

Analysis of Pink Floyd's Lyrics in the Context of Kierkegaard's Existentialism

Kierkegaard'ın Varoluşçuluğu Bağlamında Pink Floyd'un Şarkı Sözlerinin Analizi

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Abstract

Pink Floyd has a unique style and perspective as a musical group. By addressing the humanitarian crises of the 20th century in their lyrics, they incorporated distinct issues such as war, economy, education, family, and politics into their agenda. However, it is also possible to state that their lyrics focus on the pains of individual existence. By examining this through sample lyrics, we can see how existential relationships are revealed. The fundamental problem of existential philosophy is to assert that human beings are individuals and that this should be a crucial consideration for philosophy. One of the first to make this claim was Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard, and it is possible to state that he evaluated the human problem of the 19th century in this context. In this study, existential themes in Pink Floyd's song lyrics (*Hey You*, *Time*, *Echoes*, *Us and Them*) were analyzed by Kierkegaard's existentialism. Therefore, this study aims to think together and discuss Pink Floyd, the influential music group of the 20th century, in the existential philosophy of Kierkegaard, who lived in the 19th century and witnessed.

Keywords: Kierkegaard, Pink Floyd, existence

Öz

Pink Floyd, bir müzik grubu olarak kendine özgü bir üslup ve bakış açısına sahiptir. Şarkı sözlerinde 20. Yüzyılın insani krizlerini ele alarak savaş, ekonomi, eğitim, aile, siyaset gibi farklı sorunları gündemlerine almışlardır. Ancak şarkı sözlerinin bireysel varoluşun sancularına odaklandığını söylemek de mümkündür. Bunu örnek şarkı sözleri üzerinden incelediğimizde varoluşsal ilişkilerin nasıl ortaya çıktığını görebiliriz. Varoluşçu felsefenin şüphesiz temel sorunu, insanların birey olarak görülmesi gerektiğini ve bunun felsefe için önemli olması gerektiğini güçlü bir şekilde öne sürmektir. Bu iddiayı ilk ortaya atanlardan biri de Danimarkalı filozof Søren Kierkegaard'dır ve onun 19. Yüzyılın insan sorununu da bu bağlamda değerlendirdiğini söylemek mümkündür. Bu çalışmada Pink Floyd'un şarkı sözlerindeki (*Hey You*, *Time*, *Echoes*, *Us and Them*) varoluşsal temalar Kierkegaard'ın varoluşçuluğu bağlamında incelenmiştir. Bu nedenle bu çalışma, 20. Yüzyılın etkili müzik grubu Pink Floyd'u, 19. Yüzyılda yaşamış ve çağına tanıklık etmiş Kierkegaard'ın varoluşçu felsefesi bağlamında birlikte düşünmeyi ve tartışmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kierkegaard, Pink Floyd, varoluş

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Introduction

Philosophy is the highest form of social cognizance. Subjects such as the problem of human existence and the fear of death are important themes of existential philosophy. Music is a difference that describes another social consciousness, too. So, there has always been a close relationship between music and philosophy. The metaphysical and ontological aspects of philosophy have been periodically explored musically. Philosophers such as Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, Kant, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, and Kierkegaard have endeavored to relate music to philosophy. This factor, started by Pythagoras and continued to be highlighted in the modern age, is so important: Music and philosophy emerge from human thought. As we can see in this passage:

Music, according to Pythagoras, was present not only in the purely intelligible aspect of the universe but also in the visible realm of the cosmos, as the (unhearable) sound generated by the cosmic spheres, which rotate, carrying the stars in the sky. Pythagorean insights presented music as something connected very intimately to the rational harmony of reality, possibly being even closer to it than verbal language. This idea was familiar to Socrates, who in the *Phaedo* identified philosophy with “the greatest music.” The concept of inaudible, soundless music that derives from and mimics the harmony of the cosmos—music of the spheres or *musica mundana*—had been vivid not only in neoplatonic or medieval philosophy but was still considered a live theoretical option by a thinker as different as Johannes Kepler, one of the founders of modern astronomy who used to interpret empirical data in a speculative and mystical framework of a Pythagorean kind. (Rychter, 2019, p. 2)

