

# A COMPARATIVE EXAMINATION OF NO EXIT AND THE STRANGER: EXPLORING THE CONTRASTS BETWEEN EXISTENTIALISM AND ABSURDISM

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## INTRODUCTION

During the 19th century, Charles Darwin's theory of evolution had a significant impact on humanity. It questioned the existence of both humans and God. During this period, philosophy and religion remained largely out of the mainstream as science was still predominant. However, after the two world wars, humanity eventually became unstable and tragic. The impact of this theory on the literature of the different periods is significant. The survival of humans has been brought up as an important issue in studies conducted during that time (Gnanasekaran 73).

Additionally, this discourse resulted in the emergence of two significant schools of thought: Existentialism and Absurdism. According to Cuddon, the term Existentialism refers to the philosophy that concerns itself with the nature of existence (Cuddon 251).

The term Existentialism was first used by philosopher and dramatist Marcel Gabriel (Melanson, 2023). Philosophers like Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir are linked to this movement.

Existentialism, according to Kaufman, is a repudiation of all accepted systems of thinking and notion, as well as a discontent with the conventional, academic philosophy that ignores the intricacy of experience. Instead, Existentialism emphasizes the individual's responsibility for their actions and a refusal to escape from their unique existence (As cited by Senejani 15).

The philosophy of existentialism states that everyone is responsible for their actions and how they deal with the world. It is based on the idea that people change their essence as they grow older. According to existentialists, there is no objective truth. Instead, they believe that our personal decisions determine our perception of reality. They do not support concepts such as the idea that a good life is the result of honour and wealth. People should stop trying to change what has happened to them and accept whatever happens. Science is also doing an excellent job of making the world a better place. The philosophy of Existentialism states that each individual has the freedom to make their own nature (Aho, 2023).

According to Sartre, the fundamental choice a man makes is based on his previous experiences. He said that we make our decisions unconsciously (As cited by Flynn 12). There are many existentialists out there, but some of them are also "theists," such as Marcel, Jasper, and Kierkegaard. Others, such as Sartre, De Beauvoir, and Heidegger, were atheist philosophers. Nietzsche was an atheist.

The term absurdism is sometimes used to refer to a philosophy that is related to existentialism. It is often regarded as a subgroup or sub-type of the philosophy. In his 1942 essay, **The Myth of Sisyphus** Camus uses the term absurdism to refer to his philosophy. It is about the conflict between the search for meaning and the inability to find it in life (Das 37).

Authors like Albert Camus, Samuel Beckett, Franz Kafka, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, and Eugene Ionesco became well-known in the field of absurd literature and significantly influenced its growth.

The concept of Existentialism was introduced by Soren Kierkegaard, a Danish theologian and philosopher. According to Kierkegaard, Existentialism involves rejecting purely abstract and purely logical or scientific philosophies, essentially rejecting the idea of reason's absoluteness (Roubiczek 10).

According to Blackham, the concept of existentialism is a voice that expresses opposition to the absurdity of the concept of pure thought. It is a condemnation of the idea that the only thing that matters is the immanent nature of being. It also recalls the observer's journey from pure thought to conditioned thinking (Blackham 2).

### Sartre's Existentialist Philosophy

Jean Paul Sartre was born in 1905 in Paris. He was the child of a deceased naval officer, and in 1916, his mother got married to a man who Sartre despised. This caused him to feel dispossessed and abandoned, which eventually became the basis of his existentialist theory. After studying philosophy at Ecole Normale Supérieure, Sartre became acquainted with De Beauvoir, who was an intellectual and personal friend. His first book, **Nausea**, explores the absurdities of existence. He then wrote **Le Mur**, which is a collection of short stories that tackled themes such as sexuality, insanity, and human relationships. After World War II, he was taken prisoner by the German army and spent his time in prison. He also wrote Christmas plays for his fellow

inmates.

This dissertation paper will look at the following existentialist views in the play **No Exit**.

