (*The Aristos* 41). In the second rubric, The Necessity of the *Nemo*, he analyzes the *nemo* as a necessary

evolutionary force, as imperative as the human ego, “The ego is certainty, what I am; the nemo is potentiality, what I am not”(Ibid 44).

Conditions in individuals vary, between the better world inhabited, and the worse situation one faces. But to Fowles, there is a mysterious balance, where equality reigns, which he terms in the next heading, The Relativity of Recompense. He defines this as something, “which allows, at any stage of evolution, any sentient creature to find under normal conditions the same comparative pleasure in existing as all other sentient creatures of its own or any other age” (*The Aristos* 46). As animals lack what humans have, man is thus the only creation who can understand and find remedial measures. Happiness and Envy, the rubrics of this heading view happiness to be necessary to “prolong life just as it is...a chief obstacle to progress” (Ibid 49); and envy “a chief source of it...a kind of intention to survive...” (Ibid 49). Paradoxically, the nature of happiness, to Fowles is ultimately to create an “unequal world” (Ibid 48). Envy creates manipulation of the Many, which is vital to reconstruct the relativity of recompense, to “isolate the virtues of both happiness and envy”(Ibid 52).

*Doing the Good*, the succeeding heading, introduces the Bet Situation. To Fowles it is the problem, impenetrable for the self as, “we cannot and never shall solve, but about which we ought to come to some conclusion” (*The Aristos* 53). Fowles introduces this situation from the *pensees* of Pascal, “You must bet. You have no choice. You are in the game ” (Ibid 193). The free choice of a being, ordinary situations, games like chess with set rules and movements and paradoxical situations lead to this condition. The rubric, Inability to

Enact Good, considers the failure to do good, which arises from pessimistic beliefs, conflict of intentions, refusal to act at particular times, and the “mechanism of countersupporting may prevent” (*The Aristos* 58). To Fowles the opposition of the self “to counterpole will” (Ibid 58), is described in the rubric, Countersupporting. Violence, games, veiled toleration, and hypocrisy are all the factors of countersupporting. In the rubric Good Equals Evil, Fowles argues that both evil and good on expiry are metamorphosed. All actions, good or evil, “interweave so exquisitely as time passes that finally their relative goodness or badness completely disappears” (Ibid 61).

In the heading *The Tensional Nature of Human Reality*, Fowles projects the self to be aware of the relationship of tension in our world of opposite negations. A reader of Fowlesean fiction knows that the state of the self, if it undergoes crisis, becomes more composite. In this regard the cruel cause of this state in the self, is tension:

Tension is the effect on the individual of conflicting feelings, ideas, desires and events. Sometimes the tug-of-war will be one-sided...Each of us, and each society, and each world... is the centre of a web of such tensions. (*The Aristos* 71-72)

The weak-minded, unable to endure the demands of the tension, will seek to refute this environment for inflicting a permanent structure of arrangements on things. The intellectuals will oppose this temptation, but accept the principles of vitality in themselves and in creation. In the sub-division Counterpoles of ‘I,’ Fowles believes that an individual is a tissue of counterpoles. The body stands as a counterpole in relation with thoughts: “All parts of my body are objects external to me: my hands, my tongue, my digestive mechanism... My body and my thoughts and my words are like the garden and

the rooms and the furniture of my house” (*The Aristos* 69). In the rubric Tension, a person to Fowles, can never achieve a state of an ideal equilibrium. Tension is unavoidable as, “Each of us, and each society, and each world, is the centre of a web of such tensions” (Ibid 72). The institution of marriage is the best analogy of existing as, “It is the most familiar polar situation, with the most familiar tension...” (*The Aristos* 77). Fowles suggests marriage as the perfect model, the effective transposition, and the abolition of tensions in the rubric, The Manipulation of Tension. To him, “Marriage is the best general analogy of existing...an important biological explanation”(Ibid 77). Countries and blocs also live in relationships like marriage. Hence it is relevant to talk on “international tension and nuclear annihilation” (Ibid 82). The ultimate power of tension is proportionate to mystery. Like flashes of lightning on a dark night “it reveals the way ahead” (Ibid 83).

The next heading, *Other Philosophies*, exposes Fowles’s views on religions, societal and political leanings. Lashing his tirade against Christianity, he challenges the clergy, who have enslaved Jesus Christ:

Worst of all, the churches have jealously caged Jesus. What right have they to say that he cannot be approached except through them? Must I believe in the Olympians and practice ancient Greek religious rituals before I can approach Socrates? (*The Aristos* 89)

The divinity of Jesus, to Fowles do not depend in the essence of his teachings, but that he was a devout human being. The incredible aspects connected with his life, if taken to be absurd, do not diminish Jesus. It enhances him instead. Fowles categorically states: “I

reject Christianity, along with the other great religions...though I admire the founder” (Ibid 92). In spite of his atheistic viewpoints, he is mystical. His consideration of the absence of a supreme being provides a deficiency, “that allows individual human beings not only to be free but to experience freedom’s potentiality”(Neary 61). The rebellious protagonists of Fowles can be mentioned in this regard. Nicholas Urfe in *The Magus*, and Charles Smithson in *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*, attempt for transparency and harmony in their quests. But the most befitting example of such a Fowlesian entity is Frederick Clegg of *The Collector*. Clegg does not possess the cadre of a hero; he is the consequence of hazard. Miranda is the novel’s rebellious slave and Clegg, her repressive master. Besides being a victim of the tussle between the *aristoi* and the *hoi polloi*, Clegg demands “clarity and unity” (Neary 12), by abducting Miranda.

The concept of *Lamaism*, a rubric under the present heading is, “the withdrawal into self-preoccupation or self-enjoyment” (*The Aristos* 94), a perennial philosophy to Fowles. Like *Zen Buddhism*, *Lamaism* insists on the enjoyment of objects as objects. Elaborating more on the concept, Fowles believes:

To the extent that we have to nourish the self in order to remain healthy psychologically it is important as the food we eat. But clearly it will flourish most when the self, or individual, feels most defeated and most in danger. (Ibid 94)

The *lama* to Fowles, allows his desire to be free in society. He does not see the prison walls, and is even apprehensive about God. His contention is that: “Living, I must learn not to be, or to be as if I was not; individual, I must lose all individuality”(Ibid 93). But under the present conditions of evolutionary war, *Lamaism* to Fowles is unsustainable. In

the rubric Humanism, a humanist is elaborated by Fowles as an individual, who observes good in his adversaries, “because he cannot accept that they are freely evil, and he sees good in their philosophies” (*The Aristos* 95). He cites the Renaissance, the scientific age of the Greeks, to be the greatest humanistic eras. In the rubric Fascism on the other hand, Fowles perceives it as the rule of the “powerful and intelligent to gain control of the state so that the Many may be organized and controlled”(Ibid 101). A political philosophy, fascism breaks the individual, yet curbs the freedom of the self.

The central issue of *The Aristos*, is the concept of Fowles’s views on socialism, elaborated in the rubric, Socialism. This concept revolves around the inequitable relation between the Few and the Many, enhancing his own version of democratic socialism. He takes the opportunity to attack the selfishness of the affluent society of the Western capitalists and their indifference to the poverty and starvation-ridden world. This leads to the isolation, which is socially constructed: “The great problem at the heart of socialism is this: in order to bring social justice to the many, the leaders of socialism were obliged to give him power”(The Aristos 98). Suggesting that his protagonist in *The Collector*, Frederick Clegg can be seen as a product of his time, shaped by the reality of the consumer and capitalistic society, Fowles explains that the society in which Clegg lived was, “the result of a bad education, a mean environment, being orphaned: all factors over which he had no control” (*The Aristos* x). The core of Fowles’s socialism is the guidance of the Many by the Few: “They need to be led, not to be leaders” (Ibid 98). The solution to the entire problem of social inequality lies in education, which is vital to institute socialist values. A revamping of the present commercialized system of education is

essential, which otherwise pioneer schemes which focus their goal towards money. For him one should aim for a “synoptic education that would allow the student to grasp or at least glimpse, the complex whole of human existence”(The Aristos 126).

In *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, Jean-Francios Lyotard, deals with the way in which the educational institutions have transformed themselves into techno scientific systems and then legitimized them, both as means of profitability, dominating as technological private “information banks”(Lyotard 3). The query that Lyotard raises is why these institutions legitimize the race for power and money. He maintains that knowledge itself “is and will be produced in order to be sold, it is and will be consumed in order to be valorized in a new production: in both cases, the goal is exchange” (Ibid 4). Fowles’s views on knowledge does not explicitly state if education should be controlled or not by the state ideology, but *The Aristos* represents a form of challenge to these institutionalized discourses. His main question is the way educative processes in the present era tries to uplift science and devaluating the arts. To Jameson, “they are “cannibalizing” (Jameson 65) the humanities.

The level of political power, which Fowles upholds in *The Aristos*, has relations with Gramsci’s notion of hegemony. Antonio Gramsci, a Marxist intellectual was sentenced to imprisonment on the remote island of Ustica, off the Sicilian coast for five years. He upholds that hegemony is exercised by the state through its dominant group of intellectuals who constitute the “functions of social hegemony and political government ” (Gramsci 11). He argues that these issues are supported and concretized by the “spontaneous consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction

imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group”(Ibid 12). Gramsci’s political writings include themes on politics, working class intellectuals and the role of education in modern society, very much like John Fowles’s philosophies. Indeed Gramsci is considered today as an influential voice in adult education. During his imprisonment, he wrote the *Prison Notebooks*. Gramsci argued that the “function of organizing social hegemony and state domination certainly gives rise to a particular division of labour and therefore to a whole hierarchy of qualifications”(Gramsci 11-12). This is similar to Fowles’s philosophy, where he locates the Few at the top of such kind of hierarchy, because they have the necessary qualifications, or the power of knowledge. But he wishes that, “the great problem at the heart of socialism is in the order to bring social justice to the many”(The Aristos 98).

Fowles however, takes a liberal stand as he directs his wrath on the materialistic societies. He opposes the conservative philosophies which hinder the growth of the self for preserving the status quo as, “The welfare state as at present envisaged annihilates factors that evolution values highly: hazard and mystery”(The Aristos 99). This perception focuses on the question: “Is the possessor who is always the possessed?”(Ibid 109), which finds an opening in most of his fiction, like *The Collector*, *The French Lieutenant’s Woman* and *Daniel Martin*. In this case, if people were to opt between an unfair free society and a fair unfree one, they will always select the first alternative, as freedom magnetizes the self. Ultimately the genuine hope for the self to Fowles, lies in the parliamentary socialism, where to a positive extent, the voice of an individual will be heard, but with little effect, as in most cases control will reign in the government.

Existentialism, a vital rubric under the present heading, shows the promoting feature of Fowlesian fiction and non-fiction crusaded by Fowles as the: "...revolt of the individual against all those systems of thought, theories of psychology, and social and political pressures that attempt to rob him of his individuality"(The Aristos 102). Existentialism can be used as a weapon to combat the *nemo* symptom and the ego in modern man. The principle is "inherently hostile to all organizations of society and belief that does not permit the individual to choose"(Ibid 103). Believing and advocating the essentials of existentialism, he comments that it is in fact a way of utilizing other philosophies. It is a conjecture of relativity among theories of the absolute truth. In his foreword to H. W. Fawcner's *The Timescapes of John Fowles*, Fowles comments:

I have been called an existentialist, but I am essentially a pagan. Like every other being I am here to enjoy life, and to help others enjoy it now...I cannot see anything evil in the chance to escape, if only briefly, from a real world as foolish, unjust, and imperfect as ours. ( Fawcner 13)

In an interview to James Campbell, Fowles had remarked that one has to throw off the shackles of convention to discover one's true identity. His creative works carry this tone: "this is the sort of existential thesis of my books..." (Campbell 465). Abhorring the idea of the biological inequality, and foreseeing the social complications in this regard, the reflections of a larger cosmic imbalance is the abiding truth that Fowles mentions, is the flux, or change, which is the ultimate reality. The weak will be unable to tolerate these pressures, but the intelligent will "resist this temptation and accept the principle of vitality in themselves and in the creation" (Baker 169). The disparities and prejudices

which pervade the world, cannot be remedied: “What Heraclites only guesses at-the instability of living forms, the law of evolutionary change-science has only recently revealed and proven” (Baker 169). The true existentialists in the history of philosophy, are those who have detached themselves from the illusions of their time, and who have endured the realities of the Heraclitean world.

Under the heading, *The Obsession with Money*, it is lamentable to Fowles that this passion is having a failing upshot on other activities. Money is potential; the rich had formerly considered that riches would take them to heaven, but “now heaven has moved to the here and now”(Ibid 106). The dictionary describes money as “a medium of exchange. I call it the human answer to the inhuman hazard that dominates existence” (Ibid 107). The rubric Wealth and Poverty, views money as the cause of contention between the rich and the poor. Money is potential, but an access to hazard: “We are given intelligence and freedom to counteract and control the effects of the hazard that underlies all existence” (Ibid 108).

The Monetization of Pleasure, a sub-division of the present heading, elaborates Fowles’s condemnation of the capitalistic principles of his country in the 1960’s. People live in times surrounded by pleasures they cannot afford. To him, the aim of commerce should be to “market every pleasure possible and to sell it to many as possible” (*The Aristos* 110). The latest factor which is aggravating in society, is the invention of cybernetics, discussed in the rubric, The Automation Vacuum. This controls machines, leading to more unemployment and work routine. In the sub-division The Duties of Leisure,

Fowles sees relaxation imperative as work, but things will never come to be in a good state, if true leisure is not possessed equally: “The rich societies must give away not only their surplus money, but their surplus leisure and their surplus capacity to educate” (*The Aristos* 114). In this regard, Fowles considers good economy to be planned and re-orienting the protocols of education. This was initially pointed out by Bernard Shaw in *Major Barbara*, where the protagonist Andrew Undershaft, insists that quality education of the masses is the first concrete step towards good economy. The concept of education, to Fowles is the most noteworthy quality for the enhancement of the self, to arrive at the aristos. In the heading, *A New Education*, he elaborates the four main objectives of education. They are the training of the pupil to aim for the economic development in society, enlightening the temperaments of society, experience the richness of existence, and the establishment of relativity. The best of European universities like Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard, Yale, Californian Universities, the Sorbonne and the Ecole are institutions, where a student can achieve the aims cited. The more equality the self strives for, the more education he wants. The concept of a widespread education requires a language that must be taught in a “universal second tongue”(Ibid 122), highlighted in the rubric, *A Universal Language*.

*The Aristos* not only introduces the unsatisfying dichotomy between the Few and the Many, but also interpersonal dualisms. Fowles faces the scientist’s reductions rather antagonistically in support of the artist, “A goods scientist cuts the umbilical cord between his private personality, his emotions, his self...” (*The Aristos* 130). He abhors the fact that science can destroy the rich artistic creativity within the self and is careful to

uphold that, “Being an artist is first discovering the self and then stating the self in self-chosen terms”(Ibid 133) as discussed in the rubric, Art and Science. To Fowles, Art express the expressions of truths that are too complex for Science to comprehend. Thus in any education, the concepts of sciences and arts must hold equal status. Great Arts consists of: “the galaxies of thoughts, facts, memories, emotions, events, experiences, to ten lines in *Macbeth*, six bars in Bach, to a square foot of canvas in Rembrandt” (Ibid 130). Science is not degenerated, but cuts man’s “umbilical cord between his private personality, his emotions, his self”(Ibid 130).

Play or amusement, to Fowles is vital to the experiences of the self in deeper ways. In the sub-division Games, he feels that their values can be symbolic attachment, like winning or loosing, “Sport is an opportunity for personal pleasure, a situation where beauty may arise”(The *Aristos* 136). The key function of great human activities like art, science, philosophy and religion is to bring the consciousness in the self nearer to comprehend the ultimate truth. The rubric Culpability, laments on the rising of misdeeds in society. Existentialism upholds that “if I commit an evil, then I must live with it for the rest of my life...Nothing, no remorse, no punishment, can efface it” (Ibid 140). To Fowles, crime at times is invaluable, as it promotes the freedom of will. By doing away with strict penal laws, a criminal should be given a chance of “never coming back through the prison gates...”(Ibid 140). Supported by economic and psychological instances, it will be his “convalescence” (Ibid 140) to metamorphose the criminal urge in him.

Whether the fiction set in the previous centuries or the present, Fowles is intrigued by the inexplicable sway women have over men. The implications of Fowles's concept on male and female is basically moral, and far from political. For him then, the female "tend to appear in his romances as tutors, muses, sirens, nannies and gnostic trustees of mysteriousness of existence"(Conradi 91). His experiences in Bedford High School and in the Royal Marines gave him an initiation into the realities of male experience in a heightened manner. These incidents left in him a deep abhorrence and a critical awareness of male masculinity, giving him an excess to various contradictions. In his fiction, he tries to probe this myth:

His writings and comments on masculinity in general display the difficulties he has in stepping out of his male viewpoint. Even when he analyses male power most directly, he does so in ways which perpetuate some of masculinity's tenacious myths. (Woodcock 12)

*The Aristos* presents the shadows of these contradictions and attempts to lay bare this key ambiguity. Fowles's notion on masculinity is that it is a layer, while gender is an imposed coating of social conditioning. The rubric titled Adam and Eve under the present heading, argues that "the male and female are the two most powerful biological principles; and their smooth interaction in society is one of the chief signs of social health"(*The Aristos* 142). The modern world shows a considerable sickness in this respect, as the general political liberation of women, arises from the despotic supremacy of male power. He marks the male as Adam, defined as the "hatred of change and futile nostalgia for the innocence" (*The Aristos* 142), and the female as Eve, who symbolize the assumptions of

human responsibility, “ the need for progress and also the need to control progress”(Ibid 142). On this principle he comments:

Adam is stasis, or conservatism; Eve is kinesis, or progress. Adam societies are ones in which the man and the father, male gods, exact strict obedience... Eve societies are those in which the woman and the mother, female gods, encourage innovation and experiment, and fresh definitions, aims, modes of feeling. (Ibid 157)

From the “brew of myths and genes”(Benton 18), Fowles launches the criticism of male power. He quotes in *The Aristos*: “Women know more about human nature, more about mystery, and more about keeping passion alive than men do”(The Aristos 90). Masculinity to Fowles is that “appalling crust” (Benton 19), that filters everything men hear and see.

In her book *The Second Sex*, Simone De Beauvoir claims that the life forms of the male takes the female for granted. A man discovers a woman in discovering his own sex, “even if she is present neither in flesh and blood nor in imagery; and inversely it is in so far as she incarnates sexuality that woman is redoubtable”(De Beauvoir 161). It may be true that men fear sexuality at times, limiting the feminist notions of equity. In the human perception, it is certainly not the anti-feminist propaganda, but reaching for truth and wisdom in this field. Michael Foucault maintains:

For a long time they tried to pin women to their sex. For centuries they were told: ‘you are nothing but your sex.’...And towards the 18<sup>th</sup> century, this ancient movement ran wild, ending in the pathologization of woman. (Foucault 115)

In the rubric Sexual Freedom, Fowles maintains that the controversies related to this forbidden field, is the apotheosis of sexual relationships. Attraction and the sexual act are “in themselves innocent, neither intrinsically moral not immoral” (*The Aristos* 135). An important aspect Fowles stresses in the rubric, The Importance of the Now, is the relevance of the “now”( *The Aristos* 152), a steady leitmotif of his fiction. The fleeting apprehension and the rich sensation of its beingness, captivates Fowles like a “fugitive, as some particle in atomic physics: the more you would capture, the less likely you will” (*WH* 423). Fowles defines “nowness” (*The Aristos* 152) as the “ infinite process is made finite in each thing; each thing is a cross section of eternity”(Ibid 152). To Fowles, it was D.H. Lawrence, who had come closest in the century to feel it: “I did share it...as a candle to his sun. It is why I became a natural historian; it is why I became a writer ... ” (Ibid 423).

The rubric, The Inward Knowledge, enhances the necessity of inner tutoring of man in society. Prior to this, it is essential that he should be necessary to himself. To Fowles: “He is not educated until his self has been analysed and he understands the common psychological mechanisms. At present we teach the persona, not the real self”(Ibid 151). Hence the approach to psychology is vital for this. However it is also imperative that before this, the biological hypothesis of dominance should be advanced, which originated from the apes. It must be realized that this “common organizational behaviour”(Ibid 154) of dominance, will continue to thrive if the demarcation of cerebral terrain is not constrained. Hence the inward educational systems of psychologists, Jung’s teachings in particular, will bring about “more self-understanding, tolerance and a greater equality of

existence to our world”(Ibid 156). The pre-eminent concern on the self raised by Fowles, can be undermined by the queries he raises. These interrogations are the similar inward tussles, where the Fowlesean protagonists struggle to recognize their genuine selves:

Who am I? In what ways am I similar to and in what different from most other human beings? What are my duties to myself? What are my duties towards others? What do I mean by love? What do I mean by guilt? What do I mean by justice? What is science to me? What is arts to me? (*The Aristos* 157)

Perhaps as an answer to his own questions, Fowles in the last rubric of this heading, A Synoptic Education, accepts that mortality is finally the precision. All that man can do is to exist in the present, and do what is potential. Real life diminishes every minute: “If death is absolute, life is absolute; life is sacred; kindness to other life is essential; today is more than tomorrow; noon conquers night. To do is now, living; death is never able to do”(Ibid 158).

In the heading, *The Art and the Artist*, the penultimate caption, Fowles rejects an aestheticism that views the vocation of art as a self-sufficient component, “the truths of which are internal truths, the coherence of which is a merely internal coherence” (Fawkner 40). The rubric titled Time and Art, discusses the timelessness of the artifacts and a human’s eagerness to conquer the vital aspect of time:

Time, the length of survival of an artifact ,becomes a factor in its beauty...The older the artifact the nearer it is to the timeless, the newer the artifact the further away...An aged artifact is both what could not be created today and what still exists today. (*The Aristos* 161)

To Fowles, a modern novelist's preoccupation with time in art is not a matter of technical experimentation for its own sake, but should be the reconstruction of a private past and the quest for a glimpse for a unified world:

This nightingale sings to me as it sang to my grandfather, and his grandfather; and to Homer's grandfather; it is the same nightingale... It is now and it is ever.

Through the voice I hear ...and Keats heard...this passing night I enter reality two ways; and at the centre meet my richer self. (Ibid 163)

Lamenting on the role of the artist in present circumstances, Fowles feels that style has become the main bone of contention, rather than representation in art, giving birth to new methods and approaches. When certain truths are concealed, pure knowledge is suppressed and censorship imposed. Art cannot flourish in such societies. A carpenter, cannot be accomplished without his hammer and nails. In this perspective, it can be argued that to both Plato and Aristotle, mimesis is the relationship in art between reality and representational art. Aristotle conveys the optimistic notion of mimesis, whereas Plato, on the other hand, conveys its negative notion: "Therefore for Plato, mimesis, which is the art of making likeness of the objects that nature offers for observation, only threatens the purity of the perennial essences" (Serena 160). Fowles unequivocally admits that neither science nor arts create the reality, which is a vast connection and incoherence. But in some degree he tends to uphold art as a reality, as an interpretation in the collective reality that pervade our lives. He maintains that at present the art is "dangerously distancing ourselves both from apparent incoherencies of cosmic reality as well as from man-made social realities"(Beijibing 18).

In the rubric, *The Artist and his Art*, he believes that art makes man a triumphant, that is inexpressible and the accomplishment of inner-feeling, which is the “rise of the importance of self” (*The Aristos* 166). Rejecting the various ways of schematizing art, Fowles comments that if Shakespeare had been a scientist, he would have begun Hamlet’s dilemma as, “Hamlet’s famous soliloquy with some applicable statement, such as ‘the situation in which I find myself is one where I must carefully examine the arguments for and against suicide...’”(Ibid 180). The sub-division *Artists and Non-Artists*, upholds that the initial function of art is not to cure the faults and paucities of society, but to “provide salt for the ordinary...to occupy the central position in human existence” (Ibid 172). In the rubric *Poetry and Humanity*, the languages of other arts are upheld. Music as the language of the senses and painting of the visual. Poetry as an art, cannot be dismissed as, “poetry condenses, selects, distorts and emphasizes in order to present its view of reality”(Ibid 182).

In the final heading, *The Aristos in the Individual*, Fowles indicates the characteristics of the self, who after acceptance, sacrifice and change of the philosophy highlighted, will be able to arrive at the aristos. A reader of Fowles will apparently find that the accomplices of his fiction, are the projections in the psychodrama of the growth towards selfhood, in compliance with the principles of *The Aristos*. In this stage, the self will be able to undermine the difference between the Few and the Many, where he or she will avoid membership, organization, country and class. By enacting goodness and intelligence, he will be able:

To accept one's limited freedom, to accept one's isolation, to accept this responsibility, to learn one's particular powers, and then with them to humanize the whole: that is the best for this situation. (*The Aristos* 186)

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### **“I Write Therefore I am”**

In the introductory essay of this section, “I Write Therefore I am,” Fowles states that he had never really wanted to be a novelist. Poetry had fascinated him, and he had passionately aimed to be a poet, “I’ve always wanted to write (in this order) poems, philosophy, and only then novels” (WH 5). He backs the Marxist –Leninist concept that writing is the second weapon to bring about a community upheaval. A novelist writes only the fictitious, not the real. On his part, the individual concern on societal connotations made him a creative writer:

My first ambition has always been to alter the society I live in...Society, existing among other humans, challenges me, so I have to choose my weapon. I choose writing; but the thing that comes first is that I am challenged. (WH 5)

Hazards had enveloped him in this decision because novel writing in the sixties was not an uncomplicated task. The choice to be a writer seemed an existentialist alternative. This dilemma sustain in the lives of his male protagonists, who vacillate in their careers. Nicholas Urfe in *The Magus*, Charles Smithson in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, and Daniel in *Daniel Martin*, find themselves in this tightrope. Not convinced if the choice was right, he comments, “I so often doubted whether it was the right one” (WH 6). But

writing gave him the required proportion of his choice, “I always have to write something everyday. A day when I write nothing is a desert” (Ibid 6). The inspiration of the classical Muse like the sixth sense, is vital for the writer’s self. But it is lamentable that currently, the modern “positivists and behaviourists” (WH 7), do not entertain such notions. Fowles calls this the “unhealthy obsession” (Ibid 7) of the mega-European writers, which did not deter his mission. This argument is elaborated in his sixth work of fiction, *Mantissa*.

The growing obsession of people towards the cinema had created hurdles: “In other words, to write a novel in 1964 is to be neurotically aware of trespassing, especially on the domain of the cinema”(Ibid 7). The essay then depicts the conditions which had led him to write *The Collector*. Its commencement is an unnerving incident which he diverges in “I Write Therefore I Am.” On a jury duty in May 1961, a psychologically flawed person was brought to trial in the Old Bailey. The man had thrown into the fire the baby of his eldest daughter, incestuously begotten. A father of five, “he stood fumbling and weeping in the dock... he had no money, no relations, nothing except his heavy dirty-nailed hands and his tears” (Ibid 9-10). The incident convinced Fowles that the judiciary might be superior, but there was no justice. In 1964, he had commented in an interview: “I’m against the glamorization of the Many. I think the common man is the curse of civilization, not its crowning glory. And he needs education, not adulation” (Newquist 218-19).

A keen admirer of the French existentialists, Fowles was enthralled by their scrutiny on authenticity and personal freedom.. Believing in the concept that “great cultures reflected each other”(WH 10), it was necessary to know France and the French mind, and “to rediscover one’s Englishness”(Ibid 10). Not wanting to be branded as an English writer, he intends to be a European one: “...what I call a mega-European, Europe plus America plus Russia plus whatever else the culture is essentially European”(Ibid 11).

Expanding more on his own views of the writer’s self, Fowles feels that every novelist finds himself initially in the “Atlas situation, carrying the world on one’s shoulders” (WH 11). On himself, he feels that, “What I took for is the poise, the concord, the exact agreement between the strength of the Atlas and the weight of his of her world”(Ibid 11). The power of imagination, plays a vital aspect in creative-writing. Documentary approach to fiction, is a “fundamental heresy. A novel is one person’s view of life, not a collage of documentations”(Ibid 11). Keeping himself away from literary criticism and critics, he voices his personal opinion on critics and reviewers. The critics and reviewers to him are like:

Frogs and oxen. The frogs are the magazine and newspaper men, the agency men, the publishers, who rather pathetically try to equate knowing writers with actually creating something; the oxen are the writers, who are castrated by their own self-interest. (WH 6)

Strongly shunning the conventional image of the serious modern novelist, he takes exception to the mode of writing of the post war American novelists. They write better than the British, in dialogue and technical details. But to him, the whole process smell of

“artificial frozen-food, cleverly mixed”(WH 8). What interests him is the “dramatic psychosexual implications of isolating extreme situations” (Ibid 8). Being a feminist, he acknowledges himself in the essay that he enjoys the company of women, and likes working in female environments.

Fowles considers the British novel, to be only a variation of the conventional picaresque novel, and this trend arose on account of the novelists themselves, as they refused to take novel writing seriously. He does not approve of the inarticulate protagonist in fiction, which frequently appear in British fictional works: “I’m sick to death of the inarticulate hero. To hell with the inarticulate” (WH 9). He states his own mission as a novelist: “I feel I have three main politico-social obligations. First to be an atheist. Second, not to belong to any political party. Third, not to belong to any bloc, organization, group, clique or school” (Ibid 10).

It is not the writer’s commitment to style that should be adhered to be a great mega-European writer. Avoiding this, does not mean losing the writer’s self: “The loss of identity occurs in the sacrifice of everything to the fear of loss of identity” (WH 12). The first English writer to Fowles who accepted this dictum, was Daniel Defoe. The reviewers that he cannot tolerate are “the ones who give the impression that all novel writing is more or less reprehensible and exhibition of infantilism”(Ibid 12). Such practices are unheard of in the world of music and arts. The essay winds up with his comment that writing is active, not passive, and that writing makes reading active too. Writers in his opinion should not attempt to destroy whatever authenticity they try to

establish. As he acknowledges: “ They have no choice about freedom; they have to be free. And that is what isolates them, still even when all the other barriers between them and the Many, the Profane Mob, are down” (WH 13).

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### **“On Being English, But Not British”**

The essence of this essay is the haunting question which sets hurdles in Fowles’s own self of what nationality he stands for, English or British. He is English in hereditary status, as his grandparents were, but to be British was in retrospect is a “slogan word” (WH 91). He places himself as an Englishman, elaborating the metaphor of Robin Hood. The practice of hiding in the woods is quintessentially the English behaviour, equivalent of hiding one’s feelings from others. It is the classic English reserve that others cannot penetrate. By British behaviour, Fowles means imperialism, the flag waving and empire building, which he detests. Looking from his point of view, he insists “our Englishness is still battling our Britishness. The same ambivalence has for long been apparent in our literature” (WH 95). The imperial Britain of The Hanovers, Edwards, of Kipling and Rupert Brooke as he highlights, defends the concept of the “Imperialization-on Which The Sun Never Sets”(Ibid 95). This is precisely what obscures the “Green England”(Ibid 95) of his dreams. The concept of Green England to Fowles is the survival of the English mind, from primitive archetypal concepts. The myth of Robin Hood fits into this concept

Fowles introduces the mythical concept of Robin Hood as an apt illustration of the lost greenness in Britain. A ballad figure, Robin is the legend known to every Englishman since fourteenth century England:

What Robin Hood was or who he was, in the dim underwoods of history, is unimportant. It is what folk history has made him that matters. He is the man who always, when faced with either taking to the forest or accepting injustice runs for the trees. (WH 96)

Robin Hood ceases to be his own self, as soon he comes out of the trees either as an acquiescer or as a conqueror, like Fidel Castro. History supports the evidence that Britain's political view of its unchangeable status, was of "jingoism at home and arrogance abroad" (WH 95). Its political designs have obscured "green England" (Ibid 95). Britain's imperialistic devices through the ages, have made the citizen observers rather than experiencers. But Fowles argues that the capitalistic designs of England are thankfully changeable and remediable: "It contains its own self-correcting dialectic, its own formidable antithesis, such as freedom of speech and all those safeguards of the individual" (Ibid 92). In flashes of despair, Fowles reveals his kinship with the brotherhood of English exiles. It is in the English brotherhood, not in the British that he prefers, since it steadily opposes the conceits of the establishment and the rigidity of its laws. As Baker stresses more on this point: "But the simplicities of the legend, a charming metaphor only, do not really describe the more complex realities of the modern situation and the responsibilities of the English *aristoi*" (Baker 173).

The disillusionments of the nineteenth century, have forced humanists to recognize that at times, no steady progress have been initiated in England. This awareness ultimately saw the fruitless charades of British history in the limitations of the self. The moral evolution of the self, from which social change starts, should be fostered to Fowles, in a state of tolerance and freedom in the realities of national life. With a scathing attack on the random disappearance of wild nature, consistently in England since the sixteenth century, Fowles ponders if this luring from nature will make the English transform into a shell of hypocrisy:

Long hostile foreigners such as the French and the Scots will detect another source of our hypocrisy in this habitual disappearance into the metaphorical greenwoods, this retreat behind the mask of our ability to stimulate agreement when we disagree, to smile when we hate, to say the exactly opposite of what we secretly mean. (*WH* 97)

Fowles highlights this attitude as the core of Englishness, the withdrawal game which does not present one's authentic state and feelings. The humour, melancholia, bitterness, sentimentality, frankness and sexuality, he feels, are summed up in the "most revealingly English of all documents, Shakespeare's sonnets" (*WH* 100). The true English self under these circumstances, is in the arts and entertainments. In arts, caricaturists like Blake, Nashe and Bacon are commendable; in literature it is Clare, Jefferies and Hardy; metaphors are found in Fielding, Smollet, Jane Austen, the Brontes, Lawrence and Forster. In philosophy it is "our empiricism, our impatience with metaphysics, our taste for logical positivism" (*Ibid* 101). These to Fowles should be the ancestry of the self in the English soil.

In spite of all the negativism, the concept of nature in the minds of the Englishmen are a constant preoccupation. To Fowles, the stepping back from the perception of greenness in mentality as well as in the landscape, are co-related. The steadfast decline of nature plays havoc in the English mind, “The Green England is green literally, in our landscapes ... This is the greenness at the heart of our growth” (WH 102). The self in this regard, perceives through law, justice and its appliance. As he writes in the beginning of the essay, this abundance of the heart, is the legitimate self:

In all personal situations, that are important to me, I am English, not British, and ‘Britain’ now seems in retrospect a slogan word that was useful when we had a historical duty to be a powerful military nation. (Ibid 91)

As Fowles points out in this essay, there is something in the basic mechanism of the English, which allows him to be the “most self-critical people in the world, and the most self-conscious and one of the most tolerant” (Ibid 91).

This chapter comes to an understanding that the emphasis on the role of the self in the conceptual boundaries, logical certitudes and rationalizations of Fowles’s philosophy in *The Aristos*, is to accomplish the ultimate. Fowles persists in *The Aristos*, that the self can thrive in a world, if he or she seeks to determine the best course of action, by accepting and sacrificing the modifications, and by keeping free from the fascination of pretensions. The arguments in *The Aristos*, prompts the self to rise from obscure knowledge through the senses, to the clearer knowledge of the intelligible realm through reason. Only the ideal self, who exists in higher levels of awareness, will reach the undeniable intellectual

insight. The efforts of arriving at a better world, will be the struggle of the self against the institutions and system makers.

This chapter also concludes that the Heraclitean world is one based on the principle of proportion or agreement which creates a harmonious unity out of potentially hostile powers. It is a world in which man's character is his fate, and a world where the self, whether fictional or actual, is free to act naturally. It will be futile if the conflict between the biological Few and the Many is directed through expensive education for positive and definite aims. It is only then, that a reconciliation can be arrived at between the Few and the Many, the privileged and the un-privileged, the us and them, for the self to thrive. The freedom which Fowles strives for in *The Aristos* is the highest human good, the source of human civilization, highlighting the concept he had mentioned in the Preface of the book: "...to preserve the freedom of the individual" (Ibid vii). The belief in the concept that everything is relative, not absolute, accepting the necessity of suffering and contentment, adjusting in the crossroads of conflicting limits and the necessity of suffering is the "best of the situation" (Ibid 186), for the self.

The essays "I Write Therefore I Am," and "On Being English, But Not British," are the kindlings of the ideologies in *The Aristos*. Laying bare the philosophical aspects, "I Write Therefore I Am," reveal a writer's self at work, from autobiographical concepts to literary criticism. The self in a writer, should not have illusions on the choice of freedom to write, but "they have to be free" (*The Aristos* 13). The striving of the self for the spiritual renewal in nature, the wild tranquility, a leitmotif of Fowlesian fiction and non-fiction, is the core of "On Being English, But Not British." The essay reveals an

unconventional English mind, and yet at the same time trans-atlantic, sometimes even universal in outlook, criticizing the perversity of Britain in her imperial designs. Urging the self to see matters poetically rather than sentimentally, the essay intimidates to cross the threshold of the material boundaries of imperialism and come close to a reflection, by reaching the essence the greenness of one's heart: "We are condemned to be green; and in all ways green" ( WH 103).

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## Chapter IV - *New Possibilities*

### **Fiction:**

*The Magus*

### **Non-Fiction:**

“The Lost Domain of Alain Fournier”

“Behind the Magus”

“Greece”

With the publication of *The Magus* in 1965, Fowles's literary powers scaled heights in the organization of narrative, creation of ambiance, more matured and intricate than his unveiling fiction, *The Collector*. In *The Magus*, a novel conceived and attempted before *The Collector*, but published later, Fowles does not formulate his leading character as ill-bred and ill-informed, but focusses on a public-school alumni, and an Oxford returned graduate. Written in the first person, *The Magus* is a story of Nicholas Urfe, a self-centred womanizer, who starts to live with Alison Kelly, a young Australian. Despite knowing of his duplicity, she falls in love with him. Nicholas fails to see the nature of their liaison, and plans to get away from London, which was dreary to him. He takes up a job as a schoolteacher in the Greek island of Phraxos. It is here that the dislocated hero comes in contact with a weird elderly gentleman, Maurice Conchis, the magus of the title. The novel progresses with the enigmatic Conchis, drawing Nicholas more and more into and against a world of impossible odds, and made to explore his inner self to reach authenticity. Nicholas is confused, taunted, baited and made to distrust his own feelings and thoughts.

*The Magus* projects Nicholas and Maurice Conchis narrating as first person narrators. Conchis's accounts are largely concerned with four stories. Like *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, an omniscient narrator intervenes briefly in the last chapter of the novel to guide the baffled Nicholas and the flabbergasted reader out of the maze. There are various accounts by Lily, whom Nicholas encounters in Bourani, Conchis's estate, and who also duplicates as Julie, as a part of Conchis's godgame. The descriptions given by her sister Rose, the elucidations given by Conchis's wife Lily de-Seitas, the version given by

Mitford, the teacher in Phraxos, Jojo, the woman Nicholas meets on his return to London, are also parts of the narrative. There are descriptions in the text, which are not oral; they are the Foulkes pamphlet, the account given by Anton on the atrocities in Phraxos, the two pamphlets of Conchis of the 1920's and the faked letters and newspaper cuttings which are a part of the godgame on Nicholas.

The structure of *The Magus* can be compared with the allegory of the Tarot. An ancient system of knowledge of unknown origin, the Tarot derives its base from ancient Egyptians, and to some, from Atlantis. Yet it is also said to have originated in Islam. A basis of modern playing cards, the seventy-eight chapters of *The Magus* coincide with the exact number of cards in the Tarot. The quest for knowledge of re-discovering the self, undertaken by Nicholas, is comparable to the mission which the Fool undertakes in the Tarot myth. In the myth: "The Fool is the principal figure in the tarot, for he is the persona who must travel the circuit of cards through a calibrated progression out of ignorance and frivolity into enlightenment"(McDaniel 249-50). Nicholas's expedition replicates this "calculated progression in achieving whole sight" (Salami 82). The cards in the Tarot in which the Fool overcomes is a separate "riddle for him to solve before he can progress to the succeeding card and its own particular lesson" (Ibid 250). In some cases, the Tarot is evil, since it tries to undermine God. Each character in the Tarot, represents a symbol of something deeper and more profound than the pictographs. Each correspond to something within the psyche, whether mundane or profound.

Three literary influences have made *The Magus*, to be among the hundred best sellers in America. Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw*, Charles's Dickens's *Great*

*Expectations*, and Alain Fournier's *The Lost Domain*. *The Magus* is characterized by self-consciousness, intricacy, weirdness and illusory games. As Salami concedes: "The most striking feature of the novel's complexity is the sheer proliferation of texts: there are numerous stories that the reader is invited to scrutinize through the act of reading" (Salami 73).

As in *The Collector*, the opening of *The Magus* brings to our focus the central character, Nicholas Urfe, the second Fowlesian protagonist, in the incipit itself:

I was born in 1927, the only child of middle-class parents, both English and themselves born in the grotesquely elongated shadow, which they never rose sufficiently above history to leave, of that monstrous dwarf, Queen Victoria. I was sent to a public school, I wasted two years doing my national service, I went to Oxford; and there I began to discover I was not the person I wanted to be.  
(TM 3)

This is an unearthing situation, which is a personal development of the self. The narrative also highlights the bitterness and pent-up feelings, "middle-class, English, grotesquely-elongated, monstrous"(TM 3). The words wane in an accusing tone, though the narration does not project a regretful note. The novel unfurls in this paradoxical situation in the self. Nicholas "is a typical inauthentic man of the 1945-50 period" (Campbell 466). He is not as inhuman as his predecessor Frederick Clegg, but is a callous collector of damsels. Not chloroforming them, he tricks them with his "solitary heart"(TM 9), trying to carve out concepts of his own self. He rejects religious and social British attitudes, echoing Fowles's own rebellious ideas. His mutiny against these

principles is excused as, “The truth was that I was not a cynic by nature; only in revolt (Ibid 5). But he hurriedly concedes that, “I did absorb a small dose of one permanently useful thing, Oxford’s greatest gift to civilized life: Socratic honesty”(Ibid 5). His father, a brigadier, embodied the blind authoritarian regulations: “In lieu of an intellect he had accumulated an armoury of capitalized key-words like Discipline and Tradition and Responsibility”(Ibid 3). Hazard, the Fowlesean condition of “suffering freedom” (*The Aristos* 9) liberates Nicholas from his parents, when they are killed in a plane collision near Karachi in Pakistan. During his second year at Oxford, Nicholas begins his life, secluded and lonely, but is at peace, “After the first shock I felt an almost immediate sense of relief, of freedom” (TM 4).

Nicholas had spent his undergraduate years in Oxford, not only to perfect his acquaintance with existentialism, but also as a pastime, seducing women. A member of *Les Hommes Revolts*, a student club engrossed in the search of existentialism, made him devour the dissimilarity between genuine and inauthentic behaviour. After seducing women, he loses interest in them, and puts the “solitary heart”(TM 9) away, showing the “Chesterfieldian mask instead” (Ibid 22). In a retrospective mood, Nicholas could see how his previous understanding of existential theories were flawed: “We tried to imitate them, mistaking metaphorical descriptions of complex modes of feeling for straight prescriptions of behaviour” (Ibid 5). This perversion satisfied his own ends, giving him a peculiar sense of freedom. Donning this inauthentic mask, concealing his own identity, he explores his self.

The picture of Nicholas is hardly auspicious. His behaviour is the fulcrum of the analysis in this chapter. Analyzing his sexual conquests, it was like playing a game of his own design of “the solitary heart”(TM 9). He comments:

I didn't collect conquests, but by the time I left Oxford I was a dozen girls away from virginity. I found sexual success and the apparently ephemeral nature of love equally pleasing...I mistook the feeling of relief that dropping a girl always brought for a love for freedom. (Ibid 9)

On meeting Alison in due course, Nicholas becomes distressed at her growing attachment towards him. He finds their relationship to be uncanny, terming her as a kind of “human oxymoron”(TM 24), a “whore and a colonial”(Ibid 35). After toying with her affability, he deserts her, and leaves for Phraxos. The equation of sexuality with power is shown when Alison Kelly is described by Nicholas in a manner, bringing all his pretentiousness to the fore. To him, her voice is only very slightly Australian, yet not English “veered between harshness, faint nasal rancidity, and a strange salty directness”(Ibid 24). British imperialism is echoed here, as Australia being a Commonwealth country, is illustrated to be socially inferior to England. Alison's “waif-like”(Ibid 23), and “characteristic bruised look”(Ibid 23), made Nicholas hurt her continually. As their affair draw towards an end, he tells his associates ungallantly in London, that she was “cheaper than central heating”(Ibid 36). But he is aware that Alison did not reciprocate to his solitary heart, and had a “nose for emotional blackmail”(Ibid 350). It is a sign of inauthenticity in Nicholas's self, that he fails to see the unadulterated traits in Alison.

Nicholas is confused as Paul Morel had been, between Miriam Leviers and Clara Dawes in D. H. Lawrence's *Sons And Lovers*. He tries to locate his befuddled brain in something new, and gets employed in Phraxos, by the British Council. Thrilled in his new mission, Nicholas exhilarates: "But I was filled with excitement...I didn't know where I was going... I needed a new land, a new race, a new language...I needed a new mystery"(Ibid 7). Nicholas abandons Alison, escaping to Greece with all his affairs unquestioned. A deliberate and a well rehearsed letter, with a considerable amount of money, are handed over to her, indicating that she was no more than a prostitute. It is ironical to perceive that the same Nicholas, who hummed all the way to the Victoria Station, to celebrate his "emotional triumph" (*TM* 35), falls in love with Alison in Parnassus. The self in Nicholas tries to create a dividing line between an ideal and sexual love, and finding himself unable to come out of Alison's clutches, he deserts her.

In Poitiers, no magus appeared to help the confused John Fowles find his true alleyway, after his graduation in Oxford. The experiences and characters of Fowles's stay in Poitiers are embedded in the narrative layers of *The Magus*. Poitiers is one of the principal biographical inspirations of the novel:

The John Fowles of Spetsai, Greece, was a more mature, more secure young man...the John Fowles of Poitiers, France, sounds like Nicholas Urfe and shares with him the searing sense of isolation and the pain of exile, by geography, by language, and by temperament that makes Nicholas so vulnerable to Conchis's experiment. (Warburton 76)

On reaching the magical island of Phraxos in Greece, Nicholas tries to view himself as an existential poet. Writing profusely, he realizes that his poetry is nothing but banality: “The truth rushed down on me like a burying avalanche. I was not a poet” (Ibid 44). In *The Aristos*, Fowles had elaborated on the concept of the *nemo*, “The nemo is man’s own sense of futility”(The *Aristos* 35 ). This is what Nicholas feels that he belongs to “nobody-nobodiness”(Ibid 35). Taking a gun with him, he goes up the hills to kill himself, only to be called back by a romantic music: “From the hills, came the solitary voice of a girl...It sounded disembodied, of place, not person...it seemed intensely mysterious, welling out of a solitude and suffering that made mine trivial and absurd”(TM 47-48).

The reincarnation in Nicholas, is the outcome of this music, a desire to live again. Fowles here is interested in the manner the mystery of Greece dismantles idealism, as a metaphor. The haunting music exposes Nicholas’s attempted suicide as foolish. As Clegg had preferred a death like Romeo, Nicholas poses himself as Mercutio: “...more and more it crept through my mind...that I was trying to commit not a moral action, but a fundamental aesthetic one...It was a Mercutio death I was looking for, not a real one”(TM 48). *The Magus* permits its protagonist to be shaken from his reverie of over-romantic stagnation. Nicholas’s desire to die a Mercutio death, made him realize that his life was being watched by a beneficial God: “All this time I was being watched, that I was not alone, that I was putting on an act for the benefit of someone”(Ibid 48). His own atheistic concepts are dismantled here by destiny. He now considers himself “intensely false; in existential terms”(Ibid 48). This is a stepping stone in discovering his self. Moving about in the southern part of Phraxos, he feels his private domain being

intruded by someone. Noticing smoke coming out from a villa, he undergoes an uncanny experience. Discerning evidences of his suspicions, he finds two footfins; a towel, a poetry book with passages from Eliot, Auden, and Ezra Pound. A passage of T.S. Eliot's *Little Gidding* is marked for his edification:

We shall not cease from exploration  
And at the end of all our exploration  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time. (TM 55)

Maurice Conchis, the mysterious magus thus crosses the threshold, entering the life of Nicholas and Fowles's novel. Nicholas's encounter with Conchis guides him to be enveloped in a series of godgames, which mature the narcissistic self in him to an asserting individual. To Conradi:

The self imposed romantic incarceration prefixes the opposing liberating/imprisoning magical enclosure of Bourani, where Urfe will discover a world that educationally resists the self, yet enhances its sense of its uniqueness. (Conradi 45)

Conchis possesses those attributes, which make him a sound instructor and a brilliant storyteller. Having a way with drama and music, he applies them as a self-negating way. The reader categorically finds his character to be unintegrated as, "no theory about him coheres"(Conradi 48). He is but a revelation of Nicholas's other self. Conchis's philosophy is, "The most important questions in life can never be answered by anyone except oneself"(TM 136). The tantalizing way in which Nicholas is led by him to the

villa in a collection of signs, shows “his present absence as to his absent presence ” (Neary 132). So far Conchis seems to “suggest Godot” (Ibid 133). He tells the story of his life to Nicholas, which is “full of metaphysical innuendo reminiscent, of the mystagogy of *The Aristos*” (Conradi 46). He possesses a painting of “Modigliani” (TM 77), two of “Bonnards”(Ibid 82), an original “Playel harpsichord”(Ibid 79), and a fifteenth century painting of Fra-Angelico’s painting of *The Ammunitionation*. His library consists of biographies and autobiographies. Nicholas takes to week-ending at Bourani from his school, listening with rapt attention to Conchis’s life story, an amalgamation of adventurous wars and personal extremes, which he relates to the Jungian credentials of Europe. Myth and history also enter Conchis’s narrative. Lily the woman in Conchis’s life, is included in the narration, but as dead. A situation is created when Nicholas sees Conchis’s dead fiancée, which is afterwards comprehended that it was another woman duplicating as Lily.

*The Magus* so far, is filled with long monologues, in which Conchis tells stories about his life. Trapped in befriending him, Nicholas is compelled to listen to Conchis’s narratives, which are his main guides for self-identity. Conchis’s first story is about his desertion from the army during the First World War, which to him, was not cowardice, but a triumph of personal integrity: “This is how war corrupts us. It plays on our pride in our own free will”(TM 106), and to remain fighting in it would have been to betray his “real self”(Ibid 106). His childhood fiancée Lily had tried to persuade him to return to the front, but her conventional notions on bravery, duty and honour did not dissuade Conchis from ultimately deserting the army.

Conchis's maneuvers are also psychological tests for Nicholas to appreciate human relationships in addition to his attitude towards women. Nicholas is made to acknowledge, that people should be known as they are in themselves, and not as outward projections. A kind of logical positivism! The masques in *The Magus* enable him to see this view of human understanding, "First and last, the godgame builds upon relationships in a specially Jungian fashion"(Raper 68). The masque presented before Nicholas, represents an ancient ritual. It irritated him like an "obscure poem"(TM 173). The actors in it are disguised as mythic creatures: "From beyond the cottage, there was a beam of light; not very strong, as a hand-held torch might give...He was tall, well-cast to be Apollo...a running girl appeared...it was Lily...Apollo blew his horn..." (Ibid 163-4). But suddenly, it turns into a current experiment, when the participants remove their odd costumes and become normal persons, "All, these dislocations serve to obliterate Nicholas's faith in any substantive ground or center"(Neary 134).

Conchis's second story concerns a wealthy nobleman named de-Deukans. He was to Conchis, "...the most abnormal man I had ever met"(TM 161), and who had taken a keen interest in Conchis as a young man, and had a commendable role as his mentor. At this point, Nicholas is made to concede cautiously, that the role Conchis assumes is at times the role of a God. To Conchis the event in human lives are not controlled by Divine Providence, but by hazards. A question is put out to Nicholas: "Which are you drinking? The water or the wave?"(Ibid 169). This distinguishing factor is about water, which has been present in the earth since its inception, and the individual wave, formed by the wind. The layered question is to give Nicholas a hint why he is fascinated by Alison, and then Lily. Are their attractions to him on account of being nubile women, or

just objects of lust? This is Conchis's way of testing the most crucial aspect of Nicholas's self.

Conchis's narrative continues with the third story of Henrik Nygaard, a hermit he had encountered while doing his research on birds in the high Arctic. A strict Janesist, believing in "divine cruelty" (*TM* 265), Nygaard was trying to achieve a union with God. Hearing Nygaard's heart wrenching cry in the wilderness of Norway, made Conchis realize that the hermit had indeed been communicating with God for quite a long time: "He was not waiting to meet God. He was meeting God; and had been meeting Him probably for many years" (*Ibid* 271). Given to Conchis's lack of religious convictions, "...the Nygaard story is a statement not about seeking God, but about seeking oneself-a statement that is best understood in the Fowlesean interest in Jungian philosophy" (Acheson 24). Jung stresses that the endpoint of the process is alike to the discovery of God. He gives emphasis to the self in an individual as an "unknowable essence whose totality... since it transcends on powers of comprehension" (Jung 236). The moral imperative aspect of the Nygaard story had a deep influence on Nicholas. Jung elaborates on such exemplary religious experiences: "Yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.' The symbol 'Christ' as 'son of man' is an analogous psychic experience of a higher spiritual being who is invisibly born in the individual..." (Jung 52).

The longstanding inauthenticity of his self comes to the surface, when Nicholas realizes to value the individual more highly than the general. To view woman as sex objects is in itself an indication of inauthenticity. When Alison arrives in Greece for a brief period, he is faced with an unthinkable dilemma. His attraction to Lily, whose actual

name is Julie, made him deeply exhilarated to her superior charms. Alison to him was “half-baked culturally”(TM 207). But he meets her, and they spent the night in Parnassus with Nicholas realizing that water was more precious to him than the wave. For the initial time, Nicholas realizes his growing fondness for her vulnerability: “Young and ancient; innocent...The wave of affection and tenderness shock ideas” (TM 236). This is Nicholas’s initial step towards selfhood, though on a careful scrutiny, he is still erratic. He sees Alison as an individual in her own right. Resuming a relationship with Julie meant demeaning himself. But he continues the liaison, which highlights his immaturity to identify sound relationships. The information from her sister June, that Julie was once married to a homosexual, does not make any difference to Nicholas as he assigns himself the role of Prince Charming who will gratify her sexual desires. The function of Nicholas’s re-encounter with Alison, who is the “dross material of psychological confusion”(Jung 210) in *Phraxos*, exposes his illusions. He narrates to her about Lily with a conviction that she would comprehend and acknowledge it. But this infuriates Alison, who exposes the true self of Nicholas and his romantic fantasies:

I think you’re so blind you probably don’t even know you don’t love me. You don’t even know you’re a filthy selfish bastard who can’t, can’t like being impotent...because nothing can hurt you...You always have your next adventure...Your next bloody affair. (TM 245)

The last narrative of Conchis concerns an autobiographical account of himself, which runs parallel to Nicholas’s thoughtless preference of choosing Julie over Alison. As a mayor of a village run by the Nazis, Conchis once came under the command of a

sadistic officer, Wimmel. An unusual option was given to him to select between clubbing two confronting fighters to fatality with a rifle, the refusal of which would result in the capital punishment of thirty villagers. It was not that Conchis was indifferent to their fate, but to him, the implement of the self and its freedom, was more important than being dragged about like a rudderless ship: “For Conchis, to have clubbed the two men to death would have to deny who and what he is - a human being to whom that form of execution is an unconscionable act of barbarism”(Acheson 29).

The character that Lily enacts in the first part of *The Magus*, largely helps to restore the crippled self of Nicholas. Lily appears to him as a magical virgin, as Clegg had idealized Miranda in *The Collector*. When he first meets her, she exhibits herself as a young woman, who is trapped by Conchis. Creating an image of an utterly helpless woman, a victim of Conchis’s hypnosis, an actress held prisoner, a young woman raped at thirteen, plays upon Nicholas’s anima to come to her aid. It almost makes him forget Alison. But he fails to unravel Lily’s mystery. She is still to him, “the unmatched, the virgin temptress”(TM 436). She is presented first as an ethereal figure, then a romantically imprisoned schizophrenic, then as an actress who is a victim of Conchis’s corrupt theories, and alternately just as an instrument: “she shook my whole theory. She had a certain exhalation of surrender about her...that extinct Lawrentian woman of the past...the one great power of female dark mystery”(Ibid 214).

Lily adheres to Nicholas’s camp with the help of her sister Julie to be a part of Conchis’s godgame. A volley of trials and tribulations greet Nicholas, and the quest for the self, begins from this stage, like the Celtic knights in quest of The Holy Grail in the

Medieval Romances. Conchis appears like a Zen Master, shattering and setting fantasy after fantasy, and Nicholas finds himself in an endless maze where his mission seem to be addictively designed. Masques and meta-theatres are also presented before the baffled man. The emphasis of the godgames staged by Conchis, are crucial for what Conchis terms “disintoxication”(TM 529). Illusion as a factor of disintoxication, is the vital part of the fabric of *The Magus*, from the beginning to the end. In this context, Wolfgang Iser can be quoted: “...illusion means our own projects...which we produce...when we are entangled...we react to what we ourselves have produced, and it is this mode of reaction that, in fact, enables us to experience ...”(Iser 127-29).

But soon after Lily brings the sensual and tender sides of Nicholas together in the first erotic scene, Nicholas receives a clipping from a London newspaper announcing Alison’s suicide . Nicholas is jolted from his reverie on his relationship between Alison and Lily. In the interim, Conchis too informs him of Alison’s alleged suicide. Although Nicholas grieves for Alison, he is still drawn to Lily. In the exploration of human relationships, Yung had laid emphasis on recognizing things as they are in themselves. He maintains:

We transfer or project our own unconscious, needs and conflicts into objects, whether a woman, a landscape...properly understood, it is the element that transmutes the dross material of psychological confusion into the uncommon gold of self-knowledge. (Jung 210)

And it is here that the self in him takes a turn. Gradually his self-pity gets a stimulation and a strange new feeling of tenderness and love inflames in him, with his feelings

shifting from Lily to Alison. Her non-erotic value is increased in Nicholas's eyes and he feels for, "the permanently dead Alison"(Raper 73). This shifting of Nicholas's feelings from Lily to Alison, presumed dead, is a vital point in the projection of his self. Immediately after this comes the trial scene, where Lily is projected as the negative anima. She is the "actress prostitute"(TM 492); "a winged vampire"(Ibid 500); "an English witch" (Ibid 504); "an actress in a blue movie"(Ibid 522). Nicholas is mocked, humiliated and perhaps most important of all "disintoxicated"(Ibid 555) from his utopian dreams. Forced to face the facts that she never loved him, but had liaisons with Joe, a young black, his illusion collapses like a deck of cards.

The godgames staged for Nicholas, to discover his self through experience, conscious endeavor and discovery are layered like the Buddhist *mandalas*. *Mandala* is a Sanskrit word, meaning circle and are temporary structures, built of impermanent materials, abandoned after the ritual sacrifice, and deliberately destroyed. The center of the *mandala* is the essence, symbolically the heart of Buddha. The circle in a *mandala*, expresses totality of the psyche in all respects, including the relationship of man and his self, the ultimate wholeness: "In the Zen sect, the circle represents enlightenment. It symbolizes human perfection" (Jaffe 268). The circumference is the area of grasping for the essence. The godgames Nicholas encounters seem to be substantive and strategic, when he faces them, but Conchis's obliteration, orchestrated by himself creates a metaphor of nothingness, like the destroyed *mandalas*, after the rituals.

Fowles projects Nicholas's quest, through the testing of his capacities of patience. He is hardened recurrently by Lily, one before and the other after their sexual encounter.

These tribulations unmask Nicholas's pretensions and positions his inadequacies. Given a whip, he is offered either to whip Lily's bare back, or see her engage sexually with Joe before his eyes: "My eyes began to fill with tears of frustrated rage and humiliation ...the Lily, the cool, aloof self that I had first known..."(TM 418). This choice of Nicholas is parallel to Conchis's confrontation with the terrorists on one hand and the villagers on the other. Stripped morally, Nicholas at last realizes after devising elaborate analysis of the tests he had undergone, and finds abhorred truths: "My head began to swim, faces and objects...to recede from present reality; down a deep black mine of shock, rage, incomprehension and failing depths of impossible revenge"(Ibid 419).

