Pamukkale Üniversitesi
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi
Sayı 13, 2012, Sayfa 89 -104

CAMUS'S MEURSAULT: FROM AN EXISTENTIALIST ANGLE

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Abstract
This study aims to display the protagonist of Camus's *The Stranger*, namely Meursault, as an existentialist character. In doing so, it analyses the protagonist and unfolds his life in the light of the major principles of existentialism, which are the rejection of God, flaming passion for life, struggle against death, the sense of alienation, freedom of choice, suffering as a part of the world, individual as the centre of the world versus the other people and institutions, the abandonment of man (facticity), and the use of myth. Thus, it strengthens the notion that Camus is an existentialist author, who has created an entirely existentialist protagonist contrary to the idea that he is not an existentialist.

Key Words: *Existentialism, Death, Suffering, Alienation, Freedom, Myth, Abandonment* .

CAMUS'NUN MEURSAULT'U: VAROLUŞÇU BİR AÇIDAN

Özet
Bu çalışma Camus'nun *The Stranger (Yabancı)* adlı romanının ana karakteri Meursault'u varoluşçu bir karakter olarak ele almaktadır. Bunu yaparken de ana karakteri, varoluşçuluğun temel prensipleri olan Tanrı'nın reddi, aşırı yaşama arzusu, ölüme direniş, yabancılaşma hissi, seçme özgürlüğü, yaşamın bir parçası olarak acı çekme, birey merkezcilik ve öteki, insanoğlunun terkedilmişliği ve mit kullanımı ışığında analiz edilmiş ve hayatı gözler önüne serilmiştir. Böylelikle, Camus'nun bir varoluşçu olmadığı düşüncesinin tersine, tamamiyle varoluşçu bir karakter yaratmış varoluşçu bir yazar olduğu düşüncesi de perçinlenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: *Varoluşçuluk, Ölüm, Acı Çekme, Yabancılaşma, Özgürlük, Mit, Terk edilmişlik.*

In the aftermath of World War II, Camus was put in the category of existentialist writers. However, he denied to be an existentialist and refused repeatedly any such label in an interview he gave to Jeanine Delpech in 1945. He rejected all ideological associations saying: "No, I am not an existentialist. Sartre and I are always surprised to see our names linked (…)" (*Les Nouvelles Littéraires*, November 15, 1945:1+ qtd. in Baker, 1993). So, how come that he created a totally existentialist character, Meursault in his *The Stranger*? The answer comes from Baker :"But for all practical purposes he is one, at least in his philosophy of the absurd, in his constructive and moral pessimism, in his portrayal of the alienated man in *L'Etranger* (*The Staranger*), and in his plays" (Baker, 1993: 53). This means that though Albert Camus rejects to be an existentialist author, he is in fact an existentialist ,especially due to his philosophy of the absurd. Therefore, the aim of this study is to present one of Albert Camus' protagonists, Meursault, as an existentialist character, and thus to prove once more that Camus is an existentialist author. In order to do this, Meursault will be analysed in detail in terms of the following existentialist principles respectively: the rejection of God, flaming passion for life, struggle against death, the sense of alienation, freedom of choice, suffering as a part of the world, individual as the centre of the world versus the other people and institutions, the abandonment of man (facticity), the use of myth.

The major principle of existentialism is the rejection of God, which is very evident in Camus's *The Stranger*, where the main character Meursault refuses the fact that God exists. As Loose explains it:

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> Since the absurd issues from a collision between the human need for unity and the silence of an unreasonable world, the absurd can be defined as "sin without God". This does not mean that the absurd excludes God, which would be to postulate that there is a God. What it does mean is that God's existence or non-existence would not alter one bit the metaphysical Picture: the human condition would remain the same with or without God. (…) Even though the absurd is "sin without God," the introduction of evil into the discussion forces the consideration of the problem of God and, ultimately, man's submission to or revolt against God (Loose, 1962: 204-206).

Loose presents two alternatives for the problem of God: either people are not free and God, the omnipotent, is responsible for evil; or people are free and responsible but God is not omnipotent. If God is omnipotent and all the evil is the result of his designs, then what is the point in punishing man for the evil, why does man have to suffer for the designs of a cruel God? This situation creates a tension which demands either submission to or revolt against God. In other words, man must choose either obedience or revolt and freedom. There are no other alternatives. Whereas, if God is not omnipotent, then man becomes god, and he has two options in that case as well: he can either stay and face up to the absurd by rebelling against it till death and madness prevents him from doing so, or he can attempt to escape it. In the case of Meursault, the second alternative seems to be a stronger probability, which means that God is not all-powerful, and man becomes god, who prefers to stay and face the absurd by struggling against it. In the novel there are two striking examples that reveal his denial of God. The first example takes place when he is taken before the examining magistrate for the second time. The magistrate says that Meursault interests him, and that, with God's help, he will do something for him. But first he wants to ask some questions. He asks Meursault if he loved his mother, and he answers he did. Then, he wants to learn why he paused between the first and second shot. Meursault does not reply. He asks the same question two more times and seeing that Meursault remains silent, he stands up suddenly, rushes to him and takes out a silver curifix and shouts:

> "Do you know what this is?" I said, "Yes, of course." Speaking very quickly and passionately, he told me that he believed in God, that it was his conviction that no man was so guilty that God would not forgive him, but in order for that to happen a man must repent and in so doing become like a child whose heart is open and ready to embrace all. (…) he cut me off and urged me one last time, drawing himself up to his full height and asking me if I believed in God. I said no. He sat down indignantly. He said it was impossible; all men believed in God, even those who turn their backs on him. That was his belief, and if he were ever to doubt it, his life would become meaningless. "Do you want my life to be meaningless?" he shouted. As far as I could see, it didn't have anything to do with me, and I told him so. But from across the table he had already thrust the curifix in my face and was screaming irrationally, "I am a Christian. I ask Him to forgive you your sins. How can you not believe that He suffered for you?" I was struck by how sincere he seemed, but I had had enough. It was getting hotter and hotter. As always, whenever I want to get rid of someone I'm not really listening to, I made it appear as if I agreed. To my surprise, he acted triumphant. "You see, you see!" he said. "You do believe, don't you, and you're going to place your trust in Him, aren't you?" Obviously, I again said no. He fell back in his chair. (…) In a low voice he said, "I have never seen a soul as hardened as yours. The criminals who have come before me have always wept at the sight of this image of suffering (Camus,1955: 68-70).