- The concept of essence precedes consciousness. It means that human existence first takes place before he or she begins searching for his or her essence in the world around him or her.
- All humans are free to live their lives according to their own desires.
- The concept of "bad faith" suggests that a person avoids his or her responsibility due to fear and anxiety (Senejani 23).
- The concept of being for oneself is related to one's subjectivity and reality. On the other hand, being in itself refers to the external world. (Mart 51)
- According to Nietzsche's proclamation that "God is dead," he argues that human nature is non-existent and there is no divine entity. (Mart 51)

### Camus' Absurdism

Camus was born in the Algerian town of Mondovi around 1913–1960. He came from a home where the majority of people were uneducated. During the First World War, his father passed away. Camus was among the smartest and most clever pupils of his day, and his instructors had a lot of admiration for him. He battled TB throughout his secondary education, which had an impact on his performance in class. Consequently, Camus got to the notion that "life is absurd" as a result of this encounter. He was awarded the Literature Nobel Prize in 1957. Camus is regarded as an existentialist, yet he preferred to refer to himself as an absurdist and rejected the label. His most significant literary accomplishments are **The Plague**, **The Stranger**, **The Myth of Sisyphus** and **Caligula**, and others.

Albert Camus defined absurdism as the tension between an individual's capacity to seek meaning and his ability to do so in an unreal world. He claims that man is constantly faced with the absurdity of the world around him. He states that he is aware of his need for happiness and reason. The absurd is produced by this conflict between the desire for explanation and the illogical silence of the universe. (King, 2019).

When a man looks for meaning in an aimless universe, Camus & Kierkegaard say he has three choices: to take a leap of faith, commit suicide, or accept absurdity (Roskowski 17). Camus has not favoured suicide or a leap of faith as realistic alternatives. Taking a different stance from Kierkegaard, he asserts that since only corporeal reality can be felt and touched, people ought to have faith in it since doing so is reasonable. Believing in something beyond our comprehension entails misleading the present. In **The Myth of Sisyphus**, Camus asserts that a man must take a leap of faith in order to acquire spiritual conviction, yet if life is ludicrous, whatever in it must also be absurd. He believes that the wisest course of action is to accept the fact that life is ludicrous and live one's life in light of this fundamental reality (Camus). Some of the absurdist ideas presented by Albert Camus include the denial of God, the feeling of solitude, pain, and freedom to choose (Ozyon. 89).

### RESEARCH QUESTION

This dissertation raises and aims to find the solution to the question- "How do **No Exit** and **The Stranger** provide contrasting perspectives on existentialism and absurdism, particularly in relation to the concepts of freedom, individuality, the meaninglessness of the world, and bad faith?"

This dissertation question aims to explore divergent viewpoints on existentialism and absurdism presented in **No Exit** and **The Stranger**. These two literary works are renowned for their philosophical underpinnings and offer valuable insights into the existential and absurd philosophies of the 20th century. The dissertation aims to investigate how Sartre and Camus portray and contrast the concepts of freedom, individuality, the meaninglessness of the world, and bad faith within their respective works. By analyzing these themes in the context of the characters and their interactions, the study aims to shed light on the distinct perspectives on existentialism and absurdism presented by the authors. Regarding freedom, the dissertation seeks to examine how Sartre and Camus portray the burden and responsibility that accompanies individual freedom. Sartre's existentialist viewpoint may emphasize the anxiety and existential dread that individuals experience when confronted with the weight of their choices. In contrast, Camus' absurdist perspective might challenge the notion of freedom by suggesting that the search for meaning in an inherently meaningless world is futile. The concept of individuality will be explored in relation to how Sartre and Camus present their characters. The study aims to examine how Sartre's existentialism values the authentic expression of one's true self, while Camus' absurdism questions the concept of individuality and explores themes of isolation and alienation. Furthermore, the dissertation aims to investigate how the two works address the meaninglessness of the world. Sartre's existentialism may acknowledge the absence of inherent meaning but highlight the individual's responsibility to create their own meaning through actions and choices. In contrast, Camus'

absurdism might argue that the search for meaning is inherently absurd and futile due to the lack of inherent purpose in the world. Lastly, the notion of bad faith, the self-deception or denial of one's freedom and responsibility, will be examined within the context of the two works. The dissertation seeks to analyze how Sartre and Camus address and critique the concept of bad faith, and how they explore the importance of confronting the reality of one's existence and making authentic choices. By delving into these themes and

contrasting the perspectives presented in **No Exit** and **The Stranger**, this dissertation aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of existentialism and absurdism in 20th-century literature, offering valuable insights into the human condition, individual freedom, and the search for meaning in an absurd world.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology adopted by the researcher for this dissertation paper is as follows-