The next five hundred lines of *The Magus*, takes Nicholas and the reader in the process of exploration and identification. The godgames which Conchis maneuver for Nicholas aims at a purpose. Their very strategy refashion Nicholas's life with the "dismantling of the former structures"(McDaniel 36) on which he had depended. Assuming a mastery over the powerlessness of the protagonist, Conchis leads him in such a way that Nicholas is trapped in his own promiscuity and comes to the realization that spurious standards are nothing to preserve the basis of love: "I had this, being obscurely victorious. Being free again, but in a new freedom, purged away"(TM 461). He chooses to accept the authority of the godgames and becomes enchanted with the mysterious masque staged before him. He likes the fiction, the riddles, the play-acting of the players. Enraptured with them he comments: "Something analogous happened in every department of my life"(Ibid 354).

Johan Huizinga, an anthropologist has stressed the importance of play and games in human culture. In his anthropological work, *Homo Lueden*, he remarks that, “in the absence of play spirit, civilization is impossible”(Huizinga 101). In the evolutionary struggle of human civilization, Fowles adheres to the principle of Huizinga as he explores to this aspect of playing and introducing tantalizing competition in his fiction, *The Magus* and *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. In *The Aristos* he claims that: “Games are far more important to us, in far deeper ways, we like to admit”(The Aristos 158). Inheriting the interest of riddles and games from his Greek mentor Heraclites, he employs this imagery in his fiction for plot and characterization. In *The Magus* the godgame, where Nicholas is led to into a game series, is free from the frivolous:

The zone of play is caught, like limbo, between the hell of ‘reality’ subject to instincts and the paradise of the sacred, of the divine. The low and high realms of frivolous and sacred game-hunting bear unmistakable moral implications. (Ehrmann 31-57).

The teasing note of the trial scene, makes Nicholas apprehend for the initial time that he had a misguided self, and that he must separate himself from the godgame, as “...godgames and other game like activities...finally undermines to leave the protagonists alone, free of artifice and control, and staring into the face of life’s real competitions”(McDaniel 38). The trial scene in *The Magus*, formulates lucidity to Nicholas that Alison had joined Conchis’s troupe and her alleged suicide was a fake, a part of Conchis’s godgame. And secondly, that the real Conchis had died four years ago and Nicholas’s mentor in the novel is presented only as a kind of godgame. Returning to

London, he meets the real Lily-de-Seitas, Conchis's supposed childhood friend. Here he befriends two Londoners; Jo-Jo, a Glaswegian urchin, and Kemp, an ageing Bohemian. Treating Jojo as his sister and Kemp as his mother, makes Nicholas feel symbolically that for the first time he is attached to a human family.

To Carl Jung, the anima is that part of the self a man projects upon a woman, and the part of a woman projecting a man is the animus. In a man, the anima is the, "projection-making factor"(Jung 9), that governs and gives colour to relationships. Conchis and Lily-de Seitas thus devise for Nicholas the confrontation with Alison, Lily and June for psychic transformation of a healthy anima in him. As with Freud, Jung was also of the same view that a son may come to realize that, "not only the mother, but also of the daughter, the sister, the beloved, the heavenly goddess, and the earth spirit... wears the features of Aphrodite, Helen and Persephone, and Hecate"(Yung 20 )

The blatant egocentricity of Nicholas has a wider range of response to the fair sex, than he had ever had. Conchis strives hard to scrutinize that Nicholas keeps himself in the right track to develop the dimensions of a healthy anima. Nicholas suffers chronically from Freud's vital theme. Active sexual instincts in him brutally dormant the affectionate. Nicholas's romances invoke patterns of "scrupulous avoidance of tender emotions"(Raper 63). Again to Freud, a man's sensuality must seek, "only objects evoking no reminder of the incestuous persons [mother or sister] forbidden to it"(Ibid 4:207). Freud sees this deficiency in a man due to the split ego, for which the mother is primarily focused. The mother is basically the first object of male yearning. A male child loves his mother in an affectionate way, but also for the first time, an erotic

fantasy is faced by him. But gradually, in the early stages of manhood, his incest barrier is overcome and he seeks a woman “well brought up-that is more mother-like-woman he will find to marry” (Freud 4:210-11). This is also accredited by Fowles in his essay, “Hardy and The Hag:”

What seemingly stamps itself indelibly on this kind of infant psyche is a pleasure in the fluid, polymorphic nature of the sensuous impressions, visual, tactile, auditory, and the rest, that he receives; and so profoundly that he cannot, even when the detail of this intensely auto-erotic experience has retreated into the unconscious, refrain from tampering with reality [...] . (WH 163)

*The Collector* and *The Magus* records the *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* schizophrenic attitude towards women. Nicholas supports this view in the beginning of the novel: “I had got away from what I hated, but I hadn’t found where I loved, and so I pretended there was nowhere to love”(TM 5). In *The Magus*, Fowles creates a major character, who defies understanding from a “single psychological perspective”(Raper 61). The self in Nicholas is less perverted than Clegg, but his case study in psychical exploration draws out interesting viewpoints. Looking back on his experiences before leaving for Greece, his approach to relationships, male and female was by manipulating his own ego. Nicholas’s avoidance of the tender feelings in Alison is marked with the “post-war, capricious and selfish young man in revolt” (Raper 64), which he attributes to be his “real self”(TM 16). If we try to analyze discovering the crucial existential self of Nicholas, to be precise we can see that he was unpromising from the commencement.

To Jiddu Krishnamurti, it is the experience and right thinking, that the choiceless self-awareness bring out the reality, which underlies destructive make-believes. This leads to the self for achieving tranquil wisdom, which lies dormant in the human consciousness. The uncovering of the self, through experience occurs from moment to moment, negating the hindrance to wisdom. Krishnamurti comments: "...experience is always strengthening the 'me.' The more you are entrenched in your experience, the more does the self get strengthened...Is it possible for the mind, for the self, not to project, not to desire, not to experience"(Krisnnamurti 64). Fowles models the psyche of Nicholas in the myth of objective knowledge and experiences. Living in the crossroads of occurrences, which are irreconcilable poles, the self has to undergo the strife and conflict.

Initially Nicholas had uttered a sentence that sums up the nature of his inert problem, "In our age it is not sex that raises its ugly head, but love"(TM 34). His modus operandi towards women was emotionally manipulated. His favourite is D. H. Lawrence who was, "the greatest human being of the century"(Ibid 11). He attributes his sexuality as "congenital promiscuity,"(Ibid 235) and his view on women is, "women is inferior to man in everything, but that one great power of female dark mystery and beauty; the brilliant, virile male and the dark, swooning female"(Ibid 214). He is the "1950 version of Clint Eastwood, what Fowles has described as the idiotic and James Bond" (Raper 17). To Alison Nicholas is nothing but a "snob, a prig, a two penny-half-penny Don Juan"(TM 34). If butterflies are a fancy for Clegg, females are to Nicholas. He seems to be like any other stereotyped male, but Fowles took pains to weave such a complicated story around him, in assembling a sound identification between ideal and sexual love,

between Madonnas and hostesses, and between Armetis from Aphrodite. Alison uncannily blends the two categories, and hence she is the focus of perplexity for Nicholas. He undergoes psychical impotence which can be explained in Freud's explanation: "... fully normal attitude in love must unite two currents of feeling, the tender, affectionate feelings and the sensuous feelings" (Freud 4:204).

In an interview to James Campbell, Fowles had commented, "that trial scene at the time was written as a send-up of psychology ... I put in every piece of psychological jargon I could find"(Campbell 458). The psychical development of Nicholas's self is seen, when he refuses to whip Lily. The report which is given by Lily, impersonating as Dr. Maxwell, "is couched in absurdly pseudo-Freudian terms"(Woodcock 50). Nicholas is hailed and congratulated in the report, to have properly responded to the trials and tests laid out by Conchis, but it indicated that his self still lacked the basic feature of social content:

The subject has preyed sexually and emotionally on a number of young women. His methods, according to Doctor Maxwell, is to stress and exhibit his loneliness and unhappiness-in short, to play the little boy in search of his lost mother. He thereby arouses repressed maternal instincts in his victims which he then proceeds to exploit with the semi-incestuous ruthlessness of this type.(TM 438)

The report also focuses on his attitude towards the female sex, in a most befitting analysis:

The motives for this attitude spring from an only partly resolved Oedipal complex. The subject shows characteristic symptoms of mingled fear and resentment of authority, especially male authority...an ambivalent attitude towards women, in which they are seen both as desired objects and as objects which have betrayed him, and therefore merit his revenge and counterbetrayal ...with certainty a troubled period of separation from the maternal breast [...]. (TM 438).

The psychical condition of Nicholas, at this juncture projects his self as a typical product of the post-war “crisis of masculinity”(Tolson 88-91). Tolson continues: “the alienation of middle-class men, being due less to direct exploitation and more to complex ideological contradictions, is psychological in character”(Ibid 100).

Returning to London, Nicholas becomes liberated from the godgame and Alison returns to him. He becomes prepared for her, than he had ever been: “I knew she was a mirror that did not lie...whose love was real”(TM 467). He sees the Lily-like aspects in her, and she becomes “mysterious, almost a new woman”(Ibid 650). Honest and steadfast, the real objects of love and tenderness. Nicholas becomes free to involve himself in effective relationships, and come to terms to respect people like Jojo and Kemp, inspite of their disrepute. Acknowledging his feelings for them, he candidly remarks on Jojo, “I felt for her exactly what I felt for Kemp; great affection, and not the least desire”(Ibid 562). He has come a long way from the Nicholas, who was like “a conjuror with his white rabbit”(Ibid 9) who had tricked damsels by producing the “solitary heart”(Ibid 9).

The masques in *The Magus*, like magic realism, enacted both by Lily and her sister Julie are only the projections of Nicholas's crippled anima. Magic realism is a term used by critics to describe an amalgamation of the fantastic with the sundry. Franz Roh, a German critic, used the expression to describe an innovative post-expressionistic trend that was emerging in literature. This particular art was indeed realistic, but possessed a strange dreamlike quality. In due course, these fantastical elements came to be regarded as an essential part of magic realism. One of the most commonly described novel of our times is Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years Of Solitude*. This novel shifts to the realms of the fantastic. Rushdie's *Midnight Children* and *Satanic Verses* are also the novels dealing in this premise. Richard Brautigan, John Fowles and Emma Tennant come under this banner. Magical illusions are applied by these writers to draw out the manifestation of innate desire in the self. *The Magus* shows a number of traits in magic realism. The hallucination of Nicholas in Conchis's hands as a part of the godgame, reflects this trend:

Only, beyond, this faintest sound of men, a lot of men, singing, I thought fishermen. But why should they be in the hills? Then shepherds-but shepherds are solitaires...It grew imperceptibly clearer, as if a gust of wind-but there was no wind, swelling, then fading away...It sank away to complete nothingness, silence.  
(TM 116)

Then again, Nicholas is made to witness a masque arranged by Conchis and his accomplices:

I had an impression of whiteness. Then from the cottage there was a beam of light. not very strong, as a hand held torchlight might give. With a shock I realized that it was a figure of an absolutely naked man. He raised the horn he was carrying and again came the call. (TM 163)

Shakespeare's *The Tempest* taken as a literary allusion in the context of *The Magus*, demonstrates the supernatural for an apt understanding. Prospero's employment of magic in *The Tempest* runs parallel with Conchis's application of the godgames in *The Magus*. In cooperation, the works apply magic for the sake of freedom. Conchis like Prospero, is shown by Fowles as a "beneficial trickster"(Salami 81). Though at times he appears to be evil to Nicholas, his beneficial fundamentals pave the way for Nicholas's freedom. In *The Magus* Conchis remarks, "Prospero will show you his domaine"(TM 83); to which Nicholas replies, "Prospero had a daughter"(Ibid 83). The argument continues with Conchis retorting, "Prospero had many things...and not all young and beautiful"(Ibid 83). The implication of Conchis's remark indicates to Nicholas that Prospero had utilized his magic for revenge motive in *The Tempest*. His white magic prevailed only to bring Miranda and Ferdinand to the point of marriage, but he had employed black magic that reflected his fury and anger against the usurper of his Dukedom of Milan, his own brother Antonio. Prospero's magic brought fury to the sea, and the destructive power of the tempest, which destroyed the ship where Antonio and his co conspirators Alonso and Sebastian were aboard. At a point, when Nicholas is baffled by the godgames, he remarks, "these echoes of Shakespearean situations"(Ibid 491).

Sartrean's existentialism drew organized thinkers during the Second World War: "Existentialism in the form, it might be said, was a doctrine of subjective absolutism made for a world operationally void (unlike art) of any preventing design"(Conradi 49). Nicholas, prior to his migration to Greece, had illusions of himself of being a poet and that cynicism was the best approach to one's self, as he says in the early part of the novel, "I was not the person I wanted to be"(TM 15), and again, "I needed a new land, a new race, a new language"(Ibid 19). From the initial stages, he had a potential to reconstruct a self and a identity of his own niche. And this reconstruction of his self begins at Bourani where Conchis introduces him to its domain the goal of the quest is foretold in Eliot's passage: "we shall not cease from exploration..."(Ibid 69). When Conchis had narrated his war encounter he had said: "There is no plan. All is hazard. And the only thing that will preserve us is ourselves"(Ibid 129). This is where Nicholas seems to reach to an applicable understanding of his self. When he faces the subversive courtroom in the showground, a violent rage arises in him. But knowing that he has the unconditional lack of restrictions, he restrains himself: "I know I had absolute freedom of choice"(Ibid 517).

The intellect of freedom, which Nicholas experiences can be explained in Sartrean terms: "The one who realizes in anguish his condition as being thrown into a responsibility...he is no longer anything but a freedom which perfectly reveals itself and whose being resides in this very revelation" (Sartre 556). In the concluding parts of the novel, Nicholas encounters Lily de Seitas, mother of Lily and Julie, in the British Museum, who tells him that the godgame was over, and he should understand his new found sovereignty. Nicholas's masculine identity, his newfound freedom is a balancing

of concord and dispute in preserving the self. She tells Nicholas, “my daughters were nothing but a personification of your own selfishness”(TM 529). The girls in a Jungian approach show Nicholas that, “they have dramatized the essence of relationships, the very projections that fill the gaps between objects and so connect people one to another” (Raper 73). He comments, “because the freedom that makes us at least partly responsible for what we are, is cruel”(TM 459). Still believing that Alison is playing with Conchis’s script in the godgame, he deliberately encounters her, full of belligerence. He indicts her of duplicity. But he is surprised to see a “mysterious, almost a new woman”(Ibid 565) in her. Alison leads him to a park, surrounded by houses, and taking an authoritarian role, but Nicholas takes her roughly by the arm and slaps her: “I hit her before she could speak...We stared wildly at each other for a moment...But she was slowly smiling...steadier, braver, far less implacable, without malice or arrogance”(Ibid 581).

The smile can be compared to the lancing look Sarah Woodruff gives Charles in *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*. A challenging look to the male syndrome! The slapping of Alison, is a gesture of an existentially liberated self in Nicholas. It instigates a new life, with a renewed confidence in his callousness. To Huffaker:

The slap may show her that he is no longer wearing a mask but honestly and beyond reason acting upon his anger, defying the godgame crew he supposes to be watching; the slap is also his way of choosing Alison, while leaving her free to choose.( Huffaker 67)

Her smile makes him realize that the masques have concluded, “There were no watching eyes...The theatre was empty. It was not a theatre”(TM 581). Nicholas saunter, leaving Alison, carrying with him the myths of power, and accepting his liberty, “Firmer than Orpheus, as firm as Alison herself”(Ibid 581). It is the lack of restrictions in the self as an oppressor. The novel concludes in a frozen atmosphere:

The autumn grass, the autumn sky. People. A blackbird, poor fool, singing out of season from the willows by the lake. A flight of gray pigeons over the houses. Fragments of freedom, an anagram made flesh. And somewhere the stinging smell of burning leaves. (Ibid 582)

The phrase “ fragments of freedom”(TM 582), reminds Nicholas that he should struggle in a substantially multifaceted world, with an intimation that situations may turn out to be enhanced for him and Alison in the future. But she is not permitted to invade his territory of freedom. Instead she is seen standing with, “the bowed head, the buried face”(Ibid 581). Nicholas celebrates *eleutheria*, devoid of God, exclusive of Conchis and *sans* John Fowles .

Accessing the self in *The Magus* is tedious as it is “particularly connected with the titular character, Conchis himself”(Loveday 40). Imbued with crescendo, his four intense and shattering narratives reach an upsurge in chapter fifty-three. This chapter indicates the theme of autonomy as a chapter epigraph:

The freedom to confront a primitive God...The freedom to disembowel peasant girls and castrate with wire-cutters...the annunciation and defence of ... freedom

[is] more important than common sense, self-preservation...than the lives of eighty hostages. (TM 434)

An imperative argument in this regard is the compensation of the theme of freedom, with the emotions of love, sympathy repentance and respect for others as a backdrop in the projection of the self: “Just as freedom in *the Magus* cannot be discussed without reference to Greece, so love cannot be properly understood without reference to the theme of women. It is of course a work which celebrates women and women’s influence”(Loveday 42). Alison and Lily de Seitas stand for the theme of love. The freedom of the self is not offered in *The Magus* in the precise sense of the term, but in the elemental form of love and responsibility within its content. Fowles elaborately gives this message by involving the many hassles and hurdles around Nicholas. Giving the novel an open ending, he suggests that this can make the reader exercise the freedom like the protagonist, to take this as a critical task.

Myths in a way, record the values of society, where an individual finds his sense of identity. The myths unite the antimonies of life, conscious and unconscious, historical and present. Myths refer to the quintessence of human experience, the meaning and significance of human life. The godgames of Conchis refer to numerous classical myths. In Oxford, Nicholas is first projected, inspite of his public school cum Oxford return, as a man lost in his own identity. “And then I began to discover, I was not the person I wanted to be”(Ibid 15). Freud is also of the opinion that: “Instincts are mythical, entities magnificent in their infiniteness...cannot for a moment disregard them, yet we are never sure we are seeing them clearly” (Freud 72). The statement frankly admits the mythic

base of his theories in psychoanalysis. The avowal is all the more remarkable because it suggests that in the very lack of definiteness, lies the value of myth. The myth of self-discovery, or The Oedipus myth of Freud is one of the base of modern psychoanalytical theory. Freud had written in a letter his "... effort to understand himself was harder than anything else"(Freud 73). *The Magus* itself is engaging, as an extraordinary quest for freedom of the self. To portray the facets of such masculinity in Nicholas, was perhaps the main task of the novelist, taking into background the Circe-like enchantment of Greece, the interweaving of the four narratives of Conchis culminating in the trial. A careful scrutiny projects that the psychical growth of Nicholas, in harmony with his achieving for existential authenticity of his self, is the sheer entertainment of the novel.

Nature contains, though often unnoticed, the fundamental ideas which express mankind's vision of itself and its place in the world. This is a trace, which has come to be considered in the transitional consciousness of man, in the agony of separation from the roots, and the conflict of values. Nature, a vital facet of Fowlesean fiction and non-fiction, makes its presence felt for the initial time in *The Magus*. To Fowles, nature's appeal is in the silence, "the positive role of the negative"(WH 442). The world to Fowles is trying to abolish and destroy living with dead knowledge. From the acrid metropolis of London, the appearance of the innate beauty of wild nature, intrudes into the frustrated sensibilities of Nicholas as he lands in Greece, nourishing the suffocating self in him: "Pale pumice-coloured islands, and beyond them the serene mountains...Serene, superb, majestic; I tried for adjectives less used...this sinister-fascinating , this Circe-like quality of Greece"(TM 36). In an autobiographical strain, the essays "Behind The Magus," and "Greece," elaborates the influence of nature in the

writing of *The Magus*. In a replicate manner, Fowles describes in his essay, “Behind The Magus,” the effect of nature on him, “a purity which demanded a similar purity and simplicity”(WH 72). The idyllic pastoral beauty of Greece, where the protagonist draws knowledgeable insights, to discover his self, as Fowles elaborates in *The Tree*: “We still have to learn; the inalienable otherness of each, human and non-human...”(*The Tree* 94). Woods are the places where perhaps where everything, seem confusing. It is possible that in being so, they allow the self to be seen more precisely.

The experience of Nicholas and the reader, through the interweaving of the psychical, fantastical, real and the illusionary journey of the self, is spellbinding. Ultimately Nicholas discovers “a world that educationally resists the self, yet enhances its sense of uniqueness”(Conradi 45).The aim of *The Magus*, is to rectify the self of Nicholas’s mis-conceptions of truth and reality, by transforming him from a feminine collector, to the realization of Alison’s sincere worth. His abandonment of womanizing, prefigures at the end of the novel, the achievement of whole sight. He also realizes that fiction and reality cannot be separated, which Conchis had discovered as a young man: “that great passive monster, reality, was no longer dead, easy to handle. It was a kind of a mysterious vigour, new forms, new possibilities”(TM 309).

### **Non-Fiction:**

**“The Lost Domain of Alain Fournier ”**

The essay is a recollection by Fowles on Fournier's masterpiece *The Lost Domain*, that it stands somewhere behind all his creative work. Alain Fournier's *The Lost Domain* (*Le Grand Meaulnes*), is one of those outstanding books, which to Fowles is complex to scrutinize. Since its publication in 1913, literary critics had poured cold and insensitive verdicts on it. They have found the novel to be "sentimental, even mawkish; unbalanced" (WH 247). Its morbidity did not appeal to them. However, the exact literary cult in the novel can be justified only if concentration centers on its fundamental premise, the concern of what is undergone in youth, "*The Lost Domain* is, then about the deepest agony and mystery of adolescence" (Ibid 247). This grounds the fact that, it cannot be restrained to criticism in literary terms single-handedly.

Apprehensive of the dilemmas in teenage years, Fowles comments that it is the time where the juvenile try to grasp the inconsistencies of the heart, which is idealistic, yet mutinous. Eileen Warburton records Fowles's own bewilderment on the melancholies of adolescence. He had fallen in love for the first time at the age of twelve, with a girl in Norfolk, on a family holiday. Back in Leigh-on-sea, he felt as he says, "...intolerable because it seemed at that age irrational and inexpressible, melancholy in my heart" (Warburton 33). The girl of Fowles's adolescent love, reincarnates as Nancy Reed in *Daniel Martin*. On growing older, rationality starts reigning, and the myths of adolescence are curbed. It is to Fowles the yearnings of the youthful self to "maintain a constant state of yearning" (WH 247). Confessing the effect of *Le Grand Meaulnes* on him in retrospect, Fowles feels its overwhelming experience was mesmerizing:

I remember feeling this myself when I first read it as a schoolboy, many years ago. It had been an experience of such strange force, touching so many secret places of my own nature...Later in life I wrote my own first novel, *The Magus*, very much under its influence. (Ibid 246)

The manner of how artists and critics seek, “Wisdom, maturity, and command” (WH 247), is a departure from the qualities of adulthood. Mutiny, violence, the “green and unripe romantic”(Ibid 248) notions of adolescence, are those qualities, the critics cannot endure. They try to eradicate what once upon a time “ashamedly were themselves, but must instead recoil in distaste”(Ibid 248). The upshot of Fournier’s novel was so profound to Fowles, that he read almost all of Fournier’s other works, and visited all the prime places connected with the author’s life. Not engrossed against the unfavourable criticisms of *The Lost Domain*, Fowles singles out in the essay, the writer and the theme of the book, which led to its fascination, “I am, in short, a besotted fan, and still feel closer to Fournier than to any other novelist” (Ibid 246-7).

To convince his arguments, Fournier’s life and *Le Grand Meaulnes*, are briefly specified in the essay. Born in 1886 in Sologne, France, of schoolteacher parents, Fournier had a vulnerable childhood. Physically and emotionally attached to the French landscapes, he turned out to be an “imaginative inland boy”(WH 248). Later, changing his mind over a maritime career, he prepared for a course in the University of Paris. A rebel against system in the academic circles, this passion later found vent in the character of Meaulnes, that he was to create: “What he wanted above all to express was his own nature and his burning obsession with recapturing his own childhood, his own past...”(Ibid 250). His

companionship with Jacques Reverie, his future brother-in-law, came under the influence of the French Symbolists, like Henri de-Regnier, who had a: "...fixed formula for writing"( Ibid 250). It was here that Fournier struck friendship with T.S. Eliot, who took private French lessons with him in Paris. Attempting to write free verse poems, Fournier's poem *A Travers Les etes* or *Through The Summer*, unmistakably echoed in the world of *The Lost Domain*.

In 1930, Fournier fell in love with Yvonne, "a parallel for which, one has almost to go back to Dante and Beatrice"(WH 250). Yvonne treated the love-smitten Fournier sympathetically, but confessed that there was no hope, and that they were "behaving like children"(Ibid 251). This gave Fournier enough experience to convey the vivid and bewitching innocence of one's perception to life and arrest the past. Yvonne was later married to a Captain, losing contact with Fournier. On his part, he too was not true to her, having numerous liaisons. But Fowles insists that his "calf-love was to haunt, torment, and dominate the rest of his life"(Ibid 251). Other women beside Yvonne stood as "candles in the sun, and the novel is a prolonged metaphor of both it, and its inherent impossibility"(Ibid 251). Due to this reason Fowles maintains that Meaulnes, Fournier's protagonist in *The Lost Domain*, could never discover the road to the lost province, and why he leaves his wife, and why Yvonne dies in the novel. In 1910, Fournier started feeling those passions which gave him the will to write the novel, *Le Grand Meaulnes*. He felt that: "My task is tell my own stories, only my own, with my own memories, to write nothing but poetic autobiography; to create a world..." (WH 252). Giving childhood lavish adorations, created between dream and reality, Fournier felt that,

“Childhood is my creed in both art and literature; and to render it and its mysterious depths without childishness”(Ibid 252). Writing *Le Grand Meaulnes*, Fournier had expressed his innermost passions that, “working on the imaginary, fantastic part of my book and on the human one. Each gives me strength for the other”(Ibid 252).

The shower of benefits on Fournier prevailed as he had cross-Channel influences. He had visited London, and found the subject of English as one of his best subjects academically. He was struck by the paintings of the Pre Raphaelites, Robert Louis Stevenson’s novels, which he termed as “poetry of action”(WH 253). Hardy also had a place in the list of Fournier’s admiration. *Tess Of The D’Urbervilles* enthralled him. Fowles is apt in analyzing the character of Meaulnes, in whom he finds that unbreakable bond from its creator. Fournier infuses in his hero: “...the headlong passion for adventure that filled his own childhood...and we may see him in part as a last cry of despair on Fournier’s part over the loss of dreams, of the childhood world where all is possible”(Ibid 254).

In another of his essay, “A Modern Writer’s France,” Fowles recalls the countless times of his reading of *Le Grand Meaulnes*, commenting, “it has haunted me all my life”(WH 60). Acknowledging other influential works too, he feels that “none seems to me adequately to realize the effect of this one on me”(Ibid 60). To Fowles, it is an established classic: “The concepts of the lost domain and the land without a name have become stock expressions, with an almost Jungian status, in literary discussion and psychology”(WH 256). The last few months of Fournier’s life was scarred by the Great War. Knowing that Yvonne was effectively dead for him, Fournier’s sentiments were full

of tragic intensity. In 1909, his felt impending death closing on him, he was “haunted of seeing youth end ” (WH 255). He plunged in The World War in September 1914, in the trench warfare, and was engaged in a deadly combat. Nobody saw him killed. Only in the last decade, skeletal parts of French soldiers were found, who were buried by the Germans. One of them was proved in emblem, that it was of Lieutenant Fournier’s.

Fowles had paid a visit to the shop of Fournier’s uncle, where the writer had once discovered the Yvonne of his novel. The room in the shop was empty, and it was being renovated. A perching swallow on the painter’s ladder, was resting itself. The bird gave Fowles the feeling of perpetual time, the sense of “nowness” (WH 423), a recurring feature of his own fictions. This sensibility propagates the ethereal feeling of “beingness” (Ibid 423) on the self, which Fowles admits, runs through *The Magus*. The essay concludes, with Fowles commenting on his immersed epiphanic moment in Sologne, sharing the dead Fournier’s beingness:

It was there, a very real being; yet not quite altogether a real being, like the ghost of the long dead writer who stood in the shadows behind. For a moment or two there was only one time, and it was not the present... so impossible to find; yet once found, so impossible to forget.(Ibid 257)

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### **“Behind The Magus”**

This composition is a recollection by Fowles, almost forty-two years later in 1994, on the conception of *The Magus*, and his first visit to Greece in 1952. He commences by recollecting the days of his unglorified career as a reader in the University of Poitiers in France, which resulted in his dismissal. The autumn of 1951, gave him the opportunity to serve in a boarding school in the island of Spetsai, Greece as a teacher. At Poitiers, regrettably, no magus appeared to help the bewildered John Fowles find his true course. Arriving at the school in January 1952, he felt “neighbored heaven”(WH 66), on the view of the school and its atmosphere, which enthralled him beyond explanation:

I have always been deeply interested in, obsessed with, and absorbed by nature, and fell headlong and hopelessly in love with that of Greece, literally at first sight ....I have three homelands: my own England (not Britain), France, and Greece .  
(Ibid 66)

His first saunter in Spetsai, in the chilly January morning of 1952, sowed the conception of *The Magus*. In citations of his individual occurrences since 1949, written in a personal book, *Disjoints*, he records that coming across a barely legible manuscript that had recorded the exhilarating effect Greece had on him, with of course the invigorating description of nature :

It was a perfect cloudless day with a small wind... The pines were small, shapeless, and loosely scattered... What is strange in the hills is the silence: no birds...very few insects; no humans, no animals; only the still silence and the brilliant light...the blue sea below, ...mountains opposite.(Ibid 69)

Arriving at the school, its first impression made him feel as if in a dream, “enshrining the spirit of Byron”(WH 65). The boys did not know how to converse in Greek, “but were

ebullient, spontaneous, and eager”(Ibid 68). Phraxos in *The Magus* was Greece’s Spetsai, which Fowles had visited in his early years, before being a novelist. Going for a stroll the next day, he came across birds and orchids, which made him feel that Spetsai was literally an “ubiquitous sanctuary”(Ibid 68). Its citizens were “friendly; amicable-able to be friendly”(Ibid 68). Working hours were easy in the school, a total of twenty-three hours a week. The only drawback to Fowles, was that the school lacked organization. With antiquated teaching methods, cultured masters were also lacking. In 1953, Fowles and the whole staff of the school were relieved from their jobs, as the school had become non-operational.

The island of Spetsai was a “jewel, a paradise”(WH 69). This effect on Fowles was a divine perception. To Kesley, such feeling negates matter and language because, “the only things that matter are the person and the immediate perception of the divine”(Kesley 133). This can be also be regarded as Fowles’s flirtation with the Buddhist conception of Zen for a time, a kind of perception akin to a theologian, “profoundly influenced by *Lurianic Kabbalism*”(Taylor xx ).The breathtaking scenario of the mountains of central Peloponnesus created that effect on Fowles in which the self attained a sort of supreme elation:

The effect was weird, and for a few minutes I felt incomprehensively excited, as if I was experiencing something infinitely rare... All the elements, and at such a pitch of purity that I was spellbound...A sort of supreme level of awareness of existence, an all-embracing euphoria...I was suspended in bright air, timeless, motionless, floating on a sublime synthesis of elements.(WH 71)

This feeling of “isness” (WH 71) to Fowles, is not often perceived by all. Landscapes like Peloponnesus are those creations of nature, which exalt the notions of “wisdom, the beauty and the childishness”(ibid). Of “childishness because such beauty is not human, not practical, not evil”(Ibid ). They give an individual, virtues of simplicity and purity. The whole scenario made him recall *Treasure Island*. The stroll on that cold January morning in 1952, made Fowles realize years later in 1994 , as “one of the most satisfying walks I have ever made”(Ibid 72-3). On climbing Mount Parnassus alone, he felt it was the “loveliest moments of his life”(Ibid 76), sublime and all-consuming.

This divine instinct, supplemented with readings on the history of mid-century Greece, Mark Mazower’s *Inside Hitler’s Greece* and Andrew Thomas’s *Spetsai*, gave Fowles the description of the island, coupled with its historical background which he had incorporated in *The Magus*: “I myself have tried to say something of the literary background of *The Magus*... It was my first novel, and I worked on it for nearly fifteen years, yet still I feel it never quite came off”(Ibid 73). A considerable influence on *The Magus*, was D.H. Lawrence. The feeling of “existingness”(Ibid 74), to Fowles, is dedicated to Lawrence: “A form of that ‘isness,’ that present being, runs –however clumsily I expressed it-through *The Magus*. And above all I owe it to Lawrence”(Ibid 73).

The isolated villa of Maurice Conchis, fictionalized in *The Magus*, was one of the villas on the south coast of Spetsai, named *Yiasemi*, owned by the Botasis family. Fowles had visited the villa several times, keeping many features of it in *The Magus*, as Cochis’s

villa. Thirty years later after the publication of *The Magus*, Fowles read a book by Nikos Demou, *The Light of the Greeks*. This powerful essay made him realize what had actually happened on that January morning of 1952: “Among other things it is all beauty and all truth. It is in every thought of Heracleitus, Socrates and Plato; it is in every painted vase, I every landscape, in every anemone and orchid...” (Ibid 76). The essay concludes with Fowles offering his veneration to the Greeks. To him no other race feel so intensely, and “all-consumingly”(WH 76) as the Greeks do.

### “Greece”

This short essay, is a recollection by Fowles on his sojourn to Greece in 1952. The maiden trip was planned abruptly. Confessing candidly, that he had come across a Greek, presumably Heraclites in Oxford, who seemed almost from another universe, though his “ideas did (indeed still do) deeply excite me and lay behind an early book, *The Aristos* of 1964” (WH 78). Fowles had initially come to Greece out of frustration and despair, in a dilemma of choosing a career, “I wanted like countless others to be a writer”(Ibid 78). Greece has vital metaphoric designs of *The Magus*. It stands for Fowles as a place of unlimited freedom: “...the freedom to analyze, to explore, to turn a searchlight on one’s deepest and perhaps most anti-social drives and to put them into practice. (Loveday 43).

The inhospitable experience in Poitiers had discouraged him to the extreme, and Fowles was apprehensive on his prospective job as a school teacher in Spetsai, and of Greece’s social and cultural angles. His job took the toll of him, with clashes of opposing values at

times, which many of his British colleagues had encountered in the same school. And this is exactly what Nicholas Urfe in *The Magus*, faces in fictional Phraxos. But some errors had entrapped his self, and in 1996, Fowles realized, “how much it has suffered, how fatally it remains split”(Ibid 82). The freedom of the Greeks made him regret that, “I had been born in the wrong culture”(Ibid 79). The imperialistic designs of England, under the name of Great Britain, was to him a “swollen myth”(Ibid 79). The brave Greeks had opposed exploits on them from 1939 to 1945, something which to Fowles, Britons could not have resisted. But the principles of existentialism and Marxism, which had nourished his thoughts, opposed the incongruities of the Spetsai school, with its “sickening emblem of an ancient regime”(Ibid 80). He considered it an honour to be sacked, at the end of 1953.

Wild Greece was so breathtakingly beautiful, that his “passionately falling in love”(WH 80) with the breath-taking scenario was justified. The bureaucratic rule of the school, and the wild island’s “wild-clad hills and on its ravishingly beautiful beaches were too totally different, even mutually exclusive worlds”(Ibid 80). Fowles climbed the mountain of Parnassus, where he encountered in a peak called Lykeri, an intensely shy shepherdess, whom he later fictionalized as Erato in *Mantissa*, “The real Greece began for me on that day in 1952, when I stood on Lykeri”(Ibid 81). Recalling these moments later, he feels that unless he had experienced these split seconds, he could never have honestly become a poet and a writer. He had many times tried to “convey this wild soul of Greece in poetry”(Ibid 81). On the notion of “isness” (Ibid 81), a recurrent motif of his fiction, he

comments in the essay: "Greece is a kind of double miracle, both existential and historical; she is not only is but always is, like light itself, in every now"(Ibid 82).

The key setting of *The Magus* is Greece, and thereby Fowles's insinuation is classical rather than other medieval myths. It can be mentioned that one of the most striking feature of mythical aspect in *The Magus* is the "theme of masculine pursuit of the lost woman made by Lily de Seitas, who calls Nicholas, Mr. Urfe"(Salami 92). The reader can realize that this is a reference to the Greek myth in which Orpheus searches for his wife Eurydice in the lost world of Hades. The search for Alison by Nicholas in his psychical contemplation after her supposed death is very like the Greek myth.

In November 1996, Fowles was invited by the Botasis family to Spetsai. Visiting Greece again with his step-daughter Anna, and Eileen Warburton, his biographer, he describes the experience as a love affair consummated. The hospitality of the Botasis family, and the atmosphere reeked of: "...freedom... the pines, the sea, the silence, the ineffable view. Some returns and the kindness of the people who make them possible make one weep. Good fortune is always rare; its reality, beyond words"(Ibid 83).

To the extent that Chapter-IV had tried to establish through arguments, *The Magus* is a novel about the difficulties of attaining the biologically instinctive freedom, especially in terms of discovering what the self is. Fowles's ideas here, resonate with instructive veracity. Each of the characters in here, is a manifestation of the self as a syncretic being. With the edifying master-pupil colloquy, Fowles attempts to furnish a matured coherent

self, in the framework of his narrative, through the act of breach by Nicholas, the nature of the predicaments and the manifold interests, which have been analyzed in the chapter. Observed from a broader structural perspective, the psychodrama of *The Magus*, situates the self in its reintegrated process. Nicholas's musings after the trial reinforces this point: "What was I? Exactly what Conchis had me told: nothing but the net sum of countless wrong turnings"(TM 467). What Nicholas learns, is basically what Miranda had abortively tried to teach Clegg; how to re-define the self. Fowles knows that for *The Magus* to succeed, his readers, like Nicholas, must enter the marriage of complementary, the syncretic opposites where, in the tension between a multitude of extremes, life goes on.

Hazard can be looked as a *bildungsroman* in *The Magus*, as a result of the self's unprotected encounter with the world, which is an experience of revulsion. A radical negation of the sacred, as the chapter had argued, demands the affirmation of the profane. Fowles's fidelity to existentialism leads to the exposure in the underlying nothingness of freedom. To him, those who are authentic enough to accept the exile of the self, who accept the absolute aloneness of the conscious self, are the Few. The godgame had demanded that its teacher must abscond. Nicholas accepts this and thus becomes one of the Few. In *The Aristos*, Fowles exemplifies, "If there had been a Creator, his second act would have been to disappear"(The Aristos 19). The events of the godgame are not meant to be understood as literal truth, but rather as metaphorical descriptions of complex modes of feeling.

The wider canvas of *The Magus*, bears parallel with the essays, “The Lost Domain of Alain Fournier,” “Behind The Magus” and “Greece.” The feeling of now or isness which runs through *The Magus*, has a link with the three non-fictional essays. The similitude of *The Magus* to *Le Grand Meaulnes* is demonstrated through the quest taken by both Nicholas and Meaulnes reflecting the “real quests taken by their creators”(Salami 80).It reflects on Fowles’s own self, in those years of his life in 1950s, when his apprehension was to discover the writer’s self in him. Nature, which plays a pivotal role in the re-discovering of the self in *The Magus*, has affinity with the essay “Behind The Magus.” The essay “Greece” bears testimony to Fowles while facing the odds as a struggling writer and a poet. Like Nicholas, searching for a niche as a teacher in Phraxos, Fowles in retrospect muses on his own self in the essay. Nature, which is a fundamental factor in determining the self in *The Magus* is expanded in “Greece.”

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## **Chapter V - The Phoenix**

### **Fiction:**

*The French Lieutenant's Woman*

### **Non Fiction:**

“Notes on an Unfinished Novel”

“The Filming of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*”

Fowles most publicized work, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, the composition of which began in 1967, when he was already the author of two best-sellers, exemplifies his hybridization of the novel form. The techniques, describing fragile behavioural patterns, reveal sets of layers for the interpretation of the characters. Their ways of thinking show the possibilities of meta-historic images, strongly intuitive, and pro-existentialist. Fowles uses sexual autonomy to celebrate the freedom of the self, from existential restraints. Unlike the dislocated hero Nicholas, the protagonist here is a matured gentleman, a baronet's nephew with a lot of inheritance. Connor, who situates Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman* as a seminal novel, comments that it displays "ironic capability, between past and present view points and languages" (Connor 142).

Haunted by a recurring image of a mysterious woman standing on the end of a dockside, looking out to the sea, Fowles's previously planned writings took the backseat, and the seed of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* germinated. Commenting, "I am trying to show an existentialist awareness"(WH 18) he evolved the image into Sarah Woodruff, an impoverished Victorian ex-governess. The novel situates itself and Fowles as a part of "...the nostalgia pervasive in British high brow culture for the Victorian past, with its ambiguous social hierarchy, its reassuringly solid and densely cluttered interiors, its seeming confidence, stability, and unclouded sense of purpose"( Holmes 49).

This chapter focusses on the temperaments of the two protagonists, Charles Smithson and Sarah Woodruff. Since the characters are the emblems of social tendencies, societal insinuations will be given significance in the analysis. The narrative configuration in *The*

*French Lieutenant's Woman*, is an important device used by Fowles in determining the valorization of the self of the protagonists. The arrangement encompasses the epigraphs, literary parallels, allusions, and the natural landscapes. Two of the non-fictional essays, "Notes on an Unfinished Novel," and "The Filming of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*," which have thematic bearing to the novel, will be covered in the chapter.

The theme of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* is multifarious than *The Magus*. It is set in 1867, exactly eight years after the publication of Darwin's *Origin of The Species*, and six months before Karl Marx published the first volume of *Das Kapital*. What interested Fowles was how the Victorian world could be evolved into a modern one, and how his characters react to the fresh currents in the ambiance. But Fowles, goes beyond this, and views the self in critical perspectives in this novel, making the reader inclined to an uncanny feeling of nostalgia. To Huyssen: "...history in a certain canonical form may be delegitimized as far as its core pedagogical and philosophical mission is concerned, but the seduction of the archive and its trove of stories of human achievement and suffering has never been stronger"(Huyssen 5). The shifting patterns in the novel explain Fowles's concern with its historical transitions. It retracts the clothes, social mannerisms and chronological background of 1867. At times it fails to adhere to the mental picture of the Victorians, but Fowles comments that this kind of "cheating" (Acheson 17) is an intrinsic part of creative works.

*The French Lieutenant's Woman* begins with Sarah, its female protagonist, standing on the harbour breakwater at Lyme Regis, Dorset, looking out to the sea exactly a century

before the novel was composed. Charles, a Victorian gentleman, an amateur scientist, comes to the coastal town of Lyme, to study fossils. Betrothed to Ernestina Freeman, the sole offspring of an affluent industrialist, Charles and his fiancée, are out for a stroll along the Cobb in Lyme Bay. They encounter a woman, whom Ernestina recognizes as Sarah Woodruff, scorned and doubted as faintly insane by the local community after her affair with a French seaman. A fascination develops between Charles and Sarah, which culminates into matured love. She guides Charles in a tantalizing game of seduction, and he is seen battling against the Victorian norms, which ends with the breaking off his commitment to Ernestina. Charles and Sarah discover fulfillment of their love in their encounter in Exeter. But she vanishes mysteriously after this occurrence, leaving Charles in the crossroads. The novel ends, with multiple endings, enveloped in ambiguity, allowing a freedom of choice to the readers.

Fowles gives the text a Victorian ambiance, but retains a typically twentieth-century pre-occupation, with issues such as feminism and self-realization. Fascinated in the genre of the nineteenth century romantic and gothic novel, he wrote *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, through the perspective of a twentieth century writer. This can be analyzed from the authorial intrusions and opening quotations in the text, drawn from the works of Victorian writers. In this way, he attempts to evaluate in the structure, “those values that the Victorians most heralded”(Face 10). The nineteenth-century conventionality in the theme of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, is shattered by the fact that the author-narrator is aware of the twentieth-century events. He is torn between the aspiration to write a Victorian novel, and the yearning to expose its pretences, constrained him to the sardonic

intelligence of his own age. The novel thus attracts readers, seeking a re-creation of Victorian fiction, and also those looking for an engagement with existing concerns. A narrative strand is maintained throughout the novel, that allows the reader unconcerned with history or philosophy, but simply deduce the plot.

As a part of his narrative device, Fowles uses epigraphs prefacing the sixty-one chapters of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. As a narrator he is able to “reconstruct, represent and ‘colonize’ the cultural milieu of the Victorian age by the representation of aspects of its literary world” (Salami 107), through the poetry of Mathew Arnold, Tennyson, Hardy and Clough. The economic, social and political ideologies, with questions relating to sexuality of the Victorian times are expressed in the prose writings of Darwin, Marx, E. Rouston, Pike, Lewis Carroll and Jane Austen. Their accounts on social changes, are quoted as epigraphs. Fowles arranges the epigraphs accordingly to elucidate the context of each chapter, in which the characters are projected as trying to re-construct their own selves. By reading the epigraphs, history and literature are reachable to us in a textualized and narrativised form. The linking of the historical and literary epigraphs strengthen what Linda Hutcheon calls the “histriographic meta-fiction” (Hutcheon 5). Fowles goes into historical settings in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, which becomes complicated at times to reconstruct life as actually experienced by people in the past. To Henry James, “To project yourself into a consciousness of a person essentially your opposite, requires the audacity of a great genius; and even men of genius are cautious in approaching the problem” (qt: Lodge 50).

The epigraphs on Marx's comments in the *Das Capital*, aptly upholds the mood of the time. Marx pointed out that the rock-hard structures of the Victorians were built on false impressions. It was the era where John Stuart Mill give his orations of "silent domestic revolution taking place whereby women and men are, for the first time in history, really each other's companions"(Harrison 97-8). The ideology of modernization became dominant, and complexity was felt by the subaltern classes. Ironically at the same time, efficient male power warmed up its strength to restrain this rising ideology, against the possible challenges. Tennyson's poems as epigraphs to some of the chapters highlight Sarah's enigmatic projection as comparable to the verses taken from *Maud* and *In Memoriam*. The profound anguish of Tennyson is also seen in the poems, which runs in harmony with Charles's desolation on Sarah's behavior. The powerful narrative thus includes, "question of freedom of the characters, the search for self-knowledge and mystery, and the importance of history and mythology"(Salami 134).

*The French Lieutenant's Woman* opens with Hardy's poem *The Riddle*, giving a premonition of the impending mystery in the narration:

Over the sea,  
Wind foul or fair,  
Always stood she..... Seemed charm to be (FLW 9).

In this opening chapter, Charles and Ernestina "dressed in the heights of fashion"(Ibid 10), are walking near the Cobb, which faces the sea in Lyme Regis. The omniscient narrator is thorough in illustrating their ensemble: "...a magenta skirt of an almost daring narrowness-and shortness, since two white ankles could be seen beneath the rich green

coat and above the black boots...the netted chiffon..."(FLW 10). Charles's wardrobe is described as, "...impeccably in a light grey, with his top hat held in his free hand...which the arbiters of the best English male fashion"(Ibid 11). Ernestina's innocent bantering is stalled by Charles's attention drawn to a figure of a woman "standing motionless, staring out to sea"(Ibid 11). Attempting to draw Charles away from the figure, Ernestina tells Charles, that the woman is nicknamed in Lyme as the "French Lieutenant's Woman"(Ibid 14), abandoned by a mysterious French seaman. Her grit to lead Charles away draws a blank, as he ventures close to the figure. Requesting the lady to be careful of an oncoming squall, Charles's sentence is cut short, when she rotates and gives him a look which was like a "lance"(Ibid 16), starting the catastrophe of his respectable engagement to Ernestina:

Again and again, afterwards, Charles thought of that look as a lance; and to think so is of course not merely to describe an object but the effect it has. He felt himself in that brief instant an unjust enemy; both pierced and deservedly diminished. (FLW 14-15)

To Neary, the description of this gaze is saturated in negativity so much that "it is almost impossible not to connect it with the 'look' described by Sartre"(Neary 169). With a mixture of Freudian and Sartrean combination, this initial look of Sarah to Charles, seems to deconstruct the maxims of Victorian culture, cutting and annihilating him. It lures him like a siren, and as the novel progresses, destructively linking him with her sexuality. Sarah's look, Sartre would have termed as annihilating. In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre argues that looks that steal the self of another, encloses it in nothingness, and also endows the self a consciousness of his own being:

With the appearance of the Other's look, I experience the revelation of my being-as-object; that is, my transcended...In particular feel myself touched by the Other in my factual existence...Thus the encounter with the Other does not only touch me in my transcendence: in and through the transcendence with the Other surpasses, the facticity which my transcendence nihilates and transcends exists for the Other. (Sartre 351)

Nature is described prolifically in the opening chapter, with the sea as the metaphor of mystery. The sea is presented as a mystery, which unfolded in the novel's chapters: "An easterly is the most disagreeable wind in Lyme Bay... and the real Lymers will never see much more to it than a long claw of old grey wall that flexes itself against the sea"(FLW 9). Emblems of social tendencies, like Charles's engagement to Ernestina, symbolize the union of the bourgeoisie and the nobility that cemented the Victorian class hierarchy by accommodating the new money, made in manufacturing and trade, and to the affluence vested in land and designation. Charles's decision to end his engagement anticipates the eventual breakdown of this consensus and the twentieth-century destruction of the Victorian social strata. The virtuous courtship between Charles and Ernestina is paralleled by the more open sexual relationship between their servants Sam and Mary, showing the relative freedom given to Victorian working-class lovers, as opposed to their bourgeois counterparts. The character of Sam Farrow, Charles's manservant in the French Lieutenant's Woman, is a caricature of Dickens's Sam Weller of *The Pickwick Papers*.

In the first part of the novel, Charles is projected as a Darwinist rebel against the Victorian orthodoxy. Losing his mother at childbirth, and his father in 1856, he becomes the sole beneficiary of his father's fortune and also of his childless uncle's. Not preoccupied with the conventions of his era, he has a dislike for hunting and the hunters: "Charles adamantly refused to hunt the fox. He did not care that the prey was uneatable, but he abhorred the unspeakability of the hunters"(FLW 19). Walking was his hobby, having a "sinister fondness for spending the afternoons at Winsyatt, in the library"(Ibid 20). A born naturalist, he found "what little God he managed to derive from existence, he found in Nature not the Bible" (Ibid 20). Fowles's atheistic concepts are reflected here: "Existence is ultimately or potentially knowable; God is infinitely unknowable" (*The Aristos* 12).

On Charles's disposition, Fowles dwells on his slips, without much prudence, in retrospect. After his completion of studies at Cambridge, he had drifted into appalling company, and the eventual was that he ended up "one foggy night in London, in carnal possession ..." (FLW 20). Horrified, his father dispatched him to Paris. In the years to come, he became interested in paleontology, spending his time wandering on the seashore, assembling fossils. Frequenting the Geological Society, his interest shifted from the Winsyatt library. His uncle was pleased as it moved him from "the damned books in the damned library"(Ibid 21). A victim of lethargy, he had in short all "the Byronic ennui"(Ibid 22). Secretly admiring Gladstone, he also had his own political leanings. As a prey of the trappings of the Victorian society, his engagement to Ernestina was a part of an ensnaring of the Victorian society's call to duty.

The young and naive Ernestina Freeman, was on vacation at her Aunt Tranter's. She was blissfully in love, with happy dreams of wedlock. Enjoying being adulated and fussed over, she never realized that Charles was attracted to her only because of his social commitments. But to a man like Charles "she proved irresistible"(FLW 31). Pampered extremely by her parents and her aunt, they moved mountains to dote on her. Aunt Tranter was an individual of a noble essence, whom nobody could dislike, "even to contemplate being angry with that innocently smiling and talking"(Ibid 32), was unthinkable. Gullible and sympathetic, with profound optimism and self-dependence, she doted on Ernestina as a nurse. Trying to make the best of things for herself, she ended up making the best things of the world also. Having a stringent respect for the Victorian conventions, Ernestina fervently wanted to marry Charles and have children. But she hated physical relationship among beings: "It was not only her profound ignorance of the reality of copulation that frightened her; it was the aura of pain and brutality that the act seemed to require"(FLW 34). Fowles describes her coyness as the upbringing of an ethical Victorian young woman. The narration informs that she was born in 1846, and expired on the day when "Hitler invaded Poland"(Ibid 33).

The title of the novel is focused on Sarah Woodruff, a patriarchal elucidation of an outcast and a fallen woman, who was allegedly in love with a French lieutenant, Vargueness. This alleged liason of Sarah and the Frenchman are presented in the novel as a flashback. Here, Fowles clears his intention that, "practically everyone's assumed the central character is about the heroine Sarah. But for me the book was always equally

about Charles”(Bragg 33). As the novel unfurls, Sarah is portrayed by the narrator, to have previously lead a secured life as a governess in the Talbot family in Lyme. In due course, she leaves her employment and follows Vargueness to Exeter. Her misjudgment in gauging the lieutenant to be a man of standards, is an inauthentic trait in her, though Fowles ventures to depict her skill in analyzing characters, in due course of the narrative: “She had some sort of psychological equivalent of the experienced... the ability to know almost at the very first glance... she was born with a computer in her heart” (FLW 57). As she confides in Charles, it was only in Exeter that made her see what Vargueness was. Later in the novel, she confides that the lieutenant was insincere and a liar, “I tried to see worth in him, respectability, honour. And then I was filled with a kind of rage at being deceived”(FLW 151). Vargueness allegedly makes her rise from the ashes of the phoenix. Her initial misfortune ascends her to an assured level of authenticity. She returns to Lyme Regis, and by turning her back to the Victorian conventions, positions herself at a distance as the French Lieutenant’s mistress. She spurns the society, which she “cannot understand”(Ibid 153). Arnold’s lines from *A Farewell* quoted as an epigraph in Chapter 9, shows this psychical state of Sarah: “...this heart, I know...Too strange, too restless, too untamed” (Ibid 56).

In due course, coming across Sarah in the Undercliff, Charles is jolted by her sudden appearance, “He stood unable to do anything but stare down, tranced by this unexpected encounter”(FLW 74). Tennyson’s lines from *Maud*, quoted as an epigraph in Chapter 10, is reflected in this connection to Sarah’s strangeness:

And once, but once, she lifted her eyes...

To find they were met by my own. (FLW 70)

While taking a saunter in the wildernesses of the Undercliff in Lyme, Charles encounters Sarah again in isolation, sleeping in a precarious position in, “a broad, sloping ledge of grass some five feet beneath the level of the plateau” (FLW 73). Not recognizing, Charles edges closer, moving around the curve of the plateau, when Sarah wakes up, “They stood for several seconds, locked in mutual incomprehension” (Ibid 75). Apologizing sincerely to her, Charles withdrew from the cliff and unknowingly, he took a steeper path towards the village. Fowles symbolically gives the premonition of the tragedy that was to befall him: “in that luminous evening ... the whole Victorian Age was lost” (Ibid 75).

Nature again plays an important role in determining the self in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. The Undercliff in the Dorset coast, Lyme Regis, where Charles and Sarah start their steady romance, is a world which Fowles endorses:

It roars, pounds hisses, mumbles on the reefs below our fields all day long, and then all night gives a sort of voice to all those powers of nature that are exterminated almost everywhere else in England...green men could survive in those impenetrable thickets. (Warburton 280)

The cliff symbolizes nature and life against the dead world of Lyme Regis, and their lifeless conventions. It is nature that gives and provides the soothing balm to them. The encounter in the Undercliff, a kind of sensual Garden of Eden, is romantic and inexplicable. This unfathomable salve in nature, is elaborated in Fowles's non-fictional work, *The Tree*: “In summer it is the nearest this country can offer to a tropical

jungle. It has also, like all land that has never been worked or lived on by man, its mysteries, its shadows, its dangers”(The Tree 59).

After her initial introduction with Charles, Sarah gets herself employed in Mrs. Poultney’s establishments, with the help of the local Vicar. A societal caricature, Mrs. Poultney is a genius, whose resemblances appear in Victorian novels. She engages the services of Sarah in her mansion, but spends her time spying on her with her housekeeper, Mrs. Fairley. Representing the repulsive values of the Victorian culture, by her duplicitous sanctimony and conventionality, she gives the aura of being pious, upholding her bourgeois standards, imposing them on others with the severity of a ring-master:

In *Othello*, the antagonist is Iago, the character who seeks to destroy Othello by casting doubt on Desdemona’s fidelity. Where Iago acts purely as an individual driven by motiveless malignity, Mrs Poultney represents the worst excess of mid-Victorian sanctimoniousness. (Acheson 37)

Having a plump figure with eagle eyes, a miraculous sixth sense regarding filth and grime, she dismisses any gardener if he came into the house with dirt on his hands, “a butler for having a spot of wine on his stock; a maid for having slut’s wool under her bed”(FLW 26). Her dominance and authority extended beyond her mansion, Marlborough House. Having a Gestapo mode of interrogation, she could make the toughest of maids break down in minutes. Mrs Poultney is the descendant of that arrogant trait in the British Empire: “Her only notion of justice was that she must be right; and her only notion of government was an angry bombardment of the impertinent populace”(Ibid 26). But

Fowles supports her for her acuteness in practical matters, as she was far from being dim-witted, and on the other hand, was created by God to put the conceited Victorian men in their shoes. Sarah is pitted against Mrs. Poulteny, under the circumstances of the traditional Aristotelian concepts of *hamartia* and catharsis. Her isolation and vulnerability, compared to Mrs Poulteny, supports her personality, making her ascend to the echelon of a tragic heroine.

Irresistibly drawn to Sarah, Charles is incapable to see her destructive game, and he justifies his action in the circumstances merely out of a sense of “*noblesse oblige*—a sense that he has a certain responsibility towards the less fit”(Acheson 39). He associates with her as “not sexual, but fraternal, perhaps paternal”(FLW 62). Not exactly aware of his feelings towards her, he confides the matter to his friend, Dr. Grogan. But on an occasion he tumbles upon reading the case history of a French woman, Marie-de-moll, a young madwoman, who destroyed the life of a lieutenant, Emile de la Ronciere, that forewarning prevailed on him. For the first since time he met Sarah, Charles starts regarding her as a “positive danger not only to his survival but to his freedom”(Ibid 38), but is still captivated, in a mixture of sexual and paternal emotions. Fowles had perhaps wanted to end his novel like *Oedipus Rex*, where Oedipus even after answering the puzzle of the Sphinx, learns that although “he has always believed himself to be free, he has been in fact a pawn of fate”(Ibid 39). Dr. Grogan, a combination of intellectual freedom and social conventionality, is accurate to the requirement of the narration. “...vouched for the truth of his humanistic beliefs; his credibility resists the technique plays with it. The narrator’s new-novelistic interventions come to seem a form of

unreliability, which does not, finally, interfere with the character's integrity" (McEwan 36).

The omniscient narrator who interrupts the narration of the novel in Chapter 13, evades the answer to the precise ambiguity of Sarah. Fowles's wife, Elizabeth commented on this dilemma of her husband: "The mystery of Sarah is not answered, wonder if it should be"(Mansfield 281). Mansfield comments on some original manuscripts of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, where she finds that Sarah's enigmatic self is related to suit Fowles's narrative tactics:

The several portrayals of Sarah in the drafts indicate Fowles's unwillingness to explore possible definitions, but his final solution is the least transparent of the lot. What does not change, and what may finally determine the preservation of Sarah's mystery, is his use of point of view. (Mansfield 281)

Fowles provides apt adjectives to describe Sarah's second coming. She is a "a living memorial to the drowned"(FLW 9), "a living siren, a calypso"(Ibid 125), with "eyes a man could drown in"(Ibid 195). Her x-rayed projections make her a quintessence of a temptress, with the intention of luring Charles to a metaphorical death. In the role of a "Conchis-like mentor"(Acheson 41), Sarah starts to lead him in a tantalizing game of destruction, with Charles not aware of the consequences. Her halo of secrecy is surrounded in the novelist's narrative point of view. She is better explained by Fowles on her underlying self, after her confrontation with Mrs Poultney, regarding her regular walks to Ware Commons, a forbidden place for respectable townsfolk: "Nor were hers

the sobbing, hysterical sort of tears that presage violent action...misery-slow-welling, unstoppable, creeping like blood through a bandage”(FLW 96).