However, “ethically, music is neither good nor evil, but, as of all aesthetic content, one must finally despair of music to seek the good and the holy” (Petr, 1992-1993, p. 102). Nevertheless, music has sometimes been viewed as a mathematical harmony and stability, and at other times as an ingredient that strengthens emotions. However, instead of analyzing the philosophy of music or the relationship between music and philosophy, our fundamental purpose is to evaluate some lyrics of the music band Pink Floyd through the existentialist philosopher Søren Kierkegaard. For this reason, our aim in this article is not to include Kierkegaard’s views on music. Kierkegaard explains his thoughts on music in the first part of *Either/Or* (1843). For this, you can look at this book and the articles named below.¹ This is exactly the purpose that will meet our expectations. Musical sound systems, etc., cannot be evaluated directly from an ethical perspective. However, this situation may describe an existential time, to put it more accurately. Pink Floyd has a purpose that unites music with time and derives it from its own emotions and experiences. When considered, we can say that Kierkegaard also transferred his life and existential reality to his writings. Kant says, “...to go out of its sphere and to take a step into the field of practical philosophy...” (Kant, 1996, p. 60). Therefore, this article aims to produce from theoretical philosophy to practical investigation. Practical philosophy, then, reveals the ethical aspect of philosophy, which, since ancient times, has been concerned with how to live by our nature. Similarly, Kierkegaard was preoccupied with the question of how to live life and emphasized the practical side of philosophy (Gupta, 2005, p. 13). Therefore, existentialism is a practical philosophy that tries to explain the present moment of humans. The following view summarizes this:

The predominant philosophical mode of our time is acknowledged to be existentialism, a view of life which holds that the present moment is the nodal point of existence. It is in the present that existence is actual, most vital; before there can be being, there must be existence. One’s sense of being derives from one’s sense of existence, and the way to sense one’s existence is to charge each present moment with content and meaning. The present is reality. This view, though distinctly Western in origin, stemming from the thought of Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Jaspers, and others, finds strong reverberations in Eastern Zen Buddhism, which also holds that the present moment is supreme reality. (Rochberg, 2004, p. 64)

We can say existentialism is about the current time, and nowadays, at the same time, Pink Floyd lyrics are considered in this situation.

¹ Petersen, N. (2020). “A Christian Art? Søren Kierkegaard’s Views on Music and Musical Performance Reconsidered”. *Kierkegaard Studies Yearbook*, 25(1), 3-13. <https://doi.org/10.1515/kierke-2020-0001>; Petersen, N. H. (2018). “Kierkegaard’s Notions of Drama and Opera: Molière’s Don Juan, Mozart’s Don Giovanni, and the Question of Music and Sensuousness”. In E. Ziolkowski (Ed.), *Kierkegaard, Literature, and the Arts* (pp. 131–148). Northwestern University Press. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv3znrhg.13>

Students from different universities in London founded Pink Floyd in the 1960s. The band initially consisted of Roger Waters, Syd Barrett, Nick Mason, and Richard Wright. We would not be wrong if we say that the most active members of the group are Syd Barrett and Roger Waters. So much so, that Pink Floyd's lyrics were largely written by Roger Waters. It is possible to state that he wrote compositions that are fictional, philosophical, and political paradoxes of the individual. Although there are many reasons for this, one of the most prominent reasons is that his father served in the British army in the Second World War and lost his life in the ocean. Waters did not have a happy childhood and always hated school. Undoubtedly, his mother's negative political attitude was effective in this (Uçansoy & Harmandağlı, 2000, p. 18). Waters experienced the reality of post-war Britain from the perspective of a fatherless post-war child. At the same time, he witnessed how the values of freedom, equality, and social justice collapsed with the destructive power of capitalism (Svitavský, 2015, p. 5). Kierkegaard also experienced a turbulent and painful process in his childhood, and this was reflected in his writings. As we mentioned above, Waters went through a similar process. While Kierkegaard described this process with existential writings of strong literary value, Waters demonstrated it with his lyrics and music that reflect these words very successfully. Both Kierkegaard's and Waters' thinking includes their childhood, which is not to be changed. Because "the past is the paradigm of necessity. I cannot change the past, whether my childhood was a happy one or one spent locked in a closet" (Gupta, 2005, p. 8).