1. **Literature Review:** The researcher will conduct a thorough review of existing literature on Existentialism, Absurdism, Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, and their respective works. This will involve examining scholarly articles, books, and critical analyses that discuss philosophical concepts, themes, and interpretations relevant to the research question.
2. **Textual Analysis:** The researcher will perform a detailed textual analysis of the plays **No Exit** and **The Stranger** and analyze the dialogue, characters, plot developments, and symbolic elements to identify instances where Existentialist and Absurdist themes and concepts are depicted. This analysis will involve close reading of the plays and extracting key passages or scenes that exemplify the philosophical ideas being explored.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Before penning his novels, **The Stranger** and **The Rebel**, Camus published an essay titled **The Myth of Sisyphus** in 1942 in which he laid out his case for absurdism. He cited the Greek mythological character Sisyphus as a prime instance of a ridiculous hero who is doomed to an absurd existence in the essay. Sisyphus was given the penalty of having to roll a stone up a hill and then watch it roll back down; this punishment would last for all of eternity. Sisyphus did not decide to terminate his life despite having to do this pointless and hopeless chore. Instead, he chose to accept and be happy with his strange existence (Camus, 1955).

The book chapter titled "No Way Out: Sartre's **No Exit** and 'Being-for-Others'" by Robert C. Solomon is part of the book "Dark Feelings, Grim Thoughts." The book explores various philosophical perspectives on dark emotions and negative thoughts. It delves into the exploration of human experiences related to negativity, suffering, and existential concerns. In the specific chapter "No Way Out," Solomon focuses on Jean-Paul Sartre's play **No Exit** and the concept of "Being-for-Others." **No Exit** is a renowned existentialist play that delves into themes of existential anguish and the nature of human existence. The play depicts three characters trapped in a room together, where they confront their own choices and the judgment of others. Solomon's analysis delves into Sartre's exploration of the concept of "Being-for- Others," which refers to the idea that our sense of self is constructed through the perceptions and judgments of others (Solomon, Chapter 2). This concept plays a significant role in Sartre's existential philosophy, emphasizing the interplay between individual freedom and the social context in shaping our identity.

Hilal Kaya in her article "A Comparative Study: Existentialism in **No Exit** by Jean Paul Sartre and **Shadowless** by Hasan Ali Toptaş" conducts a comparative analysis of the existential themes present in Jean Paul Sartre's play **No Exit** (1942) and Hasan Ali Toptaş's novel **Shadowless** (1995) using an intertextual and comparative approach. The article explores the existentialist themes and techniques employed in both works and considers them as postmodern texts. Before delving into the specific analysis of **No Exit** and **Shadowless** the author aims to discuss the tradition of existentialism in literature. This likely involves examining the historical context, key concepts, and influential figures within the existentialist movement as it relates to literature. By conducting a comparative study, Kaya seeks to

identify and explore the similarities and differences in how existentialist themes are manifested in both works. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of how these themes are interpreted and represented within different literary contexts.

M Adam Abdullah and Suryo Tri Saksono's article "Alienation in Albert Camus' **The Stranger**" focuses on the theme of alienation in Albert Camus' **The Stranger**. Alienation is a central theme in the novel, as the protagonist, Meursault, experiences a sense of detachment and disconnection from the social and emotional norms of society. The article delves into the exploration and analysis of Meursault's alienation in different aspects, such as his relationships with others, his indifference toward societal expectations, and the consequences he faces due to his perceived lack of conformity. It also examines how Camus uses Meursault's alienation to highlight existentialist ideas and critique societal conventions.

"The Importance of Perspective in **The Stranger** and **The Myth of Sisyphus**: The Absurdist's Need for Conscious Rebellion" by Riley Keaton Imlay explores the significance of perspective in Albert Camus' novel **The Stranger** and his philosophical essay **The Myth of Sisyphus**. The focus of the analysis is on the concept of the absurd and the absurdist's response to it. The paper examines how perspective shapes the experiences and actions of the characters in **The Stranger**, particularly the protagonist Meursault, who embodies the absurdist perspective. It discusses how Meursault's detachment and indifference to societal norms reflect the absurdist notion of existence devoid of inherent meaning. Drawing upon Camus' essay **The Myth of Sisyphus**, the analysis explores the idea of conscious rebellion in the face of the absurd. It discusses how individuals can find meaning and purpose through their conscious choices and acts of rebellion against the inherent absurdity of life. According to the author, in Albert Camus' novel **The Stranger**, the protagonist Meursault embodies an inherent human struggle as he finds himself detached from commonly perceived aspects of life such as love, family, and career. These aspects typically hold significance in defining human experiences for most individuals. Meursault's perspective aligns with the absurdist philosophy, as he perceives these cherished ideals as arbitrarily assigned meanings. However, the author argues that Meursault's inability to effectively navigate and adapt to the absurdity of his environment ultimately leads to his isolation from the community and premature death—outcomes that contradict the principles of absurdism. Conversely, in Camus' essay **The Myth of Sisyphus**, a different protagonist is presented who acknowledges the absurdity of his surroundings and responds in a way that promotes a meaningful existence (Imlay 2).