This piece of clever information, which Fowles plays on his readers, structures Sarah’s enigmatic self. Because the preservation of mystery is essentially the core function of the novel, he comments, “Modern women like Sarah exist, but I never understood them”(FLW 85). Hardy’s poem, epigraphed in Chapters 18, project the enigma of Sarah to be a question in Charles’s psychiatric well of questions:

I went, and knelt, and scooped my hand,  
As if to drink, into the brook  
And a faint figure seemed to stand  
Above me, with the bygone look. (FLW 134)

Prior to meeting Sarah, Charles had enjoyed his “privileged freedom” (Woodcock 87). His proposal to Ernestina was the first step in curbing his free will, and was “ an unmistakable business deal and, even before the impact of Sarah, a trap ” (Woodcock 88). After his first encounter with Sarah, Charles found Ernestina too conventional as a preference for a wife. This is the first trait of autonomy germinating in his self. He now begins to feel sorry for himself as a “Byron tamed” (FLW 128). Zoë Fairbairns highlights a similar dilemma faced by Charles, in the novel, *Stand We At Last*. A Victorian gentleman as the protagonist, finds himself in the similar situation as Charles, which drives him to such a desperate contradiction, which eventually drives him to commit suicide. Fairbairns argues: “How difficult it was for a man who must wait until middle age to marry and how difficult it had been to wean himself off... he realized that his wife

was going to provide no substitute for them in the physical aspect of marriage? (Fairbairns 230).

Charles's dilemmas are the results of the penalty, which the Victorian hierarchy faced in the fantasy of a woman. Freud describes feminine fantasy and sexuality as the "dark continent"(Freud 212). Lacan, on the other hand, devotes the notion of femininity as something beyond the phallus, outside the symbolic order, and in opposition to masculine desire: "The woman does not exist...for it is elsewhere that she upholds the question of her own *jouissance*"(Lacan 141), which denotes pleasure. He argues that the imagery, symbolic and real, play important roles in which an individual as a hero must triumph. Charles can very well locate his self, in this situation. Initially, in spite of his simmering rebel against the Victorian codes, he was satisfied with his engagement with Ernestina. He loved her, and welcomed all the conventional rules of a bourgeois Victorian wedlock, as asexual as children. But the existentialist self in Sarah Woodruff comes to the forefront, as she comments on the societal scenario, which stirs Charles's emotions:

I knew no other way to break of what I was...Sometimes I almost pity them [other women].I think I have a freedom they cannot understand. No insult, no blame, can touch me. Because I have set myself beyond the pale. I am nothing; I am hardly human any more. I am The French Lieutenant's Whore. (*FLW* 171)

Her conditioned self depicts that she demands from the epithet of a fallen woman, a designation that makes her secure and free from all the Victorian conventions: "Her real self is that which is different from her persona; and we can say nothing more substantive about Sarah than that"(Neary 172). Her passion for Charles cuts her off from the society,

“but her freedom cuts her off from her passion”(Ibid 172). An erotic enigma for Charles, she remains unknowable, as she disappears from the tantalizing game, leaving Charles and the readers baffled.

The split in Charles under these circumstances leads him into a flight of the imagination. Sarah's unabashed confessions to him, which he assumes to be factual, carries him into a world of fantasy. The thought of having a sexual encounter with her, makes him reflect of a myth to be explored. Sarah mirrors a mythic intellectual capacity, which indicates difference from scientific-rational point of view. To Cassirer:

For where we see a mere analogy, i.e. a mere relation, myth sees immediate existence and presence...Does myth not signify a unity of intuition, an intuitive unity preceding and underlying all explanations contributed by discursive thought? (Cassirer 68-9)

In this connection, in Fowlesian fiction, the characters are given the same “ontological status as real characters”(Lee 46). Charles is very much like the mythic Prometheus, bound in the chains of Victorian ideology and Sarah's manipulation. Prometheus, son of Titan, was bound in chains by Zeus and tortured each day, who tore away a part of his liver. The distress became perpetuated, because Prometheus recovered each night and by morning, his liver was restored: “By and large, myths of love follow the familiar pattern of human emotions the whole world over”(Jordan 203). Sarah can be compared to the goddess of sexual love, Aphrodite and the eye of many gods. Luring the gods to her charms, Aphrodite swears to remain a virgin, “She is not, however beyond manipulating

the desires in any way that pleases her”(Jordan 204). Sarah is very much like her, who manipulates the desires of Charles, yet remains a virgin.

To a critic, Fowles “immerses [his characters] in a plot that marches as simply as a Greek tragedy”(Evarts 60). The circumstances can be positioned in comparison with the classical tragedy, *Oedipus Rex*, where the exact moment of Charles’s reflection is encountered by King Oedipus, that he had unwittingly involved himself in incestuous relation with his mother. To Johnstone, the novel is a “Shakespearean tragedy”(Johnstone 72). The moment of repentance and recognition in Shakespeare’s *Othello*, occurs at the moment the Moor sees Desdemona’s innocence. The point of similarity in Fowles’s novel, and in Sophocles’s and Shakespeare’s masterpieces is this moment of recognition. But the difference rests on the question of *hamartia*. Sarah in the simplest terms, made a mistake, as she comments of “...some deep flaw in my soul wished my better self to be blinded”(FLW 168). But the flaw was not similar to that of the classical or renaissance protagonist, but in modern terms of an existential inauthentic self.

The function of Sarah’s mysterious role in the novel is Fowles’s intention to make her act like a catalyst for Charles’s redemption, to achieve the liberty of preference. The thematic structure enhancing the self in the novel can be summed up in one sentence. Sarah is “the woman at the door, while Charles is the man without the key”(FLW 181). An impending challenge to Charles in seeking his liberation through his idealization of Sarah is her potentiality, which persistently reminded him of his freedom being threatened in the enclaves of the society. He takes his next step towards authenticity to dis-intoxicate

himself through the myth of women. Psychologically, this quest of self redemption of Charles is like the relinquishment of Oedipal desires by wanting “to possess women by idealizing them, an educative process”(Woodcock 93).

Sarah’s tactics to delay the gratification, by her manipulation of situations, and by giving Charles the false alarm that she had a sprained ankle, enacts her as a submissive woman. In Exeter, she plays the submissive role in the encounter, yet it gives her an “autonomous status”(Woodcock 106). Charles’s desire grows more frantic, and Fowles terms his gratification as “his terrible need to possess her, to melt into her, to burn, to burn to ashes on that body and in those eyes”(FLW 302). Coming to know of her actual role in the whole sequence, right from their first encounter at the Cobb, Charles leaves the room, hating himself to be lured by a woman, whose strictures were out of his control when she says, “There can be no happiness for you and me. You cannot marry me, Mr. Smithson”(Ibid 309). She offers him a freedom from patriarchal restraint. Her ambiguous replies in Exeter makes Charles feel like being swept away by his own presumptions. Her approval that she had deceived him rested on the fact that, she had given him the consolation of believing that perhaps in another world, she could have been his wife, which will give her the strength to survive. But she admits: “There is one thing in which I have not deceived you. I loved you... Do not ask me to explain what I have done. I cannot explain it. It is not to be explained”(Ibid 342). The expression on Sarah’s face shocked Charles beyond explicable words. To him it was the very expression when she had stood on the ledge over the sea, and had stared up to him in Lyme. He retorts, “I cannot accept that. It must be explained”(Ibid 342). They looked like two mad people,

and he departs from the room on Sarah's request, "I beseech you. Leave!"(Ibid 343). The ambiguities remain!

Charles's house of cards collapses when Sarah accepts the responsibility of whatever happened, and he grows contemptuous. This haggard and split subjectivity in Charles is "the consistency of his selfhood and its collapse, its fall"(Said 231). After his encounter with Sarah in Exeter, he discovers that she is a virgin, which ironically makes matters worse for him. It leaves him destroyed and deconstructed: "All her conduct, all her motives in Lyme Regis had been based on a lie"(FLW 341). Sarah's paradox, combines with "the Victorian typology: at exactly the point when she ceases to be a virgin, she begins for the first time to appear to have been one"(Conradi 65). Sarah is predominantly linked with the Victorian sexuality, which ultimately leads her to free will. She wrenches Charles from the innocent Ernestina, into the arms of perhaps nothing. Fowles keeps in mind the breach of freedom, which was certainly not to ridicule the Victorian sexual repression, but to show that, "...the libido is a disrupter of all cultural systems, a relativizer of all dogmatic claims about human nature and society. In the face of sex, all discourse becomes a metaphor"(Neary 212). He narrates sexual discourses in this regard, like a pornographer: "There were brothels there, and dance-halls and gin palaces; but rather more frequent were variously undone and women, unmarried mothers, mistresses..."(FLW 265).

Sigmund Freud constantly looked back to childhood trauma, both in an individual and race for either the positive or negative conditions of the psyche. Jung on the other hand,

looked forward to matured adulthood. The repressed Oedipal desires in an individual gives rise to sexual anxiety and conflict, whereas:

Jung sees neurosis as a sign that the soul yearns for something beyond physical or material satisfaction. Where Freud sees dreams as a distorted fulfillment of a sexual wish, Jung sees dream as a natural expression of the psyche. (Coupe 104)

The anima, which may be negative or positive, plays a vital role in the psyche of a character. “Indeed, we may refer that the very journey from the ego to the self is circular, involving descent into the darkness of shadow and ascent towards the self of light”(Ibid 141). Sarah’s role as a positive or a negative anima for Charles, is tricky to analyze. The matter is complicated by Fowles himself, as in the various course of the novel, he projects her as “a figure from myth; a living memorial to the drowned...an Odyssean siren...” (Acheson 38). The adjectives depict her as a temptress luring Charles to his fate. The name siren derives from a Greek root meaning to bind or attach. In some other myths, they are considered as divinities, who symbolized the souls of the dead. Initially, the sirens represented the head and bust of a woman and the body of a bird, and only later depicted as women, whose bodies terminated in fish tails. The feminist agitations in the 1860’s showed the empowerment of the female power, assuming and demanding self-determination worried the male orthodoxy: “...it must have seemed to many men as if all the sirens and harpies they had consigned to the nether regions of their social order and their psyches were threatening to break out in vindictive retribution.”(Woodcock 84)

With the seed of abhorrence in him growing against Sarah, Charles for the first time, faces her irately, “...she opened her mouth to speak, Charles’s wild yet icy look silenced

her”(FLW 444). Sarah had been the main factor of his authentic choice, “when he had had his great vision of himself freed from his age, his ancestry and class and country, he had not realized how much the freedom was embodied in Sarah; the assumption of a shared exile”(Ibid 442). This freedom is against the obedience of Victorian norms and hence, is subversive. He is in the position of Keats’s unrequited lovers in *The Ode To The Grecian Urn*, where the lovers are so near the goal, yet never fulfilled. The passionate encounter of Charles and Sarah in Exeter, leaves him in a loss of identity. To Ernestina’s father he has, “forever forfeited the right to be considered a gentleman”(FLW 324). Like a city struck out of a quiet sky by an atom bomb, he is left as a man torn between the conventions of the Victorians, and the sexual attractions of a mysterious and bizarre woman, embodying human and social emancipation. As a Darwinist, his inclination is on both; the scientific assumptions of his age, and the concepts of individual free will as required for emancipation. He has the sovereignty of choice, but the freedom exists only within an encircling un-freedom. If he chooses Ernestina, the stifling world of the Victorians welcome him. If he opts for his emancipation through Sarah, he will face a social banishment. Whatever the choice, he has moments of anguish in store of him. To Fawcner, “The process of emancipation does not involve a single choice, a single moment of indecision and pain, but a lifetime of discomfort and struggle”(Fawcner 83). He can only see his emancipation through her, but ironically not with her. He enters a nearby church, after his brief sexual tenure, and reflexively sees the crucified figure of Jesus Christ. He sees a vision of himself crucified on Sarah, and then he sees her removing him from the cross. This vision is significant in its dimension:

He seemed as he stood there to see all his age, its tumultuous life, its iron certainties, its repressed emotions, its facetious humour, its cautious science and incautious religion, its corrupt politics and immutable castes, as the great hidden enemy of his deepest yearnings. (*FLW* 350)

Fowles describes this metamorphosis of Charles in the superlatives of prose :

In a sudden flash of illumination Charles saw the right purpose of Christianity...the redemption of sins...a world in which the hanging man could be descended, could be seen not with the rites of agony on his face, but the smiling peace of a victory brought about by, and in, living men and women.(*Ibid* 349)

His weaknesses still haunted him, but his self seemed still alive, yet ironically like the fossils he had collected. To the narrator, “Then he made the great leap: They do not know, they cannot judge”(FLW 350). A poem from Tennyson’s *In Memoriam* is quoted to parallel the realization: “Do we indeed desire the dead...To make allowance for us all” (*Ibid* 350).

At the end of Chapter 12, Fowles puts the question, “Who is Sarah? Out of what shadows does she come?” (*FLW* 96), and answers himself in Chapter 13, “I do not know”(Ibid 97). At times, Sarah challenges and gives Charles a metaphorical death. If viewed as a negative anima, she poses as a threat, bringing about his obliteration. He realizes that if he were to choose her, he would become “one of life’s victims, once more ammonite caught in the vast movements of history, stranded now for eternity, a potential turned into a fossil”(Ibid 289). The recognition of his self comes even before he makes his ultimate choice. Charles is deposited in a human race, where one could experience a sense of

freedom a bourgeois cannot comprehend. This question of Sarah's role as an anima, if viewed less controversially, seems to be inclined for Charles, from negative to positive. Such animas are there in the form of Wickham and Darcy in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights*, and Rochester in *Jane Eyre*.

The intimidation to male power in the Victorian period also found a clear outlet in J.S. Mill's responses. The schizophrenia resulting among men also found the best outlook in Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. To Fowles it was the "...best guidebook to the age"(FLW 355). Stevenson's fiction shows the male psyche to be the basic cause of sexual duplicity on women. The "thorough and primitive duality of man"(Gussow 84), which Stevenson so explicitly shows in the character of Jekyll is nothing but the part of the male psychosis in general. Charles is an embodiment of these contradictions. In spite of being a representative of the male orthodoxy of the Victorians, he is a figure who does not fit into the male behavior of his times. He feels his manhood at stake. He wanted "To stop the futile brooding – if only he could act!"(Ibid 230). His quest of a genuine self, only makes him trapped in his own surroundings. Hence, hassled by the Victorian standards, he got engaged to Ernestina. His previous sexual escapades in Paris as a student, had somehow offered him more license to pursue sexual adventures. But in England he played the role of a lone wolf. As Fowles comments in the beginning of the novel, "he liked pretty girls and he was not averse to leading them, and their ambitious parents on"(Ibid 20). His engagement to Ernestina, made him feel dry, and Sarah made him drift away from her. Taking an early morning stroll, after his reading the various perverse accounts of Victorian women, Fowles makes nature, a leitmotif in his fiction,

soothe Charles's "hurt pride"(Ibid 230). In nature Charles finds the much-needed solace he requires:

On the slopes above his path the trunks of the ashes and sycamores, a honey gold in the oblique sunlight, erected in their dewy green vaults of young leaves; there was something mysteriously religious about them...a druid balm...the singing birds-blackcaps, whitethroats, thrushes, blackbirds, the cooing of wood pigeons [...] . (Ibid 233)

In his narrative device, Fowles shows Charles's self, subjected to the delusion he faced, in relation to the society. In the early part of the novel, the narrator describes the sleepy town of Lyme Regis as inferior to Charles:

Unlit Lyme was the ordinary mass of mankind, most evidently sunk in immortal sleep; while Charles the naturally selected (the adverb carries both its senses) was pure intellect, walking awake, free as a god, one with the unslumbering stars and understanding all. (FLW 159)

Charles belongs to the *aristoi*, or the Few, a typical Victorian male. The Victorian social institutions inscribed man in the circle of hierarchy of classes. It is the struggle against these establishments that the *hoi polloi*, or the Many must struggle to achieve freedom from supremacy. Charles refuses to join Mr. Freeman's trade, as a haberdasher, in fear it might encroach on his aristocratic values. This adaptation to social change is the Darwinian social evolution. It echoes with Bernard Shaw's theory of the survival of the fittest. This rebellion is embodied in the novel in the most powerful terms in Sam, Charles's manservant. And Sam evolves into a successful business man, an evolving

power. To Fowles, Charles does not exactly change according to Darwinian terms, but he advances towards, or is rather rescued by existentialism: “existentialism is not a philosophy, but a way of looking at, and utilizing, other philosophies. It is the theory of relativity among theories of absolute truth”(The Aristos 116). The existentialistic traits in Charles is described by the novelist himself: “Charles is thus an existentialist before his time, walks down the quay and sees that mysterious back, feminine, silent, also existentialist, turned to the horizon” (WH 41).

An exploration for the authenticity in Sarah becomes more necessary than Charles’s seeking for his personal authenticity. The sacred and the profane are the two sides of the individual countenance and the search for the self is within the encirclement of this matter:

The sacred is qualitatively different from the profane, yet it may manifest itself no matter or where in the profane world because of its power of turning any natural objects into a paradox by means of a hierophany, i.e. manifestation of the sacred. (Eliade 30)

Humankind had always witnessed the “perennial, conflict between good and evil, light and dark, which is reflected in mythology”(Jordan 127). The ideal of the sacred is shown only when it is generated by the reality of the profane. Without the feeling of fallen, paradise can never be regained.

A close study of Schopenhauer and Freud, reveals the concept of the will and the theory of free association of Schopenhauer, containing the foundations of what Freud later

formulated in his theory of the unconscious and the id. To some, Schopenhauer's original articulation of the Freudian theory of sexuality had interesting correspondences, where the power of sexual desire can be expressed in metaphysical language. He views his claims about sexuality as simple inferences from the metaphysical construct of the will. To him: "...we know sex to be the decided and strongest affirmation of life by the fact that for man in the natural state, as for the animal, it is his life's final end and highest goal"(Schopenhauer 329). Schopenhauer refers to the genitals as the "real focus of the will" (Schopenhauer 514) . The sexual drive "springs from the depths of our nature"(Ibid 511). Both Freud and Schopenhauer emphasized the weight and universality of the sexual drive. But Schopenhauer goes beyond Freud by expanding his dominion of sexuality far beyond procreation, orgasm and genital pleasure. Sexual impulses, which had never before been formulated, were his manifestations:

To all this corresponds the important role which the sex-relation plays in the world of mankind, where it is really the invisible central point of all actions and conduct, and peeps at us everywhere in spite of all the veils thrown over it. It is...the key to all allusions, and the meaning of the mysterious hints. (Ibid 513)

Taking Schopenhauer's view into consideration, the sexual encounter of Charles with Sarah, frees him from the bondage of the indictment of patriarchy. The denial of continuing a relationship with her hence, heightens the latent part of his freedom. He is indeed the tormenter, and the pariah, not like other men of his clan:

He saw his own true superiority to her. Which was not of birth or education, not of intelligence, not of sex, but of an ability to give that was also an inability to

compromise. She could give only to possess; and to possess him-whether because he was, whether because possession was so imperative in her.(*FLW* 443-4)

Charles's freedom crosses the domain of ordinary sexual impulses. He has crossed the threshold of genital pleasure. He is emancipated!

On Sarah's abrupt disappearance from Exeter, Charles is forced to leave England, and he goes to the United States. The horror of his knowledge of her virginity places him in a paradoxical situation. As the battlefield of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* is the one where success hurts the conqueror. The quest of Charles in the sexual godgame had indeed placed him in an emancipated situation, yet the delmmas persisted. His chances of meeting Sarah becomes distant after her desertion. The search for her has echoes of similarity in Nicholas's search for Alison in *The Magus*. But the resultant factor compels Charles to create a dreamlike world fantasizing Sarah, creating a Sarah of his dreams, who is very much different from the Sarah of reality. The real Sarah is a mystery, and a dangerous Eve, "The one Eve personified, all mystery and love and profundity, and the other, and the other a half-scheming, half-crazed governess from an obscure seaside town... his own folly and delusion"(*FLW* 411).

Sarah in her quest of emancipation, is like an embryonic feminist and the revenging *femme fatale*. Unmasking the patriarchal oppression of women is in itself a tantalizing mystery. Sarah's smile to Charles is described as "something strange, as shocking, as if she had thrown her clothes off"(*FLW* 180). This hint anticipate the central dynamism of Charles's sexual conquest . Her very casting by Fowles is in this convention:

Women dominated and even, like praying mantis, killed the men they loved or coveted. And the men quite enjoyed it. Until the nineteenth century, there had been no precise stereotype of the predatory feminist...but the Victorians' muddled blend of public courtliness and private guilt made it necessary to create one. (Tannahill 384)

*The French Lieutenant's Woman* does not exactly project Sarah's uncrucifixion of Charles from the bondages of her enigmatic self. At times, she is seen to uncrucify her own self. In this, she actually becomes more than an individual, aspiring freedom. The Marxian epigraph: "Every emancipation is a restoration of the human world and of human relationships to man himself"(FLW 346), suggests the theme of woman's liberation from man. Fowles places her in contrast to Ernestina, who is typically Victorian. Sarah has the direct countenance of the modern emancipated woman of the twentieth century. She sees her own century as a vision, which is a temporal prison, where chance has placed her: "You have given me the consolation of believing that in another world, another age, another life, I might have been your wife. You have given me the strength to go on living...in the here and now"(Ibid 342). She becomes indeed in Fowles words, "a figure from myth"(Ibid 11).

Like his readers Fowles takes the freedom of describing himself as the stout impresario in the final chapter of the novel:

There is about the clothes, in the lavishly embroidered summer waistcoat, in the three rings on fingers, the panatela in its amber holder, the malachite-headed cane,

a distinct touch of the flashy...There is, in short, more than a touch of the successful [...] . (FLW 441)

This Frenchified and plush stature in the form of Fowles had no doubt, popped into the novel several times and in several different disguises. But this time, he sets the clock back a little, to transform the fortunes of his two protagonists, Charles and Sarah. The narrator of the novel, and the impresario who invades the narrative is Fowles himself. To Malcolm Bradbury: “The trickster and the voice of fact and authority; the manipulator and the humanist concerned in all good faith over the fate and the individual freedom of his characters”(Bradbury 175). As the theme of the novel is existential freedom of the self, the novelist reaches the destination after a tedious journey of putting his difficult characters in the right place and direction.

In his non-fiction “Hardy and the Hag,” Fowles argues: “Yet I am now clear that I am happier, where I gave two, with the unhappy ending, and not in any way for objective critical reasons, but simply because it seemed more fertile and onward to my whole being as a writer”(WH 169). The status of the redemption of the self, is demonstrated in the book, through the multiple endings. The first occurs in Chapters 43 and 44, where Charles is seen to discard Sarah, marries Ernestina, and starts business with her father. Critics and Fowles himself, reject this ending as too conventional. It shows his self to be if not a loser, a dilapidated one. This ending projects a betrayal of Charles’s potentiality: “...he was one of life’s victims, one more ammonite caught in the vast movements of history, stranded now for eternity, a potential turned to fossil”(FLW 321) failing in self-scrutiny. He made no attempt to question his “irrational fear”(Acheson 41).

The second which occurs in Chapter 50 of the novel, projects the breaching of the engagement of Ernestina and Charles, and Charles returns to Sarah, where he is united with their daughter, Lalange. After confessing to Ernestina of his courtship with Sarah, he faces her cold and venomous accusation, “You have broken your promise”(FLW 366). Charles after this ending, looks at himself in a mirror: “...the man in the mirror...seemed the true self”(Ibid 367).

The third and perhaps the most appropriate ending occurs in the final chapter, where Sarah refuses to be under Charles, and decides to stay with the Rossettis, as Mrs. Roughwood, the reversed title of Woodruff. In bewilderment, Charles pronounces: “A day will come when you shall be called to account for what you have done to me. And if there is justice in heaven, your punishment shall outlast eternity”(FLW 442). He is left alone unable to situate his self: “He saw his own true superiority to her: which was not of birth or education, not of intelligence, not of sex, but of ability to give that was also an inability to compromise...he threw her one last burning look of rejection, then left the room”(Ibid 443-44). Coming out of the Rossetti’s mansion, Charles does not know where to go. Looking aimlessly at the waters of the sea, which Fowles terms as “the river of life, of mysterious laws and mysterious choice, flows past a deserted embankment”(Ibid 445), gives Charles an “atom of faith...”(Ibid 445). Life has to be taken with its hazards, as one makes it oneself. The novel concludes with Charles facing the sea, a broken but a resolute man trying to fathom his self, “And out again, upon the unplumbed, salt, estranging sea”(Ibid 445).

The metaphor of the sea has always been dangerous and alien. The literature and history of the sea is very ancient and vast. Homer's *Odyssey*, Melville's *Moby Dick*, Hemingway's *The Old Man And The Sea* and the recent Patrick O' Brian's *Master and Commander*, have the sea playing dominant metaphors in their narrations. Homer suggests that the ocean is the source of all things, "The begetter or origin of the gods and the begetter of all things"(Ferber 179). The dominant metaphor of the sea is also highlighted in Arnold's line from *To Marguerite*, "the unplumb'd, salt, estranging sea"(FLW 445) at the end of the novel, which views that human beings are just like continents, wanting to be reunited in love. But Fowles reverses this in the concluding chapter, emphasizing that true freedom is only to be found in solitude. The "unplumbed"(Ibid 445) sea of life signifies the sea as life's unfathomed depths, and its submerged complexities.

David Lodge, who gave an extended thought to the endings of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, perceives multiple endings as a rejection of an absolute order, which is one of the essential features of postmodernist fiction:

Even this kind of ending [the modernist open ending]...can seem too comfortable or consoling in its endorsement of the commonplace that life, somehow or other, goes on: and insufficiently self-conscious about its own conventionality. The open ending, like the closed ending...asserts the existence of an order; and it still makes a claim for the fiction's realism, verisimilitude, or truth to life. (Lodge 143-45)

Charles's migration to America after leaving London, is relevant to Arnold's poem, mentioned in Chapter 59, as an epigraph:

Weary of myself, and sick of asking  
What I am, and what I ought to be,  
At the vessel's prow I stand, which bears me  
Forwards, forwards, o'er the starlit sea .(FLW 413)

The last sentence in this chapter is taken from Mathew Arnold's *To Marguerite*: "The unplumbed, salt, estranging sea"(FLW 445). Fowles's emphasis of separating Charles and Sarah, is a suggestion that true freedom can be attained in solitude, not in the company of a savior or a guide. The unfathomable sea is used as a metaphor of its hidden properties, and Charles takes up his hazardous voyage on his own convictions. He has solved the riddle of the Sphinx, and takes life in his own stride. Fowles himself up the metamorphosis of Charles as, "his better self, that self that once had enabled him to see immediately through the malice of Lyme to see her real nature, fought hard to dismiss his suspicions"(Ibid 426-7).

A question can be raised if inspite of Fowles's theoretical self-awareness in the novel, does *The French Lieutenant's Woman* marginalize Sarah? There have been debates on this issue, whether the novel is a feminist or a prejudiced one. It can be argued whether she achieves self-determination in the house of the Rossettis, or whether she lives there as a symbol of male art? Sarah's enigmatic and incomprehensible self, her refusal to tell Charles or the reader on what she really thinks, have led her to take the role of a mysterious and fostering presence in the heart of the male Oedipal fantasy. In *The Aristos*, Fowles comments "Eve societies are those in which the woman and the mother,

female gods, encourage...fresh definitions, aims, modes of feeling”(The Aristos 157). When Charles and Dr. Grogan had in an earlier occasion, contemplated to send Sarah to a mental asylum on the basis of her sudden hysterical condition, it was a clear manipulation on their parts to objectify her psychological condition, instead of giving her the status she requires. The Victorian ambiguities sustain!

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**Non-Fiction:**

**“Notes on an Unfinished Novel”**

Written in 1969, “Notes on an Unfinished Novel,” concentrates on Fowles’s conception and writing of *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*. In November 1966, Fowles had toyed of writing a novel, titled *The Scythe*, with themes of women’s emancipation. The female protagonist here was a suffering individual. Fowles had commented: “Women has to retrace her steps to some of the parts of the contract that have been annulled...a woman is the port from which the ship sails, and to which it will return”(Warburton 292). Due to personal reasons, he censored *The Scythe*. The conception of *The French Lieutenant’s Woman* was based on the “mythopoeic stills”(WH 14), which led to meticulous research, which eventually bore fruit. On the persistent image, which had disturbed him, Fowles comments: “It started four of five months ago, as a visual image. A woman stands... It was obviously mysterious...the woman had no face, no particular degree of sexuality. But she was Victorian”(Ibid 14). The figure he visualized in the autumn of 1966, when he was halfway to another novel, interfered with his creativity, but was in actuality, his stimulation which he terms as “accidentality of inspiration”(Ibid 15). Fowles named this woman “in his waking dream Sarah Woodruff”(Warburton 293).

To be possessed by one's own creative faculties in writing the novel was not enough for Fowles. The misconception that all writers in a sense had natural and inborn imaginations, were not ample. This to him is, "Narcissism, or pygmalionism, the essential vice a writer must have"(WH 15). Novel writing is like nurturing an offspring. They needed earnest apprehension and discernment. The "orthodox method"(Ibid 15) in this regard is working out the experiences, and then co-relating them in harmony. At times, even this method fails miserably, as Fowles had undergone during the writing of *The Magus*. A writer metaphorically visits the places of his acquaintances, in his subconscious precincts, which he later fictionalizes in his books. The villa Fowles had visited in Spetsai, Yiasemi, years ago remained mysterious to him, even after the completion of the *The Magus*.

Once the "seed germinates"(WH 16), Fowles maintains, the rest of the complexities gradually dissolve. *The Collector* was written in a month, but had to be revised: "During the revision period I try to keep some sort of discipline. I make myself revise whether I feel like it or not...the more disciplined and dyspeptic one feels, the better-one is harsher with oneself"(Ibid 16). Advice from senior writers to trace at least a thousand words a day seemed a "puritanical and impractical approach"(Ibid 16). Writing to him was the most natural obsession of a creative individual, and one should write when one feels like, not obligated to. In *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, Fowles goes to the forefront of showing how mid-Victorian ideas on feminism, societal, rank and advancement, affected the twentieth century views. Moreover Darwin's theory of evolution had made the

Victorians fear, of being “hurled into space”(Ibid 19). Like the present times, we exist with the horror of the atom bomb. He makes his purpose clear in the essay:

The Victorian Age, especially from 1850 on, was highly existentialist in its personal dilemmas. One can almost invert the reality and say that Camus and Sartre have been trying to lead us, in their fashion, to a Victorian seriousness of purpose and moral sensitivity. (WH 18-19)

During intervals of writing, Fowles wrote memoranda to himself on the book he was on:

You are not trying to write something one of the Victorian novelists forgot to write; but perhaps something one of them failed to write... A novel is something new. It must have relevance to the writer's now-so don't ever pretend you live on 1867; or make sure the reader knows it's a pretence.(Ibid 17)

The question in the post-modern era that the novel should follow a new form, is ludicrous to Fowles. In this regard he mentions Alain Robbe-Grillet's essay, “*Pour un nouveau roman*,” where its writer questions: “Why bother to write in a form whose great masters cannot be surpassed?”(Ibid 18). Writing *The French Lieutenant's Woman* was retreating to 1867, which did not lessen the trauma, but increased, “The real historical nature of the characters”(Ibid 19) if distorted, will turn it into a comic novel instead.

These introspections project the writer's self to be intrinsic and inherent. The most “precise scientific description of an object or movement is a tissue of metaphors”(WH 17). To Fowles, his two previous novels were foundations on existentialist premises. He wanted *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, to be no exemption. He gives pertinent descriptions of the Victorian male, alike to the protagonist of *The French Lieutenant's*

*Woman*, Charles Smithson: “Just such a man, an existentialist before his time, walks down the quay and sees that mysterious back, feminine, silent, also existentialist, facing the sea and turned on him”(Ibid 19).

Irony is an intrinsic part of Fowles’s novels. He had always liked the ironic tenor of writers like Jane Austen, Joseph Conrad, Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot and Mark Twain. The reason of his liking is because “irony needs the assumption of superiority in the ironist”(WH 20). On the mode of narration, Fowles tries to resurrect his technique to view England hundred years ago, which is problematic. Hence, he decided that, “...the ‘I’ who will make the first-person commentaries here and there in my story, and who will finally enter it, will not be my real ‘I’ in 1967...though in a different category from the purely fictional ones”( Ibid 20-21).

On September 2, 1967, Fowles had almost completed two thirds of the novel. At the same time, *The Magus* was being filmed. The script of *The Magus*, was written by himself for filming. The team effort for the big screen made him reflect if novel writing is far from being a free form than cinematography. In a novel, the writer himself is the “producer, director, and all the actors”(Ibid 23). It has no limits like poetry. It tries to “establish freedom in other fields, social and political”(Ibid 23). Perturbed on what class of reviews would await him on *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*, and on its technical failures if any, he comments, “The nightmare of the writer is that all his or her worst private fears and self-criticisms will be made public”(Ibid 25). Fowles acknowledges the

influence of Thomas Hardy and Thomas Love Peacock, who are among his favourites, in the writing of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*.

Commenting on the female characters in his novels, he endorses their domination. As he had clarified, "Women know more about human nature, more about mystery, and more about keeping passion alive"(The Aristos 90), Sarah Woodruff plays the role of such a woman in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, enlarging the mind of Charles Smithson in a conventional Victorian society. In this essay, Fowles writes:

"Now Sarah has this power. She doesn't realize how. Nor I do yet...I was struck this morning trying to find a good answer from Sarah at the climax of a scene...silence from her was better than any line she might have said"(WH 26).

Ending Sarah's role in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, had kept Fowles on tenderhooks while writing the finale of this novel. And silence seemed to be the right word to collaborate with her character, "I saw that she had in fact been telling me what to do: silence from her was better than any line she might have said"(Ibid 26).

Confessing candidly that he kept himself away entirely from the literary life in London, Fowles shuns the public self, and feels at home with his real self, which is writing. Socializing with people makes him feel like an alien from outer space: "My real self is here and now, in writing. Whenever I think of this (the writing, not the written) experiences, images to do with exploring, single-handed voyages, lone mountain ascents always spring unwanted to my mind"(Ibid 27). The essay vividly recalls Fowles's disgust on the bitter obituaries in the December 1967 issue of *Encounter*, on *The French*

*Lieutenant's Woman*, even before he had published it. To the reviewers, the novel was dead, and the likes of Fowles should acknowledge and be “grateful to the two million or more ghosts who have bought copies of their respective books”(Ibid 29). The academic criticism to Fowles, have grown “dangerously scientific”(Ibid 28). In science, analyzation and categorization are the vital tools, but not in a novel. On October 27<sup>th</sup> 1967, Fowles concluded the primary outline of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, which had begun on January 25<sup>th</sup> of the same year: “It is about 140,000 words long... perfect, flawless, a lovely novel...I want to get on with another book. I had a strange image last night”(Ibid 29). The essay concludes, with Fowles's persistence to discover the unquenchable voyage for the unknown.

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### **“The Filming of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*”**

The essay records Fowles's experiences on the cinematographical endeavor of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, and his own view that novel writing possesses practical advantage over celluloid versions. Telephone calls from aspiring actresses, tedious searches for directors, producers and financiers, were the initial hurdles. His reluctance to let the novel be a serial in televisions, were the early hurdles for the filming. Colossal Hollywood producers and writers like Fred Zinnemann, Karel Reisz, Harold Pinter and Robert Bolt who were approached by Fowles, backed out politely from the venture:

Looking back, I suspect the chief thing that balked and frustrated the directors and writers we talked with was the distinctly mushroom reputation of the book itself... its text was in grave danger of becoming sacrosanct...the book was, and would always remain, unfilmable.(WH 39)

The book, biased on the female side was not treated kindly by the directors. A decade passed in the anticipation. Fate was kind to Fowles and his “tireless active partner”(Ibid 38), Tom Maschler. Director Karel Reisz agreed to direct the film, if Harold Pinter tackled the script. It was sensational news to Fowles. Further miracles followed, when Meryl Streep and Jeremy Irons agreed for acting in the title roles. The great day dawned when on the 27<sup>th</sup> of May: “Karel stood beside the camera crew outside a country house in Lyme Regis; Sam the servant waited with a bunch of flowers on his starting mark, and the magic word was said”(Ibid 40).

The essay continues with the nature of the domains of the novel and cinema. He argues that both the medias are essentially narrative in style as they overlap each other in the line of approach. Visual projections cannot be captured in words, and alternately the things expressed in words, the camera can never photograph. It is language that: “...first arose to design and ‘show’ things that could not be physically seen; the evolution of the novel has been more and more concerned with those aspects of life and modes of feeling that can never expressed visually”(WH 41).

Photography reached a milestone when it was uplifted by psychoanalysts like Freud to depict the inner emotions of characters. But to Fowles, the assemblage of some considerable number of elements cannot be filmed. The stumbling block for the filming

of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* was that it was written from both a mid-Victorian and a modern viewpoint. Helped in this difficulty by another Hollywood director Peter Ustinov, who suggested that the novel had to be filmed not in its elaborate original text, but in a condensed form in two hours of screening time. Harold and Karel hit upon a possible solution. Fowles had to approve the script not be the exact version of his novel, but its blueprint. Believing that authors should not interfere once the writer and director of the film were involved, Fowles kept himself out of the procedures .

Extending more of his viewpoints in cinematography, Fowles adheres to the perception that artists should make films as “sincere craftsman” (WH 45). Not believing that the cinema is killing fiction, he insists that: “The two ways of telling stories are much nearer sisters than anything else. A good director is always partly a novelist and vice-versa ...”(Ibid 45). Although the lure of money is one of the prime magnetism of novelists in the selling rights of the novel, his only wish of this “vile ethos”(Ibid 47) targeted that the savings should go to help the ailing British film industry. French novelist Alain Robbe Grillet invoked the cinematic adaptation of novels to advocate art, that stays on the surface and denounced what he called, “the old myths of depth. The writer’s traditional role consisted in excavating Nature, in burrowing deeper and deeper to reach some ever more intimate strata...” (qt. Lodge 78). But in the cinema, one actually views these things and what effects us, are the movements, and outlines, where the images suddenly and unintentionally restore their reality. To capture the reality, the novel made into cinema must purge itself from the language, and concentrate in “measuring, locating, limiting, defining, indicating a difference but most likely direction for a new art of the novel”(Logde 79).

Believing that “ good moment at launching is, in my philosophy of life, just as important a thing as an eventually successful voyage”(WH 47), Fowles placed himself beside Harold and Karel on the first day of the shooting. He realized that his two partners were doing their maximum to attain accomplishment. Difficult to define the abortive ten years of struggle, he felt: “...the script, the new keel performed the final miracle: it made possible both the moment and the voyage”(Ibid 47).

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This chapter emphasizes that in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, Fowles has attempted to create consciousness in the self, through the representation of the individual thoughts and outlooks; a concept of the self which is unique, autonomous, morally responsible, reaching a consensus through introspection. Charles and Sarah redeem themselves from their narrativized identities. Against the bedrock of societal dimensions, Fowles insists on a relative uniformity of self-reflection and self-representation, using the language of sexual discourse to celebrate freedom. The voiceless and confusing hope in the ambiguous finale is the indicative effect of the book. What Sarah does for Charles, Fowles does for the reader, an offering to the concept of free will by him. Dramatizing his absence in the conclusion of the novel, he liberates the self from every precinct. An existential affirmation, “as empty space from teeming community; as Sartrean freedom from Christian providence”(Neary 175).

“Notes on an Unfinished Novel,” highlights his passions of creative writing, and exploring new forms of writing, through a modern viewpoint. Fowles records the genesis of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* and its composition. The essay also accesses on Fowles's viewpoint, that he prefers his personal self to be more treasured. The second

essay “The Filming of *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*,” analysis the expedient advantage of novel writing over graphic demonstration, and Fowles’s striving in the cinematic dimensions; a diverse obsession in the creative process. The essay, though written in 1981, does not diminish Fowles’s thrill of his enthusiasm with this meticulous novel. The writer’s self and the creative self projected in these two non-fiction, reflect the tensions in Fowles’s consciousness, while writing the *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*.

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## Chapter VI - *The Art and the Artist*

### **Fiction:**

*The Ebony Tower*

*Daniel Martin*

### **Non-Fiction:**

“Eliduc and the Lais of Marie de France”

“My Recollections on Kafka”

“Hardy and the Hag”

The publication of *The Ebony Tower* in 1974, a compilation of short stories, comprises the first gesture of Fowles’s receding interest in existentialism, while looking for innovative areas in fiction writing, which furthermore finds outlet in his next work, *Daniel Martin*. In an interview to Susana Onega, Fowles had commented after the success of *The French Lieutenant’s Woman* that, “I am no longer an existentialist in the social sense...I am really much more interested, in terms of the modern novel, in what fiction is about” (Onega 181). Doubtful of this concept, he however continued in the existential premises in his works, accepting the view that the world is essentially composite and inexplicable. In *Daniel Martin*, Fowles comes closest in incorporating the necessity of art in political change in the struggle of male supremacy, and proposes a veiled prescription of his leanings to Left Winged politics. As he remarks on this principle, “I think now of existentialism as a kind of literary metaphor, a wish fulfillment” (Bigsby 117)

The essence of the self in *The Ebony Tower* and its reorganization, the fragmentation of the self and the role of the creative artist in *Daniel Martin*, will be the analysis of the first

part of this chapter. The second part will comprise of the essays “Eliduc and The Lais of Marie de France”(1974), “My Recollections on Kafka”(1970), and “Hardy and The Hag” (1977). The first essay reflects a considerable impact of Celtic influence in the projection of the self in *The Ebony Tower*. The detective genre also reverberates in three of the stories in *The Ebony Tower*, which show Fowles’s preoccupation with a dissimilar framework in the stories. The sequence of the self in his work is thus, never compartmentalized, but seeks more ambience. “My Recollections on Kafka,” and “Hardy and The Hag,” studies on the paradigms of the writer’s self. The mysteries of existence, and a constant paranoiac fear of being victimized had a cathartic flavour in Kafka’s writings, and an underlying link with the self in *Daniel Martin*. “Hardy and The Hag,” scrutinizes Thomas Hardy’s novel, *The Well Beloved* and Fowles’s own comments on Hardy as a writer. The essay also analyses the effort, which a male novelist undertakes to situate the lost figure of infancy in building his creativity, which plays a crucial role in the reorganization of the self in *Daniel Martin*.

A compilation of five stories, *The Ebony Tower* is Fowles’s fourth endeavor in fiction. Comparable features of these stories find resonances in his earlier works, but if taken into contemplation, they project depths of different genres. The four original stories here are *The Ebony Tower*, *Poor Koko*, *The Enigma* and *The Cloud*. A striking feature is the inclusion of a story which is not Fowles’s original, namely *Eliduc*. His version of a medieval French tale “translated accurately and self-effacingly”(Loveday 82) into English, is included in the assemblage, which is preceded with an introduction where

Fowles highlights a personal and a general theory of fiction. This theory lays stress on the origins of the novel directly from Celtic romance.

In the title story, the protagonist is a young English painter, critic and art teacher, David Williams. He goes to meet Henry Breasley, an elderly emigrant and an artist living in Coetminias, Brittany. Williams is tangled in a close encounter with the elderly man, and the “assignment turns into an appalling revelation of his shortcomings as an artist and a man”(Bevis 114). The second story, *Eliduc*, a translated Celtic romance, records the moral traditions which try to establish human emotions and their absurdities. *Poor Koko* questions on the maxims of existential authenticity, with elaborations on the writer’s self. The fourth tale *The Enigma*, is in a detective genre, delving into a mystery, which remains an ambiguity. The final story, *The Cloud*, comments on the dichotomies of the self, in the presentation of the uncertainties that characterizes life in the modern century.

Structurally, the five stories expand and amplify ideas, which are prominent in Fowles’s other works: “matters of love and sex, the functions of art and the artist, the uses and abuses of language, the demands of freedom and the responsibilities of free choice”(Olshen 92). He also amplifies that on account of the different themes and varying modes of narration, he had previously intended to name this collection as *Variations*, but the title was eventually discarded, due to the judgement of the editor, that it was without justification, except as “a very private mirage in the writer’s mind”(ET 117).

*The Ebony Tower* can be grouped in the genre of the short story. To give the short story a precise definition in disparity to the novel, is intricate because “the main formal

characteristics of the modern novel and the modern short story are the same” (Ferguson 14). In both the genres there are narrators, points of views, dialogues and settings. In a finality to the problem, Ferguson tries to sketch an open definition:

Short stories are defined in terms of unity (Poe, Brander, Matthews), techniques of plot compression (A.L. Bader, Norman Friedman, L.A.G.Strong), change or revelation of character (Theodore Stroud), subject (Frank O’Conner), tone (Gordimer), lyricism (Moravia), but there is no single characteristic or cluster of characteristics that the critics agree, absolutely distinguishes the short story from other fiction. (Ferguson 13)

In a catching phrase, Fowles remarks that in reading stories such as *Eliduc*, “the writer of fiction...is watching his own birth” (ET 120). Each story varies in length from forty-four to a hundred and ten pages. The compatibility of the self in the stories in *The Ebony Tower* do not recur, but vary in premises and mode of narration.

*The Ebony Tower* by virtue of its narrative device, has underlying connections, which are sometimes implied and are at times overt. Fowles’s “A Personal Note”(ET 119), before the second story can be regarded as an explicit link in the self here, because he justifies here the interlinking of the stories. The epigraphs in the beginning of each story, the similar settings, and some of the incidents are the implicit devices of the collection. Though each story has diverse examples of love, detective fiction and fantasy, there is a balance in them, while upholding the diverse facets of the self. Fowles has interwoven the texture of the five tales closely in *The Ebony Tower*, although they vary in their modes of narration and presentation

## ***The Ebony Tower***

In the epigraph to the title story *The Ebony Tower*, Fowles emphasizes the element of quest and adventure, for achieving illumination in the self. The epigraph in French is taken from the Celtic verses of Chrétien's *Yvain*, which is similar to the story of the protagonist Yvain's adventure, in search of his bride. It describes the quest journey, which runs parallel to the quest of the protagonist, David Williams:

*Et par forez longues et lees  
Par leus estranges et sauvages  
Et passa mainz felons passages  
Et maint peril et maint destroit  
Tant qu'il vint au santier tot droit. (ET 9)*

Translated, the verse means:

On into forests deep and wide  
He went through many wicked passes  
Through many treacherous, wild morasses  
And eerie places, and rode all day  
Until he saw the narrow way. (Lewis & Olshen 22)

In the same manner as Yvain takes his perilous journey for his quest, Williams commences his journey from Mont St. Michael, around the walls of the towns of St. Malo, through the forests of Brittany, which serves as a device for his self-discovery: "Then the final few miles through the forest of Paimpont, one of the last large remnants of the old wooded Brittany... green and shaded minor roads..." (ET 9-11). The *Ebony Tower* portrays Williams as a man of moral principles, who lives a tranquil life of

matrimony, with two children. He is on a mission to oblige some publishers, to write an autobiographical and critical introduction of *The Art Of Henry Breasley*. The offer was made with the painter's approval, and Williams was on his way to Brittany to meet the artist. The forest of Paimpont, the final round of his drive before reaching Breasley's manor, is "one of the last remnants of the old wooded Brittany"(ET 9). The enchantment of Coetminais, Breasley's habitat, is associated with the Celtic romances. The September weather was simply splendid through the countryside, giving David a pleasant fantasy of unattached bachelor freedom. The anecdote reflects an analogous situation of the self in *The Magus*. Like Nicholas Urfe who faces the godgames of Conchis in Phraxos on his way to self discovery, David Williams faces the a similar predicament in discovering the core tension of his inner self, in the magical land of Brittany, with an equally enthralling Coetminias, and an arrogant Henry Breasley with his two female companions. As Fowles comments, "In a way, I wanted to demystify *The Magus* which I think was altogether too full of mystery. This is a kind of realistic version of *The Magus*"(Robinson 584). Breasley can be evaluated with Conchis in *The Magus*, who eventually leads Williams to explore into the nucleus of his self.

Henry Breasley's retirement to isolation in the forests of Paimpont in France, is to look for refuge from the experimental rise in painting which had deeply aggrieved the artist in him. As he says, "Call yourself avant-garde. Experimental...High treason, that's all. Mess of scientific pottage...And isn't the best propaganda for humanism based on the freedom to create what you like?"(ET 47). On the other hand, his is an opposite pole, and to Williams observation, he is "...white-haired, though the eyebrow were still faintly

grey; the bulbous nose, the misleading fastidious mouth, the pouched grey-blue eyes...”(ET 24). To Breasley, abstract painting is a kind of betrayal and “...the triumph of the eunuch”(Ibid 111). His work, while not exactly realistic, is representational. His paintings echo the essence of a dream-like Celtic world which is archetypal. Breasley hints the symbolic term of *The Ebony Tower* to be a place where all artists take solace from the world, building a metaphorical enclosure around them. Williams observes the ancient surface of a table in front of him: “...blackened oak, scarred and rubbed the patina of centuries’ use of aged voices...As if time knew ebb...Then the old spoke with a strange lucidity... *ebony tower*. That’s what I call it” (ET 51). In Coetminias, Williams also encounters Diana and Anne, Breasley’s companions. Diana confides in him that, although Breasley would like to marry her, she prefers having a “fairy tale”(ET 44) ending to the story of her life, where she will be the “sleeping princess”(Ibid 44), to be rescued by a handsome prince. Williams falls in the luring dragnet, and toys with the idea of joining Diana to France, but it would mean discarding his wife and children. The ruthlessness of Fowles’s stripping of his protagonist to the core of his self is the arresting feature in *The Ebony Tower*, where “art is fundamentally amoral”(Bevis 115). Fowles implicitly uses the nature motif as the forest in *The Ebony Tower*, which initiates right from the incipit of the story:

The forest setting is the typical plane within which the medieval romance is depicted. Fowles’s stories demonstrate the close connections and parallels between the protagonists and those of the heroes and heroines of medieval stories. (Salami 139)

In his non-fictional venture *The Tree*, Fowles considers the importance of nature as essential settings of a narrative, where the self can identify its inert consciousness. Forest woodlands especially have an uncanny link to the narrative which take the form of an adventure and a quest in Celtic romances: “But it is the silence, the waitingness of the place, that is so haunting; a quality all woods will have on occasion...a drama, but of a time-span humanity cannot achieve”(The Tree 90). Henry Breasley attempts to teach Williams the method of maintaining a balance between abstract and representational paintings in the forest setting. He is of the view that Jung’s theory of balancing unconscious desires with rational and conscious actions is very much applicable to modernity. He tells Williams to read the medieval story of *Eliduc*: “Read it several times. What’s that old Swiss bamboozler’s name? Jung, yes? His sort of stuff. Archetypal and all that”(ET 58). It was essential for Williams to strike a balance between abstraction and representation, his wife and Diana, and his ultimate freedom choice of fidelity and being true to his social conventions.

Modern art and modern painting has a psychological relevance, and an artist can be the instrument and the spokesperson of his age. His work can be fully interpreted if we take his art in terms of personal psychology. Consciously or unconsciously, an artist tries to give form and stature to his art highlighting the values of his times. The French painter and critic, Jean Bazaine had commented, “All a painter can do is to will with all his might the painting his age is capable of”(Bazaine 122). For the past fifty years, theories on modern art had been the bone of contention. And the stream of visitors in modern art galleries show that they cannot avoid being impressed by the works: “... the fantastic

prices that are paid for works of modern art are a measure of the status conferred upon them by society”(Henderson 286). One can come to a specific termination that art, whenever produced in any age, becomes fascinating when the unconscious is moved. It is the sole aim of the modern artist to give to the public his inner vision of the self, with the spiritual background of life. On Henry Breasley, Fowles had commented in an interview to Diana Vipond:

Breasley is in no sense meant to seem ‘related’ or autobiographical, but much more a separate character sketch...as a student of French, I was deeply impressed by the *Caracteres* of La Bruyere, his whole concept of that way of entering the world of ideas and commenting on social custom...all self-portraits.(WH 441)

It has become commonplace in the contemporary epoch that the artist of today has misplaced contact with his audience, and the community no longer approves of him as in the previous ages. The world of the modern artist/poet is pictured as a godless existential world:

Godless existentialism is pictured as the philosophy of our age: the modern poet is not offered the fine edifice of Thomism, as Dante was; he is confronted...by a bleak doctrine that proclaims that man is not at home in the world but thrown into it, that he has no divine father and is abandoned to a life of care, anxiety, and failure that will end in death [...].(Kaufman 2)

What had exhilarated Shakespeare and Socrates, is found lacking in the artist of today. Finding his contact lost with the audience, the artist now finds his works hanging in museums, treated unconventionally: “In this connection one simply ignores Rembrandt

and Mozart, Villon and Holderlin, Cezanne and Van Gogh”(Kaufman 2). Rembrandt had the quality of maintaining his status, and preferred painting in his own way. There have been many artists, writers, philosophers whom age cannot wither their outstanding contributions. It is not exactly the public who is at fault, but the pretenders in art today, who fail to be familiar with their own excellence, and resort to those styles that causes obtuseness to the public. Shakespeare too had dealt with this, but for the humour of his audience. He always came to terms with the obtuseness of the public. The Elizabethan audience who were not literate, made him take it up as a challenge: “...of a boorish, lecherous, and vulgar audience to advantage and increased the richness and the subtlety of tragedy so vastly that age cannot wither it, nor custom stale its infinite variety” (Kaufman 3).

David’s assessment on Breasley in reality is the awakening of his own self. He is convinced that the unruliness of the old man is his innate self. Breasley’s surface reality in his language and behavior, is indeed misleading at the first glance, but its deeper and underlying meaning is peace, space and territory: “All his life he must have had this craving for a place to hide; a profound shyness, a timidity, forcing himself to behave in an exactly contrary fashion”(ET 82-83). This feeling David mused, might have driven him out of England and placed him in France. Ironically, it is here that Breasley discovers his Englishness, and that how much one’s native persona is retained when other cultures threaten to encroach. This was the essentiality of the Englishness in Coetminias: “...the wily old outlaw, hiding from the flamboyant screen of his outrageous behavior and his cosmopolitan influences, was perhaps as simply and inalienably native as Robin Hood” (ET 83).

Fowles uses the words “green freedom”(ET 110), indicating man can only gain freedom through interaction with nature, a recurring motif in the discovery of the self in his works. The forest motif and nature is a neat equilibrium maintained by Fowles where Williams has to choose between Diana and his wife, Beth. His journey through the forests of Brittany, through hazards is juxtaposed between his final choice of freedom, also involving mental hazards. He must create a naturalistic “living reality”(Huffaker 118). Williams’s dilemma is centred on two extremes of danger on one hand, and delight on the other: “Fowles’s reality is the quest itself, man’s search for balance somewhere amid nature’s extremes, through her vast forests, which conceal both dangers and delights”(Ibid 118). Williams creates an ebony tower around him, out of which he is unable to come out. To Diana the term means, “anything ...he thinks is obscure because the artist is scared to be clear”(ET 54). His wife stands for danger and Diana for delight, and Williams is torn between the two of them. The choice was his. Ironically, he faces a dilemma because of his marriage and unlike Fowles’s other protagonists, Clegg, Nicholas, Charles and Daniel, who dither in their choices as bachelors. Like Charles, who was bounded by the cage of the social norms of the Victorian age, but who crosses the threshold to rediscover his own self at the end in the *French Lieutenant’s Woman*, Williams unlike his predecessor, does not violate his society’s normalities and remains faithful to its rules and conventions.

Coet had been a mirror, and the existence he was returning to sat mercilessly reflected and dissected in its surface...Slowly and inexorably it came to David

that is failure the previous night was merely the symbol, the crux of the matter  
[...]. (ET 109-110)

The denial of Williams to opt for a new existence of being, leaves him in a state of loss. He returns to Paris, only to find himself longing for Diana more passionately. She seemed to be his only hope as a misplaced individual, and who could have changed his course in life. Diana was "...something far beyond the girl: an anguish, a being bereft of a freedom whose true nature he had only just seen"(ET 103). A question here arises; is Diana a character parallel to Sarah, or Alison or even a Lily in the form of a seductress who lured the other Fowlesian heroes? Or is she an ideal woman who makes Williams realize and reconstruct the true nature of his self? Looking back, it is seen that as the previous Fowlesian heroines, Diana is placed in *The Ebony Tower* by Fowles as an object "a countryside, a forest and a land to conquer and utilize"(Salami 144). Williams encounters her and Anne, in Breasley's manor, and eventually he comes to identify that they are objects of the old man's gratification, like Lily and Julie as Conchis's consorts in *The Magus*. The erotic diagnosis of her role as a sex object by Breasley is shown, as he had nicknamed her as Mouse with "an O shaped vulva"(ET 82). Breasley constructs her as the Mouse and the Muse. But the narrator insists that Diana functions as the Muse because her friend Anne or the Freak was the real person who provided the "sexual services to Breasley"(Ibid 38). It is the role of the muse that Diana reinforces herself to revive the dormant subjectivity of Williams, but ultimately fails as Williams returns to his shell. Fowles presents the two artists as fundamentally diverse. While returning to Paris, from Coetminias, Williams runs over a weasel, mistaking it for a mouse. The weasel is

accidentally killed by him and he did not understand the symbolic significance that it was actually Diana literally killed, to give him a new revival. But somehow, a tug of conscience pulled the strings of his heart. As he says, “I have a dead weasel on my conscience; and deeper still, a dead woman”(ET 119). Fowles describes this situation of individuals in an interview, “Man is wedged between a social creature and being an individual” (WH 444). Williams’s rendezvous with Diana in Coet, makes him forced to see himself as a person of mere functionary of the ebony tower, which Fowles defines as: “the whole pseudo-modern-art establishment of critics, educators, and abstractionists-made to self-destruct...”(Bevis 115). Diana is a representative of a dream world, and Beth, Williams’s wife, is his reality. This conflict between illusion and reality makes Williams, picture himself as “a man, bereft of freedom”(Ibid 109). Significantly, the protagonist here unlike the usual Fowlesian hero, misses the existential choice, of reaching authenticity and joins his wife by returning to his family. The focal point in the story, besides the freedom of choice, is the relationship of the self between art and life. At the end of *The Ebony Tower*, Williams comes to comprehend Breasley’s secret: “...the old man’s secret, not letting anything stand between self and expression, which wasn’t a question of outward artistic aims, mere styles and techniques and themes”(ET 109-10).

In this title story, Fowles juxtaposes medieval and modern art together with the complexities of modern life. The medieval paintings are Uccello’s *Night Hunt*, Pisanello’s *The Vision of St .Eustace* and *St. George and the Princess*, which project Fowles’s core thinking in nature and the depiction of nature in art, and as the story unfurls, the dilemma of the modern man, and the existential tensions that are projected.

The allusions to the medieval tales of *Eliduc*, *Yvain* the *Tristan* stories are included to explain the medieval context as the archetypal basis of the conflicts of modernity. As mentioned earlier, Fowles used nature as a motif to express these aesthetic views on the relationship of man with nature:

We are rather hostile to the woodlands because they are a form of disorder which we cannot master...We are addicted to looking for purpose in everything we do and are indifferent to nature because its only purpose appears to be being and surviving.(*The Tree*)

The major work of Breasley *The Moon Hunt*, which Williams had planned to discuss at length in *Coet*, is juxtaposed with the medieval picture of Paolo Uccello's *The Night Hunt*. This art projects medieval fear of untamed nature, and a picture which poses as a dispute to Breasley's masterwork. The crimson – clad courtiers are seen to pursue stags in *The Night Hunt*, and the figures seem to trespass when they come to the periphery of the sinister forest. Instead of segregating them as abstract and representational, Fowles hints in the story that it should be divided into decorative and expressive. These instincts give a stimulus to the internal response of a person. That is why, Fowles approves Breasley's *Moon-Hunt*. The painting has a considerable shift to the abstraction, but is representational as it moves away from external reality and represents external experience.

