



A Psychological Epistemic Deception: Julian Barnes “The Sense Of An Ending”

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Introduction

This article discusses the representation of psychological deception in Julian Barnes’*The Sense of an Ending*. Deception is one of the most important themes in postmodern novels. The title of Julian Barnes novel “*The Sense of an Ending*” is taken from an influential study Frank Kermode’s “*The Sense of an Ending: The Studies in the Theory of Fiction*.” The novel was published by Jonathan Cape in 2011 and it is also adapted as a movie. Julian Barnes had an interest on time and memory then how time changed everything into a beautiful memory and what memory has done to the time. The novel was awarded the Man Booker Prize because it created great impact among the readers and one of the judges from the Man Booker has said that *The Sense of an Ending* was a “beautifully written book”. The panel members said that book “Spoke to humankind in the 21st century” and the title justified the spirit of the novel.

The Sense of an Ending was written in a brief and elegant style which sacrificed neither poignant emotion nor realistic depiction of events, while fascinating the reader in a story that spans a lifetime of experience. A profound profile said about person’s experiences on memory, repression, and self deception, painstakingly portrayed from his own point of view. Boyd Tonkin comments in a reviews of *The Sense of an Ending* in *Independent*: ““Quietly mesmerizing . . . A slow burn, measured but suspenseful, this compact novel makes every slyly crafted sentence count . . . The concluding scenes grip like a thriller—a whodunit of memory and morality, and one which detonates a minor, private apocalypse.” (Penguin). It is a profound psychological outline of one man’s experience of memory, repression and self-deception, meticulously portrayed from his own point of view.

The Sense of an Ending, a famous novel is narrated by Tony Webster. It has two sections in which the first part illustrates the early life of Tony Webster. He fell in love with Veronica Mary Elizabeth Ford. On his visit to her house, he was ill-treated by the family members for carrying a huge suitcase. Later, misunderstanding and problems in their life resulted in their abandoning the relationship. In spite of the split in their relationship they had casual sex. This failure in her relationship forced Veronica to love

Adrian who later committed suicide for reasons that remain mysterious to Tony till the revelation at the end of the novel. Tony came to know the tragic end of Adrian through his friend Alex. Finally Tony got married to Margaret. later he divorced her and started living a solitary life.

The second part narrates about receiving a letter from Veronica's mother in which she mentioned about a document, an amount of 500 pounds and a diary used by Adrian. Finally, Veronica met Tony after a long time due to Tony's continuous requests. At their crucial meeting, she handed over an important letter which was sent by him in his early days. He felt sorry for his mistakes after reading the letter thoroughly. Tony carrying his emotions, entered into a pub and saw a mentally disabled boy. His appearance suggested that he was born to Veronica and Adrian but the truth was revealed by the care taker of the boy that the mentally challenged boy was brother of Veronica. "There is accumulation. There is responsibility. And beyond these, there is unrest. There is great unrest" (Barnes 150). Tony ends the novel expressing that he cannot possibly know or understand much more about this story, and also cannot understand the extent to which he really must feel responsible. He feels only great unrest.

Self-deception and Existential Progression are the core themes of this novel. Deception means something intended to deceive, therefore Self-deception means deceiving oneself. In this novel "The Sense of an Ending" Tony, the protagonist deceives himself as a peaceful person and he believe that he has "an instinct for survival, self-preservation" (Barnes 42). Veronica said that Tony was a coward to face the world because he was protecting himself from troubles. The novel represents existentialist ideas with Adrian's philosophical ideas. One of the famous writers and critic Camus said that suicide was the only philosophical question. "Adrian had read Camus and Nietzsche" (Barnes 10, 11). Adrian was an existentialist who committed suicide at a very young age. Even his way of attempting suicide is also significant in a philosophical sense. In the conscious state, he explicitly planned and performed his suicide attempt. Thus these are the core themes explained in the main chapter.

Biography of Julian Barnes

As per the research requirements of the post graduate studies on the chosen topic, the researcher hereby presents the following biographical details of the chosen author "Julian Barnes". Julian Patrick Barnes emerged as a famous literary critic in English Literature. He was curious about the past and passionate intelligent characters and thereby he was able to bring out many novels including *The Sense of an Ending*. Julian Barnes is a contemporary English writer. In 1946, Barnes was born in Leicester, England. His parents were French teachers. From 1957 to 1964, he educated at the City of London School and graduated Modern Language at Magdalen College Oxford. After the graduation Barnes secured the job as a lexicographer in oxford English dictionary supplement for three years. In 1977, he started his career as a reviewer and literary editor for the new

statesman and the *New Review*. From 1979 to 1986, he also worked as a television critic, initially in the *New Statesman* and then in *Observer*.

Barne's first novel "Metroland" was published in 1981 which won the Somerset Maugham Award. The novel dealt with the theme of idealism and sexual fidelity and had the three part structure that is a common recurrence in Barnes' work. Before *She Met Me*, his second novel features a darker narrative. His famous novel "Flaubert's Parrot" won two special awards Geoffrey Memorial Prize (1985) and Prix Medicis (1986). His novels *Flaubert's Parrot*, *England, England*, and *Arthur & George* were shortlisted for the Booker Prize. The novel *The Sense of an Ending* (2011) was awarded the Man Booker Prize. The novel *The Sense of an Ending* was his eleventh novel, which in 2011 was also awarded the European Litertuuprijs and David Cohen Prize for Literature. Barnes also wrote detective novels under the pen name of his wife Dan Kavanagh.

Background of the Study

The thesis *Law, History and Literature as Narratives in The Sense of an Ending* by Samuel Kulvete explores how Tony's personal narrative constructs the novel *The Sense of an Ending*. The thesis contains three chapters: prologue, discussion, and conclusion. This bachelor thesis presents the intersection of law, history and literature. Kulvete introduced the term "the fantasy space of the trial" in this paper for a particular interest that applies to situations in which literary characters imagine themselves in hypothetical courtroom spaces (25). Law, history, literature are all constructs receiving social support that provide a method for ordering the difficulties and uncertainties of the human experience.