The paper "Sartre's Existentialist Viewpoint in **No Exit**" by Akram Amiri Senejani, discusses Sartre's unique approach to philosophy by using literary works to illustrate his ideas. While Sartre's main contributions to existentialism are found in his novels, essays, and articles, **No Exit** holds a significant place as a crucial text that applies the philosophical precepts of the post-World War II era. Furthermore, the play's innovative dramatic methods influenced theater in the latter half of the 20th century, particularly the theater of the absurd, including the works of Samuel Beckett. The author states that **No Exit** is a powerful and condensed dramatic parable that explores the fundamental existential reality of individuals confronting their true selves and the consequences of their actions. It portrays an inescapable encounter with others who serve as the moral evaluators of one's choices. The confined stage setting reflects the internal confinement experienced by the characters, allowing Sartre to present a contemporary morality play. Additionally, the play anticipates the themes and techniques that arise from the implications of an absurd universe and the quest for fresh significance (Senejani 23).

## DISCUSSION

### No Exit

Valet, Garcin, Ines, and Estelle are the four characters that the drama **No Exit** introduces. Valet takes Garcin into a space right away, which is later identified as Hell. The room has just one door and no windows or mirrors. Garcin is joined by Ines Serrano and Estelle Rigault, who anticipate being tortured once the valet leaves and the door is shut. Surprisingly, there is no bodily suffering. Instead, they discover that they are interrogating one other about their sins, wants, and bad past experiences. They quickly come to the realization that they are torturing one other, which prompts them to say the well-known phrase, "Hell is other people." (Sartre 45)

The characters recall the incidents on material plane that affected their lives separately at first, but gradually they are left alone with their own thoughts and the other two's presence. The first character revealed, Garcin, is characterised as a harsh and cowardly guy. He brazenly cheated on his wife while deserting the army during World War II and showed no regret for his conduct. He dislikes Ines because she wants Estelle and can see through his flaws. Even if Estelle doesn't feel the same way, Garcin thinks that if Estelle treats him like a man, it would affirm his manhood.

Lesbian postal worker Ines is the second figure to join the scene. Her crimes include murdering her cousin, the only one of the three who admits to being cruel and takes ownership of her deeds, and turning a woman against her husband. Estelle, an aristocratic woman who also had a relationship with a younger guy, married a wealthy man in order to secure her financial future. She drowned her illegitimate kid in the river, which caused her daughter to murder herself. To identify herself as a woman through her contact with a guy, Estelle strives to become close to Garcin. She prefers "manly men," which makes her crimes of treachery and murder obvious.

The fourth figure, the valet, is mysterious and not much is known about him. The spectator knows from his interactions with Garcin alone that his uncle, the head valet, lacks eyelids and is unable to blink. The location of the drama **No Exit** is fascinating—Hell. But in contrast to conventional representations of Hell that feature obvious pain, this version shows a chamber with just three couches, zero windows, zero mirrors, and just a single door.

Tears, sleep, and blinking—all of the pleasures and comforts of humanity—are not present. The three protagonists realise they are dead when the kind valet shows them around Hell, and the location gradually

reveals its true nature.

### The Stranger

Albert Camus' first book, **The Outsider** or **The Stranger**, is a finely produced tale that displays Camus' absurdist viewpoint. The protagonist of the book is Meursault, a young guy who is described as being aloof, average, and chilly. He works as a shipping clerk while living in French Algiers. Meursault receives a telegram telling him of his mother's passing at the start of the narrative. He shows up for her burial, but the other mourners are taken aback by his strange, collected, and distant conduct. The next day, he meets Maria, a captivating woman who captures his attention. They spend time together, laughing out loud while watching comedies and sharing a bed. When Maria learns that Meursault's mom had gone away just the day prior to, she is shocked.