The epigraph to *The Ebony Tower*, calculates the hero, Yvain's reckoning before he enters a magical forest. The epigraph, is an obvious hint by Fowles that David Williams is the modern knight-errant, setting off in quest of Henry Breasley. In his essay, "On

Being English, But Not British,” Fowles says that we have transferred “The England of the trees to our minds”(WH 158). Fowles relates his protagonist to two related functions in the self: “First, as a screen, it corresponds to a kind of protective coloration or behavior...Second, behind the screen, at the forest’s centre, exists the necessary isolation and freedom to live and create as one chooses”(Sayls 13). On Breasley’s portrait *The Moon Hunt*, Fowles comments: “The grotesque faces the old fellow displayed were simply to allow his real self to run free” (ET 80). The complexities and abstractions of the arguments between Williams and Breasley “tend to arrange themselves around paintings”(Mills 32) since the action is seen by a painter.

The MLA Special Session in 1978 on Fowles had the critics imagine a faint note on Fowles as a writer who played tricks on his readers. Foster Hirsch called him “A master of dissimulation”(Hirsch 18-19), and Patrick Prince commented that in *The Ebony Tower* there is “a hint of artfulness...beneath the art...at times a faintly note”(Prince 513). Patrick points that Fowles goes near the fact that his *French Lieutenant’s Woman* has remarkable parallels with J.A. Froude’s *The Lieutenant’s Daughter*. But in *Daniel Martin* Fowles silences his critics that:

There is too much difference between the two activities. One is begetting, the other is surgery. However justified the criticism, it is always inflicted by someone who hasn’t, a eunuch... by someone who stakes most of his being economic as well as immortal.(DM 104)

The speaker here, although is Daniel Martin, can very well be Williams in a critical tug-of-war between their views on art.

The evolutionary history of mankind is being rediscovered in the modern times, in the symbolic images and myths that have survived ancient man. Archeologists use their intellect to trench into the past, discover ruins and relics, which act as priceless archives and these statues, designs, temples and languages are meaningfully translated and studied into intelligible modern concepts. But modern man finds such beliefs irrelevant to the complexities of modern life:

In London and New York we may dismiss the fertility rites of Neolithic Man as archaic superstition. If anyone claims to have seen a vision or heard voices is not treated as saint or as an oracle. It is said he is mentally disturbed...Yet the connections are there. (Henderson 97)

Fowles's views on nature and its influences which he mentions in *The Ebony Tower*, has a very obvious and remarkable reference in *The Tree*,:

So I sit in the namelessness, the green phosphorous of the tree... this inalienable otherness of each, human and non human, which may seem the prison of each, but is at heart, in the deepest of those countless million metaphorical trees for which we cannot see the wood, both for justification and the redemption.(*The Tree* 94)

The "redemption"(Ibid 94) in *The Tree*, can be related to the mythic redemption of Williams. Williams does not exactly fear the forests, and he finds in the core and heart of the woodlands, what he was, is, and what he could be. His potential freedom is discovered on his growing attention towards Diana: "Her body, her face, her psyche, her calling: she was out there somewhere in the trees, waiting for him. It was impossible, but he had fallen in love"(ET 106). In the picnic, their love was possible, "as they were quite

literally in the forest”(Ibid 91). In a later instance, as they fail to develop in their love, they step back before a gate at the end of the orchard, beyond the gate where the path leads to “the black wall of the forest”(Ibid 96). Williams stares at the trees as, “someone else, in another life”(Ibid 98). When he leaves Coet the next day, his retreat from self discovery is symbolized in his turning back to the forest.

The history of the Aryan race in Europe, show that trees were worshipped in forests and in isolated instances. History records that the whole of Europe was covered with lush primeval forests. It had made Julius Caesar ponder, how the Germans had crossed the forests on their way of conquests, at a stretch for two months without reaching the end. Sanctuaries started to be made in the clearings of the forests for meditation, and worship of trees were started by the Aryan stock, even in India. Gradually trees came to be viewed as dieties: “...when a tree comes to be viewed, no longer as the body of the tree-spirit, but simply as its abode which it can quit at pleasure, an importance advance has been made in religious thought”(Frazer 117). Some even belief trees to be animate, and cutting them should be as delicate, supplied with care as a surgical operation: “When an oak is felled it gives a kind of shrieks or groans, that may be heard a mile off”(Ibid 113). Hence to Fowles, trees and woodland have a special inspiration in his fiction and non-fiction.

The ending of *The Ebony Tower* is presented in the form of the healing power of nature. When Williams leaves Coet, he runs over a weasel, and sees that “a trickle of blood, like a red flower, had split from the gaping mouth”(ET 108). In *Eliduc*, the protagonist’s wife puts a red flower in his dead mistress’s mouth, reviving her to life. But in William’s case,

his choice is not authentic, but he stands on a decision. The image of the flower is an important aspect, as it is supposed to give healing touches, like the woods of Coet, but the self in Williams is still indecisive. *The Ebony Tower* comes near to show the self of the protagonist David Williams reaching selfhood, but Fowles uses an apt metaphor of caged animals to show that the freedom is not always in the apposite sense of the term. Williams had only a glimpse of his freedom, which is very “short-lived”(Salami 143). Unlike the medieval knights, his failure of reaching self-determination is also the inability of the modern age: “David and his generation, and all those to come, could only look back, through bars, like caged animals, born in captivity, at the old green freedom... the laboratory monkey allowed a glimpse of his lost true self”(ET 110). This indicates the temperament of Williams, which according to the analysis is split, and he never acts out of his self. Hence the dilemma he faces is where, “He never uncovers his real self and confronts reality, or faces his wife and society”(Salami 143).

The principle endeavor of Fowles in the title story is to show that artists have different lives. They have divergent principles and reflections. In some circumstances, the conventional moral ethos may not be pertinent to them. Discarding these ethos and being prepared to reject them, can only make them achieve the intensity they strive, something which David Williams could not do, and hence lost the choice of being authentic:

The abominable and vindictive injustice was that art is fundamentally amoral...Coet had remorselessly demonstrated what he was born, still was, and always would be a : a decent man and...an eternal also-ran. (ET 113)

### ***Eliduc***

The second tale after the title story is *Eliduc*, a translation by Fowles of a medieval tale by Marie de France, drawn from Celtic sources. To Fowles, Marie introduced, effectively a totally new element into European literature. “It was composed of sexual honesty and a very feminine awareness of how people really behaved-and how behavior and moral problems can never be expressed through things like dialogue and action”(ET 122). Marie did for posterity something of what Jane Austen did for hers, setting an innovative standard for precision over human sentiments and their ludicrousness. Fowles further comments:

Marie’s works were very small, very deft and concise, and the miracle is that she so often reaches far beyond her historically and formally restricted setting. Her extraordinary ability suddenly to reach out across eight centuries, to be present again. (WH 183)

*Eliduc* has obvious parallels to the title story, *The Ebony Tower*. Moreover the personal note, which Fowles had included just before *Eliduc*, asserts a vital aspect of the self. As Fowles hints, “Marie is patently more interested in the human heart than the immortal soul”(ET 124). *Eliduc* starts with the epigraph:

*De un mut ancient lai bretun*

*Le cunte e tute la reisun vus ditai [...]* (ET 125).

Fowles uses the lines in the epigraph from Chrétien’s *Yvain*, which describes the journey of a knight to seek his beloved, and eventually culminating in victory. The story is set in Brittany, where Eliduc, a Breton knight is happily wedded to Guildeluec, and is a confidante of the king of Totnes. Eliduc’s oratory in the kingdom of Totnes, speaks of

his chivalry: “My friends,...one thing for certain. Nothing venture, even when things look hopeless, then nothing gain –either in war or reputation”(ET 128). As a brave knight, the importance of courtly anecdote and the concept of adventure are stressed. The principle motif in situating the self in *Eliduc*, is the same as *The French Lieutenant's Woman*; a man torn between two women which runs parallel to the problem of Williams in *The Ebony Tower*. But difficulties initiate when he falls out of favour with his lord, due to the conspiracies of his adversaries, and decides to go out of the kingdom. Crossing the English Channel, he reaches Devon. He helps the King of Devon to ward off invasions. Unfortunately, Eliduc falls in love with the princess of Devon, and after eloping, they are conjugated. After many more adventures, he returns to Totnes, and hearing that he was already married, his new bride Guilliadun collapses out of grief, apparently dead. Ironically, his first spouse ascertains her, and by means of a healing flower, effects a miraculous cure to Guilliadun, and herself withdraws to a nunnery. Eliduc and Guilliadun live a contented life. At the end of the tale, the three characters live together, each praying for the salvation of the other's soul.

Analysing the tale, Eliduc is projected to be favoured in Totnes. He was allowed to “hunt in the royal forests...” and “left in charge of the territories”(ET 125). But his life of negations start when he falls out of favour from the king's grace and leaves Brittany, leaving a tearful wife behind: “His friends were very sad to see him go, and for his wife...she accompanied him for the first part of his journey”(Ibid 126). On meeting Guilliadun, the daughter of the king of Devon, Eliduc's depth of character is brought into focus. His consistent refusal and denial to tell his beloved that he was wedded, seems

more to be one of “moral and psychological analysis appropriate to real life and real people” (Loveday 84). But Eliduc is ashamed of his unfaithfulness, when he falls in love with Guilliadun and contemplates: “Alas!...I’ve gone astray. I’ve stayed too long here. .. If I were to marry Guilliadun, the church would never stand for it. In all ways, it’s a mess. And oh God, to think of never seeing her again!”(Ibid 135).

His dilemma is the same as Charles and Williams. But reminded of his duty as a knight-errant, Eliduc leaves Devon with a solemn promise to his mistress: “... nothing on earth will stop me doing so-as long as I’m alive and in good health. My life is entirely in your hands”(ET 136). The existential preference is almost attained by him, when he is to tie the knot with Guilliadun, under any circumstances, when a sailor in Eliduc’s ship, begins to shout on seeing her: “What are you doing? My lord, it’s the girl you’ve brought aboard who’s going to drown us all. You have a proper wife at home. It’s against God and the law. Against all decency and religion”(Eliduc 138). To which Eliduc retorts, “you fiend, you rat-shut your mouth! If she goes to the sea, I’ll make you pay for it!”(Ibid 139). Eliduc is determined to support his mistress, fighting all the odds. He is involved around the conflicts and contradictions inherent to the Celtic delima of duty; duty to one’s wife, lover and filial honour. The most agonizing concept for him is that he finds these cases irreconcilable, “It was cursed, the day I first set eyes in this country”(Ibid 135).The medieval concepts of chivalry and romance is summed up in this regard in the perception of the self. Trial through adventure is the real meaning of a knight’s existence. But this concept is confronted by the view of marriage. From the moment Eliduc crosses the

English Channel, he finds himself dishonourable. This situation in the seemingly irreparable gulf in the self, between two women becomes the primary motif in the tale.

The freedom of preference, faces Eliduc when he prepares to leave Devon and returns once again in the favour of the lord of Brittany. Determined to face the consequences, he takes Guilliadun with him:

By placing it in Brittany, Marie gives it not merely a location but also an atmosphere and in effect a genre, that of the courtly romance, recognizably linked by a shared moral code to the world of her audience, yet opening into a magical universe in which anything might happen. (Loveday 87)

The continental setting of Brittany, gives an emotional atmosphere to the tale. The protagonist opts for marriage of the mind, although he finds his own marriage split on the rocks. He sees that knighthood and its obligations to men and women is something which cannot be both renounced. He takes his mistress with him to Brittany, to face the terrible odds. The climax of the tale is attained when Eliduc's first wife, Guildeluc intervenes to save the life of his mistress. In a way, the real authentic choice is faced by the first wife, because had she not intervened, she would have perhaps retained her husband, and her place at court. But the scruples of conscience played a greater role in her self, and she faces a choice, even formidable than her husband; whether to try and win her lord's affection back, or start a new life without him. She decides to go to a nunnery, but after reviving Guilliadun. As a cast-off wife, she would be pitied, and would still have wealth and influence at court. But she goes against her marriage vows, sets Eliduc free, as she feels that her life at the court without her husband's love, would be humiliating and

outrageous. It is here that she makes the existential choice. Guildeluc's choice is between two social institutions, marriage and the church. She chooses the church, which is an existential act and which "would be to enlarge the definition of the term existential to a point where it would be meaningful"(Loveday 52). In a way, this part of the tale is more concerned with Guildeluc, than her husband.

The second motif in *Eliduc*, is concerned with the medieval concepts of chivalry and gallantry; and lastly the setting, in which Marie sets the situation mostly in the woodlands of Brittany. This is parallel to the setting of the title story, which is also engrossed with forests and woodlands. Eliduc is comparable with Williams, as both go on a mission to find the ideal. Both are married individuals. David meets Diana in Coet, but it is here that he fails to make the choice like a medieval hero, and fails to give vent to his love, being enveloped in the conventional norms and legitimate faithfulness of the present age. Fowles himself comments that the tales in the collection are interlinked and "by the time we reach this suggestion, we have already received what will turn out to be considerable number of stylistic signals stressing the connections between one story and the next"(Loveday 88). A proper understanding of the medieval romance is central to the proper assessment of the title story. Breasley, tells Williams to read *Eliduc*, as this tale functions between the balancing of the unconscious desires with rational and conscious actions.

The main clue in the personality of Eliduc is reconcilable; he is able to cope the contradictions within his own self by his actual reconciliation between his two wives. The

action of *Eliduc* is undeniably against the prevalent society and its feudal system, and even against the norms of Christianity. The compromise is acceptable because it, “concludes in a complete reconciliation of opposites and in a transcendental feeling that is shared by all the characters. Indeed *Eliduc* is able to love the two women together, to connect his divided self between them”(Salami 141). Williams on the other hand, shows that his love for Diana is a “divisive force”(Ibid 142), because he himself feels a divided self. The medieval knight is thus projected by Fowles as an ideal figure who achieves autonomy.

Nature prevails as a dominating factor in *Eliduc*. The birds, foliage, and the tranquility of the Celtic green world brings magic in the story. The magic is prevalent in its height, when the knight’s wife uses the magical flower to restore her rival: “The green world is also the haven for the unconscious princess, and it becomes in the end the secluded retreat/exile for all the three characters in their abbeys”(Alderman 146). The narrative shows the entire atmosphere of the medieval past, with its stress on a feudal world of solemn indentures, and social life highly organized on a scheme of restricted status and hierarchy, “and a world where all civilized life depended upon promises sworn between vassal and lord”(Loveday 83). The implication of rewriting a medieval romance, and including it in his collection of stories, is to strike a balance, as they are internal conflicts in situating the problematic relationship in the nostalgic concept of the self

### ***Poor Koko.***

*Poor Koko*, the third story in *The Ebony Tower*, projects the concept of existentialism playing a diminutive part, and a greater stress is laid on what creative writing is about,

with concentrations on a writer's self. The first person narrator here is a writer, who fails to hand over the magic of his language to his next generation. The title, *Poor Koko* refers to a Japanese concept. The epigraph reads as:

*Byth dorn re ver dhe'n tavas re hyr,  
Mes den hep tavas a-gollas y'dyr. (ET 147)*

The epigraph is taken from an Old Cornish proverb. Translated it states as: too long a tongue, too short a hand; but tongueless man has lost his hand. It suggests that a man of letters lacks the command over verbal communication, hence is a tongueless man. Such a man will be eventually deprived of his legacy, as most of his life had been spent on books, instead of the everyday world, losing his basic obligation towards others, "the obligation to nurture them a love of language"(Acheson 55). As the title in Japanese means filial behavior, the burglar in the story surrogates as a son of the writer, and in a frenzy, burns his father's manuscripts to destroy him. Fowles elaborates that: "Koko has in fact nothing whatever to do with Coco of the red proboscis and the ginger wig. It is a Japanese word and means correct filial behaviour, the proper attitude of a son to father"(ET 186).

The storyline deals with a nameless writer, who is also a critic, narrating his ordeal with a burglar. The whole tribulation takes place in a particular night. The writer takes a break from his urban lifestyle by moving to North Dorset, borrowing a countryside cottage from his friends, Maurice and Jane. In this secluded woodland ambiance, he plans to wind up his biography on Thomas Love Peacock. The serene atmosphere is disrupted by the entry of a burglar in the cottage, who represents the urban working class. Not interested to rob any material things, the ruffian surprisingly burns all the manuscripts of

the narrator and every text he comes across. *Poor Koko* is the only story in *The Ebony Tower*, where Fowles confronts a male protagonist to another male. The self in the previous novels were incidentally involved in tussles within a male/ female territory for reaching a greater existential freedom.

Universally, writers who seek to represent other people, think that they are the obligatory writers of fiction. To Fowles the first barrier to discover this tangible truth should be the important aspect of fiction. The second barrier is where a writer fails to touch the innermost ego, due to the distortions of the past experiences in his writings. With the successful publication of a book *The Dwarf of Literature* behind him, the narrator in *Poor Koko* is still wary of his potential: "Nor was my most successful pot-boiler, *The Dwarf of Literature*, quite the model and erudite analysis it pretended to be. Very regretfully I have always found my own faults more interesting than other people's virtues"(ET 149). He prefers "nature in art to nature in actuality"(ET 148). This is proved on his later speculations on how the intruder can be. He imagines the intruder to be a "long-haired villager lout, with fists like hams and a mind to match"(Ibid 150). But the latter turns out to be completely otherwise. The burglar is reasonably well read and kind-hearted, treating the elderly man with consideration: "I was bound and gagged. He could have punched me, slapped my face, and done what he liked. But I am convinced that my body was always safe from him. What was under attack was something else"(Ibid 182-3).

The narrator comes to realize that the second hand impressions are very vital to what fiction is about. He admits candidly to be in short of a standard writer. He recollects the

disappointments of his past life, one of which was an adulterous relationship with a woman: “I had been in bed once with someone else’s wife-during that same war-but the husband was safely in North Africa during the whole of our brief liaison” (*ET* 148). This is in a way his coming to recognize a fraction of his self. It can be seen from his phrases that he is in a better command of language than the burglar. His life is “an ensemble of texts”(Salami 155). He emphasizes “books-writing them, reading reviewing, helping to get them into print-have been my life rather more than life itself”(ET 149). The burglar’s resentment grows from his own poor command of language: “Should have made a noise, man. I’d’ve been out like a dose of salts. Wouldn’t have known who you were”(Ibid 158). As the story progresses, the confrontation turns to be a class struggle in the self. The young intruder brings his prisoner in contact with this vital aspects of the society. He is in favour of Marxist doctrines. To him, the earth is a place of misdemeanor and justifies his profession. In the burglar’s view, the real criminals of the society are the rich: “My house has had burglars in since the day I was born...You know what Marx said? The poor can’t steal from the rich. The rich can only rob the poor”(Ibid 159).

In opposition to the Marxist theory of the intruder, the writer is in favour of “humanism, good manners”(ET 180). He also deplores that the young man had no respect for intellectual honesty as he and his generation “mistakenly believe in the shamefully bourgeois”(Ibid 159) strata. But a little later he strives to make the burglar “a shade more aware of the complexities of life”(Ibid 164). But when the young man suggests that the narrator write about the younger generation, he protests: “I couldn’t write about something I don’t begin to understand”(Ibid 171). In a way, the class struggle persists. By

associating literature with liberation and free speech, the intruder describes the irresponsibility of literature as his manipulated freedom, over the illiterate.

When the burglar decides to burn all the manuscripts of the biography of Thomas Love Peacock, the writer tries to extract the possibilities of the terrible outcome, but they are all rejected. He says, “I was left to silence, catastrophe and the dying flames”(ET 176) . The gesture of a cocked thumb thrust to his face by the young man, is not meant to convey its actual significance, but that every thing was all right. As the intruder says:

I am rather fond of watching association football matches on television...what caught my attention one evening was a player running out of the ‘tunnel’ onto the arena who showed just this aggressive thumb to a band of screaming supporters ...the significance of the game not started was clear: our courage is high.(ET 183).

The writer anticipates the action: “The echo was very sharp. I suddenly saw my thief’s gesture as a warning: a game was about to start and the opposing team he represented was determined to win”(Ibid 183). He comes to the conclusion that the power of words he mastered over the burglar, might have led the young man to commit the heinous act of burning the manuscripts, “my sin was not primarily that I was middle-class, intellectual... but that I live by words”(ET 185). He ultimately fails to hand over the magic to the younger generation. He has failed according to the analysis of the title to extract filial behavior from his proxy son. He is also unsuccessful to nurture in him the love of language. The burglar comments rudely in an occasion, “Blokes like me, we’re peanuts beside them”(Ibid 164).

Being an articulate member of the middle class, the author arrives at a discernment of his self, but without a preference; he has no choice before the burglar, hence to whatever existential authenticity he arrives at, is made problematic by Fowles himself in this story. In the early part of the story the writer says: "...books ...have been my life rather more than life itself "(ET 149). Sarah's inauthentic self is recalled in this case in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, when she says that she had a habit of not trusting her own feelings, but the opinions of what her reading of Jane Austen and Sir Walter Scott had instilled in her. Certain other factors hinder for a definite conclusion on the writer. Firstly, his book *The Dwarf Of Literature* cannot be implicit as to what is its significance. Fowles does not give any excerpts of the text so that an opinion can be formed. In the finale, when the narrator appears to be a changed personality, and returns with a renewed vigour to write the biography of Thomas Love Peacock, it is unspecified that the biography will prevail to be a better projection of himself, with intellectual honesty: "...in other words, it may be that the narrator is self-deceived that complete existential authenticity will continue to elude him as long as he continues to live the precious life of a man of letters"(Acheson 56). The behavior of the burglar is also elusive to the reader, as the precise awareness of his mentality, cannot be gauged, as he had "cremated human knowledge"(ET 175). The paradigms of the self in *Poor Koko*, also shows the confrontation between the Few and the many, alike to the self in *The Collector*:

Because education and democracy have failed to remove the rigid distinction between the two lower classes and the middle upper groups, the thief and the

critic face each other across a gulf-represented by their varying skills and language-almost as wide as in the medieval story. (Alderman 142)

It is at times a disputed philosophy that human beings are not free. They are the pawns of fate. Religion stresses the omnipotence of God, but scientific points of view however stress that, "Our actions can be regarded like a victor, as the sum of our inherited genes and our environment"(Westphal 133). Delicate features like art in whatsoever way is exposed, must be taught to the masses. As the burglar is not addicted to the exquisite tastes, he cannot be liable for the tension that occurs in *Poor Koko*. Instilling artistic values is a Herculean task where the aristoi should take a compliant part. As Fowles laments in *The Aristos*: "Oswald killed President Kennedy in order to kill his real enemy: his nemo...What drove him to kill was the poisonous injustice of both his particular society and the whole process"(The Aristos 39).

The intruder in *Poor Koko* cremated the manuscripts, but not the writer himself. The intolerable predicament of the incident, ends with a metamorphosis in the narrator's self. He tries to construct the meaning of his encounter with the burglar, with a new awareness:

The charge against all of us, old and young, who still value language and its powers, is unjustified to be sure. The true villains of this piece are well beyond individual control...yet I do not want to portray myself as an innocent scapegoat. I believe my young demon was right in one thing. I was guilty of deafness.(ET 186)

## ***The Enigma***

*The Enigma*, Fowles fourth story in *The Ebony Tower*, invites the reader into a different genre; to play the role of a detective in solving the incomprehensibility and impenetrability in the self. The epigraph is taken from a question raised by Tao Te Ching: “Who can become muddy and yet, settling slowly becomes limpid?” (ET 189). The question on connotation of human life, blurred and unanswerable, is the crucial point, where the dilemmas in the self are shown. The events start with the disappearance of John Marcus Fielding, an eminent lawyer, and a member of parliament. Beginning in an impersonal style, the story begins as:

The commonest kind of missing person is the adolescent girl, closely followed by the teenage boy. The majority in this category come from the working-class homes and almost invariably from those where there is serious parental disturbance ... When John Marcus Fielding disappeared, he therefore contravened all social and statistical probability. (ET 191)

The point of view shifts to Mike Jennings, the detective handling the case of the disappearance. In the course of his investigation, Jennings after cross-examining a section of suspects, finally comes to interview his last witness, Isobel Dodgson. He ends up his assignment instead, by falling in love with her. For Jennings, the search for the missing lawyer becomes a mission in itself, and consequently the quest for a woman, as Isobel too becomes a kind of an enigma, like Fowles's other woman characters.

The disappearance motif is central in the other novels of Fowles, in the projection of the inter-subjective characteristic of the self. Conchis disappears in the end of *The Magus* to

allow Nicholas establish his own self. Sarah abandons Charles in one of the endings of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, and Charles discovers his authentic being. Breasley disappears in *The Ebony Tower*, to make room for Williams to face the possibility of his ultimate choice. Guideluc exiles herself in *Eliduc*, to allow her husband begin his life with Guilliadun. Fowles thus lays emphasis the importance of godlike and dominant figures, which makes his inauthentic characters discover an existential self within them.

In *The Enigma*, the disappearance of Fielding in the incipit of the story, foregrounds the mystery of Isobel. The aspect of fiction stressed by Fowles, more than the philosophical implications is the poetics of disappearance. In due course, the reader becomes concerned in knowing the living mystery of Isobel, rather than Fielding's missing enigma. To Salami, the genre of *The Enigma*, can be compared with Luigi Pirandello's play, *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. In this play, the character of the Father, like Fielding, wants to transform his very reality from the situation:

But our reality doesn't change! Do you see? That's the difference! Ours doesn't change, it can't change, it can never be different, never, because it is already determined, like this, for ever, that's what's so terrible! We are an eternal reality.

(Pirandello 124)

Pirandello's argument is based on the verity that a temperament becomes gratis and authentic, when he or she disappears, and is not dominated by the writer. Fielding is thus free, because he escapes from the text. The Father in Pirandello's play believes: "when the characters are alive, really alive and standing in front of their author, he has only to follow their words, the actions that they suggest to him"(Ibid 124). Fowles makes

Fielding disappear in the opening of the story, because he felt it suited the purpose: “There was an author in his life...A system, a view of things? Something that had written him. Had really made him just a character in a book”(ET 237). The narrative projects Fielding as a split character, lacking in identity, projected by the other characters in the story. A “compartmentalized”(Ibid 217) individual, he is an upper-class member of the British establishment; a lawyer, country land-owner, a Director of Companies, a village squire, a Conservative M.P, and a master of foxhounds. Life could not have given him a better placement in society. But Fielding is not interested in his lustrous position and believed that the only way to escape is to disappear and become an enigma. In an entertaining way, Fowles describes how the police tried to trace him. On the assumption that he might have travelled abroad under a false name and documents, a confirmation was made at Heathrow and the main ports to the Continent. But no passport official, no air-line desk-girl or stewardess who could be contacted could “recall his face”(ET 200). Jennings listed out a number of possibilities to attempt tracing Fielding: “suicide, murder, abduction, amnesia...under threat to life...fed up with present life...love... homosexuality ...paranoia...fox-hunting...marriage...something hush-hush abroad ... ” (Ibid 203-4). It is through mystery that Fielding exists as a self. Being in public must have driven him to contemplate suicide. Isobel Dodgson, Fielding’s son’s girl-friend has the intellect of a novelist, and without using existential terms, she tells Jennings that Fielding is a manifestation of inauthenticity. Her name recalls that of Charles Dogsdon, literally known as Lewis Carroll, the creator of *Alice in Wonderland*. Carroll had put an unanswerable riddle to his readers, “why is a raven like a writing desk?”(Carroll 95).

Isobel requests Jennings to view Fielding as a character of fiction, rather than as a man of reality. She comments, “Lateral thinking... Yes? Somewhere there’s someone writing us, we’re not real. He or she decides who we are, what we do, all about us”(ET 234). Suggesting that Fielding might have committed suicide, and the pool in his mansion, Tetbury Hall should be tested out, Jennings is denied by Fieldings’s family to carry out Isobel’s advice. He is told to “go away and get on with the job of digging up some hard evidence instead of wasting his time on half-baked psychology”(Ibid 243). Isobel argues that “a story has to have an ending. You can’t have a mystery without a solution. If you’re a writer, you have to think of something”(Ibid 234). It is a natural tendency of the mind, a motivation of all detective rationalism. Her point is that if a story disobeys the unreal literary rules, it shows that it is actually truer to life, as real characters in life violate social norms. Metaphorically, Fielding, had committed a literary crime by walking out of the rules of the narrative and therefore the enigma. He was suffocated with the social conventions, hence his withdrawal. The suggestion of Isobel on Fielding’s suicide remains opaque till the end of the story, and the narrative remains ambiguous, the enigma unsolved: “The central issue here is that the detective-story genre is disrupted since its rules are not obeyed, its enigmas remain enigmatic, and no solution is offered”(Salami 150).

A question can be raised here as to how did Fowles exactly want to project the self in this story? The other stories in this collection, *The Ebony Tower*, *Eliduc* and *Poor Koko* symbolize his dominant premise of existentialism, and the Few and the Many as themes for the undermining of the self, but *The Enigma* refuses to adopt itself into a definite

backdrop. Even the detective genre is evaded, because the term genre follows a definite social code, “a code of behavior established between the author and the reader”(Dubrow 2). On reading a detective novel, a solution is expected to satisfy our curiosity, after the suspense. To Barthes this is the “hermeneutic code”(Barthes 69). A satisfactory definition is offered by Patricia Waugh on the detective genre, which is “a form in which tension is wholly generated by the presentation of a mystery and heightened by retardation of the correct solution”(Waugh 82). *The Enigma* infers to a code of conduct of the detective genre, but refuses to satisfy the conduct, thus creating hindrance for the self to emerge. The suggestions of Isobel to Jennings on Fielding’s disappearance, does not convince the reader, as she is not able to excess into the innermost thoughts of the missing man. There is no hint in the narrative of Fielding’s conversation with her: “But if Fielding did speak to her, there is no evidence that he necessarily told her the truth about his situation ... Isobel is an ostensible human being, not an omniscient analogue to God” (Acheson 58). The explanation she offers might be existential solutions, but not valid conclusions. Nor that which definitely knows about the microcosm of an individual. The valid riddle of *The Enigma* is thus the universal ambiguity in extra-terrestrial terms.

To Albert Camus, illusions of freedom are felt by a man who contemplates suicide. Real freedom stops with death. It can be assumed from Camus’s view that he totally rejected suicide because “it does not represent the logical outcome of the revolt”(Camus 54-5). In *The Myth Of Sisyphus*, Camus views that no matter how depressing and worthless one’s life may be, suicide lead to eternal darkness. This is supported by Miss Parson, Fielding’s secretary. She insists, “He couldn’t have done it of his own free will. In his normal mind.

It's unthinkable”(ET 207). His existential subjectivity is created through his absence. To Isobel, this was the only free choice that he can take the privilege to assert his freedom. This very technique of Fowles allows the lack of restrictions in the self. It is left to the reader to create his own solutions of the mystery. The story ends with Jennings's attempts Jennings to “have the pond of Tetbury Hall dragged”(Ibid 243), finding nothing where Fielding is alleged to have been drowned. Fielding thus lives in an existential enigma. A close reading of the story shows that he might have suffered from disillusionment in marriage, and opted for an existential choice. In the context of the story, he finds it authentic to stay away from his family, for reflecting the egoistic impulses of tension reduction in him. Through the various characters who had given evidence to Jennings, he is reflected as a tough solicitor, Member of Parliament and a gentleman farmer. He might have decided to leave the material world of getting and spending, to join a monastery, as his daughters had suspected.

By refusing to solve the mystery of Fielding, *The Enigma* disrupts the rule of the detective genre, which hinders in the arguments in the situation of the self. But Fowles gives freedom to his readers to do research in the genre. Alain Robert Grillet in his novels, *The Erasers*, *Jealousy* and *The Voyeur*, disrupts the detective genre by not offering solutions to the mysterious stories. In *The Erasers*, it is the reader who has to decide how the crime was committed: “In *The Erasers*, Robbe-Grillet creates a detective novel in which the motives for the murder and the identity of the murderer are deliberately mystified throughout, leaving the narrative with no definite solution”(Salami 151). Fowles ends the story as: “The tender pragmatism of flesh have poetries, no

enigma, human or divine, can diminish or demean-indeed, it can only cause them, and then walk out”(ET 244). He preferred here, a diverse way of approaching the self.

### ***The Cloud.***

Fowles’s final story in this collection, *The Cloud*, concentrates on the uncertainties in the self in the moral fibre of current consciousness. An omniscient narrator tells the story in the present tense, giving the intimation that the writer is perhaps unaware of what will happen to his characters. The enigmatic nature of women, is once again brought into full focus. The main character is Catherine, who is the grieving heroine, remaining a mystery like Sarah in *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*. Catherine is constructed as a “female, who significantly disappears in a mystery” (Salami 145). The epigraph of the story is taken from Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*: “O, you must wear your rue with a difference” (ET 247). In the play, Ophelia means metaphorically that her grief for her dead father Polonius had driven her mad. Catherine too is remorseful, but with a dissimilarity. She mourns for her husband’s death. She muses, “Even if he returned... One must hide the impression of that. It would never do to have one’s misery taken advantage of...” (ET 287).

The narrative of the story circles around two families spending a day, near a forest, beside a river in Central France. It is noteworthy that Fowles sets the narrative again amidst nature. The two families are: Paul, a writer, his wife Annabel and their two children, Candida and Emma, along with Catherine, Annabel’s elder sister. The other

family consists of Peter, a television producer, his girlfriend Sally and a son from his former wife. The character portrayals of Peter and Sally are “irremediable”(Acheson 60) as Clegg in *The Collector*. Peter uses people for his own ends: “one didn’t really care what people thought cutting other people’s crap was that one was about”(ET 286). He is like Nicholas Urfe of *The Magus*. Peter’s girlfriend Sally also plays the role of being “trendy” (Ibid 247) and inconsiderate like him. Paul and Annabel appear to be normal, considerate individuals, concerned about their children and Catherine. Catherine is an artist and a writer who is editing an English translation of Roland Barthes’s book, *Mythologies*. A literary parallelism with *The Ebony Tower* and *Poor Koko* can be traced in this regard. David goes to Coet in France to interview Breasley, the artist on whom he is to write a book. The narrator goes to an isolated villa in a countryside to write the biography on Thomas Love Peacock, and Catherine in *The Cloud* goes to the woods and discusses with Peter and Paul, on the editing of her work on Barthes. All these characters prefer the wilderness for the works they undertake, a leitmotif in Fowles’s fiction, in situating the self.

With the constant grief of her husband’s death, Catherine is still in mourning. Fowles gives an apt description of her morbid self: “Where all is reversed: once entered, where nothing leaves. The black hole, the black hole. To feel so static, without will; inviolable shade; and yet so potent and so poised”(ET 292). Catherine feels that she had put herself as an alpha, and undermines her late husband’s position in a way, which shows that he did not have the urge to live. She had fouled her own nest. Narrating these incidents to Peter and Paul, she sends them “mixed signals”(Acheson 61). She tries to seduce her

brother-in-law Peter, drawing his attention by crying: “without warning she embraces him....Her head is buried a moment against his shoulder....”(ET 265). When Peter comes to her in the lonely and secluded part of the forest, her fingers “catch him just above the bare ankle, the briefest clutch, but enough to stop him”(Ibid 294). Catherine gives the indication to Peter that she wanted a massage of a tan lotion on her back, but clearly specifies with her mixed signals, that she would have no objection if he preferred sexual relations with her. It would not be for love, but as a passive partner, an outlet for her mourning, because she had earlier described him “as a worthless, shallow little prick”(Ibid 230). At the end of the day, ironically she has close relations with Peter, and disappears under mysterious circumstances. What is ironical in this short story, is that none of the characters attempt to find her, not even her sister Annabel, who simply comments to her daughter Candida that, “We’d have heard her. She’s probably just wandered on”(ET 299). A cloud appears out of nowhere, as the picnickers depart, and the mystery of Catherine remains unsolved.

Catherine’s seduction of Peter is an irrational act of loneliness, or as Fowles says it was “exorcising self – disgust”(Barnum 99). It was to her an act of penance to have sexual relations with a man she despises for allegedly making her husband commit suicide. It is another crime to think of such an irrational sacrament. The narrator does not make any comments if her act was justified or not, which makes the narrative complex, to locate an avenue for validation of her self. Nor it is sufficient to judge whether her penance had indeed exorcized her guilt, or if Peter had cleansed or degraded her. Her mysterious disappearance soon after this act makes the narrative more complicated, by negating

indications of her reaching authenticity. Before her encounter with Peter, Catherine narrates to her niece Emma, a fable of a princess, lost in the woods. She tells it of her own devising. The princess was left out by her parents in the very forest, where they go for the picnic. She grows up to be a girl of seventeen, taken care by the animals, and the wise old owl to guide her. The owl, symbolically surrogates the godlike figures in Fowles's novels. The princess meets a prince, and they fall in love, who later abandons her, as per the wishes of his parents. Catherine ends the story that the princess still pines for her beloved, and anticipates that he will return to take her away. Symbolically, Catherine wants to play the role of a princess, and wait for someone to take her as a companion. The reference to the princess lost in the woods metaphorically suggests her disappearance under mystifying conditions.

Catherine's dispositions are not detailed, and her temperament is deducted through the other persons in the narrative. She becomes the centre of attraction of the males, Peter and Paul, and very much of her niece, Emma. Significantly, during her interaction with Peter and Paul, Catherine points out that in a book *The Blue Guide*, an extract is taken from Roland Barthes's *Mythologies*, where Barthes speaks of tourist guides who see "all utilitarian and all modern things as monotonous. The only interesting things are the ancient monuments and the picturesque"(Barthes 81). Catherine views that Barthes makes people aware of how people communicate and try to control one another with overt and verbal signs. The reference to Barthes in the middle of the text is rather intricate, it is not an existential text in the context of the story, but a structural one, which does not have any relationship with the narration. In the early part of the story, a

possibility of committing suicide by Catherine is hinted by herself when she says, “Are you and Bel frightened I shall try to kill myself as well? (ET 264). Yet it is not clear that she had committed suicide at the end. In the fairy tale, she tells to her niece that the princess spent a long time in the woods, before being reunited with her husband. It can only be assumed that Catherine has chosen to withdraw like Fielding in *The Enigma*, and meet the right man to solve her problems. The dark cloud at the end of the story suggests that she reaches a dark period in her life, and hence must suffer for a phase of time. The ending of the story is ambiguous like *The Enigma*. Fowles gives his readers yet another open ending.

Fowles sets the story in a forest of Central France, which connects to the Celtic romance. He tries to find allusions through the medium of T.S. Eliot:

But once found, the context of allusion introduces possibilities which lighten the dark mood of the story’s surface, even though one is tempted to see the black thunderhead of the title as continuing the negative symbolic impact of the ebony tower from the opening story. (Wilson 17)

The thundercloud in T. S. Eliot’s *The Wasteland*, brings a ray of hope with soothing showers. The allusion to Eliot’s thundercloud is parallel to the cloud which appears in this story, alleviating the otherwise pessimistic ending. Eliot’s cloud has positive as well as negative implications, “The awful daring of a moment’s surrender.....I have heard the key/ Turn ... your heart would have responded..”( *The Waste Land* 404-412) is symbolized in Fowles’s story. Catherine perhaps does not commit suicide, and might again emerge a strong woman. Fowles might have had Catherine in his conscience, like Williams in *The*

*Ebony Tower*. Like the *Wasteland*'s thundercloud, with its promise of spiritual and redeeming quality, Fowles fulfills his creative responsibility, through his allusive technique, with a sense of mystery encircling the self.

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***Daniel Martin.***

Fowles's sturdy labour of seven years, *Daniel Martin*, the most complicated of all his novels, appeared in 1977. Here he comes closest in incorporating the necessity of political change in the struggle of male supremacy. Offering a veiled prescription of his leanings to left wing politics, it is "his best piece of work to date...a masterly fictional creation, dense with fact"(Pritchard 1).The novel presents the protagonist, Daniel's attempt to analyze and reconstitute his self, in a world bereft of moral and spiritual guidelines. He is a screenwriter, creating his own *bildungsroman* through "montage and collage"(Woodcock 123), the technique of wielding the change in the self in an absorbing way.

In one of his visits to Hollywood, to discuss the projected movie of the *French Lieutenant's Woman*, Fowles had a curious sense of the movie world's sterility. His cogitations flickered the beginning of *Daniel Martin*. The eponymous hero of the book is a British playwright turned Hollywood screenwriter. The novel spans over forty years in the life of the protagonist. The complexity stems out from the constant shifts between the first and third person narrators, the disruption of chronology, the use of flashback and

flash-forward and the multi-facetedness of the narrator persona, Daniel Martin. The novel shows the lingering fascination of existentialism by Fowles, and on the vital aspects on the barriers of life, and how they can be surmounted.

Daniel Martin is an Englishman in his late fifties, who had spent a major part of his life working in Los Angeles as a writer of film scripts. When the novel unfurls, he is in Hollywood, reaching a point in his life, exhausted of screenplays and contemplates to write a biography of himself. Jenny, an actress of his acquaintance in Hollywood, who is the same age as Daniel's daughter Caroline, advises that he should write a novel. At this point, Daniel is summoned to Oxford from Hollywood to be at the bedside of his estranged friend Anthony Mallory, who is terminally ill. This establishes peace between the two estranged friends. Eventually Anthony commits suicide. The novel's subsequent main action is Daniel's sustaining love for Jane, Anthony's widow; a love they had shared in Oxford as students. It ripens in their middle age and the novel progresses where Daniel takes up writing a biography, instead of screenplays and rescuing Jane from "the sterile self-absorption that threatens to engulf her"(Loveday 103).

The first chapter titled "The Harvest," indulges in rich descriptions of rural traditional activities, evoking a timeless quality, which is heightened by the ritual tones of the crop gathering, and young Daniel savoring its timeless moments in lush, rural Devon in 1942. The second chapter abruptly focuses on a middle-aged Daniel, despising his continuing as a script writer of films, and his inclination of opting as a writer of fiction. The lyrical quality of the first chapter shifts to a leap to California, where he is in conversation with

Jenny. These first two chapters are significant in the unfolding of Daniel's family background and his present status. The third chapter situates Daniel as a student in Oxford, and the fourth propels the situation of the second chapter to the final sustained narrative that leads to the writing of the book. Structurally, the novel fluctuates from the past to present, and back again. Daniel's potentials uncannily project him as a passive Fowlesean hero, and Fowles cushions him against the surfeit of competing: "And by preventing him from sinking his full energies into what he is seeking, it fossilizes his personality, insulating it against suffering, change and development"(Loveday 160).

The novel's forty-six chapters, involve the development of Daniel's life-story from childhood through adolescence to adulthood, the time-span of the narrative. Twenty eight chapters of the forty-six are set wholly in the past, nine are retrospective accounts of past episodes, and the rest of the nine are an amalgam, with occasional striking passages . The novel is inhabited by an overcapacity of characters, producers, screenwriters, comedians, professors, journalists and gardeners, actresses and country squires. Fowles aim's to present such a "gallery of types is to investigate the differences between the American and the English character, a theme which has long intrigued Daniel's creator"(Loveday 104). The virtues and failings of the protagonist are characteristic of the whole generation that Fowles wants to explore here. Daniel attempts to "rearrange, reorganize and reassemble the fragmentation of his own self"(Salami 159). The opening chapter of the novel flashbacks to Daniel's rustic childhood, one that intimately parallels that of Fowles. His later experiences in Hollywood form the backdrop of the novel. Daniel never disregards existentialism altogether, and speaks of it as a philosophy to which he was

drawn as a student in Oxford, and when he gives thought to writing a novel in the hope of recovering his lost self. On the whole *Daniel Martin* questions what fiction is about, and what problems a writer faces. Fowles employs stylistic devices, and the story shifts in time, and in point of view, it is relatively straightforward and realistic. It has a happy ending, instead of the customary Fowlesean ambiguous endings and contains a good deal of potential debates from the 1970's. The main hurdle for a precise interpretation of the self in *Daniel Martin*, stems out from the novel's self-reflexive narrative, the shift between the first and third person narrators, and the shifts in tense and its disruption of chronological development. Complexities also arise from the use of flashbacks and the forms of filmic intercutting: "The multi-facetedness of the narrator-character, and the deployment of personal or fictional history"(Salami 159), adds to the disruption of the linear structure.

The narration of the novel takes a geographical tour from Hollywood, California to Oxford in the 1950s, and from Dorset before and during the Second World War to the Nile in modern Egypt. Palmyra, the third century city of Lebanon in the Syrian Desert is also explored. In these international locations, the protagonist tries to construct and rewrite his own history he had always intended to, but which is never completed. The multifarious characteristics and the length of the novel of six hundred and twenty-nine pages, incurred severe criticism, the harshest being L.R. Leavis and J.M. Blom who branded the novel as "a seven-hundred page monstrosity"(Leavis & Blom 85). The ambiguity of the narrative voice, and the constant shifting of tenses have made reviewers and critics accuse Fowles of "imaginative chance-taking"(Lever 85), deserting his great

bequest of storytelling. The lack of humour in the novel led to the indictment of indulging and making “his medium an ugly graceless thing”(Mason 1135). But Fowles, innovative as ever, provokes here a change in the reader’s view towards fiction and its writer.

Fowles opens the book by giving prominence to Antonio Gramsci, placing an extract from his *Prison Notebooks*, as an epigraph to *Daniel Martin*:

The crisis consists precisely in the fact  
that the old is dying and the new cannot  
be born; in this interregnum a great  
variety of morbid symptoms appears. (*DM* ii)

The extract bases its theme on the precarious and discomfited position in which Fowles witnesses his cohort, a split between the dying certainties of the Victorians and the Edwardians, and the resilience of the present generation which is bare, “The old is dying”(DM ii ). The main historical situation tries to delve into the split between the nineteenth and twentieth century, as the epigraph highlights. Fowles also gives greater prominence to the Hungarian Marxist critic George Lukacs. Lengthy extracts from Lukacs are quoted in the text of *Daniel Martin*: “Between these methods, Franz Kafka and Thomas Mann, the contemporary bourgeois writer will have to choose... modifications or reform”(DM 500). The epigraph to the first chapter is from George Seferis’s *Mr. Stratios Thealassinios Describes a Man*: “But what’s wrong with that man.....Then he told me the story of his life” (DM 3). The incipit prefigures the novel’s total concern with time, “whole sight; or all the rest is desolation” (DM 3). This is an echo of Mathew Arnold’s line from *To A Friend*, where Arnold expresses his

gratitude to Sophocles: “Who saw life steadily, and saw it whole”(Arnold 395). The poem suggests that an individual who sees his life steadily and sees it in a wholeness, is the one who has a concrete sense of his authenticity. Fowles is of the opinion that Arnold, was an existentialist before his times and a writer who had like Sophocles, held “concern with ‘seeing’ clearly is one that good writers have dwelt on over the ages”(Acheson 65). In *Daniel Martin*, the question on what fiction is about focuses on what a writer faces, in his venture to become a novelist. Writing here is used as a tool of enhancing authenticity, more aware of the self, and “clear-sighted in the Arnoldian sense of being able to see life steadily and see it whole”(Acheson 65). The first chapter of *Daniel Martin* begins with the initiative with the “attempted achievement of that whole sight through an examination of all the days of Daniel Martin”(Park 157).

Daniel is a fifteen year old son of the local vicar, helping with the harvest in a Devon farm: “... a boy in his mid-teens, his clothes unsuited, a mere harvester helper: cotton trousers, an apple green Aertex shirt, old gym-shoes”(DM 4). Nature is described in all its luxury: “The field sloped from the wall of trees, westward, a gentle bosom...The dark coats lay there in against the hedge covering the cider-jar and the dinner bundle...Now the wheat was half cut “(DM 3). The farmers talk at their work, drinking cider and eating apples. Daniel is exhilarated in this serene atmosphere, “the stubble pricking, slightly drunk, bathed in the green pond of Devon voices, his Devon and England”(Ibid 6). He feels the cider “the sour green swill down his gullet...last year’s brew, delicious as orchard shade in the sun and wheat dust’(Ibid 4). He watches “Sally, the younger

horse...stood tethered beneath a thorn not far from the gate, her tail intermittently swishing”(Ibid 3). The young Daniel relishes:

The sun in the extreme west, as he likes it best. Its slanting rays reveal the lands in a pasture...childish, but another of his secret flowers, the little honeycomb scented *Spiranthes spiralis*...the signs of the birds...The leaves of the beeches. A woodpigeon coos [...] .(Ibid 11)

Wanting to present an objective and a balanced view of his life, he alternates between first and second person narration. *Daniel Martin* in this mode of presentation falls in the genre of Dickens’s *David Copperfield*. In a conversation with Robert Foulke, Fowles comments:

I’m convinced I’ve found a valuable way of reliving the past which is imaginatively right...In *Daniel Martin*,...it’s clear that anyone might consider some childhood experience to him than an event that happened yesterday.(Foulke 380)

The sunny day with its serene atmosphere, the natural domain, the enchanting forests by the side of the fields is rudely disturbed with two vital incidents that affect Daniel’s mind for ages to come. The appearance of a German bomber producing nothing but panic, petrifies the villagers, with the mass slaughter of the rabbits killed by the blades of the machine and the hands of the men in the field. These two incidents foretell the mood of the novel. In the savage slaughter of the rabbits, Daniel perceives an isolated domain that he is “already in exile”(DM 11). He distances himself, trying to be objective. He sits with his back to the beech tree, staring emptily, “without past or future, purged of tenses; collecting this day...It wasn’t death, the agony in the mower’s blade...but dying, dying

before the other wheat was ripe”(Ibid 11). This passage highlights a contrast between a young Danny and the adult and matured Daniel, who reminisces on his childhood and its harsh reality. This dilemma moves with intensity and urges Daniel to reconstruct his life:

I feel in his pocket and bring out a clasp –knife; plunge the blade in the red earth to clean it of the filth from the two rabbits he has gutted; slit; liver ,intestines, stench. He turns and turns and begins to carve his initials on the beech tree...

Close shot. D.H.M. And underneath: 21 Aug 42 .(DM 11)

Fowles’s biographer Eileen Warburton, describes the effect of nature and the war on Fowles as a boy in Devon, similar to that of Daniel: “John and his mother explored Ipplepen and the countryside...walking the country lanes, they peeked into those deep, rich Devonshire hedges...like zoos, botanical gardens”(Warburton 26-7). On the war, Warburton comments: “Even in this bucolic place, the war could intrude...German bombers, who swooped down to machine-gun or drop incendiary bombs...John and his family would hear the muffled crump, crump and murmur”(Ibid 27).

His father’s moral didacticism makes Daniel shed unnecessary guilt about the impermanent relationships in his later life. In school, he discovered “new aspects of myself”(DM 289). But behind all the rejections and reactions against his father, Daniel has one factor in common with him; the insistence for a certain order and a “hatred for a change”(Ibid 576). When his father forbid him to be intimate with Nancy, the girl he fancied in his adolescence, Daniel felt he had severed all ties from him. But realized later that he was trapped in his father’s legacy: “trapped by convention, by respectability, by class, by

Christianity...I had asked for this terrible disaster...and I cried with all my loathing of his power”(Ibid 403). This is the crisis of the vigour in masculinity. This complex is, “the focal point of the acquisition of culture...as a law whereby men and women assume their humanity...it gives the human meaning of the distinction between the sexes”(Mitchell 13). This psychology of Daniel and his father lies in the same insecurity, which is defenceless, and which Fowles argues in *The Aristos*:

And yet the nemo, like hazard, like the indifference of the process to the individual, is essential to man. It is the effect in him of knowing that human existence is unequal. it is both a passive horror of this condition and the active source of the energy needed to remedy it. (*The Aristos* 44)

In the next chapter titled “Games,” Daniel is encountered as a man in his fifties who has spent a substantial time of life as a film scripter in Los Angeles. He has reached a point of his life where he is suffocated:

I suppose it was about reality. Failures to capture it. Those stages, the flats still standing there. Movies no one even remembers any more. How all the king’s plays and all the king’s scripts...and nothing in your present can ever put you together again. (*DM* 14)

In his company is Jenny, a Hollywood actress. She proposes that he should write an autobiographical novel, where the proxy character would be Simon Wolfe, based on Daniel himself, “The real history of what I am”(DM 15). It is Fowles’s own emphasis here that a writer bases his novels in his own experiences. Jenny is used to playing roles, rather than seeking her true self. She only fantasizes to arrange a marriage for herself and

Daniel. Her function in the book as Daniel's hidden self is crucial. She acts as a lever to open up Daniel's old self. For him, Jenny represents the unreal, from the illusionary world from which he wished to exode: "What Jenny does is to indicate how far Dan still is from his envisaged redemption with Jane, and how that redemption itself is a realignment of his. She acts as his scourge"(Woodcock 131). Like Urfe's relationship with Alison, Daniel always had the upper hand in his relationship with Jenny. He tells her that love is a sickness "of his generation which he does not expect her to catch"(DM 48); almost like George Paston's alliance with Miranda. Jenny's emotional needs are genuine and she realizes that she loves him. Daniel lies to her with on many occasions, which are eventually exposed. Firstly, in the matter of the script she is acting, secondly on his refusal to cast Steve in the male part of the films. Daniel expects Jenny to act in his films and also be a part of his life. He does not give her any information of his past, in case she becomes too vulnerable. He tells her nothing about Jane on his to return to England. Daniel's behavior to Jenny seems to be in the Robin Hood myth, where he dons a mask as a defence.

From Jenny's information in the chapter titled "An Unbiased View," Daniel is a divorced man, who has his career based in America, yet prefers his native England. She sums up Daniel's essence as "Not just in transit. self-contained. Very planned and compact, like his handwriting"(DM 33). Daniel is aware that the film industry "distorts the vision of all who work in it" (Ibid 147). Corrupted by his work, he seems to have lost his "true nature"(Ibid 169). Identifying himself to as if he were "a fiction, a paper person in someone else's script"(Ibid 68), he realizes that he is inauthentic. But Daniel is aware

that he had warded off influences that might have hindered the growth of his self. The son of a Vicar, he had chosen at seventeen to be an atheist, “To prove that I was no tame victim of my background; I swore and blasphemed...”(Ibid 92). With his adolescent rebellion against his father’s belief in God, Victorian notion of sexuality, and its faith in the social hierarchy, Daniel takes his first steps of an existentialist in the making.

Daniel’s first existential act in his days at Oxford as a student, was his involvement with Jane, to whose sister Nell, he was engaged. As he says: “Our surrender to existentialism and each other was fraught with evil. It defiled the printed text of life; broke codes with a vengeance” (DM 91). She is portrayed in the novel as enigmatic as Sarah in *The French Lieutenant*; a lost domain, Daniel’s own lost self. Daniel is later aware that his marriage to Nell was an error, and that he “might have been a better writer, or at least a less transient playwright”( Ibid 177). Jane is Daniel’s redeemer, and a kind of symbol of his inner psyche of his lost mother. To Daniel, she is the: “obscure ex-sister-in-law... someone whose spirit remained not quite like that of any other woman he had ever known...who set riddles one ignores at one’s cost”(Ibid 440). Her “heuristic quality”(Ibid 441) disrupts his sense of self and offers at the same time a renewal, an escape from his sense of being. Jane emerges ultimately as “varicose veins not without standing, as Dan’s epic muse”(Arlett 185). As a mirror, Jane does not project Daniel transiently, but she recasts scenes for Daniel’s benefit. Jenny is Daniel’s product of a world of illusions, but Jane is real. Her joining of the Communist party makes her an object of increasing mystery in Daniel’s eyes:

The point is that as Jane's challenge to his power grows stronger, so Dan's reaction is to contain it by transforming her into an idealized sphinx who holds the key to his future, a future predicated in his terms of a personal relationship. (Woodcock 135).

Daniel's relationship with Jane, grows after Anthony's death. Anthony is Jane's Catholic husband, and Daniel's Oxford companion. He was a teacher all his life, and a strong advocate of honesty. Daniel learns something far more important from Anthony, than of his own identification with his past. On his deathbed, Anthony requests Daniel to help Jane recover and rediscover the person she actually is, as she had embraced Catholicism, after her marriage. Daniel is puzzled on the request, but takes Jane under his tutelage like Conchis in *The Magus*: "He differs from Conchis, however in that he has not yet shed his own authenticity; he therefore spends as much time guiding himself in the direction of greater authenticity"(Acheson 69). Jane exhibits two characteristics, positive and negative. The positive aspect is the display of her deep political convictions in Marxism, and her sense of duty; her negative aspect is her fear of freedom. She is very much like Alison and Sarah, guiding her lover towards selfhood, but on the other side, her pre-marital adultery with Daniel makes her feel that she should, "reveal to Anthony, thus ensuring that her marriage will be a through-going-penance; her flight to the Catholic church with its conscious *sacrificium intellectus*" (Loveday 123). These instances of her distraught behavior.

To Northrop Frye, “In the social condition assumed (in Classical romance, virginity is to a woman what honour is to a man, the symbol of the fact that she is not a slave”(Frye 73). Virginity though not a social status, it is a symbol of purity and integrated identity. Chastity prior to marriage, is the preservation of the integrity of the self of a woman, and in this case to Jane, her marriage to Anthony is not a real marriage at all. It excludes of one’s surrender to the full. The novel is also a progression of the unfurling of this aspect in Jane, where Daniel’s task is to uncover her buried characteristic, and “bring Jane to see it, to release the damsel from the prison of herself”(Loveday 125).

Jane’s challenge to Daniel’s power grows stronger, hence he reacts to contain her by transforming her into an idealized woman, “an idealized sphinx who holds the key to his future...”(Woodcock 135). With Anthony’s suicide, after their brief encounter at his deathbed, Daniel is compelled to “consider the various cryptic reverberations of latent meanings and existential hints...”(Fawcner 65). He discovers the lost intimacy of their youth as “something much deeper than that, the strangest reversals of time, of personal histories...moments that you are glad, for once, to have survived to”(DM 276). On Anthony’s death, Daniel feels something impossible to understand; that one can be so eternally deprived of another human being, close in time and space. The death of Anthony, is in a sense the death of the fragmentation of the self of Daniel and the reawakening of his new self.

Fowles uses the metaphor of the mirror in the novel, to handle the situations which Daniel faces. In Egyptian philosophy, there exists a very close relationship between life

and mirror. A shadow or a reflected image, “whether in glass or water, was believed capable of revealing the soul as a figure with all the attributes of the body except tangibility”(Vocano 8).The mirror, thus have been used as a magical instrument, “screened or turned to the wall at times of birth or death as a precaution against a soul’s being trapped there, or conversely placed in the grave with the dead as a means of access and a bridge to other worlds”(Park 167). Daniel was always fascinated by mirrors since his undergraduate days at Oxford, where his room was decorated by “at least fifteen mirrors on its walls, collected for their Art Nouveau frames, east access to the physical contemplation of the self”(DM 52). His narcissism is a symbolic attempt to see himself, to escape the first person and becomes one’s own third. On the day of Anthony’s death, Daniel stares at himself on the mirror, and Fowles writes on him:

Perhaps what Dan always of his looking-glass was not his own face, but the way through them. This kind of mind is self-satisfied only in the sense that one must God is self-satisfied-in an eternity of presents; in his potentiality, not his fulfillment. (Ibid 208)

In his earlier rebellion against Victorian norms of hierarchy and sexuality, Daniel had viewed his father’s status that, “Thorncombe, the rural house he has bought must be partly a product of my own history and genetic make up...and of the fact that I am English”(DM 80). Throughout the novel, Daniel’s concern is with his background and its barrier. His migration to America, paradoxically makes him cling to the accents and idioms of English. At the end of World War II, Britain had put off its age old customs and notions on duty, national prestige and “spurious uniformity”(Acheson 69), replacing

them with a new definition of the self. This age to Daniel, “offered him old sins he could convert into supposed new freedoms”(DM 171). He recollects his selfish behavior to his wife Nell and other women, which were a reflection of his times. His preference of novel writing to films, is due to its fluidity, as “it does not restrict his, or the reader’s imagination, and because it does not differentiate between past, present and future”(Salami 175). Fowles himself reaffirmed his view against the cinema because it destroys the imagination of the spectator. In relation to the cinematic adaptation of *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*, Fowles observes:

I sincerely admired Meryl Streep’s performance in *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*, but I am not so happy that she- or anyone who might have played the part, must present a fixed image for the subsequent reader. This mobility or fluidity of image, in terms of how readers ‘see’ the text, is a very important asset of the novel.(Barnum 190).