Syd Barrett, one of the influential members of the band as well as Waters, is a musician who has managed to produce striking analyses. It is possible to understand that he reflects human problems in his pieces with the following words of Waters: "The most extraordinary thing about Syd's pieces is that they make you feel that humanity is grasped very well. The lyrics of the pieces are formed by the crazy and strange juxtaposition of ideas and words" (Uçansoy & Harmandağlı, 2000, p. 21). For Reisch, Pink Floyd was doing some kind of philosophy with his music:

Pink Floyd seems natural and comfortable in this setting not simply because they play so well or because the cameras glide around the band and the open-air amphitheatre so elegantly. It is because the themes and ideas they had just begun to explore musically on *Meddle* and *Dark Side*—such as time, death, madness, loss, and empathy—are among those that philosophers of ancient Greece and Italy began to scrutinize over two thousand years ago. Not far from the time and the place, that is, where the volcano Vesuvius erupted to strip away all but the stone buildings of this once bustling Italian village. (2007, pp. 6-7)

Pink Floyd's albums have a specific theme. Although the problems in these themes do not have a system that follows each other very closely, it has tried to highlight a dominant theme. In this context, Pink Floyd's "entire album can be listened to as a single song." It is felt that the songs progress like a story, not independently of each other" (Ulusoy et al., 2017, p. 8). Many topics are touched upon in his albums, from the human-education relationship to the human-animal comparison. On the other hand, it is possible to understand that it includes people's concerns, alienation, and loneliness. In addition to pioneering the progressive rock music genre, Pink Floyd is known for their use of conceptual and philosophical lyrics, and each of their albums typically focuses on a specific theme (Golzadeh & Ghorbanpour, 2016, p. 4). It is possible to see that human crises are addressed in the lyrics of some of the songs in the albums in question. These are in the context of problems such as education, loneliness, death, and time. For instance, *In The Great Gig in the Sky*, a vocal performance tells the story of the fear of death. This song is a silent scream of the problems people experience when confronted with the reality of death.

It should be noted that the real life that people encounter in the modern world is often too shocking to be equivalent to theory. While reading philosophy texts, most of the time, we cannot think that life is going on outside and that the experiences and pains that have hit the bottom are surrounding the world: "Human consciousness and thought in the twentieth century have discovered the essential irrationality of the premises on which they are based. That the old world of illusory certainties has disintegrated in the face of new conditions which govern contemporary existence is acknowledged by all who are seriously concerned with man's destiny, including the physicist, the theologian, and the philosopher" (Rochberg, 2004, p. 3). However, new music depends heavily on various types of equipment, showcasing a model of relations between art and technology. The text illustrates the complex relationship between culture and power, particularly highlighting how music was used by totalitarian powers in the last century. Besides, music has played a significant role in various emancipatory and subversive movements. Another crucial topic to explore is the intricate connection between contemporary music and its historical roots. While the traditional canon may no longer hold the same normative force, it remains prominent in our cultural landscape, remembered by both artists and audiences. Modern music offers ample evidence for exploring the tensions between the past and the current drive for extreme creation in culture (Rychter, 2019, p. 3). In the modern age,