The PhD thesis titled *The use of the Unreliable Narrator in Postmodernist British Novel: Ian McEwan's Atonement (2001) and Julian Barnes' The Sense of an Ending (2011)* projects the subject matter of unreliable narrator as narrative in chosen postmodernist novels. This thesis presents the comparative analyses of two novels. This research work find out the purpose of postmodernist writer making use of such literary technique in their literary texts and this will help to trace the borders between the postmodernist theory and unreliable narrator. The research work looks for a comparative analyse of two literary texts: Ian Mcewan's *Atonement* and Julian Barnes' *The Sense of an Ending* in order to show the similarity of the two narrators and their differences and concern the narrators' types and functions. In the two novels the narrators are aged persona and their memories contribute to unreliability.

The Bachelor thesis *The Theme of Memories in Kazuo Ishiguro's Never let me go And Julian Barnes The Sense of an Ending* aims to analyse the theme of memories in the selected novels *Never let me go* by Kazuo Ishiguro and *The Sense of an Ending* by Julian Barnes. Smarkov examines how the theme of memory is incorporated in the storyline and discusses the unreliable narrations of the novels (3). The narrators are Kathy and Tony Webster. The thesis contains two parts: theoretical part and practical part. Theoretical part focuses on memories from psychological perspective on the nature of memories,

unreliable narrator. The practical part analyse the theme of memories in the selected novels.

Description of the topic

This study presents the psychological perspective. Psychology is a scientific study of mental processes and behaviourism. The term psychology was first come across in philosophical books of 16th century. It was created from two Greek words 'Psyche' (soul) and 'logia' (study of). The two major Greek philosophers, Plato and Aristotle were more interested in psychology. According to Aristotle, he made assumptions out of observation regarding human behaviour. During the 17th century, the French philosopher Rene Descartes suggested the concept of dualism in which the mind and body exist as two separate entities. Descartes supposed that the interaction between the mind and body created the experience of reality.

In the late 19th century Sigmund Freud advanced his theories about workings of the human psyche, its formation, its organisation. Freud wrote "The Interpretation of Dreams" in which he addressed the fundamental concepts of psychoanalysis about human mind and to describe the conscious and unconscious mind, Freud classified the human psyche into three parts: the id, the superego and the ego (Dobie 57). The psychoanalysis feature in the novel *The Sense of an Ending* is Id, which is the repository of the libido; the source of our psychic energy and our psychosexual desires gives us our vitality. Because the id is always trying to satisfy its hunger for pleasure, it operates without thoughts of consequences, anxiety. As Freud described it, the id strives "to bring about the satisfaction of the instinctual needs subject to the observance of the pleasure principle" (Dobie 57). In the novel, Tony is keen to satisfy his id at all times. Oedipus complex also a feature of the novel, Adrian had a relationship with his girlfriend Veronica's mother Sarah and had a child this is a kind of Oedipus complex. The novel dealt with defense mechanism which the protagonist Tony deploys certain defense mechanism in order to protect himself from the feelings of anxiety. Eros and thanatos is the main element in the novel and Eros drive for life instinct and pleasure and basic instinct for sex hunger and thirst. Eros and Thanatos applied in the life of Robson and Adrian.

Epistemic is what is related to knowledge. Epistemology derives from a Greek word episteme ("knowledge") and logos ("reason"), making it a branch of philosophy that deals with the theory of knowledge. In English, the term epistemology was introduced by the Scottish philosopher James Frederick Ferrier. Epistemology is the theory of knowledge, especially with regard to its methods, validity and scope, and the distinction between justified belief and opinion. In analyzing the concept of knowledge, epistemologists seek to recognize the essential and defining constituents of knowledge. The standard analysis of knowledge comes from Plato's *Thaetetus* and proposes that knowledge is a justified true belief.

Deception word comes from the Latin de meaning "from" and capere, meaning "to take." Deception is the act of hiding the truth, especially to get an advantage. Various

studies demonstrate that the common person lies several times a day and even honest people practice deception. Deception is not always an outward facing act. Self deception is a kind of deception. Self deception involves convincing oneself of a truth so that one cannot disclose any self-knowledge of the deception. In the novel *The Sense of an Ending*, Tony involves self-deception he claims that he is “peaceable” (Barnes 35, 42) and that he has “achieved a state of peaceableness, even peacefulness” (Barnes 68). In the novel, after a course of time his deception revealed by letter which once he had written to Adrian and Veronica.

Thematic Analysis

Self-deception is one the main theme in the novel *The Sense of an Ending*. Individuals form their identities by their own perspective. Self-deception helps to evade them so they could defend themselves. In the novel *The Sense of an Ending*, Tony used self-deception as self-defence for protecting himself. According to self-deception, Tony deceives himself to enact as a peaceful person and peaceable life. “Indeed, I didn’t recognise that part of myself from which the letter came. But perhaps this was simply further self deception. At first, I thought mainly about me, and how- what- I’d been: chippy, jealous and malign” (Barnes 97). Once he received a letter from Veronica which Tony had sent to Veronica and Adrian earlier. After reading the letter he learns that how harsh it was and he is shocked about his younger self.

Existentialism is a movement in philosophy and literature that emphasizes individual existence, freedom and choice. In 19th century, Existentialism was developed by Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard and the German Philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. It is based on the view that humans define their own meaning in life, and try to make rational decisions despite existing in an irrational. Barnes “*The Sense of an Ending*” novel clearly expressed the theme of existentialism associated with the two drives: life-instinct ‘Eros’ and death-instinct ‘Thanatos’. In the novel, Adrian had an interest for Albert Camus and his philosophies. “But now Adrian’s arrival dislodged Alex from his position- or rather, gave us another choice of philosopher....., Adrian had read Camus and Nietzsche” (Barnes 9). Tony and his other friends depended upon Adrian whom became the philosopher and guide of the group. The analysis of the two instincts and their association to existentialism is presented and extended upon in this research.