On the sets of Camelot in Hollywood, Daniel for the first time comes to recognize his true artistic mission. He feels that to arrive at the “ real history of what I am”(DM 15), cannot be described in a film or drama. Not a fictional experimenter par excellence, his squabble with the film industry is the reason that it emphasizes dexterity over code breaking. Daniel had realized this when Anthony had called him, which affirms the, “code-breaking as part of the process of reality, as opposed to obedience to the rules of the game demanded by the cinema industry”(Arlett 176). When Daniel recalls his early days in the film industry, and the breakup of his marriage to Nell, he contemplates on the effect of civic interference on seclusion. While reading the *Selections from the Prison*

*Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*, Daniel finds that the philosopher of praxis, or the philosopher of social action, is aware of “himself both as an individual and as a component of the social group”(DM 176). The timid child of Devon countryside must also reveal the ways “by which the modern world shaped the emerging man”(Arlett 176).

In the chapter titled “Interlude,” Daniel sees a component of drawbacks in the novel he aims to write; he fears that the novel may force him to retreat from the outside world. This exorcism gives the possibility that it could be countered by the compulsion as a mode of escape. After Anthony’s funeral in London, he contemplates on writing a novel on his own representative condition: “A psychoanalyst might say he was searching for his double separation trauma, the universal one of the infancy and the private experience of literally losing his mother”(DM 239). Thus Daniel’s quest is also the valid angle of vision by tracing his own self from the opening chapter. In this self-analysis, a description of his early sexual experiences includes the “freeze frame observation that Nancy Reed’s body was his lost mother’s body”(Arlett 177-8). The note of lyricism in collaboration with narcissism gives flavor to the early stages of his description of selfhood and to his humanistic adulthood in his later narrative. On his way to the Los Angeles airport, from where Daniel sets out for England, he is “reduced to watching himself, as if he were indeed a fiction, a paper person in someone else’s script...”(DM 62). This re-entry of Daniel to his past, and then to the present, is where the early passages of the novel gives access to the old and new worlds. The chronological beginning of the novel is the wartime Devon harvest, but the actual process of the novel begins when in Los Angeles, and Daniel speaks to Jenny about writing his own true history. It is her suggestion that he

needs to “put down exactly what we’ve just said” (Ibid 66). She finds a name, Simon Wolfe, because to her, one cannot use his own name in a novel. The option for creative writing, involves the rejection of his career as a film writer. The art of film as opposed to the art of fiction: “Thus Dan will push aside his Kitchener script in order to start assembling a few notes on why he should leave the sanctuary of a medium he knew for the mysterious and complexities of one he didn’t” (Arlett 181).

The narrative in *Daniel Martin*, is the acceleration of the novel in terms of its conception in Hollywood and its development in England and Egypt, but another time frame is also constructed by Fowles in the process, as a backdrop to project the self. The basic conception of it is in Thorncombe, Daniel’s home in Devonshire when he says, “where I write now”(DM 379). As a child Daniel had adored Thorncombe, the farm near his home at the vicarage of Devon: “...simplicity, green early sunlight in the tunneled lanes”(Ibid 360), where he had felt his first passion in Nancy Reeds. Now Daniel is middle aged and Thorncombe becomes a “home base, a refuge, and a link with the past”(Park 169). Daniel is now the novelist who tries to execute “what this book is trying to be....”(Ibid 331). It is the in the *bildungsroman* genre, that Daniel the novelist in the making, a time when it is “still bare of a story or characters in any practical sense”(Ibid 401). Daniel describes the sacred myth of *Robin Hood* or the greenwood legend, as a place of retreat, “The wilderness, whose worst temptation is not to return ” (DM 276). It is a refuge from the madding crowd and the hostilities of the social world. This archetype of the myth of Robin Hood is parallel to the Garden of Eden, The Forest of Arden, and Shangri-La. Daniel experiences a relishing retirement in Thorncombe: “...a delicate powdery drizzle

out of the south-west, and the first hint of spring, a haunting green music in the air...the groves and orchards of milder climates, of the Canaries...a curlew...a tawny owl...the dense traditional night”(DM 400). Extended examples of Daniel’s retreat into the greenwoods are mentioned, like the ruins of long-dead civilizations, Tarquinia and Tsankawi. Kitchener’s island with its “shady vistas, countless birds, coolness, simplicity...Douanier Rousseau version of the Garden of Eden”(Ibid 536). And the “Nile ...whose waters seemed to reach not merely back into the heart of Africa, but into that of time itself”(Ibid 493).

The growth of Daniel’s passion of novel writing is in reality of Fowles the novelist himself, who is in need of the reader. It is the reader who finds the novel a medium of exploration and retreat. The most important thing the novel offers the reader, is exercising the imagination. In an interview to McNamara, Fowles comments:

The novel...is a very important ‘nature reserve’ for language, and encourages the pleasure uses of language...I do find something distressingly amoral in the very nature of film and TV-possibly because the photographed image denies the spectator virtually all uses of his imaginative powers. Whereas reading requires a constant use of the reader’s imagination. (McNamara 20)

On a broad level, *Daniel Martin* seems to explore a number of independent issues in relation to the self; the quest of selfhood, the importance of art, the nature of Englishness and the suitable analysis of freedom. On a closer examination, the sensitive questions of opposed cultures, media and the ideologies are related to each other through time and by time. The retrospective of Daniel’s past, “the present progressive, the present eternal, and

the future inceptive, becomes an effective temporal paradigm for a comprehensive artistic vision defying the linearity of past-present-future”(Fawcner 47). Individual experience is checked through the systems of code of this conceptual suspension, where the glimpse of the various tensions faced by the protagonist can be comprehended as the “the temporal escape of America into a fictive future versus the temporal escape of England; Dan’s consciousness of self through contemplation of the past versus Jane’s consciousness of society through contemplation of the future”(Ibid 47). Daniel’s awareness of the temporal takes place in New Mexico. It is here that he sees the novel as the only medium that will enable him to come to terms with the cultural inefficiency he suffers from. The archetypal Englishman to Daniel, faces unreality. As Fowles comments:

The English must express what the camera cannot capture-the continual evasion of the inner self, the continual actual reality of saying one thing and thinking another...the eternal bar is that the elusive psyche is profoundly unsympathetic...our baffled inability to make good films about ourselves, or produce artists of the stature of a Bergman, a Satyajit Ray [...] .(DM 274)

A progression in the geographical trend of Daniel’s self towards maturity is first conceived in Hollywood, which steadily grows in his visits to Egypt and Syria, where he yearns for a primal self in the greens of Devon of his early days. This growth is “from an experimental, code-breaking work, paradoxically reflecting the technically stagnant world of Hollywood, with radical shifts in narrative stance...”(Arlett 182). Here he has Jane for company, who teaches him whatever he did not achieve since his Oxford days. In Daniel’s trip to Nile, Jane updates his knowledge of twentieth century criticism. Daniel

confides in her of his fears, of writing a novel that may be another kind of self-indulgence on his part, and it is here that Jane gifts him a rare book, *Lukacs on Critical Realism*, that dilutes Daniel's doubts. This nineteenth century Hungarian's views on realism, shifts Daniel's early misconceptions on the matter and gives way to an acceptance of the "great and progressive literary traditions of realism in preference to formalistic experimentations"(DM 501). Lukacs's dictum on literary conventions makes Daniel "enlarged and refined"(Ibid 501). He achieves the whole sight and the childhood "camera's eye becomes the mature whole and steady sight of the master artist who looks and speaks with knowledge of self, with both will and compassion"(Arlett 183). On the Nile river course, Daniel encounters Professor Kimberger, a German Egyptologist, who gives him a version of the Egyptian concept of *Ka*. Etymologically it meant "a man's ideal image of his own life. It could survive death only in connection with the personal body, which is why the ancients were so anxious to preserve the corpses"(DM 512). Ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics elaborates on the concept. Egyptians believed that when a person's name is written or engraved on a stone, the spirit of the individual could reside in that particular place forever, after his death, which was the pathway to eternity. If the carving is destroyed, the spirit would cease to exist. His memory and chance for eternal life becomes obliterated. Kimberger comes to realize that "controlling is knowing, and that the greatest tool of knowing is the symbol that allows you to represent what is not present before your eyes"(Ibid 514).

Fowles indicates in his novel that Daniel seeks to control by knowing his own past, by using this genre to make his mark, write his name and express his own being. On their

Egyptian tour, Daniel feels that a relationship with Jane “betrayed a retardation in himself; a quasi-Freudian searching for the eternally lost, his vanquished mother”(Ibid 513). He deliberately does not impose his feelings on her, and becomes frustrated in the process. She tells Daniel “you do have an interesting career, Dan. It really is rather difficult for us. My kind of woman. At my age”(Ibid 414). Daniel sees her as an emblem of redemption, but she responds “I have so little to give”(Ibid 598). In the hotel at Palmyra, Daniel accuses her of murdering their happiness, and he regards his feelings towards her as a mystery, “The one mystery to me is how can I have fallen twice in my life for such an impossible bitch of a woman”(DM 629). This expounds the Lawrentian myth of the mystery of a woman. Daniel recognizes that there is a psychological resemblance between Jenny and Jane, which leads to Jenny’s ultimate rejection. She castigates him as “the original male chauvinist pig”(Ibid 618). Daniel Martin as a novelist, now looks back on his best and worst selves, and in the last chapter, titled “Future Past” he commits himself to Jane.

In *Daniel Martin*, Fowles develops the theme of freedom in the self, with thrust to the contemporary social contexts. Daniel and Jane are wiser at the end of the novel, but their journey to selfhood persist, and the “timeless values sought are not some version of an existential present; the values are a more mystical, more primitive, and simple past-present toward which Fowles’s heroes and heroines more recently journey”(Beijebing 33). In spite of the lack of a coherent development of its theme, *Daniel Martin* highlights a continuing development of an individual self versus the community. The shadows of Lukacs and Gramsci reflect on this aspect. Fowles’s drifting away, if not from an entity’s

totality, is emphatic in his belief that existential freedom of the self is dangerously insufficient. Excessive obsession with personal destiny will only make one unpopular in history. The wholeness Fowles seeks, can at best achieved through one's fertile imagination. To him:

It is in the voyage into self, through the vehicle of art (here the book that Dan is writing and we are reading) that one discovers the unity that reality seldom provides, but in which one also discovers relationships and responsibilities beyond the self. (Bejibing 34)

Feminist ideas are evident in the scheme of *Daniel Martin*. Daniel is presented by Fowles as a victim of the male capitalist ethic, while Jane who is a left wing Communist sympathizer, portrayed as Daniel's redeemer. The redemptive vision of feminism is authentically upheld by Andre Gorz in his work *Farewell To The Working Class*. Gorz is of the view that, a cultural revolution which will eliminate the principle of performance, and the "the ethics of competition, accumulation and the retrace at the level of both individual behavior and social relations, replacing them with the supremacy of the values of reciprocity, tenderness, spontaneity and love of life in all its forms. (Gorz 85). This viewpoint has much in common with Fowles. He presents these subjects of consumer capitalism and its ill effects on society, and like Gorz, he sees the redemption of these ills in terms of feminism, where the contemporary women's movements along with nuclear disarmament, in relation to man can bring about a vital change in the self and the society. Fowles philosophy also upholds the values, "to win over men both inside and outside the home to subvert the traditional sexual division of labour; and to abolish

not only the hegemony of the values of virility but these values themselves...”(Gorz 85). In *Daniel Martin*, Jane is touched by the women’s movement through her daughter Rose. She values the humanist communion “in her indictment of the self-seeking world which Dan inhabits”(Woodcock 116). Daniel subsequently comes to realize that Jane offers a metamorphosed and redemptive answer to his life which acts as a catalyst which “his political indifference and ignorance needed reprimand”(DM 419).

The self in Daniel can be discovered in the novel he attempts to write, where his new-found commitments of societal implications under Jane’s influence, nurtures his maturity. His novel becomes the emblem of his rediscovery “and his voluntary abdication from the world of power and illusion epitomized by the cinema”(Woodcock 117). *Daniel Martin* on the other hand, also shows Fowles’s attempt as a novelist himself, escaping from the male dominated fiction. His own status is remarkably presented as ambitious. What Fowles attempts to project in the novel is hinted in the philosophy of praxis, mentioned in the book itself:

The philosophy of praxis is consciousness full of contradictions, in which the philosopher himself, understood both individually and as an entire social group, not merely grasps the contradictions, but posits himself as an element of the contraction and elevates this element to a principle of knowledge and therefore of action. (DM 210)

The resultant structure of *Daniel Martin* presents a Chinese-box effect. It upholds Fowles’s attempt to project his very own fantasies of the lost woman, by making Daniel write on the theme in his professed novel. As the emblem of the failures of his

generation, Daniel is “no more than an extreme example of the general case”(DM 94). The cinematic world, of which he is a part, is also the symbol of the western society's failures to Fowles's analysis. Daniel projects self-disgust at the postwar England, of which he is a representative. His role as a professional male, in the advanced capitalistic society of America has identical inferences with Andrew Tolson's view: “ the defensive insecurity of men in the post-war society is seen as the result of tensions within contemporary society and capitalism which have undermined the masculine presence” (Tolson 16).

Daniel feels that his friends of Oxford days in London, become “cogs in the communication machine”(DM 277). He voices out from the core of his self, at the magnitude of man's betrayal of his convictions, for the sake of power and success .His Oxford friends, Barney and Ken are projected in this regard

I certainly could not call Barney a failure in worldly terms; yet something of that also hung about him-indeed has continued to hang around all my Oxford generation. As with Ken Tynan, so many others, I certainly can't except myself, destiny then pointed to far higher places than the ones actually achieved [...]. (Ibid 109).

Fowles puts Barney and Daniel as mirror images to each other in the novel, to bring out the inner self of Daniel. Sometimes Daniel finds himself in the same situation as Barney, which makes him comfortable. A textual example in this regard can be highlighted when Daniel encounters Barney of having a relationship with his daughter Caroline, a young girl. It makes him uncannily alike to Barney, because Daniel himself had an affair with

Jenny, young enough to be his daughter. Daniel's self-disliking puts him on the same cart as his friend. It seems to him that "all the stabilizing moral and religious values in society, were vanishing into thin air"(DM 279).

Daniel's role as a scriptwriter gives him an access to sexuality. In his profession as a scriptwriter, he has the freedom of writing, which also acts as an "analogy for his personal relations"(Woodcock 120). This job gives him abundant extension of power and freedom, where he discovers his sexual power. He moves from one short affair to another, exploiting sexuality. Like the scripts he writes, his life seems to act from one dream to another. "I had the compromises, the false pressures and premises of the film world in perspective"(DM 156). His marriage to Nell, Jane's sister was another vital flaw in his self. "The age of self offered him old sins he could convert into supposed new freedoms. It set her in a cage. That was her real jealousy; and his real adultery"(Ibid 171). Daniel commits infidelity within his marriage, when he had casual relations with Miriam and Marjory, the twin sisters. In Daniel's eyes, these relationships brought about an ideal relationship between men and women in the future "free of all the encumbrance, the suppuration, the vile selfishness of romantic love"(Ibid 269). When Miriam and Marjorie leave, they linger in Daniel's memory as "emblems and muses"(Woodcock 122). The redemption by feminism is aptly exemplified here as Daniel himself exhibits to be progressive, exhibiting sexual liberations.

Jenny's criticism on Daniel is central to assess his identity, as Jane is cast as the redemptive woman. The pseudo name Simon Wolfe, which Jenny chooses for the

fictional version of *Daniel Martin*, points to the common male cliché, the lone wolf. “Who’d ever go for a character called Daniel Martin?(Ibid 23). Jenny also knows that Daniel maintains a monkish isolation from women, dreaming of “that very ancient male dream embodied in Mount Athos and its monasteries”(Ibid 484) and she decides, “I just won’t be only something in your script. In any of your scripts. Ever again”(Ibid 471). She realizes that the hidden figure under the carpet of “Daniel’s psychology is Jane herself, the key surrogate for Dan’s lost mother since she re-enacted the pattern of being possessed and lost in marrying Anthony”(Woodcock 133). Both Jane and Jenny are reduced to symbols of the novelist’s association from “fragmentation and inner-directness into wholeness and humanism”(Arlett 184). Jenny or Jane are constructions of mirror images through he can see his own self. The script writing in *Daniel Martin* can be analyzed as a metaphor, which is crucial enough to expose realistically the power shared by manliness and free enterprise. Fowles exploits to the full, his novel’s attempt to unearth and construct the historical and social processes which has its toll on the psyche of an individual. The narrative is interwoven in layers of Daniel’s life, shows the accumulated strata of his psyche. The methodology which Fowles uses in this regard is to make Daniel’s own selection of narrative style in his turning from the “illusory world of film to the novel as a truer medium for composing experience”(Woodcock 123).

In the chapter, titled “Tsankawi,” Daniel recalls that the germination of his motivation for novel writing was a constant longing:

The first seed of what this book is trying to be dropped into my mind that day: a longing for a medium that would tally better with this real structure of my racial

being and mind...something dense, interweaving, treating time as horizontal, like a skyline; not cramped, linear and progressive. (DM 353)

Daniel's experiences in Tsankawi is melancholic. He grasps here the idea here of conquering time in life as well as art: "in them there was sadness, the vanished past, the cultural loss; but Tsankawi defeated time, all deaths. Its deserted silence was like a sustained high note, unconquerable"(DM 325). Here, he feels himself taken back from Tsankawi to Devon; from his middle age to boyhood "...an emotional and nostalgic bind...of comparing a Devon farm"(Ibid 324). In 1974, Fowles and his wife Elizabeth, had visited Tsankawi. They walked through the cliffs, cave dwellings, and viewed the snowy mountains. The site evoked to Fowles, "a lost golden age....Haunting Tsankawi went on his personal list of emotionally defined landscapes ...the landscape, and the special quality of Tsankawi also went into the novel he was writing, *Daniel Martin* " (Warburton 357). The extended amplification of this is analyzed in a previous chapter titled "The Sacred Combe" where Daniel sees how the genesis of the book he plans to write. It was "the ghost of a central character, a theme, of a thing in the mind that might once more make reality the metaphor and itself the reality"(DM 269).The novel within the novel, which Daniel aims to write is thus an attempt to analyze and reconstitute himself and his past. It represents Daniel's escape from the glaring lights of the camera, the Gramscian philosophy of totality and achieving whole sight, and of creating his own *bildungsroman*. Fowles thus achieves his detachment from the contradictions which he faces as a male writer, by making Daniel his surrogate.

*Daniel Martin* involves risks in the methodology Fowles applies to analyze Daniel. This precarious attempt was already foreseen by Fowles, as he had commented in an interview

to Donald Hall, "I have always liked in novels a fluctuating quality. I find it attractive; I think that sometimes boring passages are quite important"(Hall 94). The difficulty springs from Daniel's attempts to project his self from the past and then construct schematic arrangements of experience. This problem is treated as a joke by the character himself in the chapter, "Webs" where Daniel comments that he feels "like someone locked up inside an adamantly middle-class novel; a smooth plausible Establishment fixer out of C.P. Snow, not a lone wolf at all"(DM 246). Like Nicholas Urfe, who goes to Greece in search of his identity, and in the process led in a godgame, Fowles sees for his creative impulse for his protagonist something of the past: "the key element in the equation which is merely hinted at in his other novels-fear of the father"(Woodcock 126). Daniel gradually unearths that his relation with his father is the subtle cause of his dilemma, where his father had conditioned him always by "antithesis"(DM 83). Daniel comments: "it wasn't until I went to a boarding-school that I realized how outstanding dull he was as a preacher, a handicap which was partly imposed by his humorless and partly by his lifelong habit of sailing high over village heads"(Ibid 76). On facing the various crisis in his life, Daniel attempts to bury all his memories of his father, but ironically realizes that he had inherited a "cosmic demonstration of this phallic inheritance"(Woodcock 127). Conservatism of the Victorian middle class patriarchal values, are an inescapable part of his self. Daniel is to carry the mantle of his father's umbrella. He feels resentment and humiliation at this: "He goes slowly, but I have to trot. And the stupid umbrella. I am furious"(DM 88). In the first chapter, Daniel is seen "nursing his solitude, his terrible Oedipal secret; already at the crossroads every son must pass"(Ibid 15).

Fowles introduces the figure of General Kitchener in the film script of *Daniel*, as the patriarchal ghost of his father. In writing the script of Kitchener, Daniel confronts both the character of the general and his father, and his “own masculine drive for power”(Woodcock 129). When Jane tries to help him in this situation, he realizes that Kitchener is his mirror image and this situation haunts Daniel. The Victorian period to him was characterized by “an obsession with patriotism, duty, national destiny, ...of an external Empire. Empire was a great disease”(DM 450). Fowles projects this inclination in the role of General Kitchener, who was caught up in the need to present a conventional front at all times. Kitchener had surrendered his inner self, which he came “devious, convulsed far more tyrannized by his own personal myth than the public one he appeared to be building”(Ibid 451). Trying to retrieve the freedom to be his own self, Daniel’s Englishness is stifled by his Britishness. He sees that it is impossible to be free in the complete sense. In the non-fiction, “On Being English, but not British,” Fowles comments:

I am emphatically not a Little-Englander...The time has come when there is no other but administrative and political necessity to talk about being British, and the agonizing reappraisal we English-Britons have to make of our status as a world power since 1945. (WH 94)

The lost mother paradigm in *Daniel Martin* is another crucial element to determine the self of the protagonist. Daniel had lost his mother as child: “My mother had died just before my fourth birthday...a tired brown face-the brownness being due to the illness that killed her”(DM 75). This absence of maternal affection, alike to Nicholas leads Daniel in

the pursuit of women, to supplement his emotional inadequacies: “His relationships with women allow him power and emotional support by bolstering his sense of uniqueness”(Woodcock 130). With males, he identifies his own masculinity, and its underlying motives. Fowles makes him use his women, to reflect himself, and he traces this narcissism in the Freudian roots as a search for his pre-Oedipal unity of self-sufficiency. Daniel’s relationships with women is manipulated by him by introducing them in the scripts of the films in the role of a surrogate mother. On Jenny, Daniel comments “I suppose I was also looking as all men do, for a sacrifice of her real self, or at least of all the parts of it that conflicted with the more concealed elements of my own”(DM 355). These relationships do not last long, because Daniel ultimately realizes that, “I must start treating this woman as she is”(DM 513).

In Egypt he spends more time with Jane, and sees that beneath all her convictions, her wrong dogmas, “there lay...that mysterious sense he had always thought of as right feeling ”(Ibid 617). While visiting Palmyra in Lebanon, Jane reflects on the need to respond to her instincts, and contemplates that Catholicism had only supported people, who fear to love; whereas Communism generalized love for fellow men. She renounces her Catholic vows, and this transformation in her eventually brings her closer to Daniel. He returns to England, and explains to Jenny of his choice, that Jane had accepted his proposal of marriage. Understandably upset, Jenny calls him a “devious, lying bastard ” (Ibid 617). But Daniel is convinced of his right choosing in Jane, and he tells Jenny that he will continue to write the novel he had undertaken. When Fowles was writing *Daniel Martin*, he was aware that the character of Jane was patterned on his wife. Elizabeth’s

traits, her style and “ her groping for a better sense of self, and John’s deep feelings for her-was still an important part of his work”(Warburton 369).

Fowles ends the novel with an ambiguous painting of Rembrandt. Looking at Rembrandt’s self-portrait, Daniel comes to recognize a new kind of artistic persona in himself. For Daniel, the painter becomes the symbol of his own aspirations of achieving whole vision, a new spiritual father. The painting shows the painter portrayed as an old man, expressing the deeper and hidden loneliness, which reminded Daniel of his own father. Daniel’s self-awareness reminds him of his formidable patriarchal image, guarding him like a sentinel, from which he cannot escape. Daniel felt “dwarfed, in his century, his personal being, his own art. The great picture seemed to denounce, to repel”(DM 628).The ending seems to be an exploitation of Daniel in his own novel, rather than Fowles, manipulating his own. The finale also upholds the narrative tactics opted by Fowles to project himself in the manner of Gramsci:

The book allows him to explore the impasse facing the middle-aged, middle class male writer of the 1970s trying to confront his own masculine experience; but one sees Fowles ahead of his character, looking back at him as the character is supposedly looking back at himself. ( Woodcock 142)

To achieve a healthy relationship with nature, Fowles believes that, “our eternal need to use it in some way, to derive some personal yield”( *The Tree* 24). In *Daniel Martin*, these ideals are studded either in Daniel himself, or in the other characters. Various ways of indulging in nature represent “partial visions”(Andrews 149). During World War II,

Fowles's family was made to evacuate to Devonshire, which he had fictionalized in the novel. Daniel's father is very much like Fowles's. They both had a passion for gardening, and took a clean garden to be an emblem of order and control. Daniel's father, an Anglican priest, "drew some analogy between horticulture and God watching over a world; in nature things happened behind your back, could not be supervised and controlled"(DM 82). Fowles comments in *The Tree* "only fools think our attitude to our fellow-man is a thing distinct from our attitude to 'lesser' life on this planet" (*The Tree* 180). The nature of the characters in *Daniel Martin*, mirror in their attitudes towards the people. Daniel's father abhorred the wild in man as well as nature. He later understands that his father's "real fear was of any nakedness of feeling..."(DM 80). In his trip to Egypt, the river Nile held for him an absorbing atmosphere to help him write the script. The Nile had rinsed Daniel's life:

The Nile did seem to possess a metaphysical charm beside its more obvious physical ones. It cleansed and simplified, it set all life in perspective. The memory of its hundreds of generations, its hundreds of generations, its countless races.  
(DM 526)

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### **Non-Fiction:**

#### **"Eliduc and The Lais of Marie de France."**

Written in 1974, at the same time as *The Ebony Tower*, the essay reflects the contribution of Marie-de-France on Fowles's creative self, and the effect of Celtic literature and its

preoccupation to locate the conditions of the self in the tales of *The Ebony Tower*. The epigraph of the story, is translated from French as: “I’ll tell you the story and all the meaning of a very ancient Breton *lai*.” An omnivorous reader of the French literature, Fowles had a profound attraction of its rich culture in his own writings. In the beginning of this essay, he singles out Alain Fournier’s *Le Grand Meaulais*, which had a momentous impact on *The Magus*. The French literature may be intricate “with its latinities, its baffling orthographies, its wealth of dialect forms”(WH 179), but to Fowles, a flavour which fascinated him were the Celtic Romances, which symbolizes the “forest” (Ibid 179). British literature had indeed brought about an extraordinary metamorphosis in European culture, but the most “emotionally and imaginatively”(Ibid 179) essence of European literature was the “strange invasion of the early medieval mind”(Ibid 179), or the Celtic Romances, with works like *Eliduc*. This attraction of these romances had pre-occupied him to the extent that Fowles feels that on reading them, “a writer is watching his own birth”(Ibid 179).

Hailing Marie de France as the first woman novelist ever, her capability of writing gives rise to a peculiar feeling in him. Her inherent art of writing germinates a firm belief in Fowles, that “the writer of the Odyssey was also a woman”(Ibid 179). Marie’s works have a strong base in the conviction that a female mind was behind the Greek epic. The sophistication in which she embroidered the folk theme of the Celts, gave rise to the first systematic feminine view in literature. Marie’s question of writing cannot be disputed. Although Fowles candidly admits that the essay is not an exploration in this opinion, he recommends a reading of Marie’s writings and the Greek epic to an inquiring reader.

Marie had written in verse, but “virtually all Marie’s importance, to say nothing of her charm, lies in her storytelling, her psychology, her morality, her highly individual use of her material—that is, it lies in her fictional powers...”(WH 180). The Celtic *Lais* on which Marie based her stories or her half-sung, half-spoken verses, were in original rhymed octosyllabic couplets, performed and sung in France by wandering minstrels, in the accompaniment of the harp. Marie was formal in her expressions in *Eliduc*, and Fowles describes it as a piece of “conventional show of courtly etiquette”(Ibid 181). This seed of the evolution of fiction, saw the ways and means of finding the right expressions and the striving form from verse to prose in literature.

The art and skill of Marie in her effort to portray a story in verse in the level of prose fiction is to Fowles the effort of an “engagingly shrewd storyteller”(WH 182). Her methodical handling of the characters, the problems of sexuality and fidelity seem to have the flavour of Freud and Jung, almost alike to contemporary character portrayals. To Fowles, the erotic *lai* of Marie’s *Lanval*, seem to be the premonitions of Thomas Hardy’s *The Well-Beloved*, which figures that “unattainable muse figure which haunts every male novelist”(Ibid 182). The essay also expands on the advantages of the pen over the camera. A camera cannot photograph a voice, it has to show the expressions well, but a novelist uses his/her art’s exceptional facility for this, which is a “key trick in all good prose fiction”(Ibid 182). The writers of Marie’s era had indeed the lesser choice in terms of form and technique, but it would be impertinent to discharge that they can be dismissed as antique pieces in literature. Marie and her contemporary writers of *Chretien de Troys*, had elegance in their narrative techniques. Fowles acknowledges time as a great

factor in advancement, but not of the arts, but of science. The remarkable quality of precision, poetic and colourful details, marked with selection of the right correlatives in symbolism, with touches of the right moods and humours, are the hallmarks of Marie's craftsmanship. Fowles finds Jane Austen close to Marie's style. Her greatness lies in her ability to reach us, crossing the threshold of nine centuries, and yet be present hauntingly in our midst. It is here that "the imagined present, however past, drowns the real present" (Ibid 183).

The essay gives a biographical detail of Marie's life. Fowles congregates from historical information, and from her own writings, suggests that she came from that part of Normandy, which borders the Paris basin in France. Probably living from between 1150 to 1216, doubts have also risen that she was the illegitimate daughter of the English king, Henry-II. Romantic and lithe in spirit, her *lais* or love stories, dictate her temperament. A victim of male chauvinism, she was sent to Shaftsbury to mend her allegedly wicked ways. The Church and the clergy did not approve of her *lais*, giving the notion that the aristocrats favoured her stories as they lived in the same wicked manner. Marie, however to Fowles saved the Celtic tales from the grave of oblivion. Her sources of the tales are not exactly located, but the word *Bretun* meaning Britain, is sometimes mentioned in them. She gave European literature an effective new element: "It was composed not least of sexual honesty and a very feminine awareness of how people really behave"(WH 185). What Jane Austen did by setting new standards of descriptions in accuracy describing human emotions and absurdities, Marie did the same for posterity. Both these writers had

a rare sense of humour. But belonging to the twelfth century France, “we grossly underestimate both her and her contemporary audience”(Ibid 185).

Emphasis is laid by Fowles that *Eliduc* and the *lais* are the reflections of the contemporary three real-life systems. Firstly it depicted feudalism, stressing strong fidelity between vassal and lord; the second context is Christian, responsible to the religious balm to the ending of *Eliduc*. The third is that of courtly love, where stress is laid on sexual relations. Marie’s invincibility in writing is unforgettable. Once she is read, the revelations would be like a spring day: “*Le vierge, le vivace, le bel aujourd’hui*...with that freshness, greenness, immediacy that have from the beginning distinguished the less coldly classical side of her country’s art”(Ibid 186).

The Celtic backdrop of the tales in *The Ebony Tower*, find resonance in the essay, “*Eliduc* and the *Lais* of Marie-de-France.” The source and the mood of the stories in the collection, recalls the theme and setting, remote and forgotten in the history of fiction, and Fowles attempts to resurrect a fragment of it. The composed sexual complications, with a feminine awareness, and moral didactics in Marie’s *Eliduc*, is remarkably akin to the sensibility in the symptoms of the nostalgic self in *The Ebony Tower*. The mania for chivalry, courtly love, crusading Christianity, mysticism, forest motif and creative responsibility all pervade in the stories of *The Ebony Tower*. The recurrence of the disappearance motif, is a connecting thread in all the stories, and the flavour of the detective genre in *Poor Koko*, *The Enigma* and *The Cloud*. The antiquated background of Marie’s remote twelfth century credulity should be taken “without a pinch of salt”(WH

186). This essay sums up the impact of the twelfth century woman writer on Fowles's creative imagination.

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### **“My Recollections on Kafka.”**

The essay concentrates on the accurate facets in the dexterity of script. Fowles singles out Franz Kafka in this observation. No modern writer other than Kafka, admits Fowles “has achieved a more distinctive style and voice, a clearer flavour in the literary cuisine”(WH 131). Epithets on Kafka abound in fictitious circles like, “It was like a madhouse. Pure Kafka...Kafka lives!...Watered down Kafka...”(Ibid 131). So much that a phonetical term “Kafkasque,”(Ibid 131), have been coined. There are of course adjectives in English literature that have attained usage in literary contexts: “Shakesperean, Voltairean, Shavian and Dickensian”(Ibid 132), to name a few. But Kafkaesque seems incomparable to Fowles, belonging to a category of the rare. Perhaps Rabelesian and Chekhovian comes nearer to it. Kafka, Rabelais and Chekhov have all analysed and “explored ‘dark’ areas of general human experience...Rabelais was a pioneer in ethics and permissive society; Chekhov in the psychology of failure; Kafka in existential sociology-in being and nothingness”(Ibid 133).

Fowles constructs dim memories of reading Kafka as a student in Oxford. Difficulties in the craft of writing, and the indomitable spirit in Kafka as an apt model for aspiring writers, is the base of the essay. Fowles finds it difficult to estimate Kafka seriously as a

major writer, but his amazement does not cease to concede that Kafka had indeed created a fortress around him; his own castle, with his inimitable style. He unapologetically affirms that he cannot remember a single scene from Kafka, “except one in which a man is turned into a cockroach as he lies in bed. I think it is a story called *Metamorphosis*... *The Castle* was about a man trying to speak to someone in a castle...”(Ibid 129). Fowles makes it distinct that his own writing method is of a “practising novelist ”( Ibid 129), and not as an academician. Stressing the independence of a writer, he insists that a university degree is not really necessary to be a successful novelist, or a poet. He clears the above notion with the concept of biology. Biology over the decades have proved from observations that:

A vital dissatisfaction has grown with the limitations of laboratory observation as a reliable account of how birds and beasts actually behave in the wild; we know now that caged animals acquire a host of atypical behaviour traits – a complex cage neurosis- in captivity. I suspect literary criticism too ought to devote more time to its subjects’ ethology: how living writers (off the campus)actually feel and behave. (WH 130)

Incorporating the views of other writers only makes a budding novelist confused as he grows older. For Fowles, what is important about Kafka’s contribution boils down to a “tone of voice, a style perfectly suited to the content rather than anything in the content itself...Nobody else has spoken like that”(WH 132). Fowles admits that even the most “frivolous novelist”(Ibid 131), should analyze the problems of style. Difficulties for a writer arises from all quarters as he grows older.

Writing the first chapter of a novel had seemed to Fowles at a particular time is “easier than the first slopes of a mountain to be climbed”(WH 131). But in the present times, finding the right angle of the plot have made many a novelist, including himself, writing the first chapter of a novel “nightmarish”(Ibid 131). It was vital to determine and situate a writer’s own self, before handling the attitudes of his characters. The feeling of “frustration and victimization”(Ibid 133), as a consequence of the darker side of the New Civilization, finds outlet in Kafka’s works. This utter feeling of disillusionment is described with a metaphor with scientists who have adjectives coined to their discoveries, like “Galilean, Newtonian, Darwinian, Freudian, Einsteinian”(Ibid 133).

The essay retraces to the theme of its base; the duty and essence of a budding novelist. The literary preoccupation in the present times, Fowles admits has become “pretensions”(WH 134). But a modern writer will not like this tag to his credit. The globe now witnesses that good writers have poor sales. Subscribing “ethological approach”(Ibid 135), as one of the good roads to successful duration chart, Fowles analysis economic considerations not to influence a writer. The rest of the essay concentrates on how a “distinctive voice”(Ibid 135), plays a vital role in an honest destination of writers. Not sure of Kafka’s birth and death dates, he finds Kafka’s works less appealing, but what caught his attention was his spirit: “ I know well is his spirit, his tone of voice, his coloration or lack of it, his drift, his one brilliant metaphor”(WH 135). The vital influence that Kafka had on Fowles was his characteristic style, which he elaborates:

It is as if he cleared a space around himself in literary history; and this makes him a kind of landmark, a reference point for all novelists who come after. But more

than that, a landmark that it is dangerous to approach-to imitate, in other words. It has a fatal magnetism, a cannibal aspect. Here trespassers will be prosecuted -of plagiarism. (Ibid 137)

The limitation of Kafka to one style of writing is to Fowles the most vital aspect of a modern writer. The mysteries of existence, a constant paranoiac fear of being victimized have a cathartic flavour in Kafka's writings as, "With Kafka, it is the articulated, that fundamentally matters"(Ibid 138). In spite of the impenetrable artistic mist enveloping him, Kafka's works have lured many *nouveau roman* writers like the Pied Piper of Hamelin. The way in which Kafka conveyed human feelings towards exploitations was something surreal. The world of Kafka seemed almost worse than actuality. Voicing his own opinion in the context, Fowles makes it clear that all novelists suffer from this tension of trying to portray the "the desire to be exact to life as it is and the wish to be exact to one's 'artificial' theories of nature, its purpose, and the test"(Ibid 139). Fowles finds tragic novelists like Thomas Hardy and Samuel Beckett, parallel to Kafka.

The vital question, plaguing Fowles is whether it is advisable to imitate Kafka and his methods. Answering the question himself, Fowles views that in doing so, "This can trap some writers in a prison of their own idiosyncrasies"(WH 141). That he himself enjoys writing and exploring in all directions is due to the fact that the "novel is more closely committed to describing experience realistically than the other forms of literature"(Ibid 142). Ending the essay in the same tone as its beginning, Fowles advises budding novelists that their choices should be opened, and that the one thing that they should not

tolerate are restrictions on artistic methods and ambitions because, “increasingly human freedom lives in human art”(Ibid 142).

In “My Recollections on Kafka” the inner core of relentless optimism in the pessimistic world, and situating oneself in these conditions is the prime concern. Fowles’s conclusions in the essay are persuasive which future novelists should regard it as their inner voice. As with most of the other essays, this composition reveals more of the self of Fowles, than the actual subject. Between his voices and inclinations, as opposed to techniques and aesthetics, Fowles attempts to situate himself. Like Kafka living and suffering in the industrial new world, the portrayal of Daniel too is shattered by the emblems of the advanced capitalistic society, and in the role of a professional career oriented male, the crisis of a novelist in the post war malaise is projected elaborately by Fowles. Kafka definitely echoes in *Daniel Martin*! But it offers a glimpse of literary influence as a largely personal connection, between voices and inclinations as opposed to techniques and aesthetics.

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### **“Hardy and The Hag”**

Written in 1977, “Hardy and The Hag” was published at the same time as *Daniel Martin*. The fragmentations and difficulties in a writer’s self, with guilt-ridden conscience as an outcome of the Oedipal complex, reflected in *Daniel Martin*, is brought out in this essay, at parity with Thomas Hardy’s *The Well-Beloved*. The essay is epigraphed with a poem from Hardy, *The Collector Cleans his Picture*: “Then me seemed it the guise of the ranker Venus...I could have ended myself in heart-shook terror” (WH 159). The poem

portrays the beautiful forms of Venus and Astarte, to whose portraits Hardy offers his adorations, before committing himself for the night's slumber. But at dawn instead of the enchanting women, a hag emerged and pointed towards a figure which was destroyed, leaving Hardy horror stricken. The metaphor of the hag in the poem, is an indication by Fowles as a predicament novelists face, when they have to counter the balancing of the figure in their unconscious and the real women in their lives.

The essay begins with Fowles stating that English novelists are inclined to gossips related literary activities, but are shy of "talking of the realities of their private imaginative lives"(WH 159). Hemingway to Fowles, is perhaps the only novelist who did not wear this "public mask"(Ibid 160). Yet the English have been successful in novel writing and poetry. Fowles links this guilt-ridden experiences of the novelists with that of a child: "As with the child, this experience is heavy with loss-of all the discarded illusions and counter-myths as well as of the desires and sensibilities that inexorable adulthood"(Ibid 160). Artists experience this same loss. A novel attempted seriously exhausts the writer's psyche, as the world he enacts, must be torn from the world proper. This to Fowles is the "loss of the secret self"(Ibid 160) which later has a "quasi-traumatic effect"(Ibid 161) on a writer. The novel Fowles undertakes to discuss in this essay is Hardy's *The Well Beloved*.

Critical of the contemporary academic world, which gives attention to text rather than the "benign psychosis of writing experience"(WH 161), Fowles laments that the ethological approach, much needed for the world of letters is lacking. The reason of his analyzing

*The Well Beloved* is because it is that novel of Hardy, which has been the least artistically approached. Scathingly attacking *The Well Beloved* in the beginning of the essay as a “black farce”(Ibid 161), Fowles writes it off as a failure from the depths of Hardy’s standards, as “a fiction at the end of its tether”(Ibid 161). The reflection of Hardy’s disastrous marriage must have been the most obvious reason for this. After the success of *Jude The Obscure*, *The Well Beloved* was dismissed by a section of critics as the “technically worst written”(Ibid 161). Hardy suffered in his era what his contemporary novelists felt; that the novel was at its end point. This drop in the fertility of the novel makes Fowles regard *The Well Beloved* waiting as “a coiled adder on the Portland cliffs”(Ibid 162), to be appropriately evaluated.

“Hardy and The Hag,” then concentrates on a case study of Fowles’s own novel, *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*. Professor G. J. Rose who wrote a paper on the novel, projected his theory as to what incites the artistically creative mind. The theory figures the memory of a child from infancy to its first awareness of a separate identity from its mother, and the dawn of the adulthood. Fowles elaborated this consciousness as:

He was once a magician with a wand; and given the right other predisposing and environmental factors, he will one day devote his life to trying to regain then unity and the power by re-creating adult versions of the experience; he will be an artist. (WH 163)

Fowles singles out Emily Bronte and Virginia Woolf as the only two female novelists in English literature who had strong masculine component in their psyches. The unconscious drive for the unattainable, is the main dilemma which envelops a sense of loss around

novelists, and which at times gives birth to a tragic writer. Ironically, it sometimes generates comedy in some writers. Fowles maintains that the novelist “longs to be possessed by the continuous underlying myth he entertains of himself—a state not to be attained by method, logic...” (WH 164). In Hardy’s *The Well Beloved*, the protagonist Pierston, attempts to cross the threshold of his present reality, which is almost parallel to Hardy’s life. Fowles scrutinizes that nobody who finds himself groping for the unattainable can live a comfortable life with his everyday self. Hardy’s first wife, must have lived a life of “feeling herself shuffled off by the man she was married” (Ibid 165). This predicament of the role of a wife is the sub-theme of *The Well Beloved*, which is the tussle between Christian and pagan doctrines. The pagan permits incest, premarital relations, unchecked id and consummation. The Christian canon stands for abiding social conventions and restrictions: “The role of the wife in this conflict and some such polarized tension between creative ‘desire’ and ‘social duty’ will exist in every novelist’s mind is complex” (Ibid 165). In this regard, Fowles contemplates that the vanished mother of infancy becomes the destination, and the “voyage undertaken is back to an indulged primal self and all its pleasures, and the main source of those pleasures was the eternal other woman, the mother” (Ibid 166). Against this, Hardy sets the presence of the women he shared his life with. Mrs. Hardy fits soundly into the roles of Arabella and Sue Bridehead in *The Well Beloved*.

Fowles terms the novel to be less of public and more of private. Perhaps Hardy too must have realized this, and as a consequence he took to writing more of poetry after 1896. He found this means “a less ‘naked’ medium than prose: not an exposed field, but a shady

copse”(Ibid 168). Fowles approves of Hardy’s unhappy endings, as those with wish-fulfillments stop the voyage of uncertainty. Such endings of happy reunion reflect childlike longings fulfilled. Hardy’s option for the sad endings foreshadowed his century. In this context, Fowles highlights his own novel *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*, which has multiple endings:

I wrote and printed two endings to *The French Lieutenant’s Woman* entirely because from early in the first draft I was torn intolerably between wishing to reward the male protagonist (my surrogate) with the woman he loved, and wishing to deprive him of her [...] .(Ibid 169)

Hardy found sexual fulfillment to be a “violent distaste”(WH 170). Happiness is put in “jeopardy by physical contact, the first hint of possession”(Ibid 170). The distant the consummation, the happier Hardy was. The luring trait he gave to his heroines is a characteristic movement “advancing, retreating, unveiling, revealing...”(Ibid 170). The trait called “Hardysque”(Ibid 170), is a narrative device called the “tryst” (Ibid 170), where chance plays a dominant part in the meeting of a man and a woman. It becomes clearer then, why the tryst never becomes an actual face, and ultimately becomes a lie. A common feature of the tryst is close confinement. Mentioning his debut novel *The Collector* in this regard, Fowles admits of having the greatest difficulty in killing off his heroine, Miranda:

I realize in retrospect, that my own book was a working-out of the futility, in reality, of expecting well of such metaphors or the irrecoverable relationship. I had the greatest difficulty in killing off my heroine; and I have quite recently, in a

manner I trust readers will now guess, understood the real meaning of my ending.  
(Ibid 173)

Fowles views the Tryphena myth in Hardy's *The Well Beloved* as the "biographical and autobiographical evidence"(WH 173). Tryphena was the woman with whom Hardy was emotionally attached and with whom he felt the passion and "frustration of pagan permissive"(Ibid 174). His mother Jemima Hand also echoed in his masterpiece *Far From The Madding Crowd*: "he was attracted again and again by the same type of woman, a replica of his own mother, with the striking features shared by all women of the Hand family"(Ibid 175). Tryphena's sister Martha reverberates in *The Well Beloved*. In this regard Fowles intercepts a vital point; Hardy perhaps never knew what really lay behind his incarnations in *The Well Beloved*. This, Fowles considers is a novelist's ignorant bliss, where the power-and frequency-of a novelist's output is very much bound up with his failing to realize it; and "that we later novelists have yet to come to terms with that knowledge" (Ibid 175).

For Fowles, the most indispensable importance element in his creative art is the lost figure of infancy, and secondly the lost loved ones in real life. They are the "prime source of fantasy and of guidance, like Ariadne with her thread, in the labyrinth of his other worlds"(WH 176). Like the clay models of the sculptor, they remain "malleable and acquiescent"(Ibid 176) in a writer's mind. And it is for this reason that a fiction writer needs such a figure behind his principal heroines. Fowles ends the essay by realizing that *The Well Beloved* is no longer the "coiled adder"(Ibid 162) that he had written earlier,

but it contains its own remedy; “it remains a grave warning, but against the sailor, not the voyage “(Ibid 176).

“Hardy and The Hag” is the struggle that a male novelist undertakes with the lost figure of infancy, in the building up of his creative self. There is evidence of this effect of feminism built into the scheme of *Daniel Martin*. Daniel is portrayed as the male victim, which can be taken as an extended allusion of Hardy’s protagonist in *The Well Beloved* . In the retrospective first chapter of *Daniel Martin*, young Daniel is “nursing his solitude, his terrible Oedipal secret, already at the crossroads every son must pass”(DM 15). Daniel later in his life, pursues women in his life as the emotional supplement to his inadequacies and power. They bolstered his sense of uniqueness, of situating himself . Like Hardy’s perpetual quest for the lost mother figure of infancy, Daniel retraces to his Freudian roots in search for the primal figure of childhood. The essay extends in the personal realm of Fowles’s comments on creative writers and situating themselves while writing fictions.

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The arguments in the premises of this chapter, confirms the artistic conflict between system and individual predilection in the stories of *The Ebony Tower*, which acts as an ethical criterion in Fowles’s works. The symbolic and romantic reading of the stories, illustrate that freedom and responsibility can find synthesis in the self. In *Daniel Martin* the sequence of events is only essential to strive in achieving whole sight and realize the human potential. Giving an implied recommendation of Marxism, through the epigraphs, Fowles does not recommend a direct political doctrine. He tries to maintain a relationship

between politics and art in the discovery of the self. *Daniel Martin* projects a religious growth of the protagonist, with an inner opening of the spiritual progression of the self. Fowles the novelist, seems to be happy in his work, but he is at times, guilty of this happiness. The novel also projects the endeavor of the self to benefit from the green regenerative retreat, a leitmotif of Fowlesian fiction, for a healthy emergence. The non-fictions in this chapter are but extended implications of *The Ebony Tower* and *Daniel Martin*, where the self is caught in the vortex of conflicting desires and intellectual contradictions.

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## Chapter VII- Creative Unconscious

### **Fiction:**

*Mantissa*

### **Non-Fiction:**

“Moliere’s *Dom Juan*”

In our modern heritage, the global disruptions after the second World War, saw the birth of immaculate and influential facets in literature. The enormity of intention in experimentation of form and technique became the ethos of the times. In such an environment, John Fowles presents his sixth work in fiction, *Mantissa* (1982). After *Daniel Martin*, the longest novel in the justification of art, *Mantissa* is a work of the loss of self-confidence of contemporary writers, who fail to impersonate reality. Fowles is here, more “an unfolding than a growing artist” (McSweeney 31). The shortest of Fowles’s novels, its structure is an allegorical innovative process, which dispenses realistic narration, ridiculing the sexual metaphors of the post-structuralists, metamorphosizing them into a unique image in the artistic process. While ridiculing the sexual theory of the text, Fowles simultaneously changes it into an arresting expression, a record of his own innovative awareness, which he had otherwise grappled with social conflicts. In *Mantissa*, Fowles decides to “take the post-structuralists theorists at their word and produce a text that conforms to their explanations”(Wilson 62). If *Daniel Martin* had resolved the novel to be realistic in its expression, *Mantissa* turns its back on pragmatism. In a way, it is *The Collector*, reborn the other way.

The present chapter undertakes to project the sites of tension in the self under oppressive circumstances, of the amnesiac protagonist in *Mantissa*, Miles Green. The non-fiction, “Moliere’s Dom Juan,”(1981) written almost at the same time as *Mantissa*, will form the second segment of the chapter. The essay projects Fowles’s views on the transitional atmosphere of the seventeenth century France, social and literal. Fowles’s preoccupation with the self in *Mantissa*, can be juxtaposed with the complicated circumstances and times of Moliere, when he had written *Dom Juan*.

*Mantissa* centers around Miles Green, a writer, who has lost his memory and creativity, lying in a hospital room. The whole narration is in the form of a dialogue between Miles and Erato, the Greek muse of poetry. The novel emphasizes the role of the muse, who takes the form of Dr. Delfie, then as a strange female punk, a writer and finally as a *geisha*, a Japanese hostess. The entire novel transpires within Miles’s brain. Erato is metaphorically the offspring of his imagination, and the book exposes how women are considered sexual, according to male demands, through language. The title *Mantissa* is contradictory to a reader, but Fowles hints that *Mantissa* is a “novelist’s reduction *ad absurdum* reply to contemporary critics who reduce the author’s role in creating the text to an inconsequentiality”(Wilson 66). But surprisingly, Fowles omits its definition from the Oxford English Dictionary, which defines a mantissa as a part of a logarithm after a decimal point.

During the writing of the novel, Fowles had commented, “My imagination is highly erotic. I think almost about everything in terms of erotic situations”(Stolley 58). A

woman, as the preceding novels had verified, is always the centre of disparity in a Fowlesean novel, where the plot turns on a man's quest for authenticity, aided by an inscrutable and erotic woman. In *Mantissa* however, the woman here is the object of the writer himself. To Bradbury, "a woman is the story itself" (Bradbury 24). Sex and fiction are but the two sides of a coin, and they are analogous and that the "archetype of all fiction is the sexual act" (Scholes 1). To Warburton, "It is likely that Fowles's imagination required a real-life counterpart, a seductive woman who appealed to him, a flesh-and-blood temptress who stimulated romantic art, rather than sexual relationship" (Warburton 394). Warburton is also of the opinion that a poem written by Fowles in 1978, titled *Conditional*, reveals an attraction of the muse with his creation of *Mantissa*. In the poem, a woman, "careless, open, young ...both lithe and poised" (Ibid 394), offers her love to the poet. However, the bard rejects her sexual advances, and desires poetic inspiration. The lady dismisses his cowardice, but the poet has no regrets. He knows that by refraining from such an affair, desire will always be fresh in his heart: "There is no record trace of who inspired this poem, but Fowles valued it highly enough to have had it privately printed the following year in fine calligraphy in an exquisite broadside limited to 150 signed copies" (Ibid 394).

Structurally, *Mantissa* is divided into four parts. In the first part, Erato appears as a female psychiatrist Dr. Delfie, in a clinic attending to Miles, her patient. With her is the West Indian nurse, Cory. Part two commences with a sudden crash of the room's door, and the appearance of a strange female punk. Part three, the most self-reflexive part of the novel, shows how the patient is re-awakened, playing the role of a literary theorist.

Finally in part four, the novel concludes, but mirrors its beginning, a come back to where it began, calling itself *Mantissa*, by explaining its own name in a footnote, which is an addition of comparatively small importance, especially to a literary effort or discourse

The four parts of the novel are introduced by epigraphs that reflects the main theme. The entire novel is prefaced by two more inter-texts, taken from Descartes and Marivaux. Descartes's extract is taken from *Discours de la Methode*: "Then, carefully examining what I was, and seeing that I could pretend that I had no body... even if the body did not exist (MT 5). His text thus deals with the separation of the body from the soul, and that an individual's essence is confined to his thinking, which does not need a particular place, neither depends on any materialistic thing in order to exist. The second epigraph to the novel is extracted from Marivaux's *Le Jeu de l'Armour et du Hasard*, a dialogue between two lovers, Sylvia and Dorante, indulging in idyllic conversation. These two epigraphs refer to the sense of being; the first in the context of bodiless thinking, and the second dealing with love and inspiration, foregrounding the duel between Miles and Erato. Erato can be regarded as a being or a thought, who exists even if the body does not exist. As a soul, she exists beyond time, place and body. The epigraph to Part-1 is from Lampriere's *Musae*: "They were generally represented as young, beautiful, modest virgins, were fond of solitude, and commonly appeared in different attire, according to the arts and sciences over which they presided"(MT 7).The epigraph suggests influence on the way the muses are characterized, in their identity and appearance.

The novel begins under the amnesiac state of affairs of Miles Green, and his gradual awareness, like gaining awareness after a heavy dose of sedation: “It was conscious of a luminous and infinite haze, as if it were floating, godlike, alpha and omega, over a sea of vapor and looking down”(MT 9). The floating sensation, “the murmured sounds and peripheral shadows”(Ibid 9), and the swimming disorientation of a mind “bereft of pronoun” and “bereft of time”(Ibid 9). The mind is made to accept that “far from augustly floating in the stratosphere”(Ibid 9), it is attached to the body, lying in bed. Like a power cut, Miles is at a loss of identity crisis: “The book begins with Sartrean revision of the Cartesian discovery of the cognito...the self in this novel is born as a conscious non-substance”(Neary 178).

Miles cannot remember his wife, and accuses her of being too possessive on her dictating attitude, when she introduces herself to him in the hospital room. He is tucked in his bed like a baby, in a room of padded walls. The Swiss cuckoo clock in the hospital room, devoid of mechanism, threatens his insipid exposure: “He remained staring at the hideous clock: its lunatically cluttered front, its dropped intestines of weights and chains. It did disturb him, standing for something he feared, he couldn’t say why” (MT 9). He realizes with horror that he is entirely unclothed under his sheets. To his physician, Dr, Delfie, who has the elements of the classical Erato, and the rudiments of the enigmatic Fowlesean female, tells him that he can only be recovered by the sexual therapy. Explaining the Freudian theory behind her treatment, she tells Miles: “Memory is strongly attached to ego. Your ego has lost in a conflict with your superego, which has decided to repress it-to censor it” (MT 26). Miles, in his amnesiac condition, remembers

only his logic, and his masculinity. He does not recall his artistic aspects. The nurse and the doctor are not flesh and blood characters, but literary devices used by Fowles, to suit his point. Miles's nature during the sexual therapy is not a real self, but the condition of a " ...coy sexual joke-at the height of arousal"(Neary 179). The hospital room represents the mind of the novelist. The dreary quilted parapets represent the gray matter of the human brain. The Swiss cuckoo clock in the hospital room represents time. The clock has been left there by a Mr. O'Brien, a hint by Fowles to the Irish comic novelist, Flann O'Brien.

Dr. Delfie is the parody of a female magus, the opposite of Conchis, who teaches with her capacity the limits of masculinity. She tells Miles: "We shall be forced to employ perverted practices"(MT 30). With the help of Nurse Cory, the doctor performs the therapy, culminating in a sexual relationship with Miles, while the nurse voyeuristically watches. To Miles who is in the grip of the two women, the experience was bizarre, and he retorts, "I can't. I don't know you from Adam"(MT 24), and "Brothel"(Ibid 28). Finally he bursts, "This is an infamous abuse of personal privacy"(Ibid 31). But the therapy is fulfilled and the section ends with Nurse Cory reading the outcome of the healing, which are a sheaf of papers in the metaphor of a baby. Miles looks helplessly to Nurse Cory's cradling arms after the sexual consummation, just like the way, a maternity nurse shows the mother a new born infant. The infant in this case turns to be *Mantissa*:

Nurse Cory had risen from the table, and was knocking and shuffling her papers together...came back towards the bed, her eyes on him, cradling the papers she

had been sorting...It's a lovely little story. And you made it all by yourself. (MT 47-48)

This birth is parallel to a passage in Barth's text's *The Death of The Author*. Here Barthes claims that "the modern scripiter is born simultaneously with the text...in no way equipped with a being preceding or exceeding the writing"(Barthes 145).

A description of the "split-brain data"(Fawkner 27), is logical to analyze the situation of the self in *Mantissa*. In the neuropsychological studies, scientists comment that time exists in the "left cerebral lobe and timelessness on the right"(Ibid 27). A clear explanation in this regard was made by Jerre Levy in 1974. To him, in the human brain:

The right hemisphere synthesizes over space. The left hemisphere analyzes over time...The right hemisphere perceives form, the left hemisphere detail. The right hemisphere codes sensory input in terms of images, the left hemisphere in terms of linguistic descriptions.(Levy 167)

The study of the disconnected hemispheres of the human brain by neuropsychologists are conjectured by human experiences. Fawkner maintains that:

Fowlesean fiction leads to neuropsychology (the cerebral world of mantissa); ...the cataclysms of the mind following the existential crisis are far more complex...The Fowlesean preoccupation with incompatible systems ...subtracts and manifests itself in the ambilateral structures of *The Collector* and *Mantissa*, the antithetical discontinuity of *The Magus* and *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, and the cross-model holographic organization of *Daniel Martin*.(Fawkner 37-38)

In simple dictum, the matter can be explained that the preoccupation of the novelist with the transcendental and descendent extremes of the human brain, makes the instinctive sense initiate for a quest from its original range, to the universal laws of the human mind.

At the end of Part I of the novel, Miles's culmination in producing "a lovely little story"(Ibid 47), symbolizes the starting of his recovery from amnesia. He is able to fantasize in language. The doctor advises him to keep up the therapy, as "It's better for you. It's better for your baby"(Ibid 44). Miles's baby is in actuality, the first chapter of texts, from where a reader commences to read. This connection between the text and the baby is made through comedy, "Erato is ultimately created by Miles and through his language; she constitutes his own linguistic verbalization" (Salami 202). This part of the novel is thus, an account of Miles being forced into the sexual encounter, which he secretly desires and "part of the power game is in that very pretence"(Woodcock 154). Dr. Delfie tells him "Your true evolutionary function, as a male, is to introduce your spermatozoa, that is, your genes into as many wombs as possible"(MT 27). In an overt way, the situation fleshes out the limits of the self, under idealizations which yearn for a deeply rooted male sense of supremacy. Miles's power is restored by administering it as an object of awareness, where women as figures of fantasy serve the purpose. But Miles calls this encounter as "Rape. The other way round" (Ibid 42). Dr. Delfie persists that "see and feel my defenseless"(Ibid 42) indicating the supremacy of male power. The sexual power of the doctor and the nurse are aptly described by Fowles as the control of "schoolmistress" (Ibid 30), and the "demure and obedient niece waiting for a kiss from an uncle"(Ibid 34). These are the imageries of vulnerability in women, which are fantasized

by male imagination, hence the male domination. But Miles is powerless to defend himself, and his self surrenders to this animality. He speculates in this juncture on his temperament. His sex “befuddled brain”(Woodcock 155), continues to investigate his identity, when the room explodes by the sudden entrance of Erato, in a different attire and role. The chapter ends with a “CRASH”(MT 45).