Here, Meursault persistently says that he does not believe in God, and thus tries to deny the existence of a God. Whatever the magistrate does, says or thinks does not matter to him, and does not alter the fact that he is a nonbeliever. He also does not refrain from repeating his disbelief in God several times. Although Meursault is conscious of the fact that his disbelief runs a risk of rendering the magistrate's life meaningless, he does not care about this and repeats his words that he does not believe in God.

The second example about the denial of God is seen almost at the end of the novel when the confrontation between Meursault and the chaplain takes place. At the beginning of the fifth chapter, in the second part of the novel Meursault says: "For the third time I've refused to see the chaplain. I don't have anything to say to him; I don't feel like talking, and I'll be seeing him soon enough as it is" (Camus,1955: 208). In this fragment it is seen that he has already refused the chaplain twice, and now refuses him for the third time. His words give such a sense that he has already started to get tired of him. After some time, when the chaplain once more comes to see him, Meursault refuses him again. He says: "I didn't need to see the chaplain", then after so long a time he starts to think about Marie, what she is doing, and if she is alive or dead. At that time the chaplain comes in. Meursault relates the event as such:

> It was at that exact moment that the chaplain came in. When I saw him I felt a little shudder go through me. He noticed it and told me not to be afraid. I told him that it wasn't his usual time. He replied that it was just a friendly visit and had nothing to do with my appeal, which he knew nothing about. He sat down on my bunk and invited met o sit next to him. I refused. (…) 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 (…) 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 don't want anybody's help, and I just didn't have the time to interest myself in what didn't interest me. (…)At that he stood up and looked me straight in the eye. It was a game I knew well. (…) he said, "Have you no hope at all? And do you really live with the thought that when you die, you die, and nothing remains?" "Yes," I said (Camus, 1955: 115-117).

In this fragment, it is clearly seen that there is a confrontation in which the chaplain tries to persuade Meursault to turn to God and repent, and Meursault stubbornly refuses to do so. Therefore, the tension between the two is increasing up to a point where Meursault will not be able to bear it anymore. In these two instances there seems to be a common point, that is, both men, the magistrate and the chaplain, fail to understand or accept the fact that Meursault is a very diffrent man and should not be compared with other or previous criminals they have met so far. These two representatives of social institutions, one of law and the other of religion, make the same mistake and compare him to the previous criminals who had normal human reactions, accepted and expected from normal people in such situations by the society in such a social order. However, it is easily perceived that Meursault is not one of these ordinary man or "everyman" as they call it. As Sprintzen states: "He does not 'live by the rules.' He does not think like ordinary people. He does not pay his respects, but seems indifferent to everything that is usually taken seriously" (Camus, 1955: 29), because, in both cases he has the impression that these are only games that he knows very well and refuses to assent to the will of the two men. Furthermore, when the priest asks him to look at the wall to find the divine face of God, Meursault says the only face he sees on the wall is Marie's face, not God's. Richard Baker expresses this earthly desire of Meursault in his own words: "The divine face Meursault sees on the wall in his cell is Marie's, a symbol of a relationship and friendship that he would like to continue developing; (…)" (Camus, 1955: 72). Therefore, even in such a situation, in which an ordinary man would try to turn to God and would ask for forgiveness, Meursault is still after his earthly desires. Hence, on no condition does he assent to the will of the chaplain, who is a representative of the religious system Meursault is very foreign to, about asking for forgiveness from God. Instead, he stubbornly expresses his disbelief in God, and says that he cannot waste his limited time on Him. What he holds as the sole truth and the certainty is this life he continues to lead and his awating death, and other than these two certainties nothing matters to him.

One of the significant components of existentialism is man's passion for life, his "intense involvement in existence." Since he is conscious of the fact that death is waiting for him at the end of life, he does everything to lead a life as intense as possible. What becomes important for him is not the quality of his experiences but the quantity of them. It is as if he were in a hurry to live, and to accumulate as many experiences as possible until death or madness takes over him. Now, man does not ask for immortality, but only tries to "exhaust the field of the possible", as Camus expresses in *The Myth of Sisyphus*. Man is only given the moving present, therefore he must learn how to be happy in this present, how to exhaust the possibilities that this present life gives to him. Sprintzen, in the light of some of Camus's works – especially *Two Sides of the Coin*, *Nuptials*, and *The Stranger* – tries to define the characteristics of Camus's "Algerian Man," which will help here to understand Meursault's passion for life. He is a man with no past and no traditions, but wholly devoted to the present living "with neither myths nor consolation". He invests all his assets on this earth, and left defenseless against death.

> The gifts of physical beauty have been heaped upon [him]. And, also the strange greediness that always goes along with the wealth that has no future. (…) a distaste for stability and a lack of regard fort he future. (…) in a hurry to live. (…) in this summer sky emptied of tenderness, beneath which all truths can be told and on which no deceitful divinity has traced the signs of hope or of redemption. Between this sky and the faces turned toward it there is nothing on which to hang a mythology, a literature, an ethic, or a religion – only stones, flesh, stars, and those truths the hand can touch. [He] wagered on the flesh, knowing [he] would lose. There is nothing [in Algiers] for [him] seeking knowledge, education, or self-improvement (Albert Camus, "Summer in Algiers," Lyrical and Critical Essays, 89-90 qtd. in Sprintzen, 1988)

As is clearly presented above the Algerian man's life is of present, it has neither past nor future; it can only end in death. He has no ambitions and plans for the future and he only seeks to exhaust or drain the possibilities of his present life and accepts the conditions of this life without question. He has neither hope or redemption, nor ethic or religion. What he only cares about and believes in are the things he can see and touch such as stones, flesh, and stars. He also likes being in direct contact with the nature or a union with nature. "The sun, sea and women in the sunlight", which are a few essential and perishable possessions, and riches of the living culture, give meaning to his life (Preface to *Rivages*, qtd. in Sprintzen, 1988)