Significance of the study

This study deals with the importance of self-deception in the novel *The Sense of an Ending*. In the society people deceive themselves by saying that they lead in a peaceful life. It also reflects Tony’s character who forced to disturb his self-image which only deceives him into a peaceable person and lives in a peaceful life. Through this research it reveals that people are unknowingly deceiving themselves in their life. Self-deception is a reflection which arises in the society and people are too cowardly to face the problems in their life.

Review of Literature

A literature review is an overview of particular topic and it is a comprehensive summary of previous research on the topic. This kind of review surveys scholarly articles, books and other sources relevant to particular areas of research. This research work aims to investigate the elements of self-deception in Julian Barnes' *The Sense of an Ending*. The novel reflects the psychological perspective and how people deceive themselves knowingly or unknowingly. People are afraid to face reality so they deceive themselves in the society.

Importance of Literature Review

The review of the previous literature is essential to understand the research work and to accomplish those Reviews of journals, articles, books, papers presented in conferences which play a great role in finding substantial relevant information and eliminating the weaknesses, if any in the research. A good literature review demonstrates that the field is known to us and it also justifies the reason for the research. It is the thing which assesses, compares, contrasts and connects different books, research articles, and other appropriate sources related to the study and it also helps to compress, appraise and synthesize the substance of external sources. Literature review helps compare and contrast the existing information in the area under exploration, identifies strengths and flaws in the preceding works that provides the background within which to place the study, identifying the gaps that exist in literature

Memory

Memory refers to the processes that are used to store, retain, and later retrieve information. Some articles presented the theme of memory in the novel *The Sense of an Ending*. M. Palani Kumar's articles presented the memory of distortion in Julian Barnes' *The Sense of an Ending* and Salman Rushdie's *Midnight Children* which in turn alter, fade, and undergo transformation in the course of time. Both novels narrate their individual history and both narrators are aware of their faulty memory. Palani Kumar interprets faulty or false memory has led both their individual history and narrative imperfect thereby making their very "self" imperfect (67). Another article focuses on the theme of responsibility and memory to focus on narration in the novel *The Sense of an Ending* which they interpret as the meditation on the distorted memories and those memories have strong impact on the narration of a narrator (Naz and Larik 1). The misleading memories impact on the narrator significantly. It creates the narrator unreliable and leaves the narrator helpless.

Unreliable Narrator

Unreliable narrators are character whose telling the story is not completely precise or credible due to problems with the character's mental state or maturity. In the novel *The Sense of an Ending*, Tony is an unreliable narrator as Houari presented in her thesis. She has done comparative studies of Ian McEwan's *Atonement* and Julian Barnes' *The Sense of an*

Ending. Rayhane interprets “Tony a fallible narrator as he can be said to be a reliably unreliable narrator, which is different from McEwan’s Briony” (99). Julian Barnes’ narrator differs from McEwan’s storyteller in terms of his nature as being unreliable.

This is an attempt of research papers to examine and analyse “The Sense of an Ending” novel through the scholarly papers.

The article Critical Review of Julian Barnes The Sense of an Ending and focuses of the novel which has full of mysteries, memory and self-deception. The novel deals two genres, the pace thriller and bildungsroman. Tariq explains that he tries to recall his past and whether he can remember it accurately or enough (2). The novel, The Sense of an Ending is a title which begins to swim before the readers’ eyes. Middle aged narrator, Tony who is thinking things over again and again. It has double ambiguity, the “Ending” can be taken to be death itself or the way various things turn out, because the sense of an ending is both, the premonition of death and of the fact that life is less and less, likely to change radically towards its end as one gets older and older.

James Dalrymple’s paper The Sense of an Ending by Julian Barnes: a ‘forensic memoir’ which focuses on the novel and it seeks to subvert the convention of detective story and its promise of explicative closure. In the novel Tony plays a detective role in analysing his memories and he tries to resolve the bequest and Adrian’s death. This paper narrates that Julian Barnes is famous for the detective genre because he has written four crime novels. So Barnes narrates Tony character in detective genre. Dalrymple compares The Sense of an Ending narrator with some novels narrator like Sherlock Holmes’ Doctor Watson, Edgar Allan Poe’s The purloined Letter (5, 6). And the novel has an element of Oedipus myth. These are interpretations which are describes in this paper.

Memory in Julian Barnes’ The Sense of an Ending and Salman Rushdie’s Midnight’s Children the article explains the unreliability of memory, narrative technique, and narration. There are some common elements in these writers and text. Both writers are belonging to the contemporary postmodern writers and both of them won the Booker Prize. Both the novels are narrated from the person point of view. This paper has done the comparative studies between Julian Barnes’ The Sense of an Ending and Salman Rushdie’s Midnight’s Children. The characters of these novels are narrated the imperfections of their memory and they are well aware of the drawbacks in their narration (Kumar 67). However, in spite of its imperfections, they prefer their own version of history or their own memory. This paper concludes that both the novels present narratives.

The article Analysis of the Protagonist’s Unreliable Chronicle with the Misleading Memory but with the sense of responsibility in Barnes’ novel The Sense of an Ending presents theme of responsibility to focus on narration. The protagonist of the novel Tony Webster, who considers himself peaceable, confronts the shocking facts which take him aback. His distorted memory challenges the authenticity of his narration. This misleading memory’s impact on the narrator comes significantly. It makes the

narration unreliable and leaves the narrator helpless. Memory plays an important theme in the chronicles of English literature (Naz and Larik 1). This article attempts to study the role of malleability of memory in terms of uncertainty. In the novel, part one during their school days the words 'accumulation' and 'responsibility' occurred. In conclusion, the novel *The Sense of an Ending* is a meditation on the distorted memory and those memories have a strong impact on the narration of the narrator. This article shows an honest narrator, with a sense of responsibility.