Part II of *Mantissa* is epigraphed by two extracts: both taken from Lempriere. The first is from *Mnemosyne*.

Mnemosyne, daughter of Coleus and Terra, mother of the nine Muses by Jupiter, who assumed the form of a shepherd to enjoy her company; the word signifies her memory. To Mnemosyne is ascribed the art of reasoning and giving suitable names to everything, so that we can describe them, and converse about them without seeing them. (MT 49)

The second extract is from Lempriere’s *Erato*:

Erato presided over lyric, tender and amorous poetry; represented as crowned with roses and myrtle, holding a lyre in her hand, with a thoughtful, sometimes a gay and animated look; invoked by lovers, especially in April (MT 49).

These two intertexts are important, as Miles is unable to remember anything, including his wife and children. According to Greek myth, the word Mnemosyne, means memory, an indication to Miles’s amnesiac condition. The tender image of Erato is suddenly shattered, when she returns in a metamorphosized form. In an attire of a punk wielding a guitar, she comes as Nemesis, the Greek goddess of vengeance. The usual Erato with her roses and myrtle are missing in her ensemble. Miles describes her:

There stands a malevolent apparition straight out of a nightmare; or more accurately, straight out of a punk rock festival...black boots, black jeans, black leather jacket. Its gender is not immediately apparent; hermaphroditism appears more probable. The only certain thing is that it is in a towering rage (*MT* 51).

Greek myths define nemesis as “righteous anger, which is directed against those who have violated order, especially the order of nature, and have disregarded nature’s law and norm”(Kerenyi 103-5).

Erato as *nemesis*, protests to Miles, that her femininity is violated by male figures. The “macabre clone” (*MT* 52) shouts at Miles, “You bastard...You bleedin’ well seein’ me now. Right?” (*Ibid* 53). She terms Miles as “a typical capitalist sexiest parasite”(Ibid 55) who degrades women by turning them into sex-objects. Miles reacts half-imploringly, “Don’t say you’ve gone political’(Ibid 54). To which Erato retorts “Look. ever since I got into serious liberation, you’ve been takin’ the mickey. I got your number, mate. You’re the original prig. *Numero Uno*.”(Ibid 56). The punk guitarist also complains and gripes about her own non-status, “The sexual exploitation’s nothing beside the ontological one. You can kill me off in five lines if you want to”(MT 94). This is the castigation against males by indignant women in other books also, which is the key facet in *Mantissa*. Miles accuses her of behaving “just like a man...Instant value judgements. Violent sexual prejudice”(Ibid 55). This product of guilt is a manipulative strategy by Fowles for minimizing feminine attacks. Erato changes and defuses her disposition and the “result is a crafty realignment” (Woodcock 156). Her identity, is absolutely fluid and insubstantial. She was the doctor and the nurse, and now the punk rocker, who will later proceed to

become the radical feminist, a Japanese *geisha* and finally, an infinite silence. Erato can be termed as fluid, because she never exists in any substantive way in the novel. She is like a mere soap bubble in Miles's artistic imagination, changing colour and shape at his whim and fancy. She is yet another example of the Fowlesean nothingness. The self in Miles gathers a bit of momentum, and he proceeds to give Erato a theoretical, lecture on modernism and postmodernism, which seems to put the narrative of *Mantissa* entirely as a critical work. A fundamental element in Part II is Fowles's using of language as an activity.

The language here constructs a male fantasy of a woman, since it occurs in, and within the view of a male mentality. Erato allows Miles to make a formal apology, appropriately in ten decrees. These sentences which absorb almost two and a half page, display all the self-deviousness of the male ego:

What I was actually rather wondering was this (colon) whether there aren't really(comma) areas that merit further investigation by both the written and the writer(comma)...the structuralists and deconstructivists(comma) the Marxists... the indisputable fact that if you had only manifested yourself earlier in the text to which you object so much(dash) and especially in that stunning classical get-up(comma) [...] .(MT 65-66)

To Miles "the reflective novel is sixty years dead"(MT 118), and the novel now is a "reflexive medium...serious modern fiction has only one subject: the difficulty of writing serious modern fiction"(Ibid 118). The second section of *Mantissa*, come to a realization that the novel ultimately swallows up its characters and itself into nothingness. Erato

vehemently asserts in the narration that, “I’ve never met such arrogance. And the sheer blasphemy! I do not inspire pornography...everyone knows that my chief characteristic happens to be a supreme maidenliness”(MT 66). When Miles comes to know that Erato is the author of *Odyssey*, the masterpiece which he can never equal, he surrenders to this “artistic ascendancy” (Wilson 64). Despite the fact that he is on his way of recovery, Erato knocks him down with a blow on the jaw, unconscious. After resuming her shape as Dr. Delfie again, she continues her sexual therapy. In medical terms this break in consciousness is caused by the failure of the heart’s action. In the context of grammatical suggestions, it is an ellipsis, reduction or interruption.

The epigraph in Part III is again taken from Descartes, who argues here for a divinity, out of the grasp of the senses and imagination: “But what persuades many that it is difficult to prove the existence of divinity in this... as if they tried to use their eyes to hear sounds or smell scents...”(MT 131). The extract from Descartes’s *Discours de la Methode*, focuses that spirituality is unimaginable. Miles recognizes Erato as “incomprehensible through the senses”(Salami 196). This part is crucial in the novel, as it depicts how he is rekindled, in the role of a literary theorist, knowing the art of fiction. Erato is depicted as passive for a time being, always agreeing to Miles. But unexpectedly, she confronts, resists, and tells that she herself had written the *Odyssey*, a book which had inspired Shakespeare:

Who do you seriously think you’re talking to? Who do you think was the dark Lady of the Sonnets, for a start? You name them, I’ve got them. And not just

Shakespeare. Milton. Rochester. Shelly. The man whom wrote the Boudoir.

Keats. H. G. Wells... I even spent a wet afternoon with T. S. Eliot . (MT 147)

Miles again loses his authoritative power, and finds himself threatened by Erato's verbal attack. But his situation is only illusory, as metaphorically she is playing the roles given to her by Miles himself. Their verbal duel ends, with the cuckoo clock signalling, and Erato disappears. For Miles, she is only a voice, and an infinite haze floating in the air. Hence he constructs her as a comprehensible Dr.Delfie again, and with whom he can have a physical contact. The cuckoo clock is a symbol, that stimulates and perturbs Miles, in the conditions of recognizing his self, and his absurd surroundings. In the incipit of the novel, the clock is shown to be disconnected, like Miles's amnesiac condition. At the end of Part III, the clock works properly once again, as Miles, the writer is able to reconstruct fragments of his amnesiac self.

Related to the issue of the senses, Part 1V opens with two epigraphs. From Marivaux's *La Colonie*, "*Deux beaux yeux n'ont qu'a parler*"(MT 155). Translated the line means: two beautiful eyes have only to speak. The second epigraph comes from Flann O'Brien's *At Swim-Two-Birds*: "By God she can do the talking. She has seen more of the world than you and me, of course, that's the secret of it"(Ibid 155). The beautiful eyes that speak refer to the inspiring effect of the muse on any artist. The description indicates Miles's use of his senses to feel, see, and touch the goddess, Erato. Miles should know that there are certain things in the worlds that cannot be "verbalized"(Salami 196), or conceived as other concrete objects. O'Brien's book also recognizes the role of the goddess, who has seen more of the world. In this last part of *Mantissa*, Miles tries one bid

for control, and decides to choose an alternative muse, to suit his purposes. This time Erato is in the form of a Japanese *geisha* “exquisitely subservient in a kimono, exquisitely immodest and still subservient without it”(MT 185). But this delicate vision is shattered, when Miles is himself transformed into a satyr, which Fowles comically describes as a “severe case of satyriasis”(Ibid 188). He takes a leap on the teasing figure on the bed, but finds himself “airborne and sailing over the foot of the bed”(Ibid 192). The satyr strikes the empty bed, crashes against the walls, causing the cuckoo clock to start ringing repeatedly. The figure drops unconsciously on the bed, and gradually takes the form of Miles again. A few seconds later, Dr.Delfie and Nurse Cory are heard. Erato’s revenge is complete and the writer for an indefinite period becomes amnesiac again:

The oblivious patient lies on his hospital bed, staring in what must now be seen as his most characteristic position, blindly at the ceiling...alpha, omega...over a sea of vapour...Merciful silence descends at last on the grey room. (Ibid 192)

The nurse enquires, “Curtains doctor?”(MT 192), to which Dr. Delfie replies, “I think that more than probable nurse”(Ibid192). The doctor tells Miles: “You ever met that Mr. Shakespeare, Mr. Green, you ask him. You ask that man”(Ibid 192).

In the beginning of the novel, Miles questions Dr. Delfie “How long have I been here?” to which the doctor replies “just a few pages”(MT 19). The doctor foregrounds the illusion of the narrative and its self-reflexivity. Time loses its meaning in Miles’s imagination, and it is measured for him by the pages he produces, not by the actual hours and days.

By internalizing exterior time, Fowles wipes out all the distinctions between subject and object, the verbal and the non-verbal, thought and behaviour, the writing and the written, novelist and character, author and narrator, time and timelessness, memory and amnesia, creativity and failure, fertility and sterility.

The blank and printed page become one. (Fawcner 54)

The self-reflexiveness in *Mantissa*, also demonstrates the way, unspoken incidents take place within Miles's brain, which reflects nothing but "the mechanics of writing as a whole"(Salami 197). By voicing these strategies in writing, "Miles only sinks further into mute print, silence made visible" (Fawcner 56). The two-page narrative in which the writer-persona attempts to break the silent discourses of the novel by voicing, are the narrative's mechanical devices: "What I was actually wondering was this (colon) whether there aren't really (comma) ..."(MT 63).

As Mahmoud Salami suggests, Fowles might have paralleled his technique of self-reflexivity with John Barth's short story *Title*. Barth's story is about a tale dealing with its social construction of a love story. The story is an evaluation in itself, drawing the reader's attention to the process of writing and the modern critical linguistic devices. The narrator in *Title*, asks the reader to fill in the blanks in the text, "...long participial phrase of the breathless variety characteristic of dialogue attributions in nineteenth-century fiction, that literate people such as we talk like characters in a story"(Barth 107). The story ends with a sentence which is unfinished "we're pushing each other to fill in the blank. Goodbye....Blank" (Ibid 113). In actuality, *Mantissa* makes fun of those fiction, which gives primal importance to critical theory. Genuine humour, an important aspect of

a novel is lacking, as Miles exclaims: “the reflexive novel is sixty years dead, Erato. ...What do you think modernism is about? Even the dumbest students know it’s a reflexive medium now, not a reflective one”(MT 116).

Parody in literature was practiced in the eighteenth century, with Jonathan Swift writing *Gulliver’s Travels* to ridicule the monarchy, and Alexander Pope satirizing his contemporaries in the *Dunciad*. Although familiar with current scholarly schools of theory, Fowles was unsympathetic in his readings of the theorists. In his interview to Diana Vipond, Fowles comments:

I wouldn’t count myself even remotely an academic. I really don’t know the poststructuralists and deconstructionists at all well...I’m not aware of them, but I don’t feel they have much to do with the art of writing. I dislike in any novel a too-overt use of theory. (WH 443)

But in ridiculing contemporary theories in *Mantissa*, Fowles renovates a post-structuralist sexual theory in books, in his own metaphor of the artistic procedure. The references to the post-structuralists theory in the text are self-evident, “but central to *Mantissa*’s effect is that it not only uses the repertoire of sexual writing; it also exploits links between sexuality and writing”(Woodcock 150). Limiting the action of the story inside a human skull, Fowles narrates with a hilarious debate, the context of the structuralist and post-structuralist theories, and the artist self’s precarious position in the creative process.

A wide-ranging view until recently was that an author was someone who wrote a book. But this myth had its roots shattered with Roland Barthes’s landmark essay, *The Death*

*Of The Author*. Barthes's notion is that an author is not simply a person, but is himself a historically and specially constituted subject. His essay rocked the whole generation of modern scholars. Barthes comments:

A text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focuses and that place is the reader...The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination. (Barthes 148)

Barthes's obituary on the author gave rise to literary speculations in the postmodern era. The theorists debated on the epicenter of the discourse:

Bakhtin's notions of dialogism and heteroglossia; Kristeva's extension of those ideas into the theory of inter-textuality; Deleuze and Guattari's schizoanalytic method resisting all the codes of oedipalization; and Derrida's critique of presence. (Soules 1)

These writers claim to reconstruct the relationship between the reader and the writer. Barthes lowered his dogmas in his publication of *Pleasure of the Text*. Here he gives a clear difference between the readerly and the writerly text. For Barthes:

A readerly text is the old paradigm in which writers imagined themselves in control-more or less, of their texts, and thus met the expectations of the traditional readers...In contrast, the writerly text gives the reader some of the writer's powers by allowing multiple possibilities for choosing one's own adventure. (Soules 1)

In this context, Barthes affirms that “The pleasure of the text is that moment when my body pursues its own ideas-for my body does not have the same ideas I do”(Barthes 17).

Recent opinions of feminists like Angela Carter and Susan Sontag, give a comprehensible outlook on the perception of dispute on pornography. In Carter’s view, if pornography means obtaining practices which instead of consoling the reader, with the “ fictions of sex”(Carter 17), will confront him with the agony of realism, and thus he will face a very “critical split between sexual fantasies and the actual sexual experiences. This dilemma paves the way for the moral pornographer might be born”(Ibid 19). But her theory has been challenged by feminists who refuse to see pornography as a vehicle for sustaining male influence. As Woodcock argues, both Carter and Sontag, “locate the potential for subverting the social fictions and myths of sexuality in the writings of de Sade and Bataille, both writers who produce work which is self-exposing in the way it lays bare, how language manipulates fantasy and image”(Woodcock 150). Another feminist of repute, Beverley Brown argues that pornography can be better explained if it is considered as a stratagem to design activating male sexuality. To her pornography as “more specific and less important”(Brown 7), than what the patriarchy might think. She unreservedly lays it as a genre, which contains ways of erecting images of sexuality:

What makes pornography recognizable are its non-transparent features, the elements which constitute it as a distinctive representational genre-a certain rhetoric of the body, forms of narration, placing and wording of captions and titles, stylizations and postures, a repertoire of milieux and costume, lighting techniques etc. (Ibid 6-7)

It can be argued that with every innovative writing, writers try to assert their commitments to individuality, creativity and purpose. The diversity of voices are now a concord of common objectives. Thoughts are constituted both as cognizant and unconscious, on the facade of the text and far below it, in the depths of the reader's inner ear: "Despite Barthes's hyperbole, the author is not dead; in fact, everywhere there is evidence that the author is alive and on the mend"(Soules 2). Fowles is also of this view, that the enlightening prattles, do not have a brunt on him. The dormant feeling that underlies the creative frustration in *Mantissa*, is Fowles's own anxiety arising out of the post-structuralists' theories of Robbe-Grillet and Roland Barthes: "the pain of isolation arising from the prevalent rumors about the death of the novel, paranoia about publication, and contempt for most formal scholarship"(Otto 82). The additional anxieties of Fowles are his own quasi-Freudian concept that writers are genetically made, "possessed ...by their own imagination long before they even begin to write"(WH 137), and art is spontaneously inspired and conceived "in passion"(Stolley 57), than planned. True novelists are obsessed by the urge to go on telling stories, driven by the need to re-establish unity with the lost mother of infancy. Fowles does not accept the fact that the contemporary writer must discover a new form to guarantee the genre's survival, nor does he share the general pessimism of the novel's decline.

In the light of these contradictions, Fowles's *Mantissa* enters as a parody in the awareness of the self, where Miles Green is an erotically preoccupied visionary, for whom writing is "sublimated sex" (Woodcock 152), and who is trapped within his own text. He is also caught in the limits of his sexual fantasies, where he tries to manipulate

his idea of a woman, but is himself manipulated by her. The elemental sexual imagination characteristic of Fowles here is a man subjected between two powerful situations; the hospital room where Miles lies is cut off from the rest of the world, and the enigmatic female enters to encounter the uncertain male. The self in Miles Green is best explained by Erato “you have always had such a rare talent for not being able to express yourself” (MT 167). He is “locked in the same prison cell”(Ibid 128), and Erato tells him “you can’t walk out of your brain”(Ibid 123). Miles is at the mercy of his own ideology. Initially his male self was an “it” transformed into “associated morphs and phonemes, which returned like the algebraic formulae of schooldays...”(Ibid 9). He becomes aware of his self on seeing the two women moving around his hospital room, “it was a centre of attention, an I of sorts...not just an I, but a male. That must be where the intruding sense of belowness, impotence, foolishness comes from”(Ibid 10).

In *Mantissa*, Fowles imposes the thought to his readers that no clampdown can be imposed on a writer’s autonomy, by the literary dogmas on the free territory of sober and creative fiction. This literary establishment can be paralleled with T.S. Eliot’s poem, *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*. Like Prufrock, who cannot express himself to his beloved in the evening, Miles is like the etherized archetypal self of a writer. The twilight of his non-creative mind passively waits for ingenuity. Fowles does not show compassion for his protagonist’s “swooning self-pity”(Fawcner 134). He is shown no mercy, for in Miles’s mental framework, they are expressions of narcissism. Dr. Delfie voices Fowles’s tinge of exasperation, “You’re only getting this because you’re a private patient, Mr Green. I can tell you now I wouldn’t tolerate your behavior if you were on the National

Health”(MT 29). The metamorphosed intrusions of Erato into the narrative of the novel, suggests a strong reversibility, of the relationship of the writer and the text: “By giving the character too much power and the writer none at all, Fowles paradoxically achieves a reversion to traditionalist writing”(Fawcner 137). The disappearing acts of Erato are suggested by the novelist as psychological mechanisms to overcome his amnesia and recollect his original self. This is also the contemporary novelist’s attempts to rediscover and recover the autonomy that the deconstructivists deny to him: “It occurred to him, with a dawning excitement, that this intuitive sense of what he could never have been, might be a useful clue to what he actually was”(MT 69). Fowles seems to make fun of the pioneers of structuralism and deconstruction, “Well, I did in *Mantissa* because I think they’ve been granted altogether too powerful a position on the intellectual side”(Barnum 198).

Erato, the muse is described in *Mantissa* as a “stimulating agent” (Salami 200) for recreating fiction. She is the Greek goddess of lyric poetry and inspiration. As a muse, Erato takes an effective role as an ideal woman to stimulate Miles’s creative vitality. To Miles, she is a woman who looks “stunning...out of this world....More childlike. Vulnerable. Sweet” and “easier to exploit”(MT 59). This inspirative role of the muse for male writers is best explained by Fowles. “I do believe in inspiration. I almost believe in muse...I simply wait till the muses come”(Halpern 39). This enticing wait for the unachievable muse, in Jungian terms is the anima that stimulates and creates a feeling “of frustration within the male writer”(Jung 12). Erato represents the anima, who helps to

create Miles's own subjectivity, as she teaches him the ways of regaining his sense of creativity;

I happen to be a female archetype with an archetypal good sense, developed over several millennia, of deeper values. On...For all your only too palpable faults and inadequacies, I did have some faint hope that you might one day with my help grasp that the very least of your selfish, arrogant and monotonously animal sex owes mine for all its past [...]. (MT 137)

The stature of the female as created in *Mantissa* by Fowles, is an existential, enigmatic and erotic portrayal, who leads the protagonist through difficult times for self-discovery. Erato, as Miles's "provocative" (Salami 201) fantasy, awakens him from a dream world, into a real one. As an enigmatic other, she invites men to ascertain her maiden territory. She is also the symbol of the lost mother, and the repressed feelings of childhood: "I am inevitably cast as a surrogate for your mother- in other words, as a chief target for your repressed feelings of Oedipal rejection..." (MT 141). As a mirror, Miles can see his real self through her, 'I'm your mirror. Just for now' (Ibid 18). She is also Miles's masculine discourse, who, allows herself to be used, encouraging promiscuity, "a complicit voyeurist" (Salami 203). Her ultimate anger, represents her whole gender, who were all treated as objects. She accuses Miles of never treating women with gentle touches: "...a thought for her as a person, only for what he got out of her. Never for a moment's considerations for her emotions" (Ibid 206).

The whole novel is a sexual metaphor for the “creation of the male writer’s subjectivity and creativity”(Salami 201). But even then, Miles tries to defend himself against the domination and the manipulation of his helpless state by Erato. At a particular instance he tells Erato, “The sex was just a metaphor, for heaven’s sake. There has to be some kind of objective correlative for the hermeneutical side of it. Even a child could see that”(MT 115). The emphasis on the grasping of language is taken as a first step in the therapy of Dr. Delfie, in restoring Miles’s memory. The stripping of Miles’s self or the male novelist’s fantasies is made into a joke by Fowles when Miles tells Erato, “I’ve got nothing on”(Ibid 56). To which Erato says, “Great. Now the whole friggin’ world can see you for what you really are”(Ibid 56). Her suggestions that there might be a kind of new meeting between them, indicates a desire for a “realignment of male-female relations”(Woodcock 161); but Green’s bruised ego is still not prepared for escaping. He says to Erato: “You may take my clothes away, you may stop me leaving. You cannot change my feelings”(MT 124). To which Erato retorts, “Unless you change them yourself”(Ibid 124). Fowles comments, “...all male sympathies must go to Miles Green; or so Miles Green overwhelmingly feels”(Ibid 181). Miles does agree to grant a degree of autonomy but to him, “There must be a point, in that area, where the teasing and joking has to stop...”(Ibid 184).

At the end of *Mantissa*, Miles is projected as a defeated figure, gaping “blindly at the ceiling...his most characteristic position...the room would have been silent...the bird in the clock... cuckoo”(MT 192). The cuckoo scorns Miles’s helplessness. His test is punctured by the protests of his characters. Norman Mailer in an occasion had defined the

novel as “Bitch Goddess”(Mailer 75). Fowles shares this ego to a certain extent of realization that the muse is sometimes frivolous and devious. Erato can make a mockery of the best attempts of the writer and reduce him to a state of helplessness. She is at times “...the Dark Lady, Lesbia, Calypso and heaven knows who else when she fancied; she had been prepared to be a bit of a Grecian urn and a blessed damozel...a mere little West Indian nurse”(MT 183). In a way, Erato is an example of Fowlesean nothingness. A self-canceling figure, like Frederick in *The Collector*:

Clegg was a self-canceling clash between mechanism and romanticism, so do Erato's clinical personae(the doctor and the nurse, who always speak a reductively rationalistic, scientific language),clash with her emotive and/or divine personae-and ,leave nothing. (Neary 181)

The basement cellar where Clegg imprisons Miranda, correspond to the grey walls of the brain, where Miles Green is trapped under amnesiac conditions. *Mantissa* can be a re-visitation of *The Collector*, where Clegg collects butterflies, mummifies them and preserves them for his own fantasy and pleasure. Miles is being seen accused by Erato that he is a necrophiliac collector “of a series of wretched women...You just collect and mummify them. Lock them up in a cellar and gloat over them, like bluebeard” (MT 94-5). This ever-changing and ultimately vanishing muse, seems to be theme of what Fowles upholds in his discussion of Thomas Hardy's *The Well Beloved* in the essay, “ Hardy and The Hag.” Fowles in this essay views his concern on the: “permanent state of loss...The maternal muses who grant the power to comprehend and palliate the universal condition of mankind...”(WH 40).

## Non-Fiction

### “Moliere’s *Dom Juan*”

The essay concentrates on the transitional atmosphere in the early part of the seventeenth century France, when Moliere had written his masterpiece, *Dom Juan*. When Fowles had translated *Dom Juan* to English for the National Theatre in January 1977, he was wary that some of the lines in it were not standard. But when he viewed the drama, the actors proved him otherwise: “this new awareness was reflected not only in his future scripts but in the fictions written in the late 1970s. *Mantissa* is a playlike novel that may be read as entirely dialogue with some stage directions smoothing it out”( Warburton 406).

The clashes between two religious conservative groups in France, the *devots*, with their belief in the conservatism of religious dogmas; and the *libertins* grasping for free thinking, with their belief “in individual conscience”(Ibid 187) led to rising tensions in the seventeenth century France. The growing skeptics in science aggravated the *devots*. In this scenario, French dramatist Moliere belonged to the “free thinking salons”(WH 188),who admired the Epicurean philosophies of France. But the *libertins* gradually lost their hold in their principles, which made their lifestyles erratic and dangerous. As an admirer of free thought, Moliere disapproved of the rigidity of his times and their “abuse in practice”(Ibid 188). He was accused of “atheism and impiety”(Ibid 187) after he had published *L’Ecole des Femmes* in 1663. Another of his successful books, *Tartuffe*, was banned in 1664, which was written in suppressed anger. The free thinking movement led

to further trouble, as many noblemen rejecting free thinking, and the word *libertin*, becoming a tag.

To Fowles, under the prevailing circumstances, Moliere suffered from split schizophrenia. His conscience admired the principles of the *libertins*, but disapproved “their abuse in practice”(WH 190). *Dom Juan* was written under the shadows of the “dual influence of seventeenth century notion of *caractere* and the free-thinking view of the active power of the individual conscience”(Ibid 190). The play, Fowles views, depicted the dilemma which was unsolvable. Moliere placed himself in this indecipherable dilemma, and Fowles analyses *Dom Juan* as a: “...kind of explosive solution, which makes clear why both the libertines and the bigots are finally demolished in it... both scourge and criminal, angel and demon, accusing and accused”(Ibid 190).

In Freudian psychology, it was a tussle between the id and the superego. Fowles believes that the French critics have not been fair in their criticism of *Dom Juan*. It was more positively approached by the British, as he contemplates that, “we are rather more familiar with paradox and loose ends in our arts”(Ibid 190). The essay then records what had influenced Fowles to translate *Dom Juan*. The play immensely fascinated him on account of the split personality of the protagonist :

One is the callous rake of the legend and the plot: but the other is an amateur philosopher, and above all a students of language, especially of what modern linguists call ‘registers of discourse,’ or characteristic patterns of vocabulary and rhetoric. In dark he is a dark cousin to Hamlet. (WH 190)

As a model for *Dom Juan*, Moliere had in mind the characters of Prince de Conti, Henri de Lorraine, de Vardes, the Chevalier de Roquelaure, and Cardinal de Retz. He had in mind to archetype his protagonist as “someone who admired the principles of free thought”(WH 188). In 1665, when *Dom Juan* was first performed, it was a huge success, but ultimately was banned in 1682. The play, to Fowles was much too intense, to be used as a “propaganda weapon...of the active power of the individual conscience(Ibid 190).

Fowles’s second keenness for translating, was the belief that the character of Dom Juan was a man returned out of the future a “a would be Wittgenstein or a Roland Barthes let loose”(Ibid 191). Himself being a keen observer of the rules of discourses in real life as they were the basic trades of characterization in plays, he admires the protagonist in the play, of his high rhetoric in speech and gesture. Moliere was himself a keen observer of “registers of discourses in real life,” as they were the essence of comedy, with a belief in the doctrine that “The good lies in learning to mistrust the surfaces of language, both in oneself and in others”(Ibid 191).

Without citing textual references, Fowles scrutinizes the heroine of the play Elvira, who had also been treated in splits by Moliere. In act one of the play she enacts her role as a demure woman, then gradually to a shrewish and sarcastic one, and at the end of the act “she bursts with real emotion”(WH 192). In the second act, her speeches are full of euphemisms and “catchphrases of high rhetoric”(Ibid 193). At the end of the play, she is projected to be inescapable from the bonds of language, like Erato in *Mantissa*.

Fowles places Moliere as an average artist in tragedy, yet “without equal as an intelligent buffoon”(WH 194). A few months after *Dom Juan* made its appearance, an angry young playwright withdrew from Moliere’s troupe, as he felt it lacked conviction. Fowles writes, “His name was Racine. There is moral there”(Ibid 194).

The study in this chapter, has analyzed the strategies of situating the self in *Mantissa*, the most intellectual abstract work of Fowles. He explores here not only the myth of the transparency in the self, but the conflict between truth and reality. Miles Green travels from the comforts of amnesia to the “painfulness of satyriasis”(Fawkner 141). The hazard in the self here is the sexual conflict between the non-author and the muse, and the ideality of its meaning. Fowles raises sexual, contradictions which had plagued him since he took to writing *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*; and in *Mantissa*, he raises these questions in a direct way. *Mantissa* faintly hints Fowles’s movement in a very polished and qualified way, that there may be a possibility of something that faces the Sartrean nothingness.

Fowles’s creativity as a novelist changes, transgresses, but yet it seems that his fiction remains consistent in from *The Collector* to *Mantissa*. As an artist, he tries to locate the self, something which he had groped for in a social deadlock in *The Collector*, in a neurophysiological disagreement with fundamental societal tones in *Mantissa*, where The Few and the Many becomes the class barriers of the mind. The issue of the lost mother figure, the muse and the artist-persona’s search for her as well as for his own divided self is the basic thrust of *Mantissa*.

The transitional atmosphere when Moliere wrote *Dom Juan*, is in a diverse way, a reawakening in the modern era's shaping of the renewed debates over the schools of theory, which have achieved prominence. Fowles had himself acknowledged in the essay that the protagonist Dom Juan was a "Roland Barthes let loose"(WH 193). The character of Dom Juan, runs parallel to Miles Green in *Mantissa*. Both are split personalities, struggling to grasp their own identity, under difficult conditions. Erato in *Mantissa* is perhaps the reincarnation of Moliere's Elvira. The fluctuating selves of Elvira, coincides with Erato in her characterization.

In *The Aristos*, Fowles comments: "all parts of my body are objects external to me: my hands, my tongue, my digestive mechanisms"(Ibid 69). Fowles somehow situates himself in this otherness, which he finds viable in the powers and potentials of creativity.

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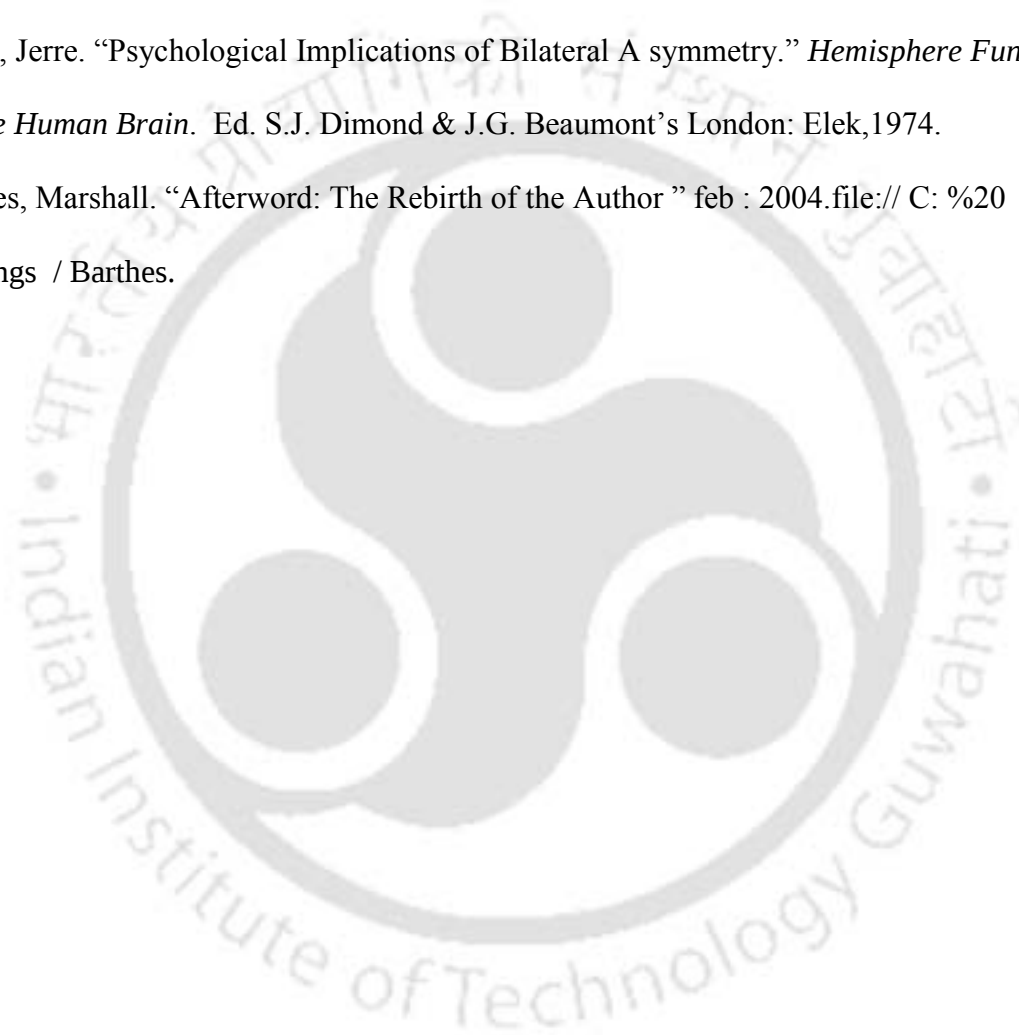
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## Chapter VIII -The Upheaval

### **Fiction:**

*A Maggot*

### **Non-Fiction:**

“Conan Doyle”

After the clinical presentation of the self in *Mantissa*, the ethos of the self in *A Maggot*, is moulded in a detective genre, where Fowles entraps history and fiction again, situating the self in the self-referentiality of time-frame, confirming that, “art best conquers time” (*The Aristos* 180). Once again, a character’s ambition reflects Fowles’s recipe of transformation, which can be identified with the recurring features of his previous works in fiction. He attempts to remove the gap between history and the readers, by presenting an eternal world, the “hugely extended now” (*AM* 426). The novel gave the fictional world, a new John Fowles, “very nearly the best work to date of a highly talented and always interesting writer”(Warburton 415). What immediately poses, challenges and stimulates the imagination of the reader is the recurring dogma of *The Aristos*: “Mystery, or unknown is energy. As soon as mystery is explained, it ceases to be a source of energy”(The Aristos 17). The non-fiction incorporated in the chapter is “Conan Doyle”(1974), where Fowles evaluates its author-persona Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the detective genre and man’s encounter with feral nature in *The Hound Of The Baskervilles*. Fowles had dedicated a foreword to this book. The detective genre clearly reverberates in the projecting of the self in *A Maggot*.

*A Maggot* published in 1985, is Fowles's hybrid interpretation of history and creative writing, through a distinctive blend of verbal communication and discourse. The novel is positioned in 1736, the time of the French Revolution and the Romantic Movement in England. The year also saw an assortment of spiritual groups, who claimed the authority of divine revelations, the pre-eminent among them being the Shakers. These were not the only preoccupations of Fowles, as *A Maggot* departs from the "conventions of historical fiction..." (Acheson 76), with the title deployed in its archaic sense, meaning a whim or an idiosyncrasy. Fowles succeeds in accessing the similarities and differences between the "techniques of fiction and the ways in which history is authenticated" (Salami 215). His creative ability here, reaffirms his capacity to create different styles in the subject matter, for the emergence of the self. As he had said in *The Aristos*, "I do not intend to walk into the cage labeled 'novelist'" (*The Aristos* vii), *A Maggot* confirms to his doctrine.

With a straight forward third person narrator telling the story, *A Maggot* commences with a group of five travellers, four male and a female, all on horseback, riding along a remote upland in a late afternoon in 30<sup>th</sup> April 1736. The travellers, as the narration states, are making their way to Devon in silence. The son of a duke, Mr. Bartholomew, his deaf and mute servant Dick Thurnlow, Mr. Brown and his servant Farthing, and a maid Louise-Fanny, figure in the group. They trek towards a vision of something amazing, that in due course will transform them, but which cannot be expressed in language in the pretext of the narrative. The reader quickly affirms that they are in disguise. Mr. Bartholomew is disguised as a nephew to Mr. Brown, who is himself an actor called Francis Lacy. The

servant Farthing is actually David Jones, a minor actor from Wales. He plays the role of a guard to protect the group from highway thieves. The girl Fanny is Louise-Rebecca, a prostitute, who has been hired to attend to the sexual needs of Mr. Bartholomew and Dick. Mr. Bartholomew intends to go to Bideford to rescue a girl, with whom he is in love, determined to marry her against the wishes of his father. They eventually arrive at the town of "C-" (*A Maggot* 14) in Barnstaple, where they spend the night in Black Hart Inn. Fanny, Mr. Bartholomew and Dick part ways from their co-travellers, reaching a cavern. The entire mystery of the novel centers around this cavern, and the events lead to the disappearance of Bartholomew and Fanny, and Dick is hanged. The rest of the novel is dedicated to a lawyer Mr. Ayscough, who investigates the case of the murder. But the narrative changes and alters the destinies of the three characters involved in the cave, leading indirectly to the birth of a great woman prophet, Ann Lee, the founder of the Shakers, a religious sect.

Throughout the novel, maggots are paralleled with death, fantasy and science fiction, through Rebecca's description of the vehicle that brings the Holy Mother in the cave. The title is symbolical and logical, with plurality in meanings. It challenges the interconnected concepts of fiction and history, in harmony with unity and origin. Reviewers had mixed responses to Fowles's title, and find it annihilating: "Incidentally, aren't maggots the larval stage of the common carrion fly?" (Moynahan 47). In the novel the characters turn out to be mere nothingness, yet the story seems to be substantial. It can be said that this is another Fowlesian textual play, where tension is left on unfilled space. But out of this nothingness, Fowles once again makes room for sovereignty of the self, this time it is the

atheist in him that seems to lie dormant, and as Neary comments “on a kind of political archetypal, and dare I say it, religious substantiality?”(Neary 185).

*A Maggot* is structured by a prologue and an epilogue, with the narrative deploying a narrator, who expounds on an eighteenth century issue. A bulk of its narrative is in a question and answer format. The central character Rebecca Lee, a prime suspect in the design, is ultimately given a spiritual transformation. Beyond devout conventions, Fowles believes that sentiments awaken a sense of individual self, which therefore has the political and societal supremacy to rebel: “Fowles challenges totalizing conceptions of both the self as utterly subject to, or determined by, historical forces, and the self as autonomous, unified individual capable of rationally controlling his/her destiny” (Roessner 303).

As a background to the novel, Fowles took into account numerous seventeenth and eighteenth-century texts. John Aubrey’s *Monumenta Britannica*, containing information on how the eighteenth century viewed Stonehenge. Pastor Moritz’s *Travels in England* (1782), gave Fowles the significance of the town of C-in *A Maggot*, and the cavern of Rebecca’s experiences as June Eternal. The passages from *The Gentleman’s Magazine* of 1736, supplied him with the aspects of the social life of the early eighteenth century, and finally a thorough analysis of Fielding’s plays and the late seventeenth century comedy of Sir Thomas Otway, *The Soldier’s Fortune*, accessed him in to mannerisms of the characters.

*A Maggot* initiates its narration, with the characters emerging unexpectedly out of nowhere, constructed before the vision of the narrator, as he begins to describe them. Detailed descriptions of the landscapes are given, with intricacies of the travellers' ensembles and their behaviour: "A man in his early 20's, in a dark bistre great coat, boots and tricorn hat...leads the silent caravan... in the bleak landscape... an aura of dismal monotony, an accepted tedium of both journey and season..." (AM 7). The narrator makes himself clear that he does not know of their whereabouts and destination: "Indeed the defining characteristic of this narrator is his lack of omniscience, what he does not know, for he has no privileged access to the history of the travellers" (Roessner 304). Fowles alludes to a sense of mystery from the beginning of the description: "The riders never progressed to any destination. They simply rode along a skyline...the last remnants of a lost myth"(AM 5). They are at first faceless, but in time however one of the pilgrims begins to take features of a nameless young woman in a portrait, dated 16<sup>th</sup> July, 1683 which Fowles had acquired years back, "...something in the long dead girl's face, in her eyes, an inexplicable presentness, a refusal to die, came slowly to haunt me"(AM 5). The young lord, around whom the plot *A Maggot* revolves, is seen trying to solve the mysteries of the cosmos. Fowles through his narrative tries to keep his disposition in suspense. Bartholomew's comments make him an existential rebel, like the Fowlesean protagonist of Fowles's early works. He speaks to his companion Lacy, in a tone of a metaphysical rebel:

I am born with a fixed destiny. All I told you of my supposed father I might have said of my true one-and much worse, for he is an old fool...I am, as you might be,

offered a part in a history, and I am not forgiven for refusing to play it...I have no liberty, Lacy, unless I steal it first [...] (Ibid 43)

On a first hand examination, the design makes the characters turn out into mere nothingness, with an insubstantial story. Spending almost a hundred pages on the happenings, with an absence of a protagonist in the proper sense, it is difficult to pull out the truth from the crux of the story. Fowles introduces Dick Thurnlow, Bartholomew's valet, as a handsome deaf-mute servant, and whose death spurs the novel's investigation. His silence becomes a metaphor for the "lord's own secret self, his profound nothingness"(Neary 186). Dick is serenely described by Fowles: "...like a draught of cold air...he seemed expressionless, as ever"(AM 41). Class-consciousness surfaces and permeates in the relationship between Bartholomew and Dick. Dick is a normal servant, but there is "something both haggard and resentful in his stance and tormented, a beast at bay, questioning why it should be so"(Ibid 30). He was supposedly brought up in the estate of Bartholomew's father, rumored that "they were suckled at the same breast, therefore foster-brothers"(Ibid 170). But Dick is a born servant, and must live and die as one, as Bartholomew had taught him: "his speech by signs, his duties, his scantling manners, his everything. Without me, he would be a wild creature, no better than a beast"(Ibid 170). Dick is by fate and birth a dissenter, which makes him unable to hear and speak, as an eternal servant. To Bartholomew:

I could stab him to death and he would not raise an arm to defend himself. Flay him alive, what you will, and he would submit. I am his animating principle ...

Without me he's no more than a root, a stone. If I die, he dies the next instant.

(AM 171)

In the social hierarchy, David Jones is the novel's class-conscious character. Coming from a wretched "miserable Welsh place"(AM 208), his annual income being only ten pounds. This is in contrast to Ayscough who earned hundreds, and to the amount earned by Hannah Claiborne, the keeper of the brothel where Rebecca lived. Ayscough constantly humiliates him for being a liar, merely for being a lower-class origin. To the lawyer, every Welshman is a liar. The biggest crime to the aristocrats is the audacity of the lower starta's attempts to change the course of life. Jones is chided for attempting to leave his village and venturing out in London to find work, the place reserved for the lawyers, professionals and middle-class men. He is portrayed as a greedy Welshman whose "poor soul needed food"(Ibid 228). This is the Augustan portrait gallery, who tamed, controlled and dominated the lesser mortals .The Fowlesean concept of the Few and the Many echoes here.

Fowles increases the aura of mystery, as the reader comes to realize that the tentative nature of his interpretation is not the veracity, making the anonymity more obscure. The first section of the novel is apparently brief, in comparison to the second. Events occur here with the discovery of Dick Thurlow's corpse, as a case of suicide, and the disappearance of Bartholomew. The novel then offers a series of testimonies, offered by Bartholomew's co-travellers, and the people encountered in the journey. An enquiry is undertaken by Henry Ayscough, a solicitor, retained by Bartholomew's father, the senior

Duke, to investigate his son's disappearance, which heightens the suspense. In the alleged suicide, Fowles "depicts a familiar scenario: a crime has likely been committed here, and the solution must be found"( Roessner 306).

The character of Aycsough is drawn as a "staunchly rationalist barrister" (Onega 29), whose professions fulfill the "green bags full of money"(AM 235). He is ordered by the Duke to gather every available testimony that could throw evidence on the disappearance of his son, Bartholomew. But the more evidence Aycsough gathers from the possible witnesses, the additional rational analysis he applies, the more puzzled he becomes. Every observer he questions, give overall different versions, which is far from his proposed goal. The fragmented pieces of evidences that he gathers, and the alternative versions of the novel, have led critics to complain that "Aycsough never does reach truth incontestable, nor does the reader"(Tarbox 138). The cruelty that Aycsough practices while cross-questioning his characters, can be seen in his prejudices against all the witnesses: "The lawyer's cruel chauvinistic contempt for his witness is offensive" (Ibid 232). But Fowles defends him in a veiled manner that he is "a prisoner both of the social system and the dominant ideology of the eighteenth-century society"(Salami 241). Insisting on a rational solution, Aycsough resorts to vicious inquiry, representing the eighteenth century legal authority to sustain conformist sexist and classicist values. On Lacy's interrogation, who lies to him, Aycsough snaps, "If thou art false, thou art dead"(AM 229). The second section of the novel also concentrates on the letters that Aycsough dispatches to the Duke, explaining certain aspects of the case.

*A Maggot* abandons the conventional norms of fiction, deploying a question-and-answer format. In this regard, Fowles disclosed his liking of trials to James Baker:

I tried to work out why I particularly liked old murder and treason trials...and decided it was because they left out one important branch of novel writing, which is describing how people look and what they do [...] .(Baker 661)

Seeking an assertion to the mystery in the unsolvable circumstances, Fowles refuses to give any single version of the obscurity. He leaves the ending of the plot open, as Salami suggests, “to stimulate the reader to provide his or her own solutions”(Salami 225). This thwarting of Fowles for a solution for the mystery in *A Maggot* can be paralleled with the genre of the anti-detective fiction, to an extent. In this category, the writers try to find a monolithic meaning to the insoluble problem raised, and relinquish the logical conclusion of the traditional detective plots. Reference may be made here of French writers like Alain Robbes-Grillet and Vladimir Nabokov. In addition British fictions like William Spanos’s *Repititions*, Martin Amis’s *Time’s Arrow* (1991), and Graham Swift’s *Waterland* (1983), adopt this refusal to offer logical conclusions.

Ayscough’s inability to solve the mystery, leads him to Rebecca, the protagonist of the novel, who is the primal source of the later proceedings. She is as enigmatic, as another Fowlesean riddle of a woman: “ She is young, hardly more than a girl, pale faced, with dark hair...”(AM 10). An alloy of Sarah Woodruff of *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*, and the twin sisters Julie and Lily in *The Magus*, she has undergone social prejudices, and is presently under the custody of Bartholomew. Prior to this, she was physically and morally abused, and degraded by her middle class master. Forced to become a beggar in

London, she took up her cudgels to become a prostitute, to overcome the social injustices meted to her. She tells Jones “they did choose to live evilly when they might live well, while it was forced upon us, only to get our daily bread” (Ibid 271). Jones describes her as “desperate, alone in this world, and damned beyond hope”(Ibid 255). She is considered as a nonentity by her co-travellers, “a mere baggage they carried with them”(Ibid 256). From the beginning of the novel, Mr. Bartholomew treats Rebecca disrespectfully, purchasing her as a commodity from a brothel, to suit his and Dick’s carnal desires. She is to him “a nest of vipers; a cunning hussy; a novel of her tricks would make a book”(Ibid 158). Having been witness to extreme human suffering from her childhood, Rebecca sees humanity at its worst, in its practice of “torture, of murder and treachery, of the slaughter of innocents ...and the cruelty of man than the wildest beasts”(Ibid 381).

As the bulk of the novel focuses attention on the inquiry by the solicitor, Rebecca’s testimony holds emphasis, as she was present during the occurrences in the cavern. The setting recalls E.M Forster’s *A Passage To India*, where the ambiguity surrounding Adela Quested, can be a parallel to what happens to Rebecca in the cave, and what causes the fate of Dick and his master. She gives two testimonies; one to Jones and the other to Ayscough in the trial. Rebecca in her first testimony to Jones, maintains that at Stonehenge, she and Lord Bartholomew had gone to commune with the spirits of darkness. Bartholomew then had asked her to recline on one of the monolithic stones in Stonehenge. Davy Jones re-tells this account before Ayscough in a perfect Gothic flavour, of Rebecca’s encounter with the supernatural:

Then there was all of a sudden a great rush or hurtle close in the night above... And as a great flash of lightning...she did see a figure that stood above her on a stone pillar as a statue... a great and dark-cloaked blackamoor... his cloak still aflutter from his falling, and so he would in an instant spring down further upon her, as a bird upon its prey. (Ibid 252)

But this incident is only a prelude before the actual happenings in the Bideford cave. Continuing her narration to Jones, Rebecca says that on that fateful day, prior to Dick's death and her lord's disappearance, she was forced to dress as a May Queen, when a strange woman appeared, to whom Dick and her lord paid homage: "as if they had met some great lady, a queen sir. Tho' in all else she looked no earthly queen, no most cruel and malevolent"(Ibid 256). Entering the cave, they were joined by two of the most hideous witch-like figures. Then Rebecca had a vision of Satan and on fainting, she was presumably raped. On waking, she found herself, walking through a long corridor, with great tapestries hung on the walls, portraying inhuman cruelty, where she recognized "her own self, as she was before her coming to London"(Ibid 264). After this Rebecca felt "a great thirst, or so for, she did mean it in her soul, a need for our redeemer Christ" (Ibid 263) and was transformed to June Eternal.

Rebecca on the other hand changes her verdict in her testimony before Ayscough, which is a turning point in the novel. In the trial, she confesses that she had lied to Davy Jones. Her pregnancy is confirmed, but to her the father of her child was Dick, and not Satan. She now proceeds to inform of her visions at Stonehenge, and this time the literary mode, if not of horror, is of serene fantasy. At Stonehenge, she experienced "a great rush from

the sky”(Ibid 328), who was not Satan, but the Lord himself. With sweet fragrance all around, she saw a kind of Dantesque vision which “ was white as the summer sun, shaped as a rose”(Ibid 331).

In Book VII of *The Republic*, titled the “Allegory of The Cave” Plato maintains that there are two levels of awareness: opinion and pure knowledge. Assertions and claims on the corporeal and observable are only opinions, which may be faulty. Only reason yields the understanding of pure knowledge, and when appropriately comprehended, results in indisputably rational insight. The “Allegory of The Cave,” like Fowles’s *A Maggot*, appears as a work, which upholds female equality and emancipation. It also proclaims that both “men and women are chained, and both must find their way into the light of true Being and true knowledge” (Bluestone 146). Plato in the “Allegory of The Cave” prompts the reader how life would be in a dark cave, where men and women are chained, in such a way that they cannot see in any other direction, but straight ahead:

The only visual stimulus for the prisoners in the cave unfolds on a short wall situated directly in front of them. On that wall which assumes the function of a screen, a projected ‘show’ takes place; it is similar to a puppet show-Shadow Theater. (Baitinger 134)

Plato hints that symbolically that these are all men and women of the world at large, who are the prisoners and inhabitants of the cave, but gradually understand and experience reality. The Feminist Literary Theorists conclude that Plato uses the allegory of the cave as a metaphor for the womb. Plato’s cave is:

A female place, a womb-shaped enclosure, a house of earth, secret and often sacred...the womb-shaped cave is also the place of female power, the *umbilicus mundi*, one of the great antechambers of the mysteries of transformation and that the women trapped in the cave might seem to have metaphorical access to the dark knowledge buried there. (Gilbert & Gubar 93-95)

Fowles in *A Maggot*, delineates the process by which the self is inspired to rise from obscure knowledge through the senses, to a clearer knowledge of the intelligible realm through the visions Rebecca experiences in the cave and Stonehenge. The “visual stimulus”(Ibid 134) in Plato’s book, can be paralleled to the visions, which Rebecca witnesses in the Bideford cave, and in Stonehenge.

Fowles declines to comment on what exactly had transpired in the cave. The cave symbolizes the inner, mysterious world, where the Fowlesean male protagonists infiltrate, by means of the reviving the supremacy of sex and imagination. The only obtainable detail is the extraordinary testimony of Rebecca, the lone-witness. What is doubtful is the fantastic vision of her visiting a heavenly city in a maggot, and her earlier account to David Jones, a contradictory story of the satanic orgy. The reader is left free by Fowles to interpret Rebecca’s testimony as evidence of a “hallucination, a mystical vision, or an encounter with beings from another planet”(Holmes 231). The strange hideous woman of her early testimony to Jones, is described by her of being transformed into the Holy Mother, who takes her place beside the Holy Trinity. And in the cave, where she had supposedly encountered Satan, Rebecca has a vision of a divine maggot:

Then came there a sigh from the floating maggot, and it did begin to fall, most slowly, like a feather: and came so until its belly rested nigh upon the ground; and from that belly now there struck forth thin legs that had great dark paws...No sooner than of a sudden there appeared upon its side towards us an open door. (Ibid 367)

Rebecca boards the open door, and is led into a tapestry of dreams, where she has an apparition of yet another socialist Utopia:

Exceeding beautiful...gardens everywhere...People of many nations. Some white...some brown, others black as night...It seemed all did live in common, without distinction nor difference...Saw I no poor, no beggars, no cripples, no sick, not one who starved... 'twas plain all were content to be of a sameness on their circumstance [...] (Ibid 376-78)

Rebecca experiences a spiritual transformation and shedding her harlot self, prepares to assume a fresh identity, in the light of what she had experienced in the cavern. On returning to her worldly life, she is enveloped in a state of physical and spiritual nakedness, which suggests that her old identity had been wiped away. She narrates to Ayscough that she felt the Holy Mother Wisdom was at her side, but “she was departed and I most sore bereft, of worse than my clothes, my soul cast naked in this present world”(AM 384). Rebecca’s two versions to the actual happenings in the cave, foreshadows her, just like Adela’s testimony to the reality in the Marabar Caves, which led to the criminalization of Dr. Aziz. Rebecca tells Ayscough: “Whether thee believe me or not, I do not care, ’tis truth”(AM 309). But later on she admits that she had lied to

Jones in her first version of the cave, to escape the stigma of a fallen woman, which characterize her.

The two accounts carry an undertone of a Jungian archetypal perspective: “The fascinating central motif in the novel is the numerous female triad linked to a mysterious fourth-three witches...Satan, or a female Holy Trinity joined by a harlot”(Miller 11). Miller continues that, such a kind of unusual union for Jung can be archetypal: “...a token for growing maturity...and the equivalence of the infernal and the celestial versions of the scene in the cave conform to Jung’s psychology...”(Miller 11). From a Jungian perspective, Bartholomew’s journey is a kind of spiritual and physical aspect of the self, as Jung sees the human subject a struggle between the conscious, unconscious and the anima. Fowles makes Bartholomew, who stands for the conscience at war with his own father, metaphorically the Christ figure at conflict with the Lord. Dick stands for the unconscious and Rebecca for the anima. Bartholomew allows Rebecca and Dick, his anima and unconscious to lead him to Stonehenge and then to the cave at Bideford, where he must:

Find a new totality of the self by assimilating his instinctual animality, and by acknowledging his female facet... knowing that this fight involves agonizing suffering, and also the hope of rebirth, for, in order to achieve its individuation, the ego must sacrifice its unconscious. (Onega 37)

It is Bartholomew himself, who assumes the form of Satan in Rebecca’s first version of the story, and in the second, where she presents him as the spirit of Christ. In *A Maggot*, Fowles however presents the stories in the trial as actually narrated by the characters.

One cannot accept the visionary versions of Rebecca's stories, and her sworn testimony does not honestly remove the cloud of doubt in Aycsough's mind as well as of the readers. The two accounts of the anecdotes by Rebecca, are puzzling for the rational Aycsough, as he cannot accommodate any one of them to furnish a reasonable elucidation to the Duke, for the murder of Dick and the subsequent disappearance of Bartholomew. Rebecca's child is later born as Ann Lee, the pioneer of the radical unorthodox Shakers. Rebecca's testimony on Dick, her lord's manservant is claimed by her to be purgatorial, as Dick, through slavery and humiliation in the service of his lordship, had to undergo penance for his carnal desires. She says: "And as Jesus Christ's body must die on the Cross, so must this latter-day earthly self, poor unregenerate Dick, die so the other self be saved" (AM 422-23). Rebecca insists that Dick had to die with suffering to be cleansed and purified. She realizes that that she is now happy that he is dead, "my heart rejoices he is dead; and that for his sake, not mine. Now he shall rise again, without his sins"(Ibid 427). Rebecca's selflessness is brought out here by Fowles in a distinctive manner. This explanation is a possible answer to the question of why Dick had hung himself in the cave.

Rebecca is a "symbolical central" (Peter & White 26) character in the novel. She becomes indispensable, since she had provided all the information needed in the investigation, to guide the narrative in the novel. She is in control, and directs the narrative movement herself. Thus she occupies a central position, whereas Aycsough is: "...being pushed to the periphery as a listener to her stories and as a new recruit to her own Shaker doctrine. She overturns the whole cycle of the investigation, and the result is

that she places him on the trial”(Salami 245). Criticizing Aycoough’s male domination, Rebecca almost becomes a prophetess who turns the myth of masculinity in religious convictions. Giving an indication that women would sooner or later take over the authority even in narratives, akin to the status of Rushdie’s male narrator in *Shame*, who realizes that such kind of females seem to take over:

The peripheries of the story to demand the inclusion of their own tragedies, histories and comedies, obliging me to couch my narrative in all manner of sinuous complexities, to see my ‘male ‘ plot refracted...through the prisms of its reverse and ‘female’ side. (Rushdie 173)

Aycoough’s discrimination against Rebecca can be justified, as she is not only working-class women, but also a dissenter from a background of the Quakers, on her way to be one of the Shakers. Fowles had contacted a musicologist to enquire on the “musical Maggots, a seventeenth century improvisational dance tune form”(Warburton 390). The word was in the catalogue in the list of the phrases in his mind, which was “tinkering for a new novel”(Ibid 390). It appealed to Fowles that the decisive conviction of the Shakers was not in faith, but in art. Hence, the “new religious movement to which Rebecca Lee gives birth in *A Maggot*, is for Fowles, a fusion of the spiritual and the aesthetic”(Ibid 414) birth of the self.

A pertinent question can be raised in this context as to why Fowles, an atheist himself should choose an extreme Christian sect, the Shakers for projecting the self in this novel? The metamorphosing of the female protagonist, Rebecca Lee from a prostitute to a saint, and her role in the novel is also a fact to be reckoned with. An introduction of the Shakers

becomes necessary in this regard. In the eighteenth century, the Protestants and other sectarian Christians were persecuted in southern France. They were soon joined by Britishers, who revived and gave momentum to their spirit, gaining the name of the Shaking Quakers or simply the Shakers, due to their dancing and shaking rituals: “the Dissenting figure who stalked in Fowles’s imagination through many years was John Wesley”(Warburton 413), who translated and published many doctrines. Ann Lee, the name of Rebecca Lee’s fictional baby in *A Maggot*, was the pioneer of Shakerism. Born in Manchester in February 29<sup>th</sup> 1736, she had joined the Shakers at twenty-two: “By her zeal and energy she gained considerable influence in the society...”(Lamson 10). Henceforth known as Mother Ann, she migrated to America with her disciples, where full Shakerism was followed.

The atheistic convictions of Fowles released their shackles in his dogmatic view on Christianity, and won his admiration of the Shakers because of the supreme position the faith had given to women. But Shakerism imposed restrictions on women to marry, and they led a life of total celibacy, with abstinence from sensual gratifications. This refusal to multiply, finally led to their extinction in the early twentieth century. The Shakers had stressed their belief in the concept that there were two persons in the Godhead of the Deity, both male and female. The Father and Holy Mother Wisdom. They had manifested themselves on earth through Jesus Christ, the Son and Ann Lee, the Daughter. And also that: “Christ had made his second appearance in the form of Ann Lee because of her Godly life, her self-denial and humility, her patience and wisdom, as well as her long

suffering and intense labours for mankind”(Neal 4). In the epilogue to the novel, Fowles comments:

One major reason is that we have committed the cardinal sin of loosing the old sense of mediocrity: that of wise and decent moderation...I mourn not the outward form, but the lost spirit, courage and imagination of Mother Ann Lee’s word, her Logos; its almost divine maggot. (AM 460)

Aycsough admonishes Rebecca constantly during the investigation, but the reader is forced to approve of her courage in withstanding the traumas of the trial. The extensive disparity between Aycsough and Rebecca can be gauged from the following:

She sits bolt upright...intent on his eyes, as if she faced the Antichrist in person...Aycsough’s patience grows thin...In truth, these two were set apart from each other not only by countless barriers of age, sex, class, education... but by something far deeper still: by belonging to two very different halves of the human spirit. (AM 429-30)

After her testimony, Aycsough offers her a guinea to test her credulity, but Rebecca rejects it outright, and humiliates him by her defiance. The lawyer comes to realize that Rebecca, cannot be broken easily, and that she is “an eternal woman of a certain kind” (AM 320) of strong will. As a threatening figure, she charges him to the last: “ I pray thee remember we women are brought up to men’s will in this world. I know men will say it is Eve who tempts them...But ‘tis Adam who keeps them there”(Ibid 309).