contradiction is not just a musical aspect. In this context, such paradoxical problems are argued by Kierkegaard's existentialism. Life and truth are related, but this is not explained clearly. Additionally, when Nietzsche states that we must be loyal to the world, it becomes possible to understand that philosophers are talking about our daily crises and uncertainties. Because our encounters and conflicts with other people point to a realistic problem (Surber, 2007, p. 193). In this context, it becomes clear that philosophy must interpret the world and those who interpret life. In this regard, it is important to reinterpret Pink Floyd, which expresses the basic problems of modern life in its lyrics, in the context of Kierkegaard, who evaluates humans from an existential perspective. Accordingly, following Waters' lead, our desires and the disappointments they create are addressed in *Julia Dream* (1986) and *Corporal Clegg* (1968), *Green is the Colour* (1969), *Cymbaline* (1969), and later in the 1970s, the absurdity of the human condition is addressed. Furthermore, *Dark Side of the Moon*, *Animals*, *Wish You Were Here*, and *The Wall* also followed a similar path (Weinstein, 2007, p. 53). Especially, we can say, Pink Floyd's entire album *Dark Side of the Moon* deals with existential themes, with tracks like *Time*, *Us and Them*, and *Brain Damage*, drowning in an individual search for meaning. On the other hand, *The Final Cut* album deals with the despair, trauma, and individual fragmentation that occurred at the end of the war. As a result, we can say that, in Pink Floyd's lyrics, it is clear that the individual asks himself questions, and in this context, questions that overlap with those persistently asked by existential philosophy are made: Who am I, and why am I here? Am I free, and am I in time? Why am I in a society and what does society want from me? What is the effect of death on me? Therefore, Pink Floyd deals with existential anxiety and the turmoil in the inner life of the individual.

Why did we think it was necessary to conduct such a study on Kierkegaard and Pink Floyd? For example, Kierkegaard wrote about the lives of ordinary people he presented examples from daily life. In this passage, Kierkegaard writes:

There is a story about a peasant who went barefooted to town with enough money to buy himself a pair of stockings and shoes and to get drunk, and in trying to find his way home in his drunken state, he fell asleep in the middle of the road. A carriage came along, and the driver shouted to him to move or he would drive over his legs. The drunken peasant woke up, looked at his legs and, not recognizing them because of the shoes and stockings, said: "Go ahead, they are not my legs". (1980, p. 53)

Pink Floyd's lyrics also have such a style. Being able to convey the events in life without making too many changes has found a place in their music. For example, according to Roger Waters, the song *Arnold Layne* emerged because of such an experience. The song describes an incident in which a person named Arnold constantly steals clothes from the laundry and then suddenly disappears (Uçansoy & Harmandağlı, 2000, p. 18). In addition, Pink Floyd's style has protest content, contrary to conventional behavior. For these reasons, Pink Floyd chose not to spend much time on the usual pop pastimes such as romance, partying, or self-aggrandizement. Their sonic universes are vast, dense, and challenging and their interests are in reality and illusion, life and death, time and space, causality and chance, compassion and indifference (Surber, 2007, p. 192). However, "no doubt rock and pop depend on a mass music industry which dictates its choices, thus leading to major artistic and human consequences" (Gonin, 2017, p. 16).

Kierkegaard, who had an anti-people attitude, also put forward a stance against the liberal thought system. Hannay says: "In a climate of opinion which sees everything moving inexorably forward, Kierkegaard thinks it would be salutary for each person to stop 'the wheel of evolution' long enough to see how much progress has really been made, and to look for any 'grit or whatever' that may have got into the machinery to make it less than we suppose. Two aspects of liberal politics, in particular, he finds particularly misleading" (Hannay, 2001, p. 10). The society had to confront its opposition and its overwhelming criticism. Indeed, Danish society didn't accept Kierkegaard's criticism. Furthermore, the band Pink Floyd was also exposed to the hatred of most British people. Because the group declared that it was against an imperialist mentality under all circumstances and pointed to England as an imperialist country in its discourses. Accordingly, the British, with the power they received from a historical mission, had implemented a truly imperial mentality in practice. On this subject, Nick Mason, one of the band members, says: "The British hated our music. They would throw things and throw beer at us" (Uçansoy & Harmandağlı, 2000, p. 25). For example, *Time* ends with the sentence: 'Hanging on in quiet desperation is the English way.' We can say that this song criticizes English culture and its hopeless situation.

Although not direct, there are thematic connections between Pink Floyd and existentialism. Pink Floyd's lyrics, therefore, address themes central to existential philosophy and explore existential themes like alienation, individuality, and loneliness.