The Ph.D thesis *The Use of Unreliable Narrator in Postmodernist British Novel: Ian McEwan's Atonement (2001) and Julian Barnes' The Sense of an Ending (2011)* examines the novels of Ian McEwan and Julian Barnes. The thesis is divided into four chapters. Chapter one describes the postmodern literature and types of narrators and then it gives the overall description of postmodernism and narration as a theoretical framework. The initial chapter presents the exploration of theory of postmodernism associated with its salient aspects that are closely related to the literary technique of unreliable narrator. It also shed light upon the types of narrators.

The second chapter "The Use of Unreliable Narrator in Ian McEwan's *Atonement*" which analyses the protagonist of the novel, Briony's unreliability as young and old and analyses how memory is contributing in increasing the narrator's unreliability. The third chapter mirrors the Barnes realisation as being a postmodernist literary work making use of the unreliable narrator. The fourth chapter discusses the comparative study of two postmodernist writers and the protagonist of the novels. Thus, the thesis ends with a conclusion and selective bibliography.

Academic Research

The thesis "The Theme of Memories in Kazuo Ishiguro's *Never Let Me Go* and Julian Barnes *The Sense of an Ending*" is divided into three parts. The first part discusses the psychological perspective of memories and the nature of memories then it also examines the unreliable narrator and presents the description of the author and it is the theoretical description of the thesis. In the second part Smarkov elaborates Narration and Memory in the novel *Never Let Me Go* which discusses the protagonist of the novel Kathy her memories and narrative technique (10). The main theme of the novel is to identify the characters who are searching for their identity, their place in the world. The novel "The Sense of an Ending" dealt with the themes of memory, narration, and self deception. The novel depicts about Tony's memories and how he deceived himself and thus the thesis ends with a conclusion and selective bibliography.

Self-Deception in the novel *The Sense of an Ending*

Deception is an act of deceiving others for instance act of deceiving can perceive while playing cards many people use deceit to trick their opponents. During political campaign political leaders use deceitful manifest to make the people believe. Business people use sly tactics to make money by betraying others and its form of deception. The scientific

theory of self-deception was developed by Robert Trivers. Robert Trivers suggests that denial and projection are basic psychological processes serving self-deception, though in slightly different ways (120). Self-deception is something deeper and more complicated, even paradoxical.

Self-deception History and Background

Self-deception is often discussed in the context of Sigmund Freud's famous psychoanalytic theory. Rather than being one of the traditional defence mechanisms, self-deception is thought to be necessary component of all defence mechanisms. Psychoanalytic theory is pessimistic about a person ability to ever recognize self-deception. A person should able to recognize his/her own self-deception at some point after it occurs- when the person has cooled down and has a more objective perspective on the issue.

Self-deception is a process of deceiving ourselves into accepting as true or valid what is false or invalid. In short, self-deception is a way to justify our false beliefs. Sometimes we avoid reality, deny the truth, and deceive ourselves. In many cases, we can see the world the way we want and not the way it is. Self-deception raises basic questions about the nature of belief and the relationship of belief to thought, desire, and will. It has long been the subject of speculation. Self-deception was not discovered only in the last decade. Plato used the concept, speaking of how uncomfortable it is if the deceiver is not even one step away from us, self-deception must lead to the greatest evil. Self-deception implies irrationality. People cling to a positive illusion about themselves, in the face of conflicting evidence. Self-deception is an old topic. Classical philosophers, beginning with Aristotle and St. Augustine, dealt with it extensively, focusing especially on the connection between self-deception, morality, and emotions. Many authors deal with the subject of self-deception in their works. There are many examples in literature such as the character of Jay Gatsby in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. For example, the Arbinger Institute's book *Leadership and Self-Deception* deals with the subject of self-deception. In fact, self-deception determines one's experience in every phase of life.

Self-deception is one of the main themes in the novel *The Sense of an Ending*. In the novel "The sense of an ending", Tony maintains a positive image and he deceive himself by saying he is in the state of peace ableness. "You can probably guess that I'm putting off telling you the next bit. All right: Adrian said he was writing to ask permission to go out with Veronica" (Barnes 40, 41). After Tony broke up with Veronica, he received a letter from Adrian asking permission to go out with Veronica.

Tony was shocked and he was annoyed with Veronica's behaviour but still he pretend to show that he did not mind at all. Tony wrote a reply to Adrian. "I enjoyed the bit about his moral scruples..... I also liked hypocrisy of a letter whose point was not just to tell me something I might not found out anyway"(Barnes 41). Tony self deceptively believes that Adrian and Veronica are hypocrites and betrayers, while he is a victim. Thus he has reason to condemn and punish. Tony avoids people and things that might remind

him Veronica and Adrian. Even after replied to Adrian, Tony burns Adrian letter and decides that Veronica and Adrian are “out of his life forever” (Barnes 43). After received the news of Adrian’s suicide, Tony did not visit Adrian family and Veronica. Tony tries to obliterate Veronica from his life story. Barnes points out that:

I did slightly odd thing when I first met Margaret. I wrote Veronica out of my story. I pretended that Annie had been my first proper girlfriend. I know most men exaggerate the amount of girls and sex they’ve had...The odder part was that it was easy to give this version of my history because that’s what I’d been telling myself anyway. I viewed my time with Veronica as a failure- her contempt, my humiliation- my expunged it from the record. I had kept no letters, and only a single photograph, which I hadn’t looked at in ages. (69)

When Tony met Margaret, he pretended that Annie had been his first proper girlfriend and hides his relationship with Veronica. After two years of marriage, Tony told Margaret the truth. To live in a state of peace, Tony banishes himself from the people and things related to Adrian and Veronica.

After forty years Tony received a letter from Veronica’s mother Sarah saying that she had left five hundred pound and Adrian’s diary to him. But the diary was in the hands of Veronica. She did not give Tony the whole diary of Adrian rather she gave the single page of the diary and copy of a letter which he had written forty years ago. Barnes stated: Dear Adrian- or rather, Dear Adrian and Veronica (hello, Bitch, and welcome to this letter), Well you certainly deserve one another and I wish you much joy (95). When the copy of Tony’s letter appears on the scene, the reader learns it contained more than what Tony described and in the letter Tony calls Veronica as bitch.