Rebecca's emphasizes that no women have a choice over men's masculinity, "who sin for their selfish pleasure"(AM 309). She puts her trump card that "women sin in hatred of the sin itself"(Ibid 309). With a defiant spirit she defends herself on her relationship with Dick: "I say again, thee'd have me mirror of my sex and thine has made. I will not suit. I have told thee I was harlot still...Can the not see I am changed, I am harlot no more. I am Christ reborn"(Ibid 426-27). She conforms to the Shaker ideology that Christ in his Second Coming will be a female. In isolation, she rejoices in her attempts to have handled the situation with stiffness and fortitude before Ayscough, reflecting a foreknowledge of certainty. She knows that the child she is to give birth will be a female, "She smiles in fact because Christ's grace has just granted her, her first prophecy: the child inside her will be a girl"(AM 396).

Ayscough now uses his weapons of rationality and position to debase Rebecca through "his seduction and knowledge, his judgment of human affairs, his position in the world " (AM 319). On Rebecca's comments that she attempts to read the Bible, Ayscough replies sarcastically with male power, "Did you tell his Lordship of this great boil upon thy ever open thighs?"(Ibid 310). At this Rebecca rejects his masculine ridicule, and his degradading threats to tame her. She refuses to answer some of his queries. Her worst crime to Ayscough, is that she tries to aspire the place of superiority in society, which to him is " most unnatural, and a great crime. What servant may become master, and master, servant"(Ibid 348). Rejecting all the eighteenth century's established beliefs, Rebecca grounds her own Shaker belief of the equality of status in society, a premise held in esteem by Fowles himself. The doctrine that Christ will be reborn in the shape of a

female, is enough to make Aycsough furious and see her as a possible threat to patriarchy as a whole. He insists to “rebel against the authority of a man” (Ibid 428). It is here that the reply Rebecca gives sums up the very essence of her self:

Witness from one side alone. Which fault lies in and, not in God or His Son. Eve came of Adam’s rib, so ’tis said in the second of Genesis. In the first ’tis God created man and woman in His own image, male and female created he them... Equal were they made. (Ibid 428)

Here she supposedly rejects all the notions of Christianity itself, echoing Fowles’s reading of the scriptures. Out of exasperation, Aycsough attacks her that she is like her missing lord, Bartholomew, who himself is a rebel against his father, a patriarchal offence. He is a dissenter against violating “so sacred a figure as a father should be”(AM 190). Mr. Bartholomew is constructed as a schizophrenic who suffers from mental illness with a split subjectivity: “he was not one man, but two”(Ibid 254). Metaphorically this is proved by Rebecca who says that the second man in him was Dick himself: “they were as one person, tho’ two in body”(Ibid 315).

A *Maggot* stresses the implication of the self in terms of feminine ideology, foregrounding the Shaker ideology throughout the novel. Rebecca upholds her position in the patriarchal society of the eighteenth century society. Posing a formidable challenge to this ideology she rejects the notion of conventionality and affirms, “Change, that is my purpose”(AM 449). She humiliates Aycsough and condemns to be an Antichrist and as a blind and evil dwarf:

I tell thee a new world comes, no sin shall be, no strife more between man and man... No judge shall judge the poor, who would steal himself, were he them; no,

nor greed shall rule, likewise not vanity, nor cruel sneers, nor feasting while others starve, nor happy shoes and shirts while any go naked. (AM 431)

To submit a logical and coherent account of the proceedings of the trial of the disappearance to the Duke, Aycsough finds himself in a dilemma between the enigmatic testimony of Rebecca and his pursuit of a rational explanation. Revealing that he is devoid of proper evidence and bound by the laws of his profession, as the native previously testified, “imprisoned as much as any debtor in Fleet law...Mobility or movement meant change; and change is evil”(Ibid 236). He does not take any step like the aristocrats as an agent of change, which might tarnish his image of the eighteenth century aristocracy.

The principles of change in the Shaker ideology and their epitomization are upheld in advance *A Maggot*. These principles of change are the causes that Fowles embarks to create such a problematic and socio-religious issues in the novel. Being an atheist himself, he is not concerned with the tenets of Christianity, but with the way the Shakers upheld the esteem of individual freedom, their defiance of establish social systems, and the embodiment of the basics of existentialism. He poses the questions and renews the challenges raised by the Shakers. Fowles asserts here, “a convinced atheist can hardly dedicate a novel to a form of Christianity”(AM 455). But the dissenters in his novel were historically and steadily discovering freedom. A statement of considerable weight as a defence of freedom is Rebecca’s initial statement to Ayscough. She refuses to allow “rank and respect” to “forbid our liberty of conscience”(AM 305). To Fowles, the dissenters seem to have preconditioned the logical basis of existentialism, and to open

that area in space, from where out of nothingness, freedom can take its birth. And this is what the intrinsic legacy of the self in Rebecca stands for in the novel.

Like the ambiguous and open ending of *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, *A Maggot* winds up in a note of mystery. Rebecca's stories like the ones of Sarah, mislead Aycsough. The book is written in a detective genre, and the whole truth is to expose what lies buried. Fowles's refusal to give a concrete solution is thwarting the capability of his readers to deduce a definite conclusion from its plot. In Russian formalism, the *sjuzet*, or plot is "the basic story stuff, the sum total of events to be related in the narrative" but "the *sjuzet* is the story as actually told by the events together"(Chatman 19-20). Again in Tzvetan Todorov's version "the story is what has happened in life, the plot is the way the author presents it to us"(Todorov 45). This is the effect of Fowles's dual concepts, which has the flavor of an anti-narrative in *A Maggot*. Anti-narratives are so termed because "what they call into question is, precisely, narrative logic, that one thing leads to one and only one another, the second to a third and so on to the finale"(Chatman 57). *A Maggot* is unconventional, not in the exact way that Chatman describes the theory of *sjuzet*, but in the way it actually "subverts the concept of the *fabula*"(Holmes 232). To Peter Brooks: "the apparent priority of *fabula* to *sjuzet* is in the nature of a mimetic illusion, in that the *fabula*-'what really happened'-is in fact a mental construction that the reader derives from the *sjuzet*, which is all that he ever directly knows"(Brooks 13). Like the other fiction of Fowles, *A Maggot* suggests that imposing a finality is to deprive the reader from the freedom of choice, to ascertain the uncertainties and fantasies. Though set in the eighteenth century, *A Maggot* insists on demonstrating the present era, as well as history:

“As in *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*, Fowles attempts to show that history is not safely complete and that it has a vital connection with the contemporary world of the reader”(Holmes 233).

As Ayscough had his coherent limitations, Rebecca’s insistence on the truth of the happenings in the cavern in the light of Bartholomew’s disappearance and Dick’s death, leaves him in a state of speculation. Ultimately, he dispatches a letter to the Duke, explaining that his son might have committed suicide in the cavern, which was witnessed by Dick. Unable to bear the horror, Dick might have followed suit. Ayscough offers another explanation that, Dick might have left his master in the mercy of the beings of the cave, and hanged himself in resentment of betraying Bartholomew. The final sentence of the novel, before the epilogue, is a song with the words of a lullaby, sung by Rebecca, to her baby: “Vivi vi, vive vum, vive vi, vive vum...”(AM 454). Fowles asserts that “they are not rational words, and can mean nothing”(Ibid 454). But the nothing is ambiguous here. It is not the self which dwells in its own vacuum for freedom, but it is Fowles’s appeal, for freedom, humanity, equality and justice, and a moral sense of the self.

The ancient *Madhyamika* school of Indian philosophy, states that the concurrent survival of right and wrong, true and false, relative and absolute, the issues of self-referentiality, overlays the way for enlightenment or intuitive knowing. This, to them is a precious contrivance for the purpose of liberation of the self. Nagarjuna, a second century *Madhyamika* philosopher had stated that concepts, events and entities do not exist in isolation, but in relation to one another. According to McCagney, Nagarjuna defines this

theory as “*nirapreksha paratra* [independent of others], *ahetu pratyaya* [without cause and conditions], *nitya* [permanent or unchanging], *aparijnana* [unknowable], and *akrirayate* [unmade]”(McCagney 61). Nothing exists-in-itself and of-itself, and no concept has any meaning, independent of a relation. To Nagarjuna this is the principle of *Sunyata*, or the doctrine of emptiness. Truth seem to contains the false, and the right encompasses wrong. Rebecca’s testimonies in *A Maggot*, can be seen in the context of *Sunyata*. Her dialectical skills, refutes the contention of the rationalists, that a thing exists in-itself or of-itself. Her visions, elaborating on the act of knowing is a product of the interaction between the observer and the observed, the knower and the known. In this relation, Ayscough’s dichotomized way of thinking, results in spiritual ignorance, motivating the mind to take hold of thoughts, as things to be grasped by the individual ego. The solution to the enigma of Bartholomew, Dick and Rebecca’s visions, is reflected by Fowles to be ultimately gained by transcendence, through a way of seeing and being. But Nagarjuna warns that the risks of making *Sunyata* an absolute truth. The theory had a purpose to him, which was to show the limitations of logic at certain times. The use of logic, to undercut logic can at times be dangerous at times. The purpose of *Sunyata*, is to end fear and suffering for all beings, ending the clinging to every concept of truth and reality. Nagarjuna also added: “Everything is real, not real, both real and not real, and neither real nor not real. This is the teaching of the Buddha”(Huntington 30).

Fowles in *A Maggot* structures its ambiance, where something emerges from things themselves. The testimonies and visions of Rebecca, find meanings and existence in the context of historical and circumstantial factors, shared by the Shakers and the

sociolinguistic community of Wales and Devon. Fowles rejects the traditional sense of the historical fiction, and lays in *A Maggot* the: "...groundwork for re-conceiving historiography as a critical practice... and the individual's role as an agent of historical change"(Roessner 302). Historiographic fiction in the recent times dwells on the self as an agent of historical change. In *A Maggot*, Fowles does not present the self to have a pre-unified consciousness, but: "maintains a distinction between the few who are capable of change... and the many (the beasts unable to question conventional beliefs). Also, Fowles does not historicize his own attitude towards the self. (Roessner 321)

Rebecca and her daughter Ann Lee are hailed by Fowles for possessing a contemporary sagacity of the self, that differentiates them in their society and from Ayscough, by allowing them to act as agents of change. Bartholomew sets riddles for Rebecca, and she in turn sets more for Ayscough, and Fowles on the whole for his readers. He makes this apparent in his interpretation of Bartholomew as the artist who encourages dispute. Rebecca repeatedly tells Ayscough that Bartholomew dealt in "riddles"(AM 338). Bartholomew can be taken as a figure in the "self-reflexive image of Fowles himself as a novelist"(Holmes 236). Akin to Maurice Conchis as an ambiguous character, he is Fowles's medium of leaving the plot of *A Maggot* flexible, giving the readers to be more creatively involved in the text. Bartholomew can also be taken as a parallel to John Fielding of *The Enigma*, whose unexplained disappearance, activates the reader's imagination. Both Bartholomew and Fielding "are enigmatic figures who bring about a transformation by arranging a drama that involves the mysterious events in the cave" (Roessner 317). In *The Aristos*, Fowles glorifies art as "the expressions of truths too

complex for science to express” (*The Aristos* 151). It is in art that the testimonies of Rebecca can be verified. Her accounts are opulently textured, with suspense and superior to Ayscough’s blatant arguments. They adhere to the evocations of damnations and deliverance, arousing our qualms and desires. Her vocals can be taken as an art, depicted amidst the political hostile environment of the eighteenth century England. As Rebecca’s narratives are the expressions of the struggle for freedom of the self, it serves Fowles’s basic function of art, which to him is “essentially a liberating activity”( *The Aristos* 180).

Like *The French Lieutenant’s Woman*, the determining character in *A Maggot* is an outcast woman, who represents rebellion and the liberty to choose. A consensus can be reached that although the self of Rebecca Lee challenges the grounds of the authenticity of her visions, they nonetheless give a twist in the enigma of the self, motivating the mind to grasp thoughts of the ultimate transcendence. The critical difference, as seen in this chapter from the previous sections of the study, embodies in the historical and circumstantial factors, paving the way for a spiritual self to transcend rationalistic tendency.

### **Non-Fiction:**

#### **“Conan Doyle”**

This non-fictional essay conceptualizes the detective implications, fear of feral nature, and the impact of the Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Hound of the Baskervilles* on Fowles himself, and in *A Maggot*. Published in 1901, *The Hound of The Baskervilles* is the most

widely read of Conan Doyle's detective fiction. Its protagonist Sherlock Holmes had died a metaphorical death in Doyle's previous book, *The Final Problem* in 1891. Holmes's assistant Watson had described his master's end as, "the last that I was ever destined to see of him in this world"(WH 143). To Fowles, Conan Doyle was the real murderer of Sherlock Holmes. Having full savour of "yarn spinning"(Ibid 143), for eight long years, he resisted "all blandishments"(Ibid 143). On an occasion, Doyle's friend Fletcher Robinson had narrated to him the tales of the Dartmoor legends, especially about the "spectral hounds"(Ibid 143). Soon Doyle visited the moor, sowing the seeds of his masterpiece, *The Hound of The Baskervilles*. The hound in the story demanded the dexterity of Sherlock Holmes, and thus the detective was reborn in its creator's mind. This re-crucifixion of Conan Doyle from his hiatus of writing was received with "universal joy"(Ibid 144).

*The Hound of The Baskervilles* was like a testing piece for its author: "The depths of public demand after eight years of silence and of the author's ability to satisfy it"(WH 144), was the need of the hour. The book's formidable setting of "the face –to- fang with one of the great archetypal monsters of human folklore"(Ibid 144), the dog of death, metamorphosed the trend of writing in Conan Doyle. This species of canines has a fascinating societal and mythical history behind it. To Fowles's knowledge the European settlers of the Mesolithic Age, around 7500 B. C, had started breeding and taming wolves. Giving encounters of black dogs haunting the moorlands on many occasions, Fowles cites his own experience of viewing a monstrous hound in Baker Street, Dorset, near his home. The Black Shuck, The Mauthe Dog, and the spectral hound of Dartmoor

with “glassy eyes and steaming sulphurous breath”(Ibid 145), killed every man it met at the place where its former master had been previously murdered. It was believed that Satan allegedly led the famed Wisht Hounds of Dartmoor.

While in the army, Fowles recalls the fear of actual hounds, as he himself had Alsatians set on him on an occasion. In a winter evening of 1946, he had a terrible encounter with a hound. Searching for a section of recruits lost on an orientation exercise, Fowles while trying to locate them climbed up a mount, reaching out to massive boulders:

Then suddenly and silently a formidable black shape moved and stood in a breach of the rocks above. I haven't forgotten the few moments of atavistic terror that possessed me before I had the sense to pull out the *Very* pistol I was carrying [...].

(WH 146)

Whatever the figure was, did not prove to be clear, and Fowles tries to recollect as what it actually was. It could have been a wild pony, but he insists that many a moormen had seen the figure before him, who had confirmed it to be a hellhound. But Fowles cites psychological explanations, having read Freud and Jung, that it could have been a mistaken identity of a pony. Reacting to the fear of the legends, the illiterate moor-men, unknown to the theories of Freud and Jung, thought it to be an incarnate of hell gate. But in an era of disbelief, Fowles argues the revealing instinct in such an atmosphere, cold, misty and lonely, the unimaginable will only loom large. Here he turns to untamed nature to be the real and formidable antagonist of man. The moor itself is “wild, untamed nature; the inhuman hostility at the heart of landscape. That is universal terror”(WH 147). Conan

Doyle must have felt this, that a part of wild nature was more profound and horrifying than a human criminal”(Ibid 147), which is the base of *The Hound of The Baskervilles*.

To Fowles, Doyle was a “fallible writer of fiction, not an infallible recorder of reality”(WH 147). He knew the tricks and hypothesis to unfurl his brilliant works. His stroke of genius lay in his accurate handling of dialogue and narration. As the story is always hidden in the heart of the narrative, the analysis of the motive, conversation and the rest expands to hundreds of pages. Readers, especially children always delve into the “lonely chocolate taste of pure story, not the dull old cabbage of he-said-she-said”(Ibid 148). Doyle makes the *Hound Of The Baskervilles*, exceptionally interesting by employing in the plot, a great amount of dialogue, where conversation makes the characters “fuel”(Ibid 148) the movement of the plot. Dr. Mortimer and Sherlock Holmes had this luxury in the narrative. Doyle sets them into the insight of the plot, to make his book suspenseful enough and of having “two vividly characterized and temperamentally opposed mouthpieces” (Ibid 148).

Analyzing the structure, Fowles comments: “one has only to flick through the pages of *The Hound of The Baskervilles* to see that the book is quite astoundingly full of dialogue for a story of such exciting action” (WH 148). Its author’s use of using conversation for the success of the book was because he knew that: “...the descriptive passages in a novel would be the only properly visual ones, but conversation is much closer to the immediacy of the actual image than we generally realize”(Ibid 150). In this regard he regards Conan Doyle as the forerunner of script cartoons and also of radio and television script

techniques, because of his moving dialogue: “His *coup de maitre* was to see that this thirst could be better quenched by conversation than by the more obvious answer”(Ibid 151). It is for this reason that Holmes and Watson have been parodied innumerable times. Fowles then analyses his own views on books like *Gulliver's Travels* and *Don Quixote*, and the impossibility of these books being caricatured.

Analysing the differences between a tale and a novel. Fowles quotes Jacques Barzun in the writer's own essay “The Novel Turns Tale,” where Barzun suggests the difference between a novel and a tale. The novel proper, “is a narrative that professes to illuminate life by pretending to be history; the tale is a narrative too, but comic; not in the sense of laughter-provoking, but in the sense of high make belief...”(WH 152). Doyle belongs to the category of the writers of tales, of make belief. Readers prefer tales because of their ingenuity which is suspenseful and “concentrated wisdom”(Ibid 153). Candidly criticizing the book from a different perspective, Fowles maintains that Doyle was not a sound creator of fictional women, but strong in creation of male characters. The characters of Laura Lyons and Mrs. Stapleton do not rise above the “late Victorian stereotypes”(WH 154). The second flaw in *The Hound of The Baskervilles* is that the protagonist Sherlock Holmes is absent in almost half the book, and the reader has to put up with Watson, but once he enters the book: “we are glugged with story; and starved of pause for atmosphere, for darker shadows and depths to congregate, darker confrontations between man and nature, man and evil man and past” (Ibid 156). Conan Doyle humbly, had never in his life understood the great talent of his art; to Fowles this is

the essence of the creative self in a novelist. The essay has an underlying link in the detective genre in *A Maggot*, in the self-transcendence of an individual.

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This chapter on evaluating the concepts and entities in *A Maggot*, concludes that it is the most cautious of all Fowlesian fiction, a diverse work from the rest. The mission once again recurs in the pattern of the quest followed in *The Magus*, that of redemption and rebirth of a self. Like his previous fictions, he is concerned with the ethical spirit of the persona: "...with an emphasis on emotional truth discovered within the individual self"(Warburton 414), which diverse from the rest of his creative writing. He comments in the epilogue:

I suspect we owe as quite as much to all those incoherent sobs and tears and ecstasies of the illiterate as to the philosophers of mind and the sensitive artists. Unorthodox religion was the only vehicle by which the vast majority, who were neither philosophers nor artists, could express this painful breaking of the seed of the self. (Ibid 457)

Fowles takes a calculated step in calming down from his skepticism, and leans on the propaganda where he finds the female self, given recognition by the Shakers. Keeping himself aloof in his attitude, his narrative speaks volumes in his approval of Rebecca. His principles of *The Aristos*; on Christianity, atheism, women, class consciousness and mystery, are taken as a collective backdrop in *A Maggot*. On the other hand he sanctions Rebecca's enlightened and modern attitude that premonitions the birth of the modern self:

“our twentieth-century consciousness of and obsession of the self”(AM 460). Fowles observes in his last novel till date, that there is no dichotomy, no boundary line in the self, to justify social order.

The essay “Conan Doyle,” reflects Fowles’s inclination to the detective genre, and the element of unexplained mystery, which echoes in *A Maggot*. The sinister myth of the hound in Conan Doyle’s *The Hound Of The Baskervilles*. Man’s helplessness against feral and ruthless hostility of nature, is brilliantly narrated by Fowles in the essay. Like the mystery of the Doyle’s sinister hound, Rebecca’s helplessness in the mystifying cave in Bideford, and the happenings at Stonehenge, is but a reflection of Fowles, that nature can be at times hermetically closed for human discernment. “Conan Doyle,” thus furnishes a diverse aspect, for enhancing the self, which seduces the adaptive complexity in the complex behavioral traits of the self in *A Maggot*.

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## Chapter IX – *Nature*

### Non-Fiction:

*The Tree*

“Weeds, Bugs, Americans”

“The Blinded Eye”

“Shipwreck”

“Islands”

“Land”

“The Nature of Nature”

Fowles’s profound grief on the death of Ned Bradford, his American editor, made him resolve not to publish fiction for a while. He started writing non-fiction as an alternative. Stimulated by photographer Frank Hovart’s exquisite pictures of trees in France, which paralleled Fowles’s own garden in Belmont House in Lyme, he wrote his most replicated autobiographical treatise, *The Tree*. The John Fowles who had began writing fiction believing that his philosophical stories and essays will be able to “change his society, now believed no one understood. No reader was changed. Writing was an inward voyage, a hermetic experience benefiting only the maker himself” (Warburton 384). The mystical and divine experience of nature, which is reflected in his creative writing, is what John Fowles records in *The Tree*. A philosophical dissertation in the defence of nature, and its preservation in primordiality, *The Tree* insists that if nature is scientified, it will alienate humanity from it. A mirror-image of Fowles’s attitude towards the natural world, *The Tree* presents polar opposites of his idealistic views combined with world visions.

The present chapter besides *The Tree*, takes up five of Fowles's essays on nature: "Weeds, Bugs, Americans"(1970), "The Blinded Eye"(1971), "Shipwreck"(1975), "Islands"(1978), "Land" (1985) and "The Nature of Nature"(1995). These essays reflect the impact of nature on Fowles over the years and how they have an underlying association in his fiction too. Like *The Aristos*, which gives an introspective aspect of the self, Chapter IX is an important part of this study, as it is the prime section, where the underlying link of the self, between Fowlesian fiction and non-fiction is brought in a substantial aspect.

### ***The Tree***

Fowles uses the image of the tree to project his views indicating his penchant for liberating nothingness through nature, with personal experiences, built around reminiscences of trees. The experience he records here, is life-changing and a move, away from his suburban childhood habitat to the countryside. What he rebels are things suburban and against suburbia: "Some trees represent that which he rebels against, and some represent that which his rebellious quest aims for" (Neary 85). The main character, with whose philosophy Fowles's confronts is his father, Robert Fowles. Recalling his childhood, Fowles recollects his habitat in a "semi-detached house in a 1920s suburb in the mouth of Thames, some forty miles from London"(*The Tree* 7). His father's pruned garden of apple and pear trees, had an enormous influence in his life. But Fowles cites dissimilarities in his attitude towards nature with the senior Fowles, a passion which was aroused in him by his relatives. He was to Warburton, "a young man lost in wonder in a green, enclosed natural place, instructed by an authoritarian older male..."(Warburton 3).

His maternal uncle, Stanley Richards, a keen entomologist, and two of his cousins who were years elder to him, taught him the love for the natural world:

What these relatives very soon aroused in me was a passion for natural history and the countryside; that is longing to escape from those highly unnatural trees...

I secretly craved everything for our own environment did not possess: space, wildness, hills, woods [...] . (*The Tree* 10-11)

Disagreements arose between little John and his father, who was an ardent devotee of the metropolis. In most outward ways he was conventional in the two worlds he lived in, that of suburbia and the commercial buzz of London. He detested his father's going off "in suit and bowler to London: an hour by train there, an hour back..."(Ibid 13). Unlike his father, Fowles did not support the pruning of trees. Symbolically, Fowles uses the garden image, to assess the nature of his father. Being an admirer of trees, Robert Fowles's attachment to them was suburban in character: "Even the minute lawn had five orchard apple trees, kept manageable only by constant debranching and pruning"(*The Tree* 7). These trees were "the most closely pruned, cosseted and prayed for in the whole of England"(Ibid 8), for Robert Fowles, believed in Bertrand Russell's eleventh commandment, the disobeying of which would be "Thou shalt prune all trees"(Ibid 24). Later in life, Fowles recalls his father's incredulity, when he had visited his son's house and garden in Belmont:

I think I truly horrified him...I first took him around my present exceedingly unkept, unmanaged and unmanageable garden...He thought it madness to take on such a 'jungle'...in effect to my co-tenants, wild birds and beasts, its plants and insects. (*The Tree* 26)

Fowles's Eden, unlike his father is not trimmed at all. He finds this sensation as a vigorous normal process: "...a healthy natural process, just as the branches of a healthy tree do not try to occupy one another's territory..."(Ibid 25). This awareness metaphorically reverberates in most of his fiction, where the protagonists refuse to be restricted by the societal conventions.

As Fowles grew up, his family confronted the hazards of the Second World War in 1940, and eventually shifted to Devonshire. This escapade from the city suburbs to the small parish was the greatest liberty to the young Fowles, and all his fiction are but a repetition of this exhilarating experience. He recollects: "We had spent that, self-evacuated, in a cottage of the Devonshire village. I fictionalized *Daniel Martin*. Despite the external horrors and deprivations of the time, they were for me fertile and green-golden years"(The Tree 18). But his father was dejected: "I sense that the memory of suburbia must have represented to my father..."( Ibid 20). The imperative philosophy of young John in Devon, projects his love of individualism and freedom. As a child he had loved taking lonely walks in Essex and the Devon countryside: "I still feel this as soon as I enter one of the countless secret little woods in the Devon-Dorset... Slinking into trees was always into heaven"(Ibid 11). His passion for fiction writing, never severed the umbilical cord, which he experienced amidst trees, as a "form of quest or adventure"(Ibid 64). After the war Robert Fowles brought his family back to Essex, in his safe and pruned garden, because it offered him: "...a place he could control...Those trees were in fact his truest philosophy, and his love of actual philosophy, the world of abstract ideas..." (The

*Tree* 23-24). The slow and secret movement of the cultivation in the pantheistic sense, made young Fowles return to the places he preferred.

Robert Fowles and his trees became for his son, the image of the things he had rebelled against. He relates this to Carl Linnaeus, whom he calls “the great warehouse clerk and indexer of nature”(The *Tree* 28). Linnaeus was a Swede, whose garden in the Swedish town of Uppsala was a neat eighteenth century one. Possessive of his garden which he had adorned between 1730 and 1760, it was pathetic that the man had gone mad at the end of his life. Linnaeus had habits of analyzing, isolating and collecting nature, instead of simply allowing it to be in the way it is. This mechanistic-scientific Linnaean way of classifying and killing natural reality is termed by Fowles to be a “green chaos”(Ibid 80).

On the this attitude towards nature, he comments:

A great deal of science is devoted to this...to providing labels, explaining scientific mechanisms and ecologies.... I spent all my younger life as a more or less orthodox amateur naturalist...I became slowly aware of the inadequacy of this approach:... a major human alienation, affecting all of [...] . (Ibid 30-33)

In his first novel *The Collector*, Fowles’s abhorrence of collecting is elucidated. The title itself is related to collecting which is antagonistic to the primitive wildness of nature, that Fowles condemns in the passage from *The Tree*. Miranda voices this attitude of Fowles in the novel: “Not anything *human*...He’s a collector. That’s the great dead thing in him”(TC 150-51).

Claiming wildness to be an essence for maintaining human sanity, Fowles contemplates that without wild nature, which is the retreat and refuge of the human psyche, one "...disintegrates and goes mad"(*The Tree* 80). The untamed gardens to him are not images of disorder, but an order which is natural and far from mechanical. But this view is perhaps like an atheist, who believes in the accepted order of things, not conforming to the controlling logos. To analyze precisely what Fowles achieves from nature is far from precise words: "What I gain most from nature is beyond words...To enter upon such a description is like trying to capture the uncapturable"(Ibid 36-37). A kind of *via positiva* mysticism, his theory is based on silent endorsement rather than defined principles. But a definite image emerges in this context that, if the trees that Fowles rejects are cherished by his father, the trees he adores are the ones that give birth to a new imaginative patriach, whom he terms as the "green man"(*The Tree* 42). He comments in this regard:

One of the oldest and the most diffused bodies of myth and folklore has accreted round the idea of the man in the trees...he possesses the characteristic of elusiveness, a power of 'melting' into the trees... it is constantly 'played' inside every individual consciousness. (Ibid 42)

*The Tree* captures Fowles as a nature worshipper, who tries to recapture his Devon experiences. These experiences give him psychosomatic strength, and significantly he clarifies his former views of naming and collecting nature. Asserting later in his life that at times such an activity is valuable because:

In the 1950's I grew interested in the Zen theories of 'seeing' and of aesthetics: of learning to look beyond things-in-themselves. I stopped bothering to identify

species new to me; I concentrated more and more on the familiar, daily nature around me, where I then lived. (*The Tree* 42)

This approach of Fowles towards nature, is closer to the Wordsworthian point of view. In the conclusion of *Three Years She Grew in Sun and Shower*, Wordsworth embodies the “recognition that all organic life, including human life, must come to the same condition of inertia, the condition of ‘mute insensate things’ ”(Durrant 24). In poems such as *The Prelude* and *Tintern Abbey*, Wordsworth's verses are those of consciousness becoming aware of itself, of man using contemplation of the natural world as a means of coming to terms with the extraterrestrial. Wordsworth's ideas about recollection, the meaning of childhood familiarities, and the influence of wits, bestow an acknowledgment on the objects it beholds, on the aptitude to record experiences carefully in the moment of observation, and to shape those same experiences in the mind over time.

Wordsworth sees nature in its joyful abundance, feeling a divine presence in it. As Neary argues that the lines from *Tintern Abbey*, “And I felt ...A presence that disturbs me with the joy of elevated thoughts”(Neary 90), shows Wordsworth seeing the natural world in profusion. This can be compared to Fowles, who writes in *The Tree*: “the green density, the unpeopled secrecy of the Devon countryside...of isolated discovery and experience. The lonelier the place, the better it pleased me...”(*The Tree* 60). But Fowles also finds the other side of nature to be cold and still: “There is a kind of coldness, I would say a stillness, an empty space, at the heart of our forced co-existence with all the other species of the planet... truly alien”(Ibid 44).

Fowles's introspective musings on trees brings forth two vital philosophical fissures, that reflect a kind of Camusian uprising he had highlighted in *The Collector*. The first is his refrainment from the metropolitan culture and moving to rural Lyme Regis. The second is his belief in the conventional notion that there is a spiritual and emotional connection between the self and nature and its surroundings, either natural or human. This dual estrangement is precisely the notions that Fowles nourishes the self with a inimitable denotation. Opting for an alternative way between Zen and modern science, he exhilarates "the unique experience, the 'green man' hidden in the leaves of his or her unique and once only being"(Ibid 47). This attitude is what art celebrates, distinguishing it from science: "What is irreplaceable in any object of art is never, in the final analysis, its technique or craft, but the personality of the artist, the expression of his or her unique or individual feeling"(Ibid 46).

Fowles has strong leanings toward the romantic version of the organic philosophy, incompatible as it may seem with his mechanistic materialism. *The Tree* describes the vitality of this consciousness:

Ordinary experience...is in fact highly synthetic...made of a complexity of strands, past memories and present perceptions...it corresponds very closely despite our endless efforts to 'garden,' to invent disciplining social and intellectual systems-with wild nature. (*The Tree* 40-41)

Romantic in his expressions, Fowles dislikes that part of science which analyzes the basic individual consciousness, in the same way he dislikes religion. A kind of a "romantic rebel"(Neary 10), Fowles is radical in his ideologies, both against analytical science and

mass society, which constantly try “to garden”(The Tree 41) the wildness of human experience. The rebellious protagonists of his fiction: Clegg, Nicholas, Daniel, David and Charles struggle to escape from this mechanistic world and its oppressors, by withdrawing into a natural green world. In his collection of poems titled *Poems*, Fowles considers the business of everyday urban life to be deadening. In his poem, *A Tree in the Suburbs*, he gives a spiritual inertia to this vexed issue:

I see them in their orange hosts

Frail phalanx of the nearly dead

They hang there in the window's eye...

And every winter things get worse. (Qt. Neary 100)

Fowles's final discussion of trees is based on his visit to a “secret wood, perhaps the strangest in all Britain”(The Tree 85). The forest named Wistman's Wood, a name likely derived from “the old Devonshire dialect word *wisht*, which means melancholy and uncanny, wraithlike”(Ibid 86) alien, mysterious and invisible. The wood apparently makes the hedgesparrow sing, “My wood, my wood it shall never be yours”(Ibid 90). But what Fowles describes here with intensity is his passion for stillness. The experiences in Wistman's Wood is that absence, the faceless otherness, one of the tenets of his fiction, for “... the justification and the redemption”(Ibid 94). As he elaborates:

But it is the silence, the waiting-ness of the place, that is so haunting; a quality all woods will have on occasion, but which is over-whelming here –a drama, but of a

time span humanity cannot conceive. A pastness, a presentness, a skill with tenses the writer in me knows he will never know. (Ibid 90-91)

Analyzing Fowles's statements in *The Tree*, his fundamental apprehensions which reflect on his fiction can be assessed. Not a very disciplined person, he does not plan them beforehand from a systematic transparent mind, and out of the chaos of undergrowth memory, his creativity unfurls. The germ of each of his novels have a definite place in his recollection, and trekking through forests which are mysterious to man, and he diverts them into metaphors of his own experiences:

In some mysterious way, woods have never seemed to me to be static things... move through them, yet in metaphysical ones, they seem to move through me .... In this they are like series of rooms and galleries, house-like, doored and screened, continuous yet separate; or paged and chaptered, like a fiction. (*The Tree* 58)

Another implication of Fowles's philosophy in *The Tree*, are his views on his own concepts in faith. His musings here demonstrate consistently that his mind-set towards woods contain a spiritual element. In a druidical way, he describes the sacred aura of trees: "Woods mysterious atmospheres, their silences...from the greatest cathedral to the smallest chapel...all derive from the natural aura of certain woodland or forest settings" (*The Tree* 62). Fowles's religion is entirely supported by naturalism. For him what cannot exist is what exists. His conviction in nature is something that can be felt, not talked about: "...remoter from us the most bizarre other non-human forms of life: blind, immobile, ...speechless" (Ibid 63). In an interview to Lidia Vainu on his favourite

activity, Fowles replied: “I think very definitely studying and remembering nature; what we call natural history...” (Vianu 2).

The spiritual element in Fowles’s relationship with nature is to a great degree, hallowed. The crucial obsession is a kind of separation not only between society and nature, but also between society and culture. These two vital aspects come together as the locus of what is anti-social, and hence of what is ingenious and creative in man: “For Fowles, as for romance, creativity flourishes in the darker and less discovered areas of the mind, and thus stands in the same kind of relationship to society as Robin Hood to the Sheriff of Nottingham”(Loveday 143). It is this concept of romance which is associated with nature and imagination as aspects of the sacred place, which underlies the domain of his fiction, and the “identification between the two natures expressed throughout his non-fiction”(Ibid 143). As Fowles comments “The two natures, private and public, human and non-human, cannot be divorced”(The Tree 78). This is a vital aspect of that essential link between the two genres, as this study tries to deduce.

What Fowles appreciates in nature, finds parallel with Emerson’s impressions of the natural world. The ideas of Plato and Emerson, dating back with some of the Hindu, Buddhist, and Persian thinkers, saw the origin of Transcendentalism in 1836, who adopted the whole connection of the spiritual doctrine in nature. Emerson finds nature to be the situation which dwarfs every other circumstance, and all men come to her for solace:

The tempered light of the woods is like a perpetual morning, it is stimulating and heroic...The incommunicable trees begin to persuade us to live with them...These

enchantments are medicinal, they sober and heal us. These are plain pleasures, kind and native to us. (Emerson 4)

When Emerson had visited the *Jardin des Plantes* on July 13, 1833, he was overwhelmed by so much “animated forms-the hazy butterflies, carved shells, birds, beasts, fishes, insects, snakes, and the upheaving principle of life in every incipient..” (Ferguson 272). Emerson like Fowles, also believed in the vitality and assurance of the present. Asserting that living in the current moment is the key to life, Emerson stressed that self-improvement begins in every instant. Nature to Emerson is also always consistent in keeping her laws, while transcending them: “... he who knows what sweets and virtues are in the ground, the waters, the plants, the heavens, and how to come at these enchantments, is the rich and royal man” (Emerson 3).

Absolutely fundamental to Fowlesian fiction, Fowles sets the concept of freedom in his novels as a creative clash between societal systems and the self. *The French Lieutenant's Woman* and *The Ebony Tower* act as moral touchstones, while *Daniel Martin* is about the “defensive determination to rejoice in the creative possibilities of freedom” (Loveday 144). But if wrongly interpreted, Fowles gives a premonition that freedom can be hazardous, which is highlighted in *The Collector* and *The Magus*. Fowles does not languish for individual freedom of the self alone, but also for that union of the self and nature, endorsing a union of man and society. This unique experience springs from the Sartrean experience of being-in-itself: “A part of that retreat must always be into a ‘wild’, or ordinarily repressed and socially hidden self... It is our passage, our mystery alone”(The Tree 79). He circles around the same issues: the suburbs, the country,

discipline, freedom, God and the self. He continues to be an existentialist in this cynical modern age, who otherwise dismiss practical concerns. Fowles has acknowledged his endorsement to Sartre and Camus, but yet maintains an individual philosophy of his own. He takes refuge in the shadowy woods, which speaks volumes of his exploration in the mystery of the self and its authentic implications.

Fowles hints in *The Tree* an obstacle which bars to achieve a perfect understanding with nature. This will be inevitable to any mortal who will try to “use it in some way, to derive some personal yield...” (*The Tree* 43). In *Daniel Martin*, all “these ideas about nature are embodied either in Martin himself or in the other characters”(Andrews 150). A very outspoken confession in *The Tree* is his comment: “Again and again in recent years I have told visiting literary academics that the key to my fiction, for what it is worth, lies in my relationship with nature”(Ibid 35). On being questioned by Carol Barnum to be elaborate on this concept, Fowles in an interview had cleared: “What most people look for in human friends and contacts, I look for in non-human nature”(Barnum 188).

*The Tree*, thus elaborates how the circumstances of imaginative conception is like a wood, where a walk amidst it is spontaneous and random. Within the changeable green sunlight and twined branches, Fowles experiences the ways to express that understanding silence, which resonates between the self and nature, by experiencing the timelessness, which is almost near-mystical, elaborated in the lengthy analogues of his fiction, “concentrated into distilled wisdom. Fowles’s voice is calm, personal, and sincere” (Warburton 385).

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### **“Weeds, Bugs, Americans”**

In this essay, Fowles advocates for the extermination of all those rudiments, that endanger to obliterate nature, which disintegrates the self. Man's magnetism to materialistic gains, have led the present times, especially America, to detach the self from nature. Endorsing the doctrine of Zen philosophy that labelling or naming a thing eliminates its identity, Fowles laments that casual attitudes towards the milieu in modern civilization, is making it die in degrees. He terms this as “the rape of nature”(WH 290), where pollution forms the most radical factor. Conservation of nature sounds a rather official word, and maintaining parks and reserves, seem today to be the task of the administration exclusively.

Complimenting that England has managed to preserve “a healthy relationship”(WH 291) with nature, Fowles is wary that America is not conscious of this propensity. The British farmers possess toleration in the conventional sense and prefer nature in its entire wilderness. They are happy to “sacrifice some good farming to some good sport, to provide cover and terrain for game birds, deer, foxes, and the rest, and thus cover the terrain for many other species as well”(Ibid 291). He has a soft corner for the British townships which have more green and random parklands than the Americans. In America, the sophisticated milieu, more dedicated to scientific progression, have farmers who are resourceful but “change landscapes to suit their machinery. They use more poison” (Ibid 291). The Americans nurture technological innovation, leaving nature to be preserved by conservationists. Fowles in this regard advocates: “What I believe is

required a very simple state: a will to foster the wildlife, however insignificant and humble...”(Ibid 294).

Fowles ridicules self-styled nature lovers who put up nesting boxes and feed birds in their gardens, but on the other side possess beautiful trimmed, manicured lawns devoid of weeds, pests and natural plants destroyed by insecticides. Nature requires seclusion, like man. Killing and destroying insects and weeds, is annihilating nature in its original form. Americans are thus less forbearing in accepting nature in its freshness. The answer to this dilemma Fowles believes, is the prohibition of all pesticides and insecticides, “Obviously the first thing to ban from the gardening shelf is all insecticide...”(WH 296). Astonishingly, he finds the lawns as poor givers of ecological returns. To him natural evergreen areas give “ nectar-rich flowers and edible fruit or berries. Such cover not only encourage birds but provides an important insect habitat”(Ibid 297). Americans have a distaste for insects, which they call “bugs”(Ibid 297). They have drenched nature by spraying uncontrolled insecticides on these bugs. Here, Fowles compliments his own Belmont garden as a perfect example of nature at its best and originality, having practiced what he had preached in his writings. A town garden in Lyme, Belmont is not very large, “...it harbours five or six breeding mammals...nesting birds with many more coming as visitors... butterflies and moths, and a generally luxuriant insect life”(Ibid 299). In 1986, Fowles accosted two little boys, in the path beside the Cobb Road in Lyme Regis, inquiring about his garden: “Is it your garden?”(Warburton 1), one of them asked Fowles. It gave Fowles the happiness he craved for, to know that his own Belmont garden to the boys was, “The best garden in the Lyme...a wizard place”(Ibid 1).

Fowles in the essay, then takes up his truncheon against shooting of birds and other wildlife. Although being a huntsman in his youth, he now sanctions the banning of shotguns. He gave up hunting as he says, "...one day I found I couldn't live with the enjoyment I got one moment from seeing birds and animals in the wild, and the enjoyment I got the next from killing them" (WH 301). Condemning the role of collecting which he considers a hobby for pleasure and vanity, Fowles does not approve of collectors and ornithologists. Scientific assessment and connection is indeed important, but somehow, seeing and enjoying nature as it is, gives him more exhilaration: "It doesn't have to be named, or studied, or hunted; it just have to be there"(Ibid 304). If uncollected and untamed, one will see: "the moth's uncurled proboscis...He will see forms, colours, structures; see personal, artistic, and literary allusions; see whole poetries where the pseudo-scientist sees only names and matter of notes"(Ibid 305). These are absent in the American mind, as they insist on the dissection of a thing combined with a passion on labelling.

In this essay, Fowles reiterates his love for nature as "a therapy"(WH 306). His emotional bond with natural landscapes, takes nature to the level of mysticism, which is :

A constantly repeated awareness of the mysterious other universe of nature in every civilized community. A love, or at least a toleration, of this other universe must re-enter urban experience, must be accepted as the key gauge of a society's humanity. (Ibid 307)

From the artificial world of people, nature suffices the solace, friendship and the affection he requires, which is a leitmotif of his creative works. The recurrence of the cycle of the

year, the sight of particular birds, flowers and insects gives him the thrill not found in human company. Reteirating his liking of Zen philosophy and its doctrine, that nature has something new to offer every time never cease to please Fowles: “I have trained myself, partly through reading Zen...not to take anything in my thousand-times-walked-round garden as familiar...I suppose the process is something like a prayer”(Ibid 306). Social toleration germinates in one’s connection with nature. Spraying insecticides and killing insects may seem a lesser crime to man, because he annihilates humanity in thousands by nuclear arms, where the pain of suffering becomes excruciating. Fowles concludes the essay by supporing one of the main themes of *The Tree*: that nature is “an inalienable part” (Ibid 307) of the self. Destroying it is destroying oneself. Caring for nature should not be left to others exclusively, “Conservation can never be someone else caring. It is you caring. Now” (Ibid 307).

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### **“The Blinded Eye”**

The lackadaisical approach of man who do not have the slightest love and tolerance towards the natural world, made Fowles write this essay. It is epigraphed with John Clare’s poem, *Summer Evening*, “A sparrow’s life’s as sweet as ours... Can’t see the good which sparrows do”(WH 308), which lays importance on toleration and worship of wildlife.

On a September evening near Massachusetts in America, Fowles describes his innate happiness on seeing “specimens of the milkweed (or monarch) butterfly, *Danaus*

*plexippus*”(Ibid 308). Always fond of butterflies, “black-veins whites, mazarine blues and milkweeds”(Ibid 308-09), he had broken into a run on seeing this rare specimen. Allegorically commenting: “I was really running after a whole buried continent of memories...”(Ibid 309). In retrospection, Fowles castigates himself of being a lepidopterist in his youth, switching his hobby to ornithology and finally diverting his interest to botany, to be followed by a phase in shooting and fishing, which he terms as a “black period in my relations to nature”(Ibid 309). The shooting of a curlew beside the Thames, and the response of the bird in pain, made Fowles sell his gun, with a solemn pledge not to ever kill “intentionally”(Ibid 309) again any wildlife.

As an evolutionary follower of the “*Homo sapiens*”(WH 310) , he lashes out at himself with grievance, on being trapped into the heresies of man’s attitude towards the natural world. He had written his first novel, *The Collector* to express his hatred of the lethal perverse acts of lepidopterists. To Fowles, all nature lovers collect the “death of the living”(Ibid 309) under the pseudo name, “hobby”(Ibid 310). This is abuse of nature, in which many people boast of the word to show their individual aesthetic relationship with natural life: “To my mind hobby is a deforming word-that is, it deforms anyone who uses it to describe his own relationship with natural life”(Ibid 310). Hunting and killing were also the heresies he had committed himself, which coincide with the lines of the poem by John Clare, as the epigraph to this essay: “Your blinded eyes, worst foes to you, Can’t see the good which sparrow’s do”(Ibid 308). The philosophy of Zen makes Fowles examine critically the western attitude towards environment. He comes to the conclusion that the west has only a one-sided vision regarding nature: “Our illusion is that nature must be dryly classified and its behaviorisms analyzed like so much clockwork”(Ibid 311). Like

Zen, the approach to nature should be poetic, not scientific. The present era has split the identity of the self with nature. Science tends to divide and classify, while art in any form tries to give the elements of comprehensiveness.

Fowles stresses this point with a paragraph from Keats's *Ode To A Nightingale*: "The voice I hear this passing night was heard... She stood in tears amid the alien corn" (Ibid 313). Keats's lines stress the same focal point as Fowles, that of a steady permanence of change in nature. That is why the song of the nightingale which Keats heard in his evenings, had perhaps enthralled kings and emperors in ancient days and also to "Ruth amid the alien corn"(Ibid 313). Poetry tends to comprehend the pure and the pristine. As evolutionary species on this planet, man is gradually detaching himself from a stable flow through the effects of science. He views the continuity of a stable evolutionary process, which strikes a chord in the continuity of life. Nature in this regard is like a "sanctuary, a system of landmarks in time; a check on our craze for meaningless 'progress' "(Ibid 314).

The movement of the migratory birds strike Fowles with the awareness of time. The birds, flowers and butterflies lead him through the labyrinths of his own life. Caging the wild in another heresy to him, making him detest pets and distrust the zoos. In this regard he describes a particular experience in Crete, where he was accosted face to face with a lammergeier. It is one of Europe's largest birds of prey. They are kept in zoos, and very few ornithologists see it in the open. The secret message which might have passed between him and the magnificent bird in the remote snowy mountain of Crete, Fowles muses, was as if the lammergeier said to him: "cage me, cage yourself"(Ibid 318).

What Fowles had himself seen as a boy in the 1930s at Devon, the glades and heaths full of butterflies, birds and insects have been reduced to farmland areas, giving the impression of a dead planet. Mankind, when faced with changes put forward an obvious question: “What’s in it for me?... What new pleasure shall I get?”(Ibid 318). The alterations of nature is mysterious, a notion “where the killers and collectors and name tickers will finally see nothing, hear nothing, and understand nothing”(Ibid 319). Fowles’s apprehension echoes in Emerson: “How easily we might walk onward into the opening landscape, absorbed by new pictures...all memory obliterated by the tyranny of the present, and we were led by triumph in nature”(Emerson 2). Evolution and the hostilities of time can soothe nerves, if the self yields to nature. A flower, a tree or a bird will surely envelope him into its own machine. He contemplates this calming effect of nature on his own self, which reverberates in his novels:

“That is why I love nature: because it reconciles me with the imperfections of my own condition, of our whole human condition...my freedom depends totally on its freedom. Without my freedom, I should not want to live”(Ibid 319).

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### **“Shipwreck”**

The essay analyses wrecked ships, lying along the Cornish coast, preserved by the generations by the Gibsons family of the Isles of Scilly. Feral nature had always thrilled Fowles. The fear, and the passion of man’s combat with the untamed, is the core of this essay. He begins by describing the coasts of Scilly, and the perennial danger of the sea

vessels: “The frequency of disaster, the remoteness, the atrocious economic disregard ...gave rise to the very ancient of wrecking”(WH 322). The battle between man and the sea, and the outcome of the terrible ordeal is almost annihilating. Fowles meticulously describes the various stories of the wreckages, cold-blooded murders, and plunderings of the eighteenth and nineteenth century vessels, in this coast of England as appalling. Poor light, fog and the great reefs, were the agents of the catastrophes. At times the war with the sea-god Neptune, lasted for days. This ominous and dark facet of nature stimulates in him a perplexing sensation of pleasure, widespread to British seamen, which challenges the self: “I should like to go now into the calmer, though deeper and darker, waters of why the spectacle of the shipwreck is so pleasing-why, in short, there is a kind of Cornish wrecker in every single one of us”(Ibid 329).

To Fowles, the calamities like wreckages, bring forward the Aristotelian conception of being purged and reborn as better persons. Man modifies strategies to combat the inevitable. The human endurance to struggle the wrath of the sea, inspite of the heavy odds, urge him for fresher ordeals. The characteristic feature of the sea is enticing to man. With its layers of complexity, the sea invites him with its archetypal meaning: “It has the attributes of all women, and all men too. It can be subtle and noble, brave and energetic; and far crueller than the meanest, most sadistic human king who ever lived”(WH 330). Residing in the seaside town of Lyme Regis, Fowles feels “the storms and gales...the thunder in the shingle”(Ibid 330), which arouses a thrill in him: “I watch it every day. I hear it every night...Storms and gales seem to awaken something joyous and excited...the thunder on the shingle...the rut and rage”(Ibid 330). This challenging aspect in the self, are embedded in the impervious protagonists of Fowlesean fiction.

The mystery of the sea as interpreted here, is the “Freudian double identification”(WH 330). Its wrath to him is both the superego and the id. On one hand, it is without restraint, like a bull in the ring, and on the other “the great punisher of presumption, the patriarch who cuts that green stripling, man, down to size”(Ibid 330). In its wrath, man is mystified by the sea’s lack of reason, blind to everything, save its own nature; a sightlessness which is analogous to the attributes of the self, lurking in the consciousness. The wrecked part of ships are our own “repressions, our compromises...duty and a dozen other idols of the top-hamper we call civilization”(Ibid 331). The western countries have framed metaphors on ships. It is greatly adored and gendered as a male species. Airplanes and jets have no doubt tempted man, but through the vast seas of space, man still prefer ships. Shipwrecks have a genuine fascination for him, yet ironically it instills in him “a genuine sadness” (WH 331) too.

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### **“Islands”**

Photographer Fay Godwin’s remarkable photographs of the islands in the Cornish coast, induced Fowles to write this extraordinary essay on the simile of islands, and the connotations of the their image. The essay elaborates on the archipelagoes of Schillies. In exploring the implication of islands, he comments: “... the mysteries, symbolic and real, of all similarly situated islands; about their silences, their otherness, their magic and their mazes, their eternal waiting for a foot to land”(WH 339 ).

The coast of Land's End in Schillies, England, consists of islands standing on a separate territory. To Fowles, they are more primordial, even prior to Adam and Eve, who had braved the sea, probably four thousand years ago. The islands hold "an astounding concentration of nearly one fifth of all such tombs in England and Wales-far more than Cornwall"(WH 334). He discusses at length the historical importance of Cornwall and the islands around its coast, since 1000 B.C. Personally, he admits that islands lure him to a point where he never fails to stopover, when waylaid in his voyages and journeys: "True islands always play the siren's trick: they lure by challenging, by daring. Somewhere on them one will become Crusoe again, one will discover something"(Ibid 336).

The metaphor of islands to Fowles, offer both personal and private imagination. They install in one, a primary sense of identity. He gives a remarkable metaphor on the relationship of the self with the islands:

In terms of consciousness, and self-consciousness, every individual human is an island...It is also the contrast between what can be seen at once and what remains, beyond the shore that faces us, hidden. Even to ourselves we are the same, half superficial and obvious, and half concealed, labyrinthine, fascinating to explore.  
(WH 337)

But inspite of this, every island has its own essence, its own individuality, although they lie in an archipelago. Allegorically, every being possesses a separate identity in the sea of humankind. The communities of the islands to Fowles long ago, were the pioneers of alternative societies. Hence they are alien to the technologies of the modern man. Sanctified visions of "utopian belonging...of an independence based on co-operation

haunts them all”(WH 338). The siren myth which envelops the sea, to Fowles, cannot be altogether inauthentic. That the sirens are gendered as females is obvious, corresponding to their mythic descriptions, “the domain of the siren has always been where the sea and the land meet; and it is even less for nothing that the siren is female, not male”(Ibid 339). The sea to Fowles is beneficial for the physical body and the aesthetic soul of the self. Narrating the history of his own domicile, the seaside town of Lyme Regis since 1750 A.D, Fowles laments that contemporary beaches, even Lyme has become the principal source of erotic pleasure, especially of the advanced societies. The vulgarity displayed on the sea-shores needs condemnation: “The beach has now become the principal public pleasure area, closer and closer to the bedroom, of all advanced Western and Eastern societies”( Ibid 345).

The image of the island is “liberty”(WH 346). They are secret places, where the mind's eye does not relax. Juxtaposed, they also provide the self, the wine of blissful forgetfulness. For writers, they provide excellent inspiration. Perhaps, it was why he feels, the sea had inspired Defoe to write *Robinson Crusoe*, Homer the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, William Golding *The Lord Of Flies*, and Thomas Hardy *The Well Beloved*. Detachment from the mainland to Fowles, supply the psychological hypothesis much needed to writers. The first novel in world literature to Fowles believes might have been “woven out of islands and the sea, and of solitude and sexuality, which is why it has had a greater influence on subsequent storytelling, both thematically and technically”(WH 348). He believes that the writer of the *Odyssey* was a female, “I am one of those heretics who believe the *Odyssey* must have written by a woman”(Ibid 348). He gives substantial evidence on the matter. The narration in the *Odyssey*, its innate details in the initial pages,

the description of the characters, the vivid analyses of the interior décor of the Greeks, how guests were received, dresses, jewellery, and Helen herself can only be compiled by a woman. The *Odyssey*, Fowles believes, was written at a time when brute male greed for property and power had obsessed man. What particularly fascinated him were the voyages and the islands described in the quest for the freedom of Helen from Troy. The sea provides the road to the self for the quest, “where the great ally of reason, the conscious, gives way to the rule of the unconscious and the libido”(WH 354). The quest theme, which is one of the main grounds of Fowles’s fiction, dominated this epic. Fowles adheres to Freud’s “rule of the unconscious and the libido”(Ibid 354), in this regard. Every artist who sets off in his quest for the unknown, realizes like Odysseus, that he must run “the gauntlet of island reefs, the monsters, the sirens, the Calypsos and the Circes, with only a very dim faith that an Athene and a wise Penelope waiting at the end”(Ibid 362). This notion finds an outlet in his discourses on female characters of his fiction, as reflected in this attitude to nature.

The major sway for any matured writer is his “own past work”(WH 368). Singling out Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* in this regard, Fowles hails this drama as a masterpiece of the seventeenth century, where the island myth holds supreme. What significantly attracted Fowles to *The Tempest* is the “overriding metaphors the island and the sailor stranded in a place that he cannot fully understand...which both bewitches and is intensely cruel”(Ibid 369). The parable of the human civilization in the play is Shakespeare’s own imagination of authority, expectations and restrictions. The germination of the image of the island in Shakespeare’s consciousness must have occurred to Fowles, from the reading of the ancient pamphlets of the Elizabethan and Jacobean ages. The Spanish

Armada of 1588 gave the Elizabethans, a haunting image of islands. Fowles himself acknowledges the “releasing power of *The Tempest*” (Ibid 380), when he had visited the island of Spetsai in 1950. He recommends *The Tempest* as a guidebook “for anyone, at least the self-inquiring”(Ibid 380).

The essay offers an explanation of the concept of the mazes in islands. Encountering a maze of circles, made with pebbles by idle teenagers in the Baltic coast in Gotland, Fowles felt that the maze is a symbol of the “ingenuity in craftsmanship”(WH 380), the ability to weave beyond the normal skill in plots of fiction, which is the prime device of the artist. The maze Fowles finds in *The Tempest* is Shakespeare’s own imagination behind the mask of Prospero. The conflict here takes place within the artist, between the power to imagine and the use of the imagining: “The truth is that the person who always benefits and learns most from the maze, the voyage, the mysterious island, is the inventor, the traveller, the visitor ...that is, the artist-artificer himself”(Ibid 376).

In the present century, Fowles comments that man today has all the pleasures at hand. Enjoyment has become an obsession with him, which is “destructive”(WH 381). This does not necessarily mean that one has to renounce pleasure. The pagan mind, since the days of Homer, had very little to do with consumption of pleasures, “Shakespeare ... probably never saw a remote sea-island”(Ibid 381). But yet to Fowles, he is self-throned as the world’s greatest dramatist “on the peak of Parnassus”(Ibid 381). Fowles concludes the essay, by attributing Fay Fodwin’s photographs of the Scillian islands as : “the elemental, compound of sky, sea, sand, rock...the cleansing as the sea itself will

cleanse... and most of the Scilly remains one huge Zen garden of the Atlantic” (Ibid 382).

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### **“Land”**

Fowles’s abhorrence of photography, the lure of which he was previously a victim of, is described in the essay “Land.” As a novelist, he knows and feels that novel writing and photography are polar opposites: “photography and novel writing are deeply antipathetical activities, and inherently hostile-indeed by nature, almost blind-to each other’s virtues”(WH 383). He does not adhere to people, urban or rural, who enjoy landscapes only as a healthy pastime. Countryside, which form an inalienable part of Fowles’s writings, is to him: “...natural history, its flowers, trees, birds, spiders, insects, ...and a walk that does not require and allow one to stop and examine at leisure every ten...” (Ibid 384). He consents on the eccentricity of his behaviour, supporting his stand in this view, by other writers and artists like Thomas Bewick and John Clare. Landscapes should not be the objects to be bounded by the grandeur of photographs, but one should try to master its essence, and be able to feel and be acquainted with it.

The deadness and fixity of photographs makes him feel the freezing of time as well of landscapes, as the ultimate end of reality. He agrees that photographs have historical and archival values, but cannot capture what had occurred five minutes prior to the clicking, and five minutes later. To him, there is no substitute for a landscape for “being there in reality; for choosing one’s way through it, discovering and experiencing it fully and

directly”(WH 385). Commenting on a particular landscape of Devon in England, which he had elaborated in *Daniel Martin*, he refers in this regard to a French writer, Restif de la Bretonne and his autobiography, *Monsieur Nicholas*. The narrative power of this writer, Fowles recollects, had deeply stirred his emotions. The description by Restif on a particular landscape had inspired him to write on the “sacred combe ” (DM 4) in the first chapter of *Daniel Martin*.