Not surprisingly Camus's Meursault, like the author himself, has almost all these characteristics of the "Algerian man." So, his love of life overpowers everything. As Baker states, Meursault is incredibly disinterested in anything except the pure flame of life. For him the only truth and value is his life and the possibilities that his life presents him to exhaust. He does not care about past or future, but only immediate present and tries to live it fully. He is a clerk without ambition, who rejects his boss's offer for a better job and a position in Paris. He is a man who will marry Marie if she wants, and does not consider marriage a big and serious matter. As Sprintzen explains, he is obviously an intelligent man; however, having been compelled to leave school due to poverty, he arrived at the conclusion that ambition was a waste of time and effort. All that mattered was living one day at a time, accepting the pleasures offered, and expecting no more. Having given up the future, his life follows the trajectory of the moment: job, acquaintances, social routines, climate. Events happen and he responds (Camus, 1955: 25). In other words, stripped of hope, ambition and sense of future, Meursault lives only in the present or in a succession of presents, and as fully as possible trying to drain all the possibilities of life. In some parts of the novel, his passion for life is felt very intensely. What is particularly emphasized in these parts of the novel is Meursault's physical needs and immediate wishes and pleasures. During the funeral for example, instead of mourning for his mother, he thinks about very trivial things saying: "All of it – the sun, the smell of varnish and incense, and my fatigue after a night without sleep – was making it hard for me to see or think straight" (Camus, 1955: 17). So, what he cares during the funeral is a sleepless night and his fatigue, not his

mother or her death. After a short time, at the end of the funeral, as he leaves the village, he thinks of "people, voices, the village, waiting in front of a café, the incessant drone of the motor, and [his] joy when the bus entered the nest of lights that was Algiers and [he] knew [he] was going to go to bed and sleep for twelve hours" (Camus, 1955: 18). Here, again Meursault's physical needs overpower his mother's death and the significance of the funeral, and generally expected behaviours from him in such a situation. Just the day after the funeral, while he is shaving, he decides to go for a swim and catches the streetcar to go to the public beach down at the harbor. He runs into Marie Cardona there and a very sensual scene takes place in the water. Meursault relates it as such:

> I helped her onto a float and as I did, I brushed against her breasts. I was still in the water when she was already lying flat on her stomach on the float. She turned toward me. Her hair was in her eyes and she was laughing. I hoisted myself up next to her. It was nice, and, sort of joking around, I let my head fall back and rest on her stomach. She didn't say anything so I left it there. I had the whole sky in my eyes and it was blue and gold. On the back of my neck I could feel Marie's heart beating softly. We lay on the float for a long time, half asleep. When the sun got too hot, she dove off and I followed. I caught up with her, put my arm around her waist, and we swam together. She laughed the whole time. On the dock, while we were drying ourselves off, (…) I asked if she wanted to go to the movies that evening. She laughed again and told me there was a Fernandel movie she'd like to see (Camus, 1955: 19-20).

In the example above it is as if he were born again in the sea, under the tender sky with the mild sun over him. He also seems very free in the water. It is felt that he lives whatever is given to him at that immediate present; he touches Marie, puts his arm around her waist, and plays with her in the water like a small child. Although it is the day just after his mother's death, it is sensed that he is full of life, and uses every chance to exhaust what life presents him, not caring much about the death of his mother. Moreover, before they leave the beach, he offers to go to the cinema and they decide to see a Fernandel movie, which interestingly is a comedy. It seems as though he did not lose anything, nothing changed in his life and everything was normal only one day after his mother's loss. All these events also signify his passion for life. As Sprintzen states:

> Meursault resides in that shrunken present rich with sensations that lead nowhere. (…) He simply refuses to interpret his experience or to give it a significance beyond what is immediately present to the senses. (…) He takes [the weather, qualitative changes in experience and in the modulations of nature] as they are; asking and expecting nothing more. At the same time he remains practically blind to the socially established meanings with which others embellish events. Nowhere is this more evident than in his relation with Marie [as mentioned above]. (…) he knows nothing of love and cares nothing for the institution of marriage. But when Marie smiles in a certain way, he is attracted to her and wants her. His desires are not without warmth, but they lack premeditation or foresight. They are spontaneous responses to sensuous qualities and reflect little if any conceptual interpretation or social propriety (Sprintzen, 1988: 24).

What Sprintzen wants to emphasize with these words is that Meursault is not planning anything beforehand, nor does he have any projects for the future, because he lives spontaneously, things happen and he only responds without interpreting.

Another event revealing his passion for life takes place through the end of the novel, before the verdict is given. He relates his conversation with his lawyer and says: "I asked him whether he thought there was any chance of overturning the verdict if it was unfavorable. He said no" (Camus, 1955: 106). This question of Meursault displays the fact that he starts to worry about his own life and tries to avoid the possible unfavorable verdict, that is, death and asks for ways to his lawyer. As Baker states after the verdict is given, while he is waiting for his execution, he feels even more trapped and anxious, and preoccupies himself with thoughts about "circumventing the machine" (Camus, 1955: 69). In the fifth chapter of the

second part, he is seen contemplating about a way to escape the "machine." He says:

> All I care about right now is escaping the machinery of justice, seeing if there's any way out of the inevitable. (…) I've wondered if there have ever been any instances of condemned men escaping the relentless machinery, disappearing before the execution or breaking through the cordon of police. (…) But when I really thought it through, nothing was going to allow me such a luxury. Everything was against it; I would just be caught up in the machinery again. (…) I was forced to admit: however; that from the moment it had been passed its consequences became as real and as serious as the wall against which I pressedthe length of my body. (…) If I ever got out of this prison I would go and watch every execution there was. But I think it was a mistake even to consider the possibility. (…) I wasn't being reasonable. It was a mistake to let myself get carried away by such imaginings, because the next minute I would get so cold (…) by giving it some hard thought, by considering the whole thing calmly, I could see that the trouble with the guillotine was that you had no chance at all, absolutely none. (…) So the thing that bothered me most was that the condemned man had to hope the machine would work the first time (Camus, 1955: 108-111).

It is easily understood that Meursault is very confused after his verdict is given. He considers many different possibilities of escape, and after some time he comes to his senses, realizes his situation and concludes that there is no way out of the machinery of the justice. Then, he again finds himself thinking about the ways of escape. Thus, he continues to go to and fro between the possibility and impossibility of escape, finally arriving at the conclusion that he has no chance of escape. Because the way in which he will be executed, namely the guillotine, leaves absolutely no chance of escape for him. He even considers the possibility of failure of the blade, but then says that in such a case they would start it over. Therefore, there is only one thing left to Meursault to do: hoping that the machine would work the first time. This again reveals Meursault's strong desire for life.