The letter brought a tornado into Tony's life and opened the dust for many years to remember the truth. The truth was to prove that Veronica was a hypocritical woman, because Tony wrote a reply letter to Adrian as revenge in cruel words and suggested Adrian meet Veronica's mother Sarah. Tony assumes they'll split up and after that; You will be "left with a lifelong bitterness that will poison your subsequent relationships". "Even her own mother warned me about her" (Barnes96). Tony chose revenge and curse, but in his memory, he believed he had written a letter to Adrian that was full of blessings. But the letter is full of insults and bleak prospects for their future. The letter also shows Tony how those memories that did not fit his self-perception have disappeared or changed.

I reread this letter several times. I could scarcely deny its authorship or its ugliness. All I could plead was that I had been its author then..... Indeed, I didn't recognise that part of myself from which the letter came. But perhaps this was simply further self deception. At first, I thought mainly about me, and how- what- I'd been: chippy, jealous and malign. (Barnes 97)

After reading that letter Tony realise how he was “chippy, jealous and malign” (Barnes 97). This is an act of self deception. Tony deceives himself and he hides his evil self.

Tony learns that how he lost his life and he is “unable to learn much from the few lessons life provided me (him) with” (Barnes 99). From the letter Tony realises his act of self-deception. “I began to feel a more general remorse- a feeling somewhere between self-pity and self-hatred- about my whole life. All of it. I had lost the friends of my youth. I had lost the love of my wife. I had abandoned the ambitions I had entertained” (Barnes 99, 100). Tony feels self pity and self hatred about his whole life and guilt about himself. He thinks that he had lost his friends of his adolescence and lost the love of his wife.

Tony asked about Veronica parents through email and asked “was her father still alive?”(Barnes 110) then he added that “I’d met them only once, I had good memories, Well, that was fifty percent true. I didn’t really understand why I asked these questions” he pretends himself as something was normal. Earlier he said that he had worst memories during his visits to Veronica’s family and he himself said that was fifty percent true. He intentionally portrays himself as good person this also an act of Self-deception.

Tony has a selective memory regarding his relationship with Veronica. In the first part Tony tells that Veronica refuses to dance with him and she despises her record collection. But in the second part old Tony remembers that Veronica invited him to dance and play his pop records. He recalled during his vacation at Veronica's house that his father mystified him by talking about the church of San Michele and the Café Royal, but Tony reconnects to this and when old Tony Google searches for them, he finds that they had never been therethese buildings (Yuan 78). Tony also keeps the information that on the second night she walks by his room and kissed him. In front of the family, she remains affectionate towards him. Her thoughts had been selective in which she is cold, arrogant and her father and brother are dismissive. He is fooled by having an immoral thought about Veronica and his selective thinking helps him to pin the blame for his breakup with Veronica. In his memory Tony is a decent person and he thought that Veronica took offense at him, but she doesn't do anything to him. In the novel, Tony lost everything due to his self-deception.

Internal narrators can tell a mixture of knowledge, lies, self-deception, delusion and glaring mistakes. A self-deceptive narrator does not clearly articulate the truth, but provides a story made as cohesive and natural as possible and confirming the obvious facts as closely as possible. But self-deception is an unstable mental phenomenon; its instability arises from the desire to hide and reveal the truth at the same time. Thus, self-deceptive narrators often tell their stories in a vague and contradictory manner. They set up a narrative identity, which recognizes past actions, but rejects them to the past self and commits them to the present self. The storytelling process can lead to changes in self-knowledge and self-image.

The Sense of an Ending, even as Tony reveals his original letter to Adrian and the truth behind Adrian's death, remains difficult to restore causes and effects, as as a character narrator he can give a limited perspective. But his narrative speech is given a clear manifestation of his thoughts and feelings. Based on his memory, the earlier part of his narrative can hardly be a reliable account of what happened, but it is a true reflection of his understanding and feelings about himself, Adrian, Veronica and his family. The vagueness

and contradiction of his speech reflect his struggle between deceit through certain verbal patterns and narrative characteristics.

Tony tends to use a single verbal pattern to state that his account is true to his memory rather than the actual facts. He cannot assert that what he remembers is equivalent to what happened. For example:

- If I can't be sure of the actual events any more, I can at least be true to the impressions those facts left. (Barnes 4)
- Was this their exact exchange? Almost certainly not still, it is my best memory of their exchange. (Barnes 19)
- Actually, to be true to my own memory, as far as that's ever possible (and I didn't keep this letter either)... (Barnes 41)
- Again, I must stress that this is my reading now of what happened then Or rather, my memory now of my reading then of what was happening at the time. (Barnes 41)

This design indicates that Tony tries to assure the reliability and accuracy of his narration, more to himself than to the narrator. It also mentions that Tony cannot remember his past events in an unbiased way. His memory is a mixture of facts and his interpretations. This design manifests his conflicting desire to conceal and reveal the truth at the same time. It is a sign to his self deception. Another verbal model, which is used more frequently, is that Tony doubts or even denies the reliability of his memory. Such a pattern is used especially when it is likely that Tony has misunderstood others, misjudged a situation, or is trying to project his own issues or emotions onto others. For example, when he recounts the weekend he spent with Veronica's family, which is more posh and whom he considers deaf, he wonders whether or not he was looked down upon by them:

- I was so ill at ease that I spent the entire weekend constipated: this is my principal factual memory. The rest consists of impressions and half memories which may therefore be self-serving...(Barnes 27,28)
- This ought to have made me feel accepted, but it seemed more as if they has grown tired of me... Perhaps this was mere paranoia. (Barnes 29)
- The Fords had been posher than the Webster back then... Or was his mere Paranoia on my part? (Barnes 73)

In addition, when he recalls his argument with Veronica about whether their relationship is heading, he also doubts his memory:

- Or have I just remembered it this way make it seem so, and to apportion blame? If asked in a court of law what happened and what was said, I could only attest to words 'heading', stagnating' and 'peaceable' I'd never thought of myself as peaceable- or its opposite - until then I would also swear to the truth of the biscuit tin; it was burgundy red, with the Queen's smiling profile on it. (Barnes 35)

After Tony reconnects with Veronica, he recalls that Veronica has seen Seven Bore with him, which is contradictory to his previous memory that he sees it by himself. But he immediately doubts his memory and imagines that he is questioned in a court of law:

“At least, that’s how I remember it now. Though if you were to put me in the court of law, I doubt I’d stand up to cross-examination very well. ‘And yet you claim this memory was suppressed for forty years?’ ‘Yes.’ And only surfaced just recently?’ ‘Yes.’ ‘Are you able to account for why it surfaced?’ ‘Not really’. ‘Then let me put it to you, Mr Webster?’ ‘But we don’t love many people in this life. One, two, three? And sometimes we don’t recognise the fact until it’s too late. Except that it isn’t necessarily too late. Did you read that story about late flowering love in an old people’s home in Barnstaple?’ ‘Oh please, Mr Webster, spare us your sentimental lucubrations. This is a court of law, which deals with fact. What exactly are the facts in the case?’ I could only reply that I think - I theorise - that something - something else - happens to the memory over time.”(Barnes 119,120)

Tony's doubt and denial of his memory demonstrates his unconscious struggle between the compulsion to confess and the tendency to disguise himself. But his prosperity for self-deception appears to be stronger than his desire to disrupt his self-image. After receiving the bequest from Veronica's mother, he is perplexed and tries to search his memory for "any moment, incident or remark which might have seemed worthy of recognition or reward"; but it is in vain, because his memory has become more and more a mechanism which reiterates apparently true data with little variation. "History is that certainty produced to the point where the imperfections of memory meet documentation of insufficiencies" (Barnes 17). The rapid passage of time, the lack of documentation, and the solid defense mechanism keep Tony from emerging from the haze of his memory. But he doesn't fully believe in her memory. The verbal pattern that he doubts or denies the reliability of his memory also implies the instability of his disappointment.

Regarding the narrative characteristics, first, the narration is fragmentary. The fragmentation of the narrative serves to hide something. The narration of events tends to be incomplete and vague. Some events are not observed by Tony, some are "forgotten" and some are distorted. For example, at the beginning of the narration Tony lists six fragments that he remembers in no particular order, and the last is "the bathwater has long since become cold behind a locked door" (Barnes 3). The scene tells of Adrian's suicide, which Tony did not witness "but what you remember is not always the same as what you witnessed" (Barnes 3). Tony only hears how he killed himself, and he doesn't know why. He imagined the scene because it is an important event in his life. The fragmentation of the narrative helps cover up his destructive behaviors, fool Tony himself, and confuse the reader. Tony's deception and his true self-image can be seen through the details of his storytelling.

Second, the storytelling is rambling. The narration of the past and the narration of the present are intertwined. This pattern is more evident in the latter part of the

narration. For example, the narration of the old Tony's quest for Veronica's mother's legacy is interwoven with the narration of young Tony's dates with Veronica. It breaks the chronological order and creates a distance between the narrator's multiple memories. In addition, the narration of events is constantly interrupted by the narrator's monologue. The disjointed structure also manifests the instability of Tony's self-deception.

The verbal pattern that Tony uses to assure the reliability of his narration, which is true to his memory rather than actual facts, and the one that he uses to doubt or even negates the reliability of his memory indicate Tony's conflicting desire to conceal and reveal at the same time. Moreover, the narrative characteristics that the narration is fragmented, disjointed also manifests the instability of Tony's self-deception. Tony has been a self-deceiver. But he is also a confessor. After he confronts the reality, he chooses to reveal hidden, negative part of his self-image and confesses his evil intentions and destructive behaviours. His narration presents vividly how he has deceived himself and how he is forced to face it. The process of narrating his struggle, but it eventually leads to revelation. By narrating, Tony confesses his faults, reconstructs his self-image, and in the meantime admonishes the reader.

Tony is not entirely unaware of his weakness and bad intentions. But he was too cowardly to face them and change them. When confronted with problems, he tends to assign blame in order to evade his guilt and simulate a state of but "too much time has passed, too much damage has been done, to be forgiven (Barnes 99). He lost the chance to be a better man and to take responsibility.

Self-deception is common. It can be discerned everywhere in everyone. The only distinction lies in to what extent individuals deceive them. Self-deception helps individual defend against negative affects resulting from destructive behaviours, threatening thoughts or unpleasant feelings, but it also prevent individuals to undertake duties. Facing and knowing one requires courage and honesty. When individuals know themselves better, those are better prepared for shouldering responsibility and addressing problem.

Existential Progression in The Sense of an Ending

Existentialism is a term coined by Danish theologian and philosopher Soren Kierkegaard. According to Soren, Existentialism "is a rejection of all purely abstract thinking, of a purely logical or scientific philosophy; in short a rejection of absoluteness of the reason" (More 13). Existentialism is primarily 20th century philosophical movement it embraces various doctrine but centring on the analysis of individual existence. The word existence is a major key concept in Existentialism. It used in this philosophy in a particular sense. The existentialist uses existence to refer particularly to human existence. There is a common belief that only concrete thing can exist. Existentialists also support this view and describe a human being as a concrete individual capable of being. Existentialism insists that philosophy must relate to individual life and experience. The existential

philosopher focuses on the inner experience of individual life. The two main clues to begin philosophy must be borne in mind are one's own knowledge and experience.

Existence precedes essence

Existentialism believes in the personal experience of an individual. Thus it has been considered a philosophy of existence, a philosophy of affirmation and acceptance, and a rejection of the attempt to justify and think about existence. But this begs the question that human existence has an essence. The modern French existentialist Jean-Paul Sartre's famous adage being comes before essence, implies that there is no pre-defined essence of humanity except for what it creates itself. According to the existentialists, there is no prior idea of a thing's existence. The first thing is then visualized by the mind. Then first each topic is an existing topic.