Opposite to the vineyards of Mont Grey and behind the woods of Bout-Parc... the high bordering woods...At the bottom of the valley were bushes for my goats...and greenwood where the heifers could graze ...it was strengthened by a beautiful hoopoe coming to perch...I looked with admiration at the hoopoe,...and ate some pears [...] .(WH 387)

The passage, from *Monsieur Nicholas*, Fowles believes has precisely the same “emotional vividness, an accuracy with regard to an experience that every child has known, the first discovery of a secret place...”(Ibid 387). It is here that the landscape, from where photography even cinematography is perpetually debarred, giving birth to the recollective description of writers, which combine with the reader’s imagination. This finally, culminates in the context of improvement in creative works, which is a surviving aspect of Fowles’s creative works.

Turning nostalgic, Fowles laments that British landscapes in the present times, reveal the grim actuality of countryside being devastated. But amidst these, a dim rainbow among the clouds remind him of, “...high hills and mountains ...the richness of natural life is not in danger”(WH 394). Nevertheless the gradual “green deserts”(Ibid 395) created by man,

is generating hurdles for the artist, whose ingenuity involve the illustration of natural life. Fowles is indignant on those affected writers, who are informal in this stance: “More and more I am out of sympathy with artists who monotonously purvey the pretty, the conventionally attractive, side of life and landscape outside our towns and cities, as if nothing had changed”(Ibid 395).

Fowles comments that the word ‘landscape’ appeared in the English language at the end of the sixteenth century, from the Dutch word *landschap*, which meant province or region. It described more of the walled gardens of medieval kings and earls, “as emblem or symbol of the land cultivated and brought under control of man”(WH 398). Treating landscapes as “honorary humans”(Ibid 399), the Romantics gave nature the long awaited due of respect. They have humanized “mountains, torrents, streams, rocks, and woods, and using them as substitutes for the human face and human emotions”(Ibid 399). Fowles releases his displeasure on those writers who are lured of pleasing and “cashing in on public taste” (Ibid 400). It symbolizes landscapes of performing like circus animals, where man applaud. The fault, Fowles acknowledges, comes from: “our illusions of our self-obsessed century; the beliefs that worthwhile art must be ‘new’ which most often condemns it to be extravagant”(Ibid 401).

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### **“The Nature of Nature”**

Written in 1995 almost at the age of seventy, the essay is Fowles’s cherished and private “long love affair with *Le Sauvage*, the wild nature”(Warburton 453), ever since his

childhood, and a summing up of his most private experiences, sentiments and feelings. Nature's invariable revitalization had always enthralled him, constantly nourishing a sanguinity that contradicted a writer's negativity. He himself strikes a chord, commenting "Perhaps the 'Nature of My Nature' would be a more honest title"(WH 408). On the "cruise"(Ibid 408) of living on this globe, Fowles recollects myriads of his naive encounters the ethical and artistic visions, in his prolific consciousness. To him the Greek concepts of "*sidros, keraunos and eleutheria*"(Ibid 413), iron obligation, perils and liberty correspondingly, encounter the cruise of man.

As a natural enthusiast, Fowles sees creative writing as a presentation of viewpoints, rather than scientific observations: "I see literature far more as an expression of feeling conveyed through poetry, drama, and fiction than any sort of serious scientific statement about reality"(WH 409). Not rejecting science in entirety, he grounds that science fails to fasten itself to the importance of the self and the aesthetic. Consequently it fails to comprehend that: "Each of is always, at heart, however apparently similar, inalienably not anyone else"(Ibid 410). He keeps away from the disciplines, as it is prearranged which novelists do not prefer. Almost Coleridgean! Fowles acknowledges the vitality of science in modern perspectives, but its failure to be unaware of the existential reality is what alludes the disciplines to be biased. He recommends C.P. Snow's book, *The Two Cultures* in this outlook, "Snow's essay seemed to respond to something that was oceanically subtle and complex"(Ibid 409). What Snow's analysis neglects, is the pre-eminent sensation of feeling in the self, "between a you and a me...Each of us is always, at heart, however apparently similar, inalienably not anyone else" (Ibid 410). Science is knowing, and arts is feeling. Fowles drives home his dispute, with an illustration. Just as

throughout history, conceivably ever since the Bronze Age, women have been grossly and “selfishly misunderstood, slighted and exploited by men, so has the feeling by the knowing”(Ibid 410). He abhors his own masculinity, as it had cruelly behaved in the voyage of evolution. But this culpability of men is not to be interrelated by despising science, as it occurred for instance, in the Victorian times. In accord with the view that the tussle between science and arts may seem irrelevant and insoluble, Fowles is also aware that separating them may like the Siamese twins, “destroying both” (Ibid 410). Instead of weaving the two streams of knowing and feeling for a proper accomplishment, Fowles bewails that the present curriculum and academics are bent on keeping these two vital aspects apart. Vigilant that his opinions might be detrimental on all scientific disciplines, he attempts to fine-tune his views, commenting: “I may be technologically illiterate...I can neither drive a car nor use a word processor... I’m digitally clumsy and disciplinarily lazy”(Ibid 411).

As scientific disciplines tend to mislead the reader by their labyrinthine themes, Fowles feels comfortable not to be a true believer in the scientific processes, which might have deviated him from being a novelist: “Novelists are like conjurors, always expert in misleading”(Ibid 412). Knowing and cataloging, the facets of science, would have destroyed in him the most inexplicable part of love and adoration: “I never really understood why I loved my now-dead wife... common sense and reason can become a mysterious part of love”(Ibid 412).

On religious conviction, Fowles reconfirms his aesthetic viewpoints, but appreciates the veracity that religions create at times. Not being religious in the conventional sense, it

seems ridiculous to him to pass off his views on faith. Instead of the word religion he prefers a more compassionate expression:

My feeling about human existence on this uncontrolled sprouting planet is that its perceptible reality, and its destiny, waver and zigzag amid a triangle of opposing yet counterbalancing factors. Physically and mentally we individuals bounce, carom, and ricochet like pin-table balls. (Ibid 413)

The three pinballs of “*sidros*, *kerounos*” and *eleutheria*” (WH 413 ) collide with the self in this world. The first pin is the allegory of a ball, symbolizing “necessity”(Ibid 413), which curtails our liberation. The boundaries of *sidros* are our egoistic impulses which imprison us. The second and frequently changing pin, the *kerounos* or pure hazard is like thunderbolt: “Its results may be hoped for, expected, predicted, dreaded; but they are never certain”(Ibid 413). The last pinball, *eleutheria* is the freedom which inspires the self to revolt against necessity and hazard.

Fowles recalls his most memorable days, when his uncle had taken him for hunting in Essex. The thrill of caterpillar tracking, creeping around Leigh-on-Sea, with torches in hand, looking for moths; the sight of the hawk moth taking its birth from a pupa, gave the child Fowles, an endless elation: “Oh the joys of that, the stroking that induced the poor thing to peep, a miracle...All nature seemed human, its diverse forms puzzling”(Ibid 414). On reading French literature in Oxford, Fowles remembers that it trained him to regard nature as a woman, making him plunge “deeper into sin, having a passionate, life-changing affair with a shatteringly beautiful and rich young women”(Ibid 415). These enchanting landscapes, he terms as the “wild”(Ibid 415).The natural world of France

appealed to him. The country gave him an “un-English notion of *liberte*” (Ibid 416). The rather egotistical freedom of rural Devon, a “crippling polio of English Puritanism”(Ibid 416), was not accessible in France. The innate life of France seemed a marvellous reminiscence of an unshackled feeling, “a little like a visit to a high-class restaurant for a gastronome”(Ibid 416). He refers to England, France and Greece as a trigency, “I am trigenic of three motherlands, a matriot for all, and far from sure where I belong”(Ibid 416).

Fowles acknowledges his liking for naturalists like Gilbert White, Thoreau and Richard Jefferies; especially Jefferies who tutored him the philosophy of regarding nature as ultra-human, or “beyond humanity”(WH 418). The English natural landscapes had instilled in him, an involvement of a deep-seated interest in hunting; from grasshoppers to rabbits, pigeons and trouts. Its alarming and gradual extermination in the present times is appalling to him. It is palliative for him to spot a pair of ravens, who live near his Belmont abode, whose existence throb the environment with “life”(Ibid 417), in this otherwise desolate globe. Orchids draw his attention as “seductive”(Ibid 417). Till the writing of the essay, Fowles had hunted orchids almost through Europe. Becoming a curator of a little museum in Lyme Regis in 1978, brought him in contact with paleontology, connected with fossils, which is a metaphor in his novel, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. On becoming a curator, Fowles recollects Virginia Woolf's dictum that “nature and letters seem to have a natural antipathy...they tear each other to pieces”(Ibid 419). Fowles feels like a eunuch when science encounters him, like a “giant tarantula lurking in its subterranean liar”(Ibid 419), waiting to ambush on his attempts of appreciating science. The Swedish scientist, Dr. Linnaeus became insane towards at the

end of his life, as he was “drenched and drowned in the enormous flood of names, names, names he had unleashed “(Ibid 420). Taking over the museum in Lyme Regis, made Fowles stand on the brink of falling in “sea of fog” (WH 420), of having to label the collection of fossils and ammonites. Maintaining a funeral register on nature, like plants, birds, insects and animals in his garden in Dorset, it appalls him to comprehend that a bulk of them had disappeared due to the “planet’s most viciously selfish and greedily dominant one, man” (Ibid 421).

Fowles deplores the situation of nature in England, where pollution has led to an acridity in the metropolis, leading to the degradation of mankind, “a hypertrophy infinitely worsened by what we may think of as our special grace, our individuality”(WH 422). But yet, in England, nature like a “savage old mistress” (Ibid 422), draws him away from desolation. His study in Lyme Regis overlooks the English Channel, evoking the past and the present in him. Hazards and fate beyond prediction can consign mankind to oblivion, but nature instills in him a fragment of optimism, “Yet something in wild nature, though often dumb, masked, or hooded, has an occasion, as just now, touched my individual soul” (Ibid 422). This brings to him the “beingness, existingness”(Ibid 423), the essential subject matter of his fiction. To Fowles, “existingness”(WH 423) is a delicate plant considered necessary to be preserved in writing. Virginia Woolf and D.H. Lawrence had come closest to this concept in the century. Lawrence understood the implications of this existingness, especially elaborated in *The Man Who Died*. The magnitude of Fowles’s admiration for Lawrence can be gauged from his humble acknowledgement: “I did share it, though but as a candle in the sun” (Ibid 423).

The transitory apprehension of beingness, is its “nowness”(WH 423), that strikes Fowles of its ephemeral, rich sensation

“It is being, being, being...a perpetual miracle, so vivid and vital that ordinarily we cannot bear it; always rare enough to be a shock, no similes or metaphors can convey it; like a sudden nakedness, a knowing of oneself laid bare before a different reality”(Ibid 423).

It is this possession of extreme existingness Fowles feels, relieves him from the usual bondages of human passions, and why fate has made him an aesthete and a novelist, where he almost situates the self. Any individual who tries to fathom and analyze this beingness by science will result only in estimation; the reality will not be resolute. It will bifurcate the living feeling, and stifle all existence with “dead knowledge” (WH 426). Fowles feels that writers have been branded as hypocrites, as they believe in the individual self, and the language they use is not their art, but a shrouded expression: “we are eternally behind bars, our tongues are tied, our words by being words kill all chance of verity”(Ibid 426). Becoming flexible in his views, he believes that human tastes and convictions are essentially personal matters, private and individual. Science has given birth to skepticism, casting doubts even against the gods, and religion. In spite of his atheistic concepts, he considers the scriptures as a shelter, where science has utterly failed.

The planet to him, has transgressed since his year of birth, 1926. Hazard, a vital facet in *The Aristos*, is necessary for humans, although it is pitiless and excruciating; “We seldom realize how vital to us this both exquisite and baneful uncertainty is”(WH 427). The

*keraunos*, or the pure chance perpetrating human existence is to Fowles, something beyond knowledge; a source of unexpectability in every self, “energy, physical and psychic”(Ibid 427). Hence he advocates a balance between the arts and science, oscillating between the two aspects, which will aim not only to know the nature of things, but the nature of understanding them in essence. Artists find themselves in situations like Columbus: “knowing neither quite where they are going nor what they will find –or how their discovery will later develop”(Ibid 428). He prefers to be guided by whatever he had learned methodically, artistically and existentially from nature. His viewpoints in this essay, emphasizes the deep empathy of the self with nature, expanding its cosmic vision. The general malady that pervades the self, our literature, education, attitudes to one another, can be comprehended in nature. It can be valid to compare John Fowles with the philosopher Jiddu Krishnamurti, in their perception of concepts, as they rely on their own apprehension of truth. In this iconoclasm, there is no destructive trait.

Fowles’s attitude to the natural world, echoes Krishnamurti’s appreciation of nature, as a *via positiva* statement of the non-dual state. Jiddu Krishnamurti cannot be called a nature spiritualist proper, in his teachings and thinking. It is known that he spent a substantial time walking in nature and gardening, when occasions favoured. Perhaps, *The First and Last Freedom*, from the best of his many notebooks, introduces his observation in nature. Fowles had commented to Diana Vipond: “I’m a deep believer in silence-the positive role of the negative”(WH 442). For Krishnamurti too, nature’s appeal is the silence, which resounds in man:

“When there is silence...there is no formulation, there is no idea, there is no memory; that stillness is a state of creation that can be experienced only when there is complete understanding of the whole process of the ‘me’”(Krishnamurti 256).

Lucid in his views in the concluding paragraphs of “The Nature of Nature,” Fowles candidly confesses with a poignant intensity, of having betrayed the fundamental and biological law of being childness: “I know now that I shall never have children...I shall die hopelessly short of entelechy...”(Ibid 428). While he lives and breathes, he hopes to conserve his own “Powers of feeling and knowing, defective though they often are”(Ibid 428). He reflects, that he is a peculiar “outcast, an exile from normality. I hope you will credit that I truly venerate, behind my inadequacies, the wild ” (Ibid 429). Here Fowles, yet again acknowledges the untamed nature to be the actual fountain of his incredible creativity. Commenting on the wild filling of his own garden, he searches here, as he does in his fiction, “pursuing alternatives”(Ibid 429). The flora, having their epiphanic stature, resurfaces year after year; but their appearance during their subsistence are instances to be cherished. The essay concludes with a description of a clear June morning, with its writer out for a saunter down the hill of his plot. Passing the cream-white furbelows, he sights nature in his most preferred flower, the orchid. The variety of woodcock orchids in Lyme Regis, are a source of his secret joy, as an apotheosis of the green cycle of nature: “I cherish them empathetically so much they would make me cry, if I were the crying kind. I look at them *now*, knowing they are and that I am, in love and silence”(Ibid 429). The essay concludes with that transient feeling of “isness”(Ibid 423),

which had captivated Fowles and his protagonists, Nicholas, Charles, Daniel and David in their cruise of self-discovery.

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On evaluating the satisfying concepts of the idealized and elegiac values and aspects of the essays in this chapter, it can be seen that the idea of nature in Fowles, express a vision of spiritual doctrines to be cultivated in the self. Fowles's extraordinary profundity and passion in nature, strive to reorganize the self, in fuller union with the surrounding milieu. This message is sprinkled in all of his creative and non-fictional works. "Weeds, Bugs and Americans," instills awareness of the mysterious other universe of nature. He regards nature as rehabilitating, which can instill consciousness in the self for accepting responsibility. Destroying nature is social aggression, and preserving it is social tolerance, which can go a long way in the healthy thriving of the self.

"The Blinded Eye," is a call by Fowles to step down from game hunting. Nature, from animals to insects have the property of keeping us in cohabitation. In this essay, Fowles pays his reverence to nature for its reconciliatory assets and sublime moments it offers to oneself, which is almost flagrant. The continual flux in it, can thwart the hostility of time, where the self and the perceived can survive in timelessness.

"Shipwreck," is that shadowed part of nature, where man is still at antagonism to master it. Nature as the sea is a patriarch, refusing to be tamed. The sea in its fury, serves as a metaphor to the individual's psychical repressions and bounded duties, where the red-

lettered ethics of civilization triumphs to depress the self. The indomitable spirit of the self is the mainstay of the essay.

Over the layers of cultural consolations, civilized detouring have not yet recovered the wholeness, which the self desires. The autonomy of the individual is marked from initial alienation to advanced civilization, by more and more dependence, bureaucratization, spiritual desolation, and barren technicization. The image of an island in the essay “Island,” denotes self-consciousness in every individual. The concealed labyrinthine of man, is that hidden self which every artist aim to explore, aiming for the illumination of the mysterious. Islands allegorically symbolize that furtive self of the artist, where prolific imagination flowers. The Fowlesian protagonists in the fiction, frantically search for this very sense of identity, their hidden selves.

“Land” explores the transitory fixation of reality of landscapes in photographs, and the writer’s capture of an undeviating reality of it in fiction. The humanization of the mountains, torrents, streams, rocks, and woods, and using them as substitutes for the human face and human emotions have been explored in *The Magus*, *Daniel Martin*, and *The Ebony Tower*, where the self unearths itself.

In “The Nature of Nature,” Fowles sums up in reminiscence of living, encountering the philosophical and aesthetical visions. The essay is again dominated by the morbidity of the fall in pristine nature leading to the degradation of the self. Fowles highlights science as the prime agent, that deny the apprehension of ‘nowness’ of its ephemeral sensation. The poetic self in him, which had initially instilled him to be a poet years ago, still

attempts to resurface. The essay winds up the self in Fowles, the man, his likes, dislikes and intentions.

This penultimate chapter of the study, upholds the arguments and analysis, projecting that fundamental link of the self, between Fowlesian fiction and non-fiction. Fowles has circled around the issues of suburbs, the country, freedom, discipline, God, and the self in the fictional structures of his novels. And in these non-fiction, he relates his skeptical philosophies on nature. He rummages around in the shadowy, woodlands and in suburbs, the mystery of the self and its exploration for meaning in existence, attempting to achieve cosmic integration through nature.

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## Chapter X - *Horizons Unknown*

### (Conclusion)

In this study I had sought to evaluate the variations of the self in the fiction and selected non-fiction of John Robert Fowles, in an oeuvre spanning a momentous world of ethical, intellectual and aesthetic heights. The Fowlesean self is an exploration in the different landscapes of the mind, structured like a geological strata, with philosophical concepts and life experiences placed in an ascending order. There has been an appraisal in this study, of how Fowles has situated the self, the convergences and divergences that are perceptible in both the genres of fiction and non fiction, opening our mind's eye to horizons unknown. As a portrayal of an evolving artist, steadfastly refusing to hide in the facade of structures and style, Fowles's novels project a thinker and a theorist in his own circularity of ideas. He approaches novel-writing as if it were an escapade; an ambiguous mystery to be entered and investigated, an amusement of detection to be played with a writer's own flair. His non-fiction, ranging from a single page to substantial essays, covers the period from 1963, the year of the appearance of his first novel, to the anthology of the collected essays in *Wormholes*. The study in its purview, have analyzed that the selected non-fiction, sustain his interpretation in his fiction and his view on life in general.

The study had focussed on the question of whether the self in Fowles's works is indefinable, misread or misinterpreted. It is revealed that the nature of reality in Fowlesean work is relative with respect to individuals, time and paradigms, which is

highly self referential. It gives birth to paradoxical situations where opposite categories like relative and absolute, true and false, right and wrong co-exist. The resolution of this paradox of the subjective and objective dichotomy, can lead to the liberation of the self, solving the mysteries of the mind and consciousness. Misreading or misinterpretation can be thwarted as the self in the sequence of Fowles' works, is never closed and fixed. It is associated to the conditions of the consciousness, taking us to the unlimited and the perpetual. The self in his fiction is persistently variable and at times ambiguous, as Fowles, the magus himself is repeatedly in action. It is like a pinball, bouncing between things which cannot be spurned, within the boundaries of hazard, the ability to want, and the perseverance for freedom. To Warburton: "Fowles had always written out of his own experience, and his fictions were largely about a displaced first person, a 'John Fowles' character, placed in a richly imaginative situation and transformed and disguised ... " (Warburton 430) .

In tracing the psychotherapeutic networks of situating the self in Fowles's works, it is vital to note that in 1941, when Fowles was just fifteen, he had undertaken to write for the first time on his personal solitude. In Oxford, he began experimenting with poetry. In spite of his will to be a poet in mid-1950's, *The Aristos* was already in its making. In 1953, his visit to Greece, triggered **the writing** of his first conceived novel, *The Magus*, which had pre-occupied him for ten years. This shifting of genres is an indication of the author's attempt to situate his own self, before entrusting himself as a writer. As he himself comments: "I like to travel. I don't mean in the literal sense, but I like to go from one kind

of novel to another...I'd like to write a book in every imaginable genre possible, and in an ideal world...that's still what I would love to do"(Kakutani 1). Hence *The Aristos* can be regarded as Fowles's first conceived work, and as discussed in Chapter III, the implications of his fiction grew from here. This gives substantial support to the arguments discussed in the study, of that crucial link between Fowles's non-fiction with his fiction.

The implications of the study discovers that a close reading of the non-fiction of Fowles, is indispensable for a proper appreciation of Fowlesian fiction. Chapter III, titled "I Write Therefore I Am," containing the aphorisms of *The Aristos* about the state of man, aspires to create a synthesis of the self in his fiction. Chapter IX, titled "Nature," which discusses the natural world in Fowles's non-fiction, supports and reinforces the base of his fiction in enhancing the **perceptives of the self**, almost close to situating the essence of being and existing. In Fowles, it is the self developed through the powers of reason, experience, concern, care and responsibility, in relation with the ethics and doctrines laid down in *The Aristos* and *The Tree*, that one can locate the cognition in an entity. In the itinerary of the work, the study also determines that in relation to women in his fiction, Fowles asserts their potential, trying to delete the roots of anarchy in this sensitive issue, reiterating his concepts in *The Aristos*.

Starting with his first published novel, *The Collector* shows that liberty is precisely that "nothingness"(Sartre 12) of the Sartrean existentialism of the self, where "Freedom" (Ibid

433) is not possible in a being, but **it is his nothingness**, which is in itself a being. *The Collector* projects the protagonist, slipping off all his moorings leading himself to an irreversible chain of events. The tragedy is hardwired, compressed, yet transparent, with the intrusion of chance and hazard, the facets of *The Aristos*, fetching fatal conditions in its outcome. The reckless and perverse experimentation of Clegg envelops him into a self-possessed cruelty, discovering pleasure in the acts of negation and dissection. Miranda, a resourceful, urbane and talented entity of the Few with aesthetic luminations, is a pawn, gripped in the zone of tussle against the inarticulation of the Many, to whom freedom of choice is denied. She has the control to steer herself in the direction of autonomy inspite of her deplorable circumstances, but is cut to minuscule by her death. Deprived of freedom, her self is ironically distorted in the undiscovered sadistic desire of lepidopteristic possession. Inspite of moving towards a greater understanding, her cathartic liberation in death becomes a castigation, leading her from the subterranean vault of Clegg's mansion, to the coffin.

The dehumanization and antagonism of nature can be comprehended from the title, which suggests possession. Nature is not a motif in the literary context of the *The Collector*, which is a dominant aspect for the opening of the self in Fowles's later fiction. Except for the suburban garden, through which Clegg passes, Fowles does not describe nature in its essence here. Ironically, without its healing effect, Clegg is mechanized, indicating that its omission is a pointer to the acrid vision of the self. The tradition of counter pastoral in *The Collector* is the ultimate rejection of the self from a Beckettian perspective, a failure in communication in Clegg's and Miranda's impenetrable subjective worlds. In his essay,

“Collector’s Items: Introduction,” written in 1996, Fowles recollects with revulsion on his early attitude towards nature, as a collector and a huntsman: “I am afraid that the sacred relics, the buzzard’s talon, the flash of jay’s blue primaries, the raven’s beak, the pinned rows (obscenely like soldiers on parade) of butterflies and moths, were all lies” (WH 405). The Fowlesean central character in *The Collector* is a mutineer, revolting against society and nature, and creating an in-between wall. The biological instinct of an individual nature is demystified here, taking modern society and its cultural conceptions as vital strengths to express mankind’s vision. The contradiction between two conflicting forces is viewed as the determining factor in their continuing interaction and confrontation.

From the arguments above, a vital question arises: Was it Clegg imprisoning Miranda, or rather in community confrontations, Miranda imprisoning Clegg? In the conditions of the complex world, Miranda’s attempt to educate him is an utopian fantasy. The debate thus continues, under the formidable shadow of the Few and the Many, presenting the pessimistic elucidation of the self.

In exploring the situation of the self, the study observes that Fowles’s portrayal of the trapped self in *The Collector*, takes a detour before he published his next novel, *The Magus*. He had already been preoccupied with thoughts that had plagued him on the cloying disparity of religion, superstition and mysticism. His outstanding and innovative philosophies in his next non-fictional work, *The Aristos* is an acclamation of the lucid and

objective laws of individual survival. Fowles scrutinizes here on a myriad of subjects. *The Aristos* serve as thematic indicators in relation to the self in Fowles's fiction, where he believes in the concept of **the self as** a unique, autonomous, and morally dependable entity, a medium to signify valuable quantity in life and awareness.

The concepts of writing and the relationship between the reader and the writer's self are the key issues taken up in this chapter. The essay "I Write Therefore I Am," stresses artistic imagination, free from scientific dominion as the potential commitment of a writer's self. The other essay "On Being English, But Not British," brings out Fowles's commitments to nature, and the striving of the self for the regenerative retreat, the Green England with an exquisitely English feeling for myths, roots and traditions, which is a leitmotif in his fiction. His comments on the writer's self, supports the evidences of his hallowed conviction in writing;

I know many writers fight fanatically to keep their published self separate from their private reality...But I've always thought of that as something out of our social, time-serving side; not our true artistic ones. I don't see how the 'lies' we write and the 'lies' we live can or should be divided. They are seamless, one canvas, for me. (Warburton ix)

These essays sustain Fowles's views on art and the artist in *The Aristos*, which also reverberate in *Daniel Martin* and *The Ebony Tower*. The conditions of the self are determined by the creative design of the observer and the observed which is closely allied with nature. Chapter III, therefore is an intellectual and philosophical blueprint of Fowlesean fiction and discourse on the self. Fowles himself consents on this issue to

Diana Vipond in an interview: “....Yes, certainly, *The Aristos* was an early attempt to explain this and myself” (WH 446).

From the indexical survival tactics of the self in *The Aristos*, and the ensnared conditions of *The Collector*, the credibility of the self in *The Magus* is subjected to a huge widening spectrum. Aware of the societal circumstances that had grounded his debut novel, *The Magus* is divergent in its abstinence from the pessimistic interpretation of the Few and the Many. A work, rich with symbols and labyrinthine twists, the domain shifts from the cellar-room of Miranda, to open and lush green Phraxos in Greece, and finally back to London. As a quest story, the novel is made multifaceted by the assimilation of dilemmas involving freedom, hazard and existential uncertainties as a backdrop to verify the self. Here, we come close to answering the apprehension whether self-centered activities are the origin of all disorder in Fowles’s works. The concomitant distortion of the self here, becomes a meeting place of conflicting desires and intellectual contradictions, though gradually the rigid dichotomies crumble, as it seeks to transcend the rationalistic tendency, reaching a point of situating itself.

This archetypal quest pattern in *The Magus* in a didactic pupil-master colloquy, is an endeavor to come nearer to a more accurate and truer interpretation of the self, as a paradigm of an entity. *The Magus* is a *bildungsroman*, tracing the spiritual, moral, psychological, social development and growth of the probable redemption of an insensitive and **apprehensive** Nicholas Urfe, from a trapped situation to maturity through experience. To Henry James: “Experience is never limited and it is never complete; it is

an immense sensibility, a kind of huge spider-web of the finest silken threads suspended in the chamber of consciousness, catching every air-borne particle in its tissue” (Qt: in Lodge 51). Fowles makes Maurice Conchis a beneficial charlatan in the surrealistic sojourn of Nicholas Urfe, mixing the real and the incredible, in a *tour de force* which reveals the preconditions of the self. The inroads to freedom, allegorically parallel to Shakespeare's introduction of magic in *The Tempest*, incorporates the fantastic with the sundry. *The Magus* possessing a weird surreal quality shows traits of magic realism, through the staged deaths, erotic encounters and petrifying incidents as parts of the godgame, in projecting the conditions of the self. Nicholas refuses to be shackled in a corner, bounded by the unfathomable caverns of the godgames played on him. Keeping in tune with Nicholas's new sense of freedom at the end of his mission, is also a transformation of Fowles, the novelist himself: “It was logical, the perfect climax of the godgame. They had absconded, we were alone” (*The Magus* 655). *The Magus* bears evidence and also supports the statements of Fowles in *The Aristos*:

We shall never know tomorrow; we shall never know a god or if there is a god; we shall never know ourselves. This mysterious wall round our world and our perception of it is not there to frustrate us but to train us back to the now, to life, to our time being. (*The Aristos* 10)

The essays “Behind The Magus,” “Greece,” and “The Lost Domain of Alain Fournier,” serve as links in the search for the elemental pronouncement in the self, with the feeling of “isness”(WH 73) which runs through *The Magus*. Fowles describes this transient feeling which “come in a very brief space, gone almost as soon as arrived”(Ibid 73). A close study of *The Magus* also shows a well-built autobiographical slant. Fowles's

experience of the hiking of Mount Parnassus in 1953, and the elating feeling of this experience is brought out in retrospect in the concluding lines of the essay, “Behind The Magus.” The “isness”(Ibid 73) acts as a stable stimuli in his later fiction, which is an incessant feeling experienced by Fowles: As he comments, “This ‘isness,’ that present being, runs-however clumsily I expressed it- through *The Magus*”(Ibid 73).

We have seen how enamoured Fowles was of the Grecian landscapes during his early years as a struggling novelist. The essay “Greece,” wrests the essence of the “wild soul ” (WH 81) of Greece, the “wisdom of Heraclites and Socrates”(Ibid 81) and Greek myths, which went a long way to imprint the backdrop of his works, especially the novels. Greece forms a catalyst, and a *bildungsroman*, a metaphor of the rich exotic self in Fowles’s work. The resemblance of *The Magus* to *Le Grand Meaulnes* is verified in the essay, “*The Lost Domain Of Alain Fournier*,” where the allegorical self travels through the travails of adolescence, aiding in the creative process of the writer’s self. The image of the resting swallow in the final lines of the essay, denote the ceaseless present, or the isness, as in the conclusion of *The Magus*. Exploring the self in Fowles’s works, is delimited and unrestricted within the framework of passions. There are supplementary concepts, events and entities which are addressed in relation to one another. Nothing exists in-itself and of-itself, and no concept has any meaning independent of the other. The cruise of the self in Chapter IV, is pitted against nature, time, myth and hazards, in relation to the symbolic aspect of the *mandala*, having the essence of the self, as its centre.

Focusing on the identical basic questions he had been plagued with in *The Magus*, Fowles in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* projects the protagonists, Charles Smithson and Sarah Woodruff trapped by their own exploitations. A Victorian aristocrat in the intersection of existential concepts, the unity and the coherence of his self shattered, Charles Smithson undergoes Darwinian metamorphication. Fowles in the form of the narrator-persona, in Chapter 13 of the novel, lets hazard decide the destiny of his protagonist, a significant recurrence of his own philosophy in *The Aristos*. Setting the Victorian society as a formidable background to the novel, and Sarah rebelling against its authorized dictums, the Fowlesian notions of freedom and hazard, once again raise their heads. The intriguing network in the three open conclusions of the novel, is like a kind of delicious flexibility by Fowles, an open-endedness in the form of freedom of the self in the narrative, which also gives autonomy of choice to the readers. The encounter of Charles and Sarah in Exeter is described by Fowles as: "He conquered that instinctive constriction...as if she would bind him to her for eternity..."(FLW 337). Time and culture are dominated by the recurrent motif of nature in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, with the image of the sea as a symbolism of mystery, in exploring the conditioning of the self. Sarah is herself an obscurity, a riddle and her fixed long looks towards the sea, oblivious to the world, makes her tantalizing.

Serving to shore up the Victorian falsification of female domination, the study shows that there are parallels between Charles's rejections of Ernestina, and Sarah's rejection of Charles, which is a providential victory of the Victorian female on the male, affirming their individual status. The humiliation that Ernestina undergoes on her betrayal is re-paid

by Sarah in the second ending, when she rejects Charles. Fowles comments on this situation of Charles: "...a man behind the invisible gun-carriage on which rests his own corpse"(FLW 445). Mrs. Poultney and her incredibly dominant protocol, is a parallel to Sarah. Both women thwart the Victorian ideology of subjugation in their own ways, asserting their freedom.

The divergent factors in interpreting the self in *The Collector*, *The Magus* and *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, illustrate that Clegg suffers as a member of the Many and Charles of The Few. Urfe is not a victim of the masses, but of his own flimsy ideology. Both Urfe and Charles use the myth of women to exorcise themselves. As a reverse action metonymy in the acts of seizing, Fowles presents Clegg, Nicholas and Charles as collectors, obsessed with the objects they want to possess. Their amusements have no compunctions on moral values. Clegg is a lepidopterist, Nicholas a hunter of women and Charles a paleontologist. From the closed sleepy town of Lyme Regis, Charles Smithson in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* tries to attain authenticity, the reverse of the self in *The Collector*. The self in Fowles's fictions, thus oscillates.

Imperceptively, eroding the autonomy of those forces which alienate freedom of the self in the essays included in this chapter, reflect Fowles's preoccupation in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. Accessing this philosophy in "Notes on an Unfinished Novel," Fowles hints of preferring his real self in writing, which is to him an "experience, images to do with exploring, single handed voyages, lone mountain ascents always spring unwanted to my mind"(WH 27). The course of the self is marked here by gradual

independence, freed from bureaucratization and spiritual desolation. The second essay, *The Filming of The French Lieutenant's Woman* reflects Fowles's philosophy in the belief that the artist's sincerity lies in his sincere craftsmanship, rather than barren technicization. The feeling of "isness"(WH 73) of *The Magus*, lends its support in this essay, on that immortalized moment in Fowles's life, the day when the cinematographical works of *The French Lieutenant's Woman* began.

Against the Victorian domain, the concepts of time, nature, mystery, freedom, myth and hazard is rediscovered in the self in Chapter V. We succumb to objectification in a web of societal and culture control, receptive to the awareness of solitude, cultivating sensitivity. On the notion of time to apprehend the density of experience in the self, Fowles comments:

Time, properly understood, is not an elusive enigma of theoretical physics, is not a sadistic condition imposes on us by some divinity hiding behind an equation, or a purposeless obstacle to some truth we should all be happier for knowing; but a greater potential consolation than all our gods, all our philosophies and religions, all our arts and sciences. (Warburton 381)

In Fowles, the situation is made clear in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, that the self achieves authenticity through memory and time, the final exorcism in the symbolic burials, coded by the miscellany of the Victorian society. Memory seduces the self, occupying the space between history and time. As Krishnamurti says, "Surely memory is time, is it not? Memory creates yesterday, today and tomorrow" (Krishnamurti 191). Past memory to Krishnamurti, conditions the present and shapes the morrow.

In relation to the universal unhappiness in current civilization, the obsession of the self against time in Chapter V, the self in Chapter VI is in search of personal space in the intricate interaction of complex behavioral patterns. The fluctuating self from spontaneous liberty in the stories in *The Ebony Tower*, symbolically deals with modern art's retreat from reality. The artist's consternation of representing his own experience of life in his art, the antiquity and primordial in the adaptive complexity of human nature, is explored in the self. This chapter, brings into focus that, without self referentiality, the real self is impossible to situate. The mysteries here remain inexplicable, and the enigmas remain as riddles: "Besides, the unexplained mystery, as every agonistic and novelist knows, is black proof of an ultimate shirking of creative responsibility"(ET 119). The dwindling need for representational art and the artist's duty to his world is the pedestal of the divorced conditions of the self, from **the preceding elegance of *The Ebony Tower***. In disagreement with the radical formalistic genres of the century, the stories in *The Ebony Tower*, excluding *Poor Koko*, are replete with Jungian psychology and Celtic myth. Myth to Fowles, always confers a meaning on the existence of the self, and imposes a design of meaning in the otherwise sea of external occurrence.

In the same context, the image of an island in his essay, "Islands," with their "silences, their otherness...and their mazes"(WH 373) run parallel to the self in the social context of the tales in *The Ebony Tower*, signifying separation, alienation and isolation. The constant urge for transcendence of David Williams in the title story leads him in the

existential crossroads as Breasley, who had spent his life spurning bourgeois conventions, retreats to the ebony tower, dedicating himself exclusively to art.

The problems of being an artist are inextricably bound with the problems of being an existentialist. **For to become consistent**, the artist must have an independent life. In *Poor Koko*, the narrator-writer gropes for the numerous barriers to discover the truth, which are the inescapable part of writing. *The Enigma* and *The Cloud*, present the uncertainties and isolation in the self, in cryptograms of the detective genre. Fowles's reflections of the multi-layered absorption of Western art, and the literary traditions from where his own beliefs stem forth here was stated clearly in *The Aristos*:

The enormous 'liberation' in style and technique and instrumentation...that has taken place in our century is strictly caused by the need artists have felt for creative *Lebensraum*; in short, by their sense of imprisonment in the mass of other artists. Prison destroys personal identity; and this is what the artist now most fears. (*The Aristos* 167)

The locus of the primordial memory, art and time, takes a deviation in *Daniel Martin*, where the protagonist, in a current situation, undertakes the task of writing a novel. Fowles reflects on Gramsci, Marx and Lukacs, trying to maintain a relationship between politics and art in self-identification, with affinity in the green regenerative retreat. The unconscious search for the unattainable lost figure of infancy in *Daniel Martin*, with the constant paranoiac fear of being victimized, is set against the mysteries of existence in a cathartic dilemma, which envelops a profound sense of loss in the self. Here, Fowles lets nostalgia and collective memory return to the self, freed from scientific pretensions,

recognized as a conglomeration of symptoms, relating to the past. The conjunction between memory and past in the projection of the self in *The Ebony Tower* and *Daniel Martin*, can be seen in a new way of sensation about an old feeling, entering an innovative world as “Nostalgia” (Hofer 376). As Fowles contemplates, “life is destiny self-created, the sum of all past memory”(Warburton 60). Nostalgia is also a reflection of what things in the past mean. In effect, the “word was transformed from a disease of memory, one of the maladies *de la memoire*...a term employed to charge attachment to, and effect for the past...”(Natali 2), illuminating links to memory, history and time.

In the study, the essay “*Eliduc* and the *Lais* of Marie de France” is accentuated as a noteworthy correlation in the paradigms of the self in *The Ebony Tower*. The essay, offers nature as substantial balm to troubled lives as reflected in Celtic literature, linking the self in the stories of *The Ebony Tower*. Observing Fowles’s scrutiny of primitivism and its concepts close to his heart, the search for the essential natural self in its perfect symmetry looks back to that age. Woven with these ideas is the building of the creative self, which is extended in the essay, “My Recollections on Kafka .” Here Fowles draws attention to the conditionings in all dimensions, which should not betray the self, leading a budding writer astray, in an ever worsening realm of isolated, impoverished estrangement. Fowles explores the writer’s psyche, as the world he enacts, must be torn from the world proper, in “Hardy and the Hag.” This to him is the loss of the secret self, a recurring motif in Fowlesean fiction, in the impulses of identification of self-actualization and self-transcendence.

It can be argued that Fowles's attitude towards sex involves the sacred and the profane. To him like Thomas Hardy, the unconsummated relationships preserve the mystery. The self in Chapter VI thus, receives myriads of impressions; from the trivial and the fantastic. As Virginia Woolf describes, "the incessant showers of innumerable atoms"(qt. Lodge 86), which surround it from the beginnings of consciousness to the end. The intermingling of genres, of novel writing and cinematography, sailing through existential crossroads, ambiguities, uncertainties of freedom, isolation, nature, myth, mystery, show Fowles's pre-occupation of diverse hybrid knowledge of reflecting the commitments of the self.

After viewing the self in multifaceted dimensions in Chapter VI, we succumb to a mind-body split locale where the self in Chapter VII, takes up the cudgels in a modern crux. In *Mantissa*, Fowles takes up the question of the split in the self, pushing the post-modernist formulae of alienation and isolation, rejecting the concept of the death of the author. He shows the amnesiac writer Miles Green to be obsessed with the notion of preserving his self-autonomy in writing. **The neural activity in the self** interacts with environmental contingencies. In an interview to Diana Vipond Fowles confirms:

As I have repeatedly said, I wouldn't count myself even remotely an academic. I really don't know the poststructuralists and deconstructionists at all well. But I suppose my partial knowledges of Barthes, Kristeva, and so on like bunkers on a golf course. (WH 443)

In a way, *Mantissa* is Fowles's ***The Collector*** reborn the other way. He tries now to recapture the ambivalence in the self that he had groped for in a community impasse in

*The Collector*, in a neuro-physiological divergence. The essay “Moliere’s Dom Juan” reflects Fowles’s preoccupation of the self in seventeenth century France. The idea of a person, whether in real life or in fictional representations, has come under attack from both the Humanities and Sciences in recent times. Lodge argues:

There is, for instance certain affinity between the poststructuralist literary theory that maintains that the human subject is entirely constructed by the discourses in which it is situated, and the cognitive science view, that regards the human self-consciousness as an epiphenomenon of brain activity [...].(Lodge 89)

The perspectives of the urbane, creativity, myth, societal and autobiographical, as combinative conditioning in the subject-object dichotomy is explored in the self in Chapter VII.

In an answer to the **insecurities, tensions** and the clinical dissection in *Mantissa*, the self in Chapter VIII is autonomous, unified and individually capable of rationally controlling her own destiny. Concerned with the societal plague of Augustan England, Fowles in *A Maggot*, once again blends history and fiction to determine the re-designing of the self. Mohanty’s comment reinforces the propensity of the self in this chapter: “Without being a subject, without having the possibility of that reflective loneliness which is the destiny of the self, and without enjoying that social and historical identity which belongs to the self, a person would not be a person” (Mohanty 74).

Fowles focuses here once again on a woman, representing rebellion, change and the sovereignty to decide. In the frozen inertia of societal complexes, the anticipation of the

arrival of a new present order, ever hungry for new horizons, a recurrent trend in Fowles's works, is repeated in *A Maggot*. He sets up a mysterious situation, by not allowing it to decide its solution, but questions the motives and values supporting that very drive for closure. A prototype of *The Magus*, supporting numerous plots and detective stories, *A Maggot* unveils speculations of unsolved mysteries at the end. Echoing his principles in *The Aristos*, *A Maggot* shows that dissent, an anti-hegemonic force, is a biological and religious necessity for the evolution of the self. *A Maggot* confirms Fowles's political ambitions that the novel should alter the society, a highlighting point of *The Aristos*.

The self in this concluding fiction of Fowles, invalidates by meandering in its ethical and religious conviction in the course of discovery. It tries to synthesize the complexities, from the labyrinth of existence. Fowles for the initial time, deviates here from his rigid philosophies of religion, and allows it like art, to contribute as a common symbolic grammar, needed by the new social order, amidst the fissures and anxieties. In *A Maggot*, nostalgia prevails as a caution, as a marker of historical changes, giving the self more ambivalence. Cutting off the nets of rational readings, Fowles introduces here reflective nostalgia, by balancing the dislocations in the self. This concept can be felt culturally or individually, directly or indirectly as a recurring motif in the projection of the self, but which does not reach a constant state of self discovery or whole sight, as Fowles asserts, "...We still haven't beaten Socrates' most famous piece of advice: Know thyself"(WH 445). Fowles attempts in his works what D.H. Lawrence had pointed out :

You musn't look in my novels for the old stable ego of the character. There is another ego, according to whose action the individual is unrecognizable, and passes through, as it were, allotropic states which it needs a deeper sense than that we've used to exercise.(qt . Lodge 62)

The essay, "Conan Doyle" reflects on that aspect of untamed nature more profound, yet appalling than a criminal. The resistance of man against the primeval force of nature, are the last remnants of hostility at the heart of the landscapes. The essay also takes into account the ingenuity of Conan Doyle, with his tricks and hypothesis to unfurl his brilliant works, brought up in *A Maggot*, showing Fowles's preoccupation with the self in these locales. The detective genre, mystery, ambiguity in "Conan Doyle," categorically links for exploring the dominant rationality of the self in *A Maggot*. Delving into a book of Conan Doyle, is being glutted with narrative where the ambience encounters confrontations between man and nature, man and malevolence, man and past.

In answering the query if the self stresses the need for the green world and the regenerative retreat, relating itself to the freedom in nature which characterize the individual condition, it is found that Chapter IX, titled "Nature," advances the notion of change, plurality and relativity of nature in the individual self, rejecting absolute and fixed scientific judgments. Fowles terms nature as "a druid balm, a green sweetness over all" (Warburton 279). The greatest moral lesson from nature is the lesson of inherency, of what is, without the regard to what the observer likes or dislikes. He enhances the permanence of nature, woven through time, where the consciousness and sensory world perceptions lead to the "isness"(WH 71). Hazards and fate beyond prediction can consign

man to oblivion, yet nature instills in the self, a fragment of optimism of “beingness, existingness” (Ibid 423), the essential milieu in the exploration of the self in his works. It is this possession of extreme “existingness,” (Ibid 423) that transitory sensation, which relieves him from the usual bondages of passion, and which bestows on him the zeal for being an aesthete and a novelist. As he says:

What has struck me about the acutely rich sensation of beingness is how fleeting is its apprehension. One is of intense nowness, the other of realizing that you (oneself) alone, in your individuality, are infinitely fortunate to experience it....  
(WH 423)

Chapter IX focuses on the predominant facet of Fowles’s championing of wilderness as the most compelling of emotional experiences. With discursive language, Fowles in *The Tree* stresses the relevancy of the unpredictable and the intuitive in art, advancing the notion of change in the self. The study reveals that the fiction with disparate world visions are the mirror images of the self, of the ideologies mediated in *The Tree*. Fowles’s use of the tree image, especially the childhood occurrences, is a predilection for liberating oneself. As he writes: “Yet something in wild nature, though often dumb, masked or hooded, has an occasion, as just now, touched my individual soul”(WH 422). The protagonists of his fiction struggle to escape from the mechanistic world and its oppressors, seeking mental performativity, by withdrawing into a natural green world. The stimuli they receive from nature, acts as a protective shield, help to avoid damage in their psychological perception. This humble correlation, is that link, a constant charged impulse, between the fiction and the non-fiction of Fowles, which the study had

undertaken to explore. The sacred combe in *Daniel Martin*, the breath taking beauty of Greece in *The Magus*, the pastorals of Brittany in *The Ebony Tower*, restate this. Clegg in *The Collector* takes refuge from the hubbubs of London to the countryside, Nicholas Urfe in *The Magus* exhilarates into the green lap of nature in Greece, David Williams takes a temporary refuge in the green forests in Brittany in *The Ebony Tower* and Charles Smithson in *The French Lieutenant's Woman* goes to the small seaside town of Lyme.

The essays incorporated in Chapter IX, support to preserve the fossilized displacements in the self. "Weeds, Bugs, Americans," laments on the obliteration of the innate organisms in nature. Nature is that inalienable part of man, which when blasphemed and exterminated, the self perishes. Fowles feels that the mysterious other universe of nature, must revive the self. "The Blinded Eye," becomes poetical in its expression, enhancing the durability of nature, woven through time. The hostility of passing moments, if knitted into this universe, will reconcile the self, to cohabitation. "Shipwreck," sees the perpetual battle between man and sea, the failing game of man. The sense of identity and oneness, in terms of personal identity is allegorically compared by Fowles to an island, in the essay, "Islands." Self-discovery and the releasing power of the destruction of the British landscapes and the callous attitude of the contemporary writer, turning a blind eye to the sensitive issue is the crux of the essay "Land." The landscapes and wild nature he had seen in France, Greece, England and even his very own Dorset and Lyme Regis, instills in the consciousness of the self, the feeling of "beingness, existingness"(WH 423).

This chapter, in a methodical approach, comes closest to situating the self, and a winding up of Fowles's longing for that "impossible freedom" (WH 449). To Fowles, it is the fleeting "isness" (WH 73), between the observer and the observed in nature which is a sort of the ultimate level in the awareness of subsistence, "an all embracing euphoria. It cannot last long. I could not define what I was feeling...suspended in timeless, motionless floating in a sublime synthesis of elements" (WH 71). The discourses combine to facilitate that, it is not man seeing through nature, but man salvaging estrangement with his self, through nature. This apparently innocuous point encapsulates a key aspect, as the study has explored, an imperative facet in situating the self in Fowlesian works. The implications of this conception is the ability to dissolve differences in the self, which may have contained a number of reactionary connotations. The relation is not only between man and nature, but man and society, which comes in co-relation as the locus of the imaginative and creativity in the self. Fowles is a writer who stimulates us to supply what is not there, but what he offers is apparently subtle and elaborate, yet is composed of something that expands the reader's mind and endows with the most enduring form of life experiences, which may appear trivial to a great many readers. The turns and twists in *The Collector*, *The Magus*, *The Ebony Tower*, and *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, keeps the reader on tender hooks of suspense. The attention is laid half upon the present, and half on the future. The intense experiences of sublimity in rare moments, are those where the flux of time seemed to merge with a deep silence, and a sense of oneness, which is almost flagrant. Herein lies Fowles's greatness in the projection of the self.

Addressing the question if the self of his fiction reiterate, recur and take an evolutionary trend in his non-fiction, the answer lies once again in the magnitude of the symbolism in nature. *The Tree*, testifies the possible emancipation of the self, bestowing it with a unique value: “The two natures, private and public, human and non-human, cannot be divorced” (*The Tree* 78). The ensemble of nature as reflected in Fowlesean fiction, is a highway, through which the restless spirit of anxiety, passes through the concomitant distortions and diversities. In the civilized detouring, his characters succumb in the web of life, in their quests for individuation. The domination of nature as a means of coordinating medium, provide the rules for social, ritual and spiritual recovery. The mirror images of the self, mediated in *The Tree*, are structured in the fiction with unrelated world visions. As Fowles himself acknowledges: “This is the main reason I see trees, the wood as the best analogue of prose fiction” (Ibid 76).

The study had accessed that an ideological justification with emphasis on a moral mission in the arena of human existence is the empowerment of the female self by Fowles in both his fiction and non-fiction. He has upheld the intellect and courage of women, voicing their need for uprightness and virtue, out of patriarchal restraints. His range of portrayals array from the innocent to the degraded, but the paradoxes that display women are in the purest form, with enigmatic touches, transcending the limitations of time. It is requisite in the study, to lay emphasis on the overwhelming influence in this issue. Fowles elaborates on his concept of women as: “The women in my books are usually standing for other things... Women enshrine right feeling better... It suits me to set that in women characters only because I am a male writer” (WH 452). The

recurring attraction to the enigmatic women in his fiction, can be traced to his Oxford days, when he had befriended Constance Morganstern. To Fowles, Constance was “both erotically and psychologically moving...a benign *femme fatale*...who constantly excited one... almost inarticulate ” (Qt: in Warburton 51). The presence of this enigmatic woman, became in his later fiction, an unspoken, mysterious “guardian of some larger personal truth that the protagonist is moved to discover”(Warburton 51). The erotic is an abiding insignia in all his fiction, from *The Collector* to *A Maggot*. The non-fiction like “Hardy and The Hag,” “Notes on an Unfinished Novel,” “Eliduc and the Lais of Marie-de-France,” concedes to this view. The failed seduction of Miranda in *The Collector*, Nicholas’s imprisonment after his sexual intimacy with Lily in *The Magus*, Charles’s terrible dilemma, after Sarah’s successful seduction in Exeter, the discovery of a corpse in *Daniel Martin* after Jane and Daniel engage in their first sexual encounter, David’s faltering to Diana’s advances in *The Ebony Tower*, substantiates this point.

Fowles’s observations on the woman’s psyche, holds fast to the portrayal of Shakespeare’s woman characters, who ring out as the agents of intellect and courage, across the ages. These sixteenth century Elizabethan women have spoken through dramatic parts, to voice their own need for uprightness **and righteousness** from patriarchal manacles. It can be argued Fowles’s woman characters are the delights of readers, as his range of portrayals cover from innocence to degradation and perversion, but the paradoxes that displayed women are in the purest form. Fowles, like Shakespeare, champions the self of women in almost all of his novels. Because he is an extraordinary genius in portraying individual behaviour like Shakespeare, that Fowles depicts the

conditions of women within a patriarchal system, creating them in their richness with enigmatic touches, transcending the limitations of his time.

The study also observes that Fowles's treatment of women can also be related to Thomas Hardy's awareness to make the Victorian society more conscious of its treatment of and attitudes towards the fair sex. "Hardy's gift for creeping intuitively into the emotional life of women" (Boumelha 3) in the context of the nineteenth century, led to the emergence of an increasingly ideological rethinking of sexuality, particularly of the female self. Darwin's *Origin of Species* in **1859** and *The Descent of Man* later in 1871, argued that men and women were somehow mentally different. The centrality of the female characters in both novels brings into question the problems concerning female nature. This plays a large part of Hardy's and Fowles's construction of the fallen woman, in an era when men are associated with culture and intellect, women with biology and reproduction.

One of the reiterating and recurring drift of the self in Fowles's fiction is the disappearance motif. The characters of Sarah Woodruff, Henry Breasley, Rebecca Lee, Catherine, Marcus Fielding and Maurice Conchis are produced within the narrative, involving the circumstances of disappearance. They are parts of the fiction, involving the unpredictable end. Fowles himself admitted that his characters have a life of their own in the novels, a filtered version of reality. Their existence in the fictional cosmos retains in its realization, the power of life and death. The presence through absence. Conchis disappearance's after the godgame; the lieutenant we do not encounter in *The French*

*Lieutenant's Woman*, yet he makes his presence felt in the entire novel; Breasley's absence towards the end of *The Ebony Tower*; Marcus Fielding's disappearance in the beginning of *The Enigma* and **Catherine's** mysterious disappearance in *The Cloud* is Fowles's attempt to battle against all the erosions of personal identity.

The self in Fowles's fiction and non-fiction, seem to be at a point to define itself. Its centre is paradoxical. Its core is not the centre. It is within itself, but yet outside it, having its situation elsewhere, in the ambiguity of its situations. He acknowledges, "It always gives me a not altogether pleasant sense of having inside me some power that is not me, but foreign and visiting"(Warburton 331). The self in the conditions of nature and culture gives way to a ternary condition of human life. The study arrives at a conclusion that the nature of reality is relative with respect to individuals, time and paradigms in the Fowlesian world, which is self referential, giving birth to a paradoxical situation where opposite categories like relative and absolute, true and false, right and wrong co-exist.

In the mirror of human relationships, does the self falter at times without any justification and condemnation? Is it possible for the fallible self to proceed further? Can the self situate itself? The study has shown that in Fowles's work, in spite of the tribulations, there is a constant state of self discovery for totality or whole sight: "We have to live with the constant knowledge that we change, that all changes..."(WH 455). The issues of the self in the study, uphold the view that Fowles is concerned on the deep insight of totality of one's responses and silence in the pursuit of the knowledge of the self in his works, which is mainly guided by a realist contention. In the works of Fowles, the self can be at

times misread and misinterpreted, but the thesis had tried to show that an individual is not the impression that he or she gives, to which our several impressions and ideas formulate: “Our fundamental tactic of self-protection, self-control and self determination is not spinning webs, like a spider, or building dams like a beaver, but telling stories, especially the story of who we are”(Dennett 210).

The study also shows how the resolution of this paradox can lead to liberation of the self by solving the mysteries of the mind and consciousness. The identity of self in the sequence of Fowlesean works is never closed, fixed once and for all. The issues of the self shows that Fowles is concerned on the profound insight of the observer and the observed. The self is not only the enemy of the self, but also the friend. There exists a world separate from the observer, and that by using some guidelines of rational thought one can find universal, rational, objective and value free laws of nature to support this existence. Since the concept of identity varies, the concept of personal identity of the self cannot be determined. As Mohanty comments:

We need not start with a conception of what the world must be like, and then try to fit our concept of a person to that picture of the world. Rather our concept of a person, gleaned at first from our direct attending to ourselves as persons, should contribute towards forming that picture of the world which we all aim.(Mohanty 72)

Undividable suffering in the self, is a concept or an interpretation, though one may be unconscious of it. Man endures because of the sense of powerlessness to create peace

and joy as pawns of circumstances. In order to transform suffering by understanding it, it is necessary to see clearly what meaning or interpretation, is attached to individual anguish. In reality, the concept of misery is, an outcome of a belief based on some experience, and in due course, the self experiences torment.

The purview in the study, demonstrates that, to Fowles, identifying the false beliefs that underlie affliction, will bring the self closer to healing its disempowerment, but will not always bring immediate release. Hence the tribulations of conscience his protagonists undergo in experiencing suffering, explicates in the subconscious, that suffering comes from denial, which is close to Jiddu Krishnamurti's comments on the significance of suffering:

Is suffering merely a word, or an actuality? If it is an actuality and not just a word, then the word has no meaning now, so there is merely the feeling of intense pain. With regard to what? With regard to an image, to an experience, to something which you have or have not. If you have it, you call it pleasure; if you haven't, it is pain. Therefore pain, sorrow, is in relationship to something. (Krishnamurti 152-53)

These previous experiences act as a barrier to the understanding of the new challenges, cultivating and strengthening memory on suffering. When the self is able to meet "challenges anew, afresh, without the past, only then does it yield its fruits, its riches"(Krishnamurti 190). To Krishnamurti, when a being suffers, he or she undergoes pain. The facets of physical pain, differs from the trauma of the psychological. Distress is but a disturbance in the different levels of the sub-conscious.

In Fowles, the paradoxes of the self and the sense of spirituality is combined with the alertness of man with man, nature, woman, and the cosmos, carrying his perceptions beyond the spectrum of human politics and society. In everyday experiences, the individual self is something which is at times taken for granted. Attempting to define it have led us only to be more baffled and directing towards contradictory conclusions, resulting in the queries of the many psychological and philosophical schools of thought. Philosopher J. H. Mohanty comments:

A person has three layers of selfhood...What however, defines a person (and not a mere ego, an embodied subjectivity, or a social self) is that she is that being who is not a merely a representing subject, but who acts, suffers, expects, fears, hopes, loves and hates, judges, demands, has rights, entertains values, in connection with other individuals [...]. (Mohanty 82-83)

The individual self sometimes loses himself in his commitments, disregarding his egoistic impulses of tension reduction, pleasure and pride, as reflected in the self in *The Magus* and *The French Lieutenant's Woman*. Extending step by step in the precincts of the self, he ultimately identifies himself with the maximum standards that can be comprehended. The authentication of his values stem from the concord in his own self and his real being. Therefore can we situate in the works of Fowles, a second self, one that speaks to tell the meaning, the obstacles encountered, the results obtained, and the remaining problems solved? Probably this self is situated in the field of the already existing or yet-to-appear impending situation. As Fowles records in his diaries:

The permanent mystery of my life since *The Collector* is that I don't feel (in any except one way) happier or more fulfilled. We have money enough now, freedom to live where we like and do what we like. I have one of the great blessing of my life-no one is my master. I am completely my own. But I don't feel happier ... except in one way...That is in writing...More and more I have a sense of immortality. (Warburton 246)

The mannerisms of Fredrick, Nicholas, Henry Breasley, Mrs Poulteny, Lily or even Sarah and **Alison at times may be loathsome**, but that cannot be a final impression, "there is no impression constant and variable"(Mohanty 77). The study attempts to arrive at a comfortable and credible mode of situating the self, and solving the mysteries of the mind and consciousness, that John Fowles tries to locate in his fiction and non-fiction, in the rich sensation of beingness, and in its transient apprehension, which nourishes his own self:

One is of intense nowness, the other of realizing that you are (oneself) alone, in your individuality, are infinitely fortunate to experience...It is being, being, being...a perpetual miracle...a sudden nakedness, a knowing of oneself laid bare [...] . (WH 423)

Now at seventy-nine, Fowles scans his past, no longer trusting his brain, but still laying emphasis on situating his intimate feelings, wanting to share them with his readers:

I should like to try to give some of my feelings about the cruise, as I tend to think of the experience of living on this planet...There have been some descriptions of

the ‘cruise’ in all my novels...I’d like this tangled nest of memories and thought to be read in association with that. (WH 408)

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