Naturally, Meursault's flaming passion for life goes hand in hand with his struggle against death. Since absurd is the confrontation between the world and man, the absence of one of thse elements causes the absurd to fade away. Especially, the role of man is of utmost importance for the absurd. So, he must exist and must keep the absurd alive, and the only limit to /or release from the absurd is death. Sprintzen describes death:

> as the ultimate 'absurd wall' which seals the emprical meaninglessness of a life devoted to transcendent values. (…) Liberation from habitual enslavement (…) [However,] the succession of presents before a lucid consciousness in the face of death is the ideal of the Absurd Man (Sprintzen, 1988: 20).

That is why Meursault never thinks about his past or never makes plans for the future, but only lives in the present, or a succession of presents. It is a kind of way to revolt against the passing of time, and thus the idea of death. In his revolt against death he identifies death with an element of nature, since, as Philip Hallie says, death is a thing nature inflicts on man. Thus, he tries to find some ways – such as sleep, sensual life and past life, which will be presented respectively – to escape the sun and thus death. Baker confirms Meursault's identification of the sun with death. He says: "[Sun] is ultimately related to the notion of death" and continues by quoting from Camus's *The Myth of Sisyphus:*

> I come at last to death and to the attitude we have toward it. (…) This is because in reality there is no experience of death. Properly speaking; nothing has been experienced but what has been lived and made conscious. (…) From this inert body on which a slap makes no mark the soul has disappeared. This elementary and definitive aspect of the adventure constitutes the absurd feeling. Under the fatal lighting of that destiny, its uselessness becomes evident (Camus, The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays, trans. Justin O'Brien, New York: 1972, 15-16 qtd. in Baker, 1993).

Camus also defines death as "fatal lightning" which again explains Meursault's attitude in the face of the sun. That lighting may signify

death or knowledge of death. So, he sees it as an antagonist and tries hard to get rid of it. His first struggle with death is obvious during the wake and the funeral, and even before he gets to the home. Because, during his journey to the home he sleeps in the bus in order to avoid thinking of death (Camus, 1955: 4). When Meursault goes to the home for the funeral, the director and the caretaker take him to a room where he will be able to keep vigil over his mother. He says:

> Just then the caretaker came in behind me. (…) He stuttered a little. "We put the cover on, but I'm supposed to unscrew the casket so you can see her." He was moving towards the casket when I stopped him. He said, "You don't want to?" I answered, "No." He was quiet and I was embarassed because I felt I shouldn't have said that. He looked at me and then asked, "Why not?" but without criticizing, as if he just wanted to know. I said, "I don't know." He started twirling his moustache, and then without looking at me, again he said, "I understand." (Camus, 1955: 6).

The reason why he does not want to see his mother is that he is not ready to accept the knowledge or existence of death. He is not ready to face death, the truth of it. What is also noteworthy here is that when the caretaker says he understands, he really does. Because, he has the same fear of death and tries to escape it in his own way. The way he chooses is to see death as a simple, daily event happening to them, "the others", but not to him. Meursault emphasizes this idea saying: "I'd already been struck by the way he had of saying "they" or "the others" and, less often, "the old people," talking about the patients, when some of them weren't any older than he was" (Camus, 1955: 8). Thus, the caretaker in a way impersonalizes the idea of death and thinks that he is not very near to death like the others. Likewise, Meursault after this refusal to see his mother tries to find refuge in sleep in order to escape the idea of death. He says: "I could feel myself getting sleepy" (Camus, 1955: 7). Then, as time passes, he falls asleep. He says: "It was pleasant, the coffee had warmed me up, and the smell of flowers on the night air was coming through the open door. I think I dozed off for a while" (Camus, 1955: 9). "Then I dozed off again" (Camus, 1955: 11). Therefore, until the time he leaves the home, he constantly dozes off in order to forget the idea of death.

Another way he employs in order to escape death is that he tries to create the impression that it is a normal day, an ordinary one like the others. To achieve this he accepts the caretaker's offer for a coffee with milk, since he likes milk in his coffee; then he feels like smoking a cigarette and they smoke together; eventually with the warming effect of coffee he sleeps for a while with his "Maman right there." He behaves as if he were in his home and nothing changed. It is evident that these are all a way of escape from the idea of death. Some time later he again refuses to see his mother when the director asks this time: "He picked up the telephone and turned to me. "The undertaker's men arrived a few minutes ago. I'm going to ask them to seal the casket. Before I do, would you like to see your mother one last time?" I said no" (Camus, 1955: 13). His refusal to see his mother once more reveals his struggle against death.

The other example of his struggle against death is emphasized through his struggle against the sun that can be seen "as a symbol of the alien external forces surrounding man and destroying his existence, (…) and the only appropriate attitude toward such forces [is] revolt (…)" (Hallie, 1954: 26). The way Meursault prefers in his revolt for now, is to escape this external force. However, what count most here are the words of nurse (which he is going to remember even in prison and), which help him start to realize that actually there is "no way out" of this situation, no way to escape the sun, and so death. At the end of the funeral, when he eventually gets on the bus, he feels a deep relief and happiness knowing that he is going to get away from death. He expresses: "(…), and my joy when the buss entered the nest of lights that was Algiers and I knew I was going to go to bed and sleep for twelve hours" (Camus, 1955: 18). As is seen here, he is very relieved after a day full of exhaustion, sunlight, distress and fear of death. Supporting the same idea Baker also points out that:

> Subsequently, experiencing the absurd in nature is threatening for Meursault, and he seeks respite from the sun. At the conclusion of the funeral, Meursault immediately boards the bus home, failing to linger at the grave as the others leave. In route to Algiers, we learn of his simple satisfaction as he enters the city at night, lit up by the street lamps. Meursault has momentarily escaped the sun's onslaught and its alienating power, seeking relief and comfort in his home town during the cool of the evening (Baker, 1993: 64).

Thus, by the effect of the sun pressing on him more and more everyday, he gradually becomes aware that his death is coming closer day by day.

Finally, it becomes evident that towards the end of his life, he cannot find any strength to struggle with the sun, and especially after the verdict is given, he nearly gives up his revolt against realizing that there is actually "no way out." Therefore, he tries to face death, and mostly concentrates on himself, his past life and Marie. Baker states that

> If the sun represents light, lucidity, or knowledge, we know Meursault's former attempts to flee from this knowledge of death have been futile. He must live the experience of the sun by opening himself to this knowledge, a natural source for him to dwell in. It is not until the death sentence has been passed that he finally confronts the knowledge of his death and faces the absurd. (…) The cycle is now complete: beginning with his mother's funeral, shooting the Arab, and the sentencing to death by guillotine, Meursault has been haunted by death, but never able to experience it firsthand through rational knowledge. This helps explain why Meursault refused to see his mother's body: he cannot truly experience death through viewing her corpse (Baker, 1993: 68-69).