Principles of Existentialism

1. Subjectivity:

The human being as a being is nothing and he will not be anything until he becomes what he makes himself. This is subjectivity which is the first principle of existentialism. Man, in fact, is a project possessing a subject life and before this projection nothing and before this projection of the self nothing exists. As given that existence precedes essence, it is only natural that the man be held responsible for what he is. This is the first effect of existentialism that it puts every man in control himself as he is, and places the whole responsibility for his existence upon his own shoulders. Thus Man is thus his own master and it also projects that man is free

2. Anxiety

Sartre observes that in choosing a thing and committing himself to it, man gets committed not only to himself but also to the humanity as a whole and he says, "In fashioning myself I fashion man". This leads to the state of anxiety that descends upon man as he realises that through his choice he is acting as a legislator deciding for the whole of mankind.

3. Nothingness

Heidegger introduces the term "nothingness" this term illustrates the kind of self and world understanding that emerges in anxiety called nothingness. Human existence thus shows as the nothingness of being, as a negation of every reality. Heidegger affirms that, "Human existence cannot have a relationship with being unless it remains in the midst of nothingness" (Existentialism). Man's entire existence is believed to be suspended between the two poles of nothingness- that before birth and after death.

4. Absurdity

The acceptance of nothingness leads to the concept of absurd which becomes a leitmotif in Sartre's opinion of existentialism. Absurd is mainly a state of alienation from the world. For existentialists, life is also an absurd: but human beings need it to make sense, to have

meaning and purpose. Knowing that they can make the meaning of our lives also creates a tension when it comes to the validity of those meanings. There is a kind of depressing absurdity to the prospect of committing our lives to values and meanings that people know they have invented it.

5. Death

The important issue with existentialism deals with death which is inevitable and inescapable. In a factual life, death is a distinctive and intrinsic, it's contradictory to exterior. An existentialist sees death as a decisive motivating power for existential effort. Death is one of the limit-situations for Man. Existential individual must be prepared to face death at any time

because he lives in such a way. Heidegger said "To freely accept death, to live in its presence, and to acknowledge that for it there is no substitute and into it one must go alone, is to escape from all illusions and to achieve genuine dignity and authentic existence" (Watts). Existentialists believed that after his physical life there is no other life except for the existentialists who believed that death may be the end of physical life but it leads to another kind of life i.e. ontological existence

These are the principles of existentialism. In these principles some of them are used in the novel *The Sense of an Ending*. Barnes novels have always been the exemplifications of existentialism and alienation. Existentialism is by far trying to find meaning in the meaningless existence. Man's refusal to embrace and accept disharmony and conflict intensifies his endless struggle with inner peace. This existentialist perspective sheds light on the different characters of Julian Barnes *The Sense of an Ending*. Tony's revisiting the past and searching for his friend Adrian's letter strengthen his alienation from the society. The term Absurdism has to articulate as a philosophy and it originated out of the fundamental discord between an individual's quest for meaning and identity in the meaninglessness of the universe. The novel reflects the absurdism and meaning in their lives appear from the formless chaos of the world. There is a close association of alienation, absurdism and existentialism to that of 'death' and with the philosophy of 'death' and the philosophy of 'love' co-exists. Julian Barnes' novels had been 'chronicles' of existentialism with the philosophy of 'death' being his prime objective. 'Death' is an interesting fact for Barnes so he highlights the mechanism of the psychology of 'death' on the people and how they deal with it. 'Death' is an insoluble question and is at the core of existence in this universe.

The novel *The Sense of an Ending* expresses the philosophy of existentialism. Among the four friends of Tony 'school days, Adrian was the most intellectual boy and he is different from whole students like odd one out in their class. Tony's narration about Adrian "His name was Adrian Finn, a tall, shy boy who initially kept his eyes down and his mind to himself" (Barnes 4). Even the teachers "were more interested in him than" (Barnes 4) the others. The group members they mocked the social construction. They hated their parents but Adrian did not hate his parents even his parents were separated. He lived by his principles. Adrian loved 'life', its ways and purpose. He had an interest for

Albert Camus and his philosophies “Adrian has read Camus and Nietzsche” (Barnes 9, 10). Adrian character can be analysed by those writers book he read. Nietzsche belongs to the school of existentialism and his philosophy of existentialism is “god is dead” in this novel reader could not able find that Adrian as a god believer. Adrian read Camus also and he is existentialist from that reader can found that Adrian is an existentialist. “Camus said that suicide was the only true philosophical question”- Adrian’s words. Adrian creates his own freedom and meaning in his life:

Previously Alex had been regarded as he philosopher among us. He had read stuff the other two hadn’t, and might, for instance, suddenly declare, ‘Whereof we cannot speak, thereof must we remain silent’. Colin..... But now Adrian’s arrival dislodged Alex from his position- or rather, gave us another choice of philosopher. (Barnes 9)

Before that, Alex was considered a philosopher among them. He had read things that the other two did not as much as Alex. But now Adrian's arrival pushed Alex out of his position, or rather, has given them another choice of a philosopher. He guided them and they all depended upon him.

Adrian commits suicide when Tony and his friends are left wondering the reason for the extreme step. Adrian’s love of Camus is paradoxical to his suicide. Even his way of killing himself is indicative in philosophical sense. Adrian killed himself as a conscious mental state which is planned and performed. Adrian suicide note of existential ideas following:

That life is a gift bestowed without anyone asking for it: that the thinking person has a philosophical duty to examine both the nature of life and conditions it comes with; and that if the person decides to renounce the gift no one asks for, it is moral and human duty on act on the consequences of that decision. There was practically a QED at the end. (Barnes 48)

Adrian words in the letter which this life is a gift given without anyone asking for it: that the thinking person has a philosophical duty to examine both the nature of life and the conditions with which it is connected and that if the person chooses to forego the gift that no one is asking for, it is a moral and human duty to respond to the consequences of that choice. Existentialism is a vital theme in Barnes’ subject matter details the existential crisis and nothingness of human life. Existential progression is well developed by Julian Barnes.