For instance, it has been suggested that Waters' view of existence and what art should be is very similar to that of the French philosopher Albert Camus. The character of Meursault in Camus' *The Outsider* is identical to the character in Waters' song *Hey You*. It is also possible to say that Wilson's work, *The Outsider*, had an influence on Pink Floyd or Waters in terms of style and ideas. Interestingly, the British critic and philosopher Colin Wilson's 1956 work *The Outsider* also addresses the French existentialists and their views on art. Wilson argues that from his early songs to his post-Floyd albums, he was inspired by the same themes in Camus' understanding of existence and used the same set of images, such as the sun, the moon, darkness, stones, and walls (Weinstein, 2007, p. 52). The members of Pink Floyd are not directly influenced by Kierkegaard, but they are familiar with Camus and his writings. We know that Camus was inspired by Kierkegaard's existentialism. Although Camus has a perspective opposite to Kierkegaard's, it is clear that he influenced him. Golomb says: "Camus is an inverted Kierkegaard" (2005, p. 127).

Pink Floyd's lyrics often criticize the pressure the system puts on individuals. Education comes first in this criticism. Therefore, Pink Floyd is known as a political band, and that is true. However, the lyrics are indicative of an existential situation. *The Wall* lyrics prove how society's education system can become a pressure factor for individuals. When the lyrics of the song *The Wall* are considered, a problematic education system and the psychological state of mind created by this system are revealed. It turns out that the education system acts within the context of national desires and does not consider the existential aspect when educating or transforming children in line with its curriculum. Therefore, the conclusion that can be drawn from the lyrics and perhaps from the entire album is that it explains the psychological pressure that the education system puts on children. May be asked, "Is the issue here existential or psychological?" We can say this problem is existential. So existential problems reconstruct individual issues. In addition, the album also focuses on themes such as abandonment and loneliness (Golzadeh & Ghorbanpour, 2016, p. 6).

Similarly, about a hundred years ago, Kierkegaard made striking analyses of the education of children and their position in modern life: "There are handbooks on everything, and generally speaking education soon will consist of knowing letter-perfect a larger or smaller compendium of observations from such handbooks, and one will excel in proportion to his skill in pulling out the particular one, just as the typesetter picks out letters" (Kierkegaard, 2009b, p. 104). As can be seen, while Kierkegaard evaluates his present age, he also gives clues about what the education system in the 20th century could be like. In this context, we need to focus on the words in *The Wall*: "We don't need thought control; we don't need sarcasm in the classroom." These expressions, which are based on criticism of education or the education system, also include a criticism of the modern age's view of humanity. We have to explain how these lyrics connect to Kierkegaard's quote. Since they seem to address different aspects of mass education. Kierkegaard desires individual education and often criticizes mass education since mass education sweeps up human existence.

Analysis of Pink Floyd's Lyrics in the Context of Kierkegaard's Existentialism

This work is neither about Pink Floyd's music nor about music. Here, Pink Floyd's song lyrics are analyzed by Kierkegaard's existentialism. Methodically, the lyrics of the selected songs by Pink Floyd are given under titles. Then these lyrics are analyzed in terms of Kierkegaard's contexts, such as human life and existence, focusing on an existential perspective. For this purpose, the analysis of Pink Floyd's songs *Hey You*, *Us and Them*, *Time*, and *Echoes* has been done in Kierkegaardian existentialism, and our study has been limited to this. As a method, first, the existential parts in the lyrics will be determined and given, then the evaluation will be made in Kierkegaardian texts, and the study will be completed

Analysing *Hey You* Lyrics

The theme of loneliness is highlighted in the lyrics of the song *Hey You*, included in Pink Floyd's album *The Wall*. The song highlights that aging and loneliness are fundamental elements of human distress in this world. Getting older also means being estranged from other people and even from oneself and it manifests itself in inner distress, just like loneliness. The major source of this distress is that the individual has unknowingly missed many things while getting older and is close to death. *Hey You* lyrics are below:

Hey you, out there in the cold
Getting lonely, getting old
Can you feel me?