Hence, it is not until he has been sentenced to death by guillotine that he eventually gives up his revolt against death, starts to face it gradually, and realizes that life is the only value. For the first time he opens himself up to the "tender indifference" of the nature and sees it as a "brother." For the first time in his life again he recalls his past, his mother's "fiance," his memories with Marie, and especially a story of execution about his father. This concentration of him on his past life in the last days of his life may still be considered as another way to escape from the idea of death as it has been stated earlier. Sprintzen emphasizes this stating: "Cut off from the world, he is forced back upon himself. Robbed of access to space, and confronted with the fact that he can no longer take the future for granted, he begins to think about his past life—and especially Marie" (Sprintzen, 1988: 33). Therefore, his struggle against death ends only with his acknowledgment of his own death imposed upon him by the death sentence by guillotine.

The third existentialist principle is alienation which, in Meursault's case will be analysed in three levels. The first one is his alienation in nature; the second one is his physical alienation or isolation in his cell; the last one is alienation in society. As for the alienation in nature, it is related to the sun. As it has been mentioned earlier sun has always been an antagonist to Meursault, and from the beginning of the novel to the end Meursault has been haunted by the sun. Philip Hallie emphasizes man's confrontation with and alienation from nature in Camus's novel saying: "He has concentrated on showing us men imprisoned by nature (…)" (Hallie, 1954: 83). Therefore, haunted by the sun, Meursault feels uncomfortable, oppressed, and alienated. As it has been mentioned in the previous parts, this alienation starts during his mother's funeral with the alienating effect of the sun creating pressure on him. As time passes that day, he feels that the sun becomes unbearable. "Once again the nurse's words to Meursault prove prophetic because if he walks too slow, he is susceptible to sunstroke; but if he goes too fast, he sweats, and later the brisk air in the church will make him cold; one way or another nature will take its toll" (Baker, 1993: 64). Therefore, he wants to flee from the sun as soon as possible. He even cannot wait till the end of the funeral, and immediately catches the bus to Algiers seeking relief and comfort. Only when he sees the lights of his hometown, can he feel "at home," getting rid of the feeling of alienation, but only momentarily since this influence of the sun is haunting. Actually Meursault, being an Algerian man, likes the

sun and sea, but only when he finds them together. When it is so, he enjoys himself under the mild sun cooling himself in the sea. So, when he is exposed to the sun without sea, he feels that the sun is threatening and very inhuman. Baker quotes from Camus's *The Myth of Sisyphus:*

> At the heart of all beauty lies something inhuman, and these hills, the softness of the sky, the outline of these trees at this very minute lose the illusory meaning with which we had clothed them, henceforth more remote than a lost paradise. (…) The world evades us because it becomes itself again. That stage scenery masked by habit becomes again what it is. It withdraws at a distance from us (Camus, The Myth of Sisyphus, 1972: 14 qtd. in Baker, 1993).

Likewise, the sun which is very warm and friendly to Meursault when he is by the sea, becomes very inhuman, hostile and oppressive at some critical moments like the funeral, the killing of the Arab and the trial, all indicating the notion of death. During his encounter with the Arab, he feels the same pressure by the sun and sees both the sun and the Arab as threats to his life which causes him to kill the Arab.

His second level of alienation is the physical one that he experiences when he is shut up and isolated in a cell. Meursault expresses that

> Of course I had read that eventually you wind up losing track of time in prison. But it hadn't meant much to me when I'd read it. (…) [days] ended up flowing into one another. They lost their names. Only the words "yesterday" and "tomorrow" still had any meaning for me. One day when the guard told met hat I'd been in for five months, I believed it, but I didn't understand it. For me it was one and the same unending day that was unfolding in my cell and the same thing I was trying to do (Camus, 1955: 80).

In his cell, Meursault is so alienated from the other people that he even loses his sense of time, and thus cannot understand it when the guard says he has been in prison for five months. Only the words "yesterday" and "tomorrow" has some meaning for him. It is as if he lived "the same unending day" everyday. This indicates to what extent he is alienated and isolated from his normal physical environment. There are other signs of his physical alienation in his cell. After spending five months in the cell, he becomes a stranger even to himself. His alienation becomes more evident when he says:

> That day, after the guard had left, I looked at myself in my tin plate. My reflection seemed to remain serious even though I was trying to smile at it. I moved the plate around in front of me. I smiled and it still had the same sad, stern expression. (…) I moved closer to the window, and in the last light of day I gazed at my reflection one more time. It was still serious – (…) and for the first time in months, I distinctly heard the sound of my own voice. I recognized it as the same one that had been ringing in my ears for many long days, and I realized that all that time I had been talking to myself. (Camus, 1955: 81).

It is as though he looked at the face of another man. He spends so long time in the cell, without being able to see anyone, and even his own face that he cannot recognise the face he sees in the plate that he uses as a mirror. He even does not realise whether the man he is looking right in the face at that moment is himself or not. After some time Meursault even cannot recognise his voice, which shows the degree of enstrangement from his own self. Only through the end of five months of imprisonment in his cell does he realise that he has been talking to himself all that time. Therefore, his loss of sense of time, and his nonrecognition of his own face and voice strongly points out to his physical alienation from his normal environment.

The third level of Meursault's alienation is the alienation from society. One of the most striking examples of this type of alienation is presented during the first day of his trial when Meursault observes people in the courtroom, and describes the atmosphere:

> I noticed then that everyone was waving and exchanging greetings and talking, as if they were in a club where people are glad to find themselves among others from the same world. That is how I explained to myself the strange impression I had of being odd man out, a kind of intruder (Camus, 1955: 84).

There is such a warm atmosphere in the courtroom among the people that he feels completely alone, like an intruder, or a stranger. It is as though they were all from the same world and were happy to find each other there. The point is that nobody talks to him or cares about him except for his lawyer, who is there due to his profession only. Thus, Meursault has the impression that he is the only one who is foreign to these people and the atmosphere in the courtroom, he is totally alone there in such a crowded place. This indicates that Meursault is alienated from the society, since he does not play the game according to its rules. Thus, there appears a lack of communication and disparity between Meursault and the others due to which they cannot react to the same thing in the same way. Eventually, he feels as a stranger, intruder to the society ending up in solitude. Athough he comes to terms with nature and universe, he cannot achieve the same thing with the society, which, till the end, sees him as a threat to its identity because of his noncomformity to its norms, and so as a traitor.