Eros and Thanatos

Eros and Thanatos word comes from Greek Mythology. Eros means god of love and desire. Thanatos means God of death. The novel ‘The Sense of an Ending’ elucidates the mechanism of two instincts of ‘Eros’ and ‘Thanatos’. Sigmund Freud makes use of these mythical figures to name the life and death instincts that co-exist within human psyche. All human instincts, according to Freud, fall into one of the two broad categories: Eros or the life instinct, Thanatos or the death instinct. These two forces fight each other, and their conflict and interaction determine the growth of individual life and culture.

Eros sometimes referred to as sexual instincts. The basic survival, pleasure, and reproduction are deal with life instincts. These instincts are significant for sustaining the life of the individual as well as the continuation of the species. While they are frequently called sexual instincts, these drives also include such things as thirst, hunger, and pain avoidance. The energy created by the life instincts is known as libido. Eros is associated with behaviours commonly associated with the life instinct include love, cooperation.

The goal of life is death proposed by Freud. He noted that people after experience a traumatic event (such as war), they often re-enact the experience. He concluded that people embrace an unconscious desire to die, but that this wish is largely tempered by the life instincts. In Freud's view, self destructive behaviour is an expression of the energy created by death instincts. When this energy is focussed outward onto others, it is expressed as aggression and violence.

Adrian Finn states of 'Eros' and 'Thanatos' even in his schooldays he is aware of the two drives. Adrian speaks up in the English period "Finn continued, as if it might not just be the thickies in the back row who didn't understand Greek. "Or love and death, if you prefer, the erotic principle...coming into conflict with the death principle" (Barnes 6). Adrian interprets that "Sex and death". Another incident replicates the theme when a student, Robson commits suicide after knowledge of his girlfriend's pregnancy. His libido forces him to seek pleasure and it strengths instinct of Eros in him. As he satisfies his id, his superego moves towards into play. His sense of ethics activates the death instinct and thus he commits suicide. Adrian comments on Robson's death, "Thanatos wins again" (Barnes 13). Robson's remorse made him commit suicide. "From the point of view of morality, the control and restriction of instinct, it may be said of the id that it is totally non-moral, of the ego that it strives to be moral and of the superego can be hyper-moral and then becomes as ruthless as only the id can be" (Freud 40). Robson Thanatos has gained much prominence from his superego and this primal instinct has won the conflict. In other words, the sense of guilt has made him commit suicide.

Tony is eager to satisfy his id at all times. His relationship with Veronica was kind of Eros. He wants to satisfy his physical pleasure with her but later he avoids her. So he escaped from Thanatos. "Thus the conflict between Eros and Thanatos in the psyche of Tony is exhibited" (Singh 223). Tony's Eros forces him to love Veronica and his Thanatos drags him to avoid and hate her. After many years of detachment from Veronica, still Tony has attraction towards her. He declares himself:

Another thing I realized: there was a mistake, or a statistical anomaly, in Margaret's theory of clear edged versus mysterious woman; or rather in the second part of it, about men being attracted to either one sort or the other. I'd been attracted to both Veronica and Margaret. (Barnes 92)

After break up with Veronica, Tony had an affair with Annie that relationship is clearly indicated his Eros. He never desires another serious relationship and he wants to satisfy his physical pleasure so he chooses Annie. Then he married Margaret, she is a simple woman with no air of mystery what makes him marry her. Yet theirs is not successful marriage.

Tony neither remains himself morality nor sticks himself to the societal norms and hence there is a little projection of his superego. Tony minds swing between Eros and Thanatos that is instinct of love and death. Tony's life instinct makes him to survive and he states that:

And that's life, isn't it? Some achievements and some disappointments. It's been interesting to me, though I... Not that I would have missed my own life for anything, you understand. I survived. 'He survived to tell the tale' – that's what people say, don't they? (Barnes 56)

Adrian's suicide remains mystery till the end of the novel. Tony became shocked after know the Adrian's suicide and Tony finds the reason of Adrian's suicide. Instead of getting involved with Veronica, Adrian had a relationship with Mrs. Sarah Ford, Veronica's mother and which resultant in Mrs. Sarah Ford's pregnancy.

Adrian faces a psychological dilemma and he felt guilt for his act which led him to commit suicide. In Adrian's diary he had wrote some mathematical accumulation Tony could not able to find this truth behind the formula:

Thus, how might you express an accumulation containing the integers b, a^1, a^2, s, v ? And then a couple of formula expressing possible accumulations. It was obvious now. The first a was Adrian; and other was me, Anthony- as he used to address me when he wanted to call me to seriousness. And b signified 'baby'. One born to a mother- 'The Mother'- at a dangerously late age. A child damaged as a result. Who was now a man of forty, lost in grief. And who called his sister Mary. I looked at the chain of responsibility. I saw my initial in there. I remembered that in my ugly letter I had urged to Adrian to consult Veronica's mother. (Barnes 149)

At the end of the narrative, Tony recognizes the identity of the 'disabled man' whom he had mistakenly thought as after Veronica's son from Adrian. Adrian Finn's illogical and adulterous relationship with Veronica's mother and behind the mathematical accumulation Tony finds the reality in the end of the novel. The reason for Adrian's suicide also becomes clear to Tony. The psychological conflict and dilemma are reflecting by Adrian and Robson's suicide.

Conclusion

Thus the novel illuminates the mechanism of 'Eros and Thanatos' their interconnection and their untidy collision in the form of human struggle. While Eros develops in Tony Webster, Sarah Ford, and Veronica, Thanatos controls Adrian and Robson. And the whole plot of the novel prominences unending fight between the Eros and Thanatos. Thanatos became more powerful in the novel. Julian Barnes well developed the instincts of Eros and Thanatos in the novel.

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