But the succeeding days of Meursault's life proceed in an unconventional way, as if no catastrophe had happened. Meursault's attitude seems odd and disconnected as he partakes in activities like getting drunk with his new lover, travelling on a beach vacation, having dinners, and taking rest. Meursault and his companions get into a fight with several Arabs when they are on vacation. One of them is the brother of Raymond's wife, who Raymond beats after accusing him of adultery. Meursault is friends with Raymond. The sole explanation Meursault provides for killing the Arab after yelling at him is the sun's glaring light in his face.

It becomes clear throughout Meursault's trial for murder that the court takes more interest in his cool demeanour during his mom's burial rather than focusing on his crime. He is accused of being weird, mysterious, unproven, and misanthropic and is finally given the death penalty. Three times, the chaplain tries to get Meursault to ask for forgiveness, but he resists each time. Meursault is so enraged that he considers attacking the chaplain and angrily denies both the path of Christ and God's existence. He longs for liberation and a pristine beginning, but one that enables him to keep his memories of the existing life. He disbelieves in the idea of a hereafter and views everything as meaningless and trivial, thus he does not see the need to ask for forgiveness.

Instead, portraying Meursault as an outsider observing his culture, Camus shows him as a person who feels profoundly alienated from it. Meursault, although being a part of his community, becomes an outcast because he is unable to live up to social norms, whereas the behaviours of an outsider or foreigner can be seen as unreasonable or immoral. Meursault distinguishes himself by refusing to comply to the social norms that demand it, leading a sensual and alienated life on the periphery of society.

Exploring Meursault's deviation from social conventions is necessary for comprehending his character. His adamant opposition to lying is a key component of his deviation from norms. Speaking lies is just one aspect of lying; another is going beyond one's true emotions. Meursault aggressively opposes covering up his actual feelings and opts to express them openly. The social equilibrium and established framework are at danger as a result of this resistance. For instance, he reacts angrily rather than regrettably when asked to express remorse for his wrongdoing in a traditional way. His eventual punishment is the result of these minor departures from society norms.

Meursault is portrayed as a poor, helpless man who is intrigued by a sun without shadows. He is very sensitive and driven by a strong, deep longing for the unchanging truth. The truth he desires, nevertheless, is now unfavourable since it is based on his own feelings and experiences. Without this reality, it would be impossible to beat oneself or the world. In spite of having no desire to be a hero, the character in **The Outsider** is prepared to give his life in the sake of the truth. Camus depicts Meursault as a symbolic image of a unique Christ-like individual who personifies the ethical and societal ideals of justice and human dignity.

### THEME OF DESIRE EXPLORED IN THE TWO NOVELS

At the outset, Garcin presents himself as an amiable gentleman and a person of high moral character. However, as the play progresses, we come to discover that this initial perception does not hold true. In fact, according to Sartre, he embodies the epitome of human suffering.

Despite having a wife who loved him unconditionally, Garcin harboured an inexplicable hatred towards her. Regrettably, the only recollection he retained of her was the annoyance she caused him. One incident from his life, which he shared while recounting his experiences, serves as a poignant reflection of his true nature:

Well, here's something you can get your teeth into. I brought a half-caste girl to stay in our house. My wife slept upstairs; she must have heard everything. She was an early riser and, as I and the girl stayed in bed late, she served us our morning coffee. (Sartre 25)

This account further highlights his deviant sexual inclinations and his inclination towards promiscuity. He exerted dominance over his wife and exploited other women to fulfil his sexual desires. His choice of words implies a lack of intimacy in his relationship with his wife, yet she yearns for him. This serves as a deliberate portrayal to underscore the theory of desire.

The subsequent illustration pertains to Estelle, a charming individual whose priorities revolve solely around

superficial possessions. She remains fixated on her appearance, constantly seeking validation and approval from men, even within the depths of Hell. In her relentless pursuit of physical affection, she casts longing gazes towards Garcin, hoping to captivate his attention and become the focal point of his desire:  
GARCIN: And you didn't want one?