Freedom of choice is another existentialist principle that is of utmost importance for the absurd. Therefore, in this study the idea of freedom will be analysed in two ways: physical freedom and freedom of choice. At the beginning of the novel it is evident that Meursault has the freedom of choice. Except for the hours that he spends in the office, he is free to do everything. Especially at the weekends, he sleeps for long hours and then he prepares breakfast for himself as he likes it, after the breakfast he usually goes to the beach to have a swim. Particularly these scenes on the beach and in water shows the extent of his freedom, as mentioned in earlier parts. In addition, he has the freedom of choice. For instance, when his boss offers him a job in Paris, Meursault prefers to stay in Algiers. He says:

> [My boss] told me he wanted to talk to me about a plan of his that was stil pretty vague. He just wanted to have my opinion on the matter. He was planning to open an office in Paris which would handle his business directly with the big companies, on the spot, and he wanted to know how I felt about going there. I'd be able to live in Paris and to travel around for part of the year as well. (…) but [I said] that really it was all the same to me. Then he asked me if I wasn't interested in a change of life. I said that (…) I wasn't dissatisfied with mine here at all. He looked upset and told met hat I never gave him a straight answer, that I had no ambition, and that that was disastrous in business. (…) I would rather not have upset him, but I couldn't see any reason to change my life. Looking back on it, I wasn't unhappy. When I was a student, I had lots of ambitions like that. But when I had to give up my studies I learned very quickly that none of it really mattered (Camus, 1955: 40-41).

This example reveals that Meursault has his own freedom of choice. His boss offers him a better position in Paris, which means a different life also. But, Meursault says he is happy and satisfied with his job and life here, and he does not need any change in his life, and thus chooses between two preferences: going to Paris and staying in Algiers.

Another example of freedom of choice takes place during a confrontation between Meursault and the priest when the priest forces him to accept that there is a God, and he must turn to Him to ask for forgiveness before he dies. Upon his being very persistent about asking for forgiveness, Meursault loses his patience. First he attacks the priest, and then he experiences a burst of emotion and says:

> He wasn't even sure he was alive, because he was living like a dead man. (…). But I was sure about me, about everything, surer than he could ever be, sure of my life and sure of the death I had awaiting for me. Yes, that was all I had. But at least I had as much of a hold on it as it had on me. I had been right, I was still right. I was always right. I had lived my life one way and I could just as well have lived it another. I had done this and I hadn't done that. I hadn't done this thing but I had done another. And so? (Camus, 1955: 120-121).

It seems as if Meursault would continue like that: "And so? Do I not have the freedom to choose? Do I not have the freedom to choose the way in which I lead my life? So what? Will I be punished for doing so, using my freedom

of choice, choosing the way I lead my life?" He says he leads such a life, because he has chosen to lead it in that way, or he might have preffered to lead it in another way. That depends on him since he has the freedom of choice which he will use until the day he dies although he is aware of the fact that he is now shut up into this cell.

Pain, one of the existentialist principles, is very much like death, something that "nature inflicts on man", and so it is inevitable like death and there is "no way out" (Hallie, 1954: 30). Therefore, it is useless and meaningless for man to try to escape it. All efforts to escape pain and suffering are in vain because they are a part of this world. Man must endure the suffering without any complaint and in total acceptance. So, Meursault does the same and accepts suffering as a normal fact of life. This is understood very clearly especially in relation to his attitude towards his mother's death. After having heard his mother's death, he does not show any sign of grief, and during the funeral he does not weep for his mother, which seems to indicate that he is totally indifferent to his mother's death. It becomes more evident when Meursault says: "It occured to me that anyway one more Sunday was over, that Maman was buried now, that I was going back to work, and that, really, nothing had changed" (Camus, 1955: 24). These words of him signify that his mother's death has actually changed nothing in his life. Everyting is the same, and he continues his life as he does before. In fact, it is not because he is a very indifferent man, but because he knows that death and pain are inseparable and inevitable parts of life and people should accept them silently without much complaint and bother.

The other example of suffering and pain as a part of the world is displayed, through the end of the novel, when a conversation takes place between the priest and Meursault. The priest talks about suffering and pain inherent in man because of the eternal suffering of Christ. Meursault tells that:

> He was expressing his certainty that my appeal would be granted, but I was carrying the burden of a sin from which I had to free myself. According to him, human justice was nothing and divine justice was everything. I pointed out that it was the former that had condemned me. His response was that it hadn't washed away my sin for all that. I told him I didn't know what a sin was. All they had told me was that I was guilty. I was guilty, I was paying for it, and nothing more could be asked of me. (…) "You're wrong my son," he said. "More could be asked of you. And it may be asked." "And what's that?" "You could be asked to see." "See what?" The priest gazed around my cell and answered in a voice that sounded very weary to me. "Every stone here sweats with suffering, I know that. I have never looked at them without a feeling of anguish. But deep in my heart I know that the most wretched among you have seen a divine face emerge from their darkness. That is the face you are asked to see." (…) I said I had been looking at the stones in these walls for months. (…) And in any case, I'd never seen anything emerge from any sweating stones. The chaplain looked at me with a kind of sadness (Camus, 1955: 118-119).

The priest says that every stone in the wall sweats with suffering. However, since Meursault is an absurd man who believes in the things he can see and touch, he does not care about the priest's ideas about the suffering of mankind. What he only cares about is his own imprisonment and suffering that he experiences directly. Since suffering is already a part of this physical world, what the priest tells him about the spiritual suffering of man does not matter to him much. Therefore, since Meursault sees suffering as a natural part of the world, he accepts it with no complaint.

According to existential philosophy individual is at the centre of eveything and everything other than individual is "the other." This "the other" generally symbolizes the social and moral values, which existentialists regard as forms of hiding and expression of fear and ignorance. In *The Stranger*, the individual at the centre of everything without doubt is Meursault. Because all the events are constructed around him. "The other" is, of course, everything other than Meursault, especially the representatives of the social and moral values and institutions such as the magistrate and the prosecutor representing the law system, the priest representing the religious system, the jury and the people in

the courtroom symbolizing the society.