Hey you, standing in the aisles
 With itchy feet and fading smiles
 Can you feel me?
 Hey you, don't help them to bury the light
 Don't give in without a fight
 Hey you, out there on your own
 Sitting naked by the phone
 Would you touch me?
 Hey you, with your ear against the wall
 Waiting for someone to call out
 Would you touch me?
 Hey you, would you help me to carry the stone?
 Open your heart, I'm coming home
 But, it was only a fantasy
 The wall was too high
 As you can see
 No matter how he tried
 He could not break free
 And the worms ate into his brain
 Hey you, out there on the road
 Always doing what you're told
 Can you help me?
 Hey you, out there beyond the wall
 Breaking bottles in the hall
 Can you help me?
 Hey you, don't tell me there's no hope at all
 Together we stand, divided we fall

We can say that this song's lyrics deal with the loneliness and solitude of the individual behind walls. Here, we find a societal outcast who flees society. Kierkegaard says, "I can abstract from everything but not from myself; I cannot even forget myself when I sleep" (Kierkegaard, 2019, p. 171). This sentence is important since if you are alone, you have a distance from the masses. A lonely person is a hurricane and freedom. Pink Floyd's *Hey You* is a lonely Kierkegaard. You may be an outsider, but you belong to yourself, and you are on your own. This is a great opportunity for you to find your own identity and existence. However, existence alone does not happen, so it is necessary to reach out to other 'you', not to the mass.

Hey You shows how society deeply harms individuals. A disaster strikes the individual because of their shaken state. Kierkegaard would say the individual's inner self is suppressed by ethical pressures. Pink Floyd's song assesses a situation while rejecting universal morality. Kierkegaard similarly argues that individuals are alienated from their reality during the ethical stage. *Hey You* uses a wall to represent insurmountable social barriers, which the protagonist ultimately sees as an illusion. Whoever is behind the wall or out in the cold is beyond help. Much has been lost from his/her perspective, and there is nothing left to move him/her. However, a door of escape opens at the end, and it is said that if we act together, we can get rid of this situation. But for Kierkegaard, this idea is dubious, as its inherent skepticism is crucial for individual growth. Nowadays, the principle of association, only relevant to material self-interest at most, is restrictive, not enabling (2009a, p. 106).

Analysing *Time* Lyrics

In the lyrics of the song *Time*, it can be seen how the existential consequences of loneliness and boredom affect the individual. The song has distinct musical sections, each with unique sonic characteristics that symbolize and metaphorically: a clock and pulse overture, a narrative with lyrics, and a peaceful, final reverie part (Mathews & Varier, 2020, p. 2). The song lyrics of the song are about the transience of time, the inevitability of death, and how life is in vain. The lyrics for *Time* can be found below:

Ticking away the moments that make up a dull day
 You fritter and waste the hours in an off-hand way
 Kicking around on a piece of ground in your hometown
 Waiting for someone or something to show you the way
 Tired of lying in the sunshine, staying home to watch the rain
 And you are young and life is long, and there is time to kill today
 And then one day you find ten years have got behind you
 No one told you when to run, you missed the starting gun
 And you run and you run to catch up with the sun but it's sinking
 Racing around to come up behind you again
 Sun is the same, in a relative way, but you're older
 Shorter of breath and one day closer to death
 Every year is getting shorter, never seem to find the time
 Plans that either come to naught, or half a page of scribbled lines
 Hanging on in quiet desperation is the English way
 The time is gone, the song is over, thought I'd something more to say

The song is in the album *The Dark Side of The Moon*, and this album tries to reflect the experiences of the ordinary individual, as well as life, death, madness, business life, and war, by putting them into words (Ulusoy et al., 2017, p. 8). The album also has a style that tries to focus on all the details of the day (Uçansoy & Harmandağlı, 2000, p. 239). The song's lyrics narrate a story rooted in lived experience. This message is reflected in the instrumental episode's monotonous, unreleased section. Ironically, this wait prevents experiencing and living the present moment, but lost time is irretrievable (Mathews & Varier, 2020, p. 2). When we look at the lyrics of *Time*, it is possible to observe that the relationship between time and trouble is examined. As can be seen, the paradoxical mood of the individual who turns around in time is described, and the helplessness that occurs as a result is depicted.