ESTELLE: I certainly didn't. But the baby came, worse luck. I went to Switzerland for five months. No one knew anything. It was a girl. Roger was with me when she was born. It pleased him no end, to have a daughter. It didn't please me! (Sartre 28)

Driven by materialistic pursuits, Estelle finds herself condemned to Hell for the heinous acts of betrayal and murder. Such was her obsession with material possessions that she callously disregarded her lover's affection and even went so far as to kill her own daughter. These lines exemplify the sole motivation behind her relationship with her younger boyfriend, which was purely based on her insatiable desire for sexual gratification rather than genuine love.

According to Sartre's theory of sexual desire, he posits that the allure of such desires is so powerful that resistance becomes futile, and engaging in physical encounters becomes the sole means to satiate these feelings (Hoult, 2016).

Sartre's depiction of Ines, the third example of sexual deviance, reveals the self-proclaimed cruelty. Ines shares an intense desire for Estelle, much like her previous yearning for Florence. However, her connection to Estelle lacks any emotional depth, leading her to experience a profound absence of her presence in the realms of Hell.

A parallel yearning emerges in the character of Meursault, who exhibits a preoccupation with Marie's physicality rather than the emotional connection they share. This fixation persists even during his time in prison, where he yearns not only for his freedom but also for the sensual attachment he shared with Marie. It becomes clear from these situations how all four people are trapped by their rabid drive for sensual fulfilment, bereft of any real love or emotional depth. They take love for granted and see their partners as nothing more than objects that satisfy their arousal needs, which causes a sense of alienation to permeate their relationships. In accordance with the philosophies of Sartre and Camus, they posit that the world lacks inherent meaning, and it is our individual capacity to assign significance and interpretation to our existence. Ines' assertion highlights the presence of this belief within their literary works:

To forget about the others? How utterly absurd! I feel you there, in every pore. Your silence clamours in my ears. You can nail up your mouth, cut your tongue out - but you can't prevent your being there. Can you stop your thoughts? I hear them ticking away like a clock, tick-tock, tick-tock, and I'm certain you hear mine. (Sartre 22)

The portrayal of the drawing room in the play serves as a backdrop that reinforces the shared belief of these characters. It symbolizes a confined universe devoid of allure, appearing minuscule in the eyes of its inhabitants. Similarly, Meursault, like the other characters, perceives this world as devoid of inherent meaning. He remains apathetic towards the world and its interpretations imposed by external consciousness. Consequently, the profound impact of his mother's death fails to affect him, while he finds himself affected by the simple sensation of sunlight striking his eyes.

One prominent existential concept is that of "existence precedes essence," which grants individuals the freedom to determine their own essence without predetermined constraints (Edward Pasko as cited by Vieth 3). This notion fundamentally rejects the existence of a higher power. In the play **No Exit** although a direct rejection of God is not explicitly depicted, the characters' immoral actions imply their lack of spiritual connection to any deity.

In contrast, Meursault, as an absurd hero, firmly rejects the notions of God and Christianity, recognizing their inherent worthlessness and transcendence beyond the realm of the physical. This rejection becomes evident in his argumentative exchange with the chaplain:

But suddenly he raised his head and looked straight at me. "Why have you refused to see me?" he asked. I said that I didn't believe in God. He wanted to know if I was sure and I said that I didn't see any reason to ask myself that question: it seemed unimportant. He then leaned back against the wall, hands flat on his thighs. Almost as if it wasn't me he was talking to, he remarked that sometimes we think we're sure when in fact we're not. I didn't say anything. He looked at me and asked, "What do you think?" I said it was possible. In any case, I may not have been sure about what really did interest me, but I was absolutely sure about what didn't. And it just so happened that what he was talking about didn't interest me. He looked away and without moving asked me if I wasn't talking that way out of extreme despair. I explained to him that I wasn't desperate. I was just afraid, which was only natural. "Then God can help you," he said. "Every man I have known in your position has turned to Him." I acknowledged that that was their right. It also meant that they must have had the time for it. As for me, I didn't want anybody's help, and I just didn't have the time to interest myself in what didn't interest me. (Camus pp 116-117)

Like other people, Estelle relies on others. Although she doesn't accept the blame for her lover's suicide, she still believes that she is capable of self-expression. She also believes that Ines can tell her about a particular skin condition, which shows how Ines developed her. This concept of deplorable faith is availed by Sartre's verbalization that "Hell is other people." (Sartre 45)

According to the idea of poor faith, which has its roots in the discussed philosophies, depending on other people to define one's true nature causes one to engage in lying to oneself and avoid accepting accountability for their conduct. Garcin and Estelle are excellent examples of this idea.