His confrontations with the magistrate and the priest have already been presented in the earlier parts. But, it will be useful to remind them here again in a few sentences perhaps. The subject of his confrontation with the magistrate is surprisingly not law, but religion, and particulary belief in God:

> (…) he cut me off and urged me one last time, drawing himself up to his full height and asking me if I believed in God. I said no. He sat down indignantly. He said it was impossible; all men believed in God, even those who turn their backs on him. That was his belief, and if he were ever to doubt it, his life would become meaningless. "Do you want my life to be meaningless?" he shouted. As far as I could see, it didn't have anything to do with me, and I told him so. But from across the table he had already thrust the curifix in my face and was screaming irrationally, "I am a Christian. I ask Him to forgive you your sins. How can you not believe that He suffered for you?" I was struck by how sincere he seemed, but I had had enough. It was getting hotter and hotter. As always, whenever I want to get rid of someone I'm not really listening to, I made it appear as if I agreed. To my surprise, he acted triumphant. "You see, you see!" he said. "You do believe, don't you, and you're going to place your trust in Him, aren't you?" Obviously, I again said no (Camus, 1955: 68-70).

This representative of the law system says he believes in God and thinks that all men believe in God, at least they must. Therefore, he forces Meursault to confess that he believes in God and Meursault stubbornly refuses to do so. With the magistrate's question "Do you want my life to be meaningless?" it becomes very evident that God, and his belief in God is the only value he clings to in life, and this is the only value with which he gives meaning to his life. As Meursault says: "That was his belief, and if he were ever to doubt it, his life would become meaningless." Thus, this example shows the struggle and the confrontation between the individual and "the other," because it is impossible for them to come to terms with each other and so they will always remain as the individual and "the other." Another confrontation occurs between Meursault and the prosecutor. Although, Muersault does not speak or express anything in this case, the prosecutor's way of talking reveals the struggle between the two very clearly. Meursault relates his words as following:

> He stated that I had no place in a society whose fundamental rules I ignored and that I could not appeal to the same human heart whose elementary response I knew nothing of. "I ask you fort his man's head," he said, "and I do so with a heart at ease. For if in the course of what has been a long career I have had occasion to call for death penalty, never as strongly as today have I felt this painful duty made easier, lighter, clearer by the certain knowledge of a sacred imperative and by the horror I feel when I look into a man's face and all I see is a monster" (Camus, 1955: 102).

The prosecutor talks about the rules of the society and accuses Meursault of disobeying these rules. It is clear that he sees Meursalt almost like an animal not deserving to continue living. Therefore, his death will not mean a loss, and will not change anything. The struggle between Meursault and the system of law is exhibited in this way.

The other struggle takes place between Meursault and the priest, who again forces him to turn to God and repent in order to be forgiven, and to find hope for afterlife and relief there. He tries every way to persuade Meursault, but Meursault does not take it seriously. Feeling that Meursault is getting annoyed, he tries to change the subject and asks why Meursault is not calling him "father." Meursault says:

> That got me mad, and I told him he wasn't my father; he wasn't even on my side. (…) then, I don't know why, but something inside me snapped. I startedyelling at the top of my lungs, and I insulted him and told him not to waste his prayers on me. I grabbed him by the collar of his cassock. I was pouring out on him everything that was in my heart, cries of anger and cries of joy. He seemed so certain about everything, didn't he? And yet none of his certainties was worth one hair of a woman's head. (Camus, 1955: 119-120).

Thus, when the priest presses Meursault so much about his belief in God, afterlife,

suffering; and tries to remind him that he is a representative of the religious system and Meursault should show respect to him and call him as "father," Meursault losing his conscious and patience attacks him and insults him until the guards save the priest from his grab. Once again the two opposite poles are displayed here, presenting the struggle between Meursault and the chaplain.

The jury and the people in the courtroom symbolizing the society is another example of "the other" for Meursault. Because, when he first enters the courtroom, he observes that all these people greet and talk to each other behaving like a unified community. Thus, this atmosphere and the scene make him feel as a stranger among "the others." It is as if with their arranged and unified behaviours they intentionally tried to cast him out, tried to show the fact that he is an outsider among the other people, not harmonizing with them. And, they succeed it. Meusault expresses that feeling of queerness with these words:

> I noticed then that everyone was waving and exchanging greetings and talking, as if they were in a club where people are glad to find themselves among others from the same world. That is how I explained to myself the strange impression I had of being odd man out, a kind of intruder (Camus, 1955: 84).

All the people in the courtroom, except for him, are waving and talking to each other. It is as if they were members of the same club, and he were not. So, he feels very strange like a man from another world, like an intruder. This, once again shows the conflict between the individual, Meursault and "the others" representing the society.

One of the most important principles of existentialism is the abandonment of man or facticity. For Camus life and this world both remain as places of exile and the kingdom in which man is always aware of his "solitariness." It is a kind of desert where man's situation is one of abandonement. He is a poor creature thrown into this world, totally alone and deserted by God, and he has no external forces to help him. In a way, he is deserted to his fate which he himself will create through his own actions. In *The Stranger* Meursault is exactly in this situation, thrown into the world or life, which is like a place of exile. The notion that this world is a place of exile is signified with Meursault's experiences with the sun that haunts him till the end, and the excessive heat that disturbs him throwing his balance off. In the face of this brutal world, he is alone without any external help. So, with the awareness of this, he does not expect and accept anyone to help him. However, there are two instances in which he is confronted with the idea of "help of God." The first one occurs during the trial while the magistrate is questioning Meursault about the killing of the Arab. After repeating the story over and over for a few times Meursault says:

> After a short silence, he stood up and told me that he wanted to help me, that I interested him, and that, with God's help, he would do something for me. But first he wanted to ask me a few more questions. (…) Then he said, "Why did you pause between the first and second shot?" (…) I was about to tell him he was wrong to dwell on it, because it really didn't matter (Camus, 1955: 67-69).

Here, although the magistrate says that he will help Meursault with the help of God, Meursault is aware and sure of the fact that nothing or nobody can help him. He knows that this is the result of his action, and he must bear the consequences of his action alone and must take the responsibility even if it costs him much suffering, which is also a natural part of this world and from which nothing can save him. His argument with the chaplain is the second event in which the priest tries to console him with God's help and hope for an afterlife. Meursault relates this event as such:

> 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, 1955: 116-117).

This time it is the priest, instead of the magistrate, who emphasizes the fact that Meursault will be helped by God if he turns to Him. But, Meursault refuses this offer of help from God saying he does not "want anybody's help." In addition to his rejection of God's help, Meursault does not accept any consolation from the priest when he says that all people are condemned to die, as a consolation. Meursault replies that it is not the same thing. Therefore, since he knows that he is completely alone in the face of the earth, he is conscious that nobody, no external force can help him, and thus refuses all offers of help.

Baker considers that Camus wrote the *Myth of Sisyphus* as a companion piece to *The Stranger*. He wrote the novel "to express in subjective human terms what the essay was to explain in rational and philosophical terms. In other words, the novel described the "feeling" of the absurd, whereas the essay explained the "notion" of the absurd" (Baker, 1993: 55). This means that *The Stranger* is not an explanatory book; but it only presents and describes. Therefore, it needs a companion to explain it and to make it clear, which is *The Myth of Sisyphus*. Thus, with this explanation it becomes clear why the reader feels a relationship between the novel and the myth, and the main character, Meursault and the mythological character, Sisyphus. There are two common points between the two: First one is the mechanical living of both characters, which is like a vicious circle; the other is their acceptance of this vicious circle very courageously and effort to be happy with it.

Since there is only present for Meursault, the world of habit or a mechanical living is natural and inevitable for him. This monotonous life, this "deadening repetition of daily work" is particularly presented in the first half of the novel where Meursault is seen as an office clerk who lives in Algiers. Since he is an office worker, he usually eats his meals at Céleste's restaurant, and takes the streetcar to work. For example, during the funeral he thinks of the other colleagues and says: " They'd be getting up to go to work about this time: for me that was always the most difficult time of day" (Camus, 1955: 12). This reveals the fact that his life is so monotonous that he can guess easily what the others must be doing at that moment. In another part, Meursault talks about the Sunday after the funeral, and once more it becomes evident that his life is very mechanical or routine. He starts with the morning:

> I remembered that it was Sunday, and that bothered me: I don't like Sundays. So I rolled over, tried to find the salty smell Marie's hair had left on the pillow, and slept until ten. Then I smoked a few cigarettes, still in bed, till noon. I didn't feel like having lunch at Céleste's like I usually did because They'd be sure to ask questions and I don't like that (Camus, 1955: 21).

Here, it is clear that every Sunday he has lunch at Céleste's, but this Sunday he does not feel having it there in order not to be asked questions about the funeral. As is seen here, even his weekends are very routine, which is a sign of his monotonous life.

Meursault, after having his luch, goes to the balcony and starts to describe a usual Sunday afternoon and evening; and ends watching the people almost at night. It is evident that this is a typical, monotonous Sunday. Because Meursault nearly knows precisely what the people will do and where they will go. In addition to this, some words or phrases indicate that he lives the same Sunday every weekend. For instance, the phrases "a rather frail little man I know by sight" and "It was Sunday all right" reveal that he lives that same Sunday over and over every weekend.

This routine life presented in *The Stranger* is parallel to this fragment taken from Camus's *The Myth of Sisyphus*:

> Rising, streetcar, four hours in the Office or the factory, meal, streetcar, four hours of work, meal, sleep, and Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday and Saturday according to the same rhythm (…). But one day the "why" arises and everything begins in that weariness tinged with amazement. (…) Weariness comes at the end of a mechanical life, but at the same time it inaugurates the impulse of consciousness (Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays*, 1972: 12-13 qtd. in Baker, 1993).

This quotation from the Myth bears a great similarity to the ones in *The Stranger*. If the mythological character Sisyphus, on his own is taken, his monotonous, mechanical struggle to roll the rock up only to see it roll down back is very similar to Meursault's routine life.

The second similarity between the two characters is their acceptance of these monotonous lives. Sisyphus tries to continue his life with his burden without any complaint, and still tries to be happy with the situation he is in. So, Meursault, like Sisyphus, is a lonely but courageous bearer of the burden of life, a person who does his duty only by living and by trying to be satisfied with his life. His life is very mechanical seems like a vicious circle like Sisyphus's toil or torment, but still he tries to be satisfied with what he has in his hand. Thus, he always tries to find something to be happy with his life. For example, when he is in prison, he remembers what his mother said about life and happiness. He says:

> Maman used to say that you can always find something to be happy about. In my prison, when the sky turned red and a new day slipped into my cell, I found out that she was right. Because I might just as easily have heard footsteps and my heart could have burst. Even though I would rush to the door at the slightest shuffle, even though, with my ear pressed to the wood, I would wait frantically until I heard the sound of my own breathing, terrified to find it so hoarse, like a dog's panting, my heart would not burst after all, and I would have gained another twenty-four hours (Camus, 1955: 113).

In prison, even trivial details become very important for Meursault. For instance, hearing the footsteps becomes a sign for his execution and causes him great stress. Whereas, when he does not hear the footsteps, he feels very lucky since he gains another twenty-four hours to go on living. Although he is in prison living in such bad coditions, he still wants to live. This idea of another twenty-four hours in front of him to go on living, which seems very simple in normal coditions, makes him extremely relieved and happy, and he understands what his mother meant by always finding "something to be happy about." His mother's words are what help him to find "value in his life and confronts the passage of time" (Baker, 1993: 63).

In short, both Meursault and his mother find a way to bear the burden of the life, and to make it easier. Therefore, their acceptance of life without much complaint is very similar to Sisyphus's acceptance of his situation. In addition to this, both characters; Meursault and Sisyphus are alone in nature. They struggle with it on their own by using their own ways and not taking any external help. Meursault, at first, tries to escape the nature and its effects, then finally realizing that there is no way of escape he stays and accepts it with no self-deception. He does not try to find an excuse or someone to hold responsible for what he did. Only he innocently tries to tell them that the sun threw him off balance, but he does not make any other complaints. Likewise, Sisyphus accepts his punishment without complaining about it, and continues his life even in that situation. All these qualities of Meursault indicates that he has a strong relationship with the mythological character, Sisyphus.

Consequently, taking all these main concerns of existentialism presented in the novel into consideration, one may consider Camus's *The Stranger* an existentialist novel. It is known that Camus has always refused to be an existentislist, yet these elements of the novel that have been analysed so far, insist of being exactly the opposite.

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