Garcin fails to depart when the entrance opens since he is unwilling to accept accountability for his deeds and cannot confront his choice to flee from his soldiers, that was a cowardly act. He let the entrance to close once more and stated that he would enable Ines to judge him and construct his essence:

GARCIN: It's because of her I'm staying here.

[ESTELLE releases INES and stares dumbfoundedly at GARCIN.]

INES: Because of me? [Pause.] All right, shut the door. It's ten times hotter here since it opened. [GARCIN goes to the door and shuts it.] Because of me, you said?

GARCIN: Yes. You, anyhow, know what it means to be a coward. INES: Yes, I know.

GARCIN: And you know what wickedness is, and shame, and fear. There were days when you peered into yourself, into the secret places of your heart, and what you saw there made you faint with horror. And then, the next day, you didn't know what to make of it, you couldn't interpret the horror you had glimpsed the day before. Yes, you know what evil costs. And when you say I'm a coward, you know from experience what that means. Is that so? (Sartre 42)

Ines, on the other hand, exhibits an intense sense of self, the capacity to express herself and influence others, as seen by her activities in Hell. She is open about her decisions and the wrongdoings she has done, much like Meursault. Neither Ines nor Meursault are reluctant to accept responsibility for their acts and feel satisfaction in doing so. An important aspect of absurdism is its uncompromising acceptance of responsibility:

I crept inside her skin; she saw the world through my eyes. When she left him, I had her on my hands. When I say I'm cruel, I mean I can't get on without making people suffer. Like a live coal. A live coal in another one's heart". She saw the world through my eyes. (Sartre 67)

Garcin and Estelle find themselves trapped in their past, unable to let go. They constantly reminisce about past events, discussing their former lovers and friends on Earth, which hinders their ability to fully engage with the present moment. On the other hand, Ines and Meursault embody a different approach, as they live in the present without dwelling on their past or being preoccupied with the future. Ines, in particular, sees no value in revisiting her past, as she believes it holds no significance. She asserts that everything she needs is right here, in the present moment. Instead of feeling the need to defend herself in light of who she formerly was, she welcomes the freedom to identify who she is at her core and accepts the harsh fact that she is in Hell. Meursault and Ines share similar perspectives on life. Meursault expresses views that align with Ines' beliefs. According to Meursault, one can find happiness regardless of the circumstances or the environment they find themselves in. Even when confined to prison, Meursault managed to experience happiness. This happiness stemmed not from hope or certainty, but rather from his acceptance of the stark reality that death was inevitable and unstoppable. He embraced the present moment and sought to live passionately. Meursault's freedom was such that he desired to start life anew, even when faced with the proximity of death. He famously stated, "to live it all again too." (Camus 122)

Ines and Meursault hold comparable views on the matter. Meursault maintains that irrespective of one's circumstances, happiness can still be attained. Even after his release from prison, he managed to find contentment. He expressed a desire to embrace life to the fullest, despite coming face to face with death. He possessed a keen awareness of his actions and refrained from passing moral judgment on them, considering them neither inherently good nor deplorable:

I was sure of myself, sure about everything, far surer than he; sure, of my present life and of the death that was coming. That, no doubt, was all I had; but at least that certainty was something I could get my teeth into—just as it had got its teeth into me. I'd been right, I was still right, and I was always right. (Camus 74)

Due to his absurdist perspective, he rejects belief in abstract concepts. He finds value in tangible aspects such as Marie's attire, physical appearance, and laughter, appreciating their concrete nature without delving into deeper meaning. He does not grieve over his mother's death, as grief is an abstract emotion that eludes him. He places his faith in what he can directly perceive, even viewing sunlight as an adversary.

## CONCLUSION

The plays **No Exit** and **The Stranger** offer profound insights into the realms of existentialism and absurdism. In conducting a comparative analysis of these works, the researcher discovered that, with few exceptions,

both ideologies share remarkably similar beliefs. For instance, a notable parallel can be observed between the character Ines in **No Exit** and Meursault in **The Stranger**. Ines actively constructs her essence, which involves inflicting torment upon the other characters in Hell, and she chooses to be liberated by living in their company. Similarly, Meursault also embraces freedom, but in contrast, he does not consciously construct his essence. Instead, he finds freedom in the acknowledgement of life's inherent absurdity, recognizing the futility of constructing an essence within this nonsensical world.

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