Boredom and death, which are important in Kierkegaard's philosophy, have been seen as the main source of all existential problems. He explains this problem with the God-human relate: "When God lets himself be born and become man, this is not an idle caprice, some fancy he hits upon just to be doing something, perhaps to put an end to the boredom that has brashly been God said must be involved in being —it is not to have an adventure" (1980, p. 130). While Kierkegaard writes from an existential perspective that boredom turns into a dizzying problem in the individual's singular life, Pink Floyd transforms this into musical dynamism with its lyrics and presents existential distress as an echo. Kierkegaard's philosophy consistently grapples with death, drawing heavily on his personal experiences. Because the deaths of his brothers/sisters caused him to think about the idea of death, he often talked about the mystery of death in his writings. This attitude is echoed in Pink Floyd's lyrics, and there is an idea that death is strange. The issue becomes obvious when we look at Kierkegaard's following statement about death: "My soul is strangely moved; it is anxious at the spectacle of the powerful images floating past it; it again sighs despondently: to die is gain" (Kierkegaard, 2019, p. 256).

Pink Floyd songs often emphasized death. Death is sometimes described as an early death caused by war, and sometimes as a tragic event that occurs because of aging. Sometimes, as in the song *Time*, this situation is expressed through the cyclicity in the relationship between the sun, time, and death. The theme of death is important for Pink Floyd. Because millions of people died in Europe and on other continents, World War II was a big crisis for all people. Besides, death is an existential crisis for every individual, and this fact became becoming in society after the war. At this time, everything changed, and the lyrical perspective was very combative. According to Rochberg, after the war, things were moving intensely. By 1939, the zenith of what could be called the 'heroic' degree of modernism in music (and the other arts) had passed. The new ages that came on the cultural scene in America and Europe shared a common avant-garde aesthetic influence. Tradition no longer held value or bearing, the new music and the new art owed nothing to history (Rochberg, 2004, pp. I-XIII).

Analysing Echoes Lyrics

Echoes lyrics' have included so existential impactful and on the album *Meddle* (1971) and go on over 20 minutes. It is stated that there is always fear, hope, and an existential situation behind some of our fundamental divisions. You can find the lyrics to *Echoes* below:

Overhead the albatross hangs
 Motionless upon the air
 And deep beneath the rolling waves
 In labyrinths of coral caves
 The echo of a distant time
 Comes willowing across the sand
 And everything is green and submarine
 And no one showed us to the land
 And no one knows the where's or whys
 But something stirs and something tries
 And starts to climb towards the light
 Strangers passing in the street
 By chance two separate glances meet
 And I am you and what I see is me
 And do I take you by the hand
 And lead you through the land?
 And help me understand the best I can
 And no one calls us to move on
 And no one forces down our eyes
 No one speaks and no one tries
 No one flies around the Sun
 Cloudless, every day you fall
 Upon my waking eyes
 Inviting and inciting me to rise
 And through the window in the wall
 Come streaming in on sunlight wings
 A million bright ambassadors of morning
 And no one sings me lullabies
 And no one makes me close my eyes
 So I throw the windows wide
 And call to you across the sky

The content of the song *Echoes* tells about the place of humans in this world. Rick Wright's song lyrics carry profound existential themes. These lyrics reflect Kierkegaard's view that science's pursuit of facts obstructs humanity's path to self-discovery. Enveloping us, countless living beings blossom, while humankind's importance wanes. A man should have the courage to look at the world from his window and not forget himself. Indeed, Kierkegaard also questions how we came to this world and claims that we are not permitted the right to choose in life. Kierkegaard says:

What is going to happen? What will the future bring? I do not know, I have no presentiment. When a spider flings itself from a fixed point down into its consequences, it continually sees before it an empty space in which it can find no foothold, however much it stretches. So it is with me; before me is continually an empty space, and I am propelled by a consequence that lies behind me. This life is turned around and dreadful, not to be endured. (2000, p. 39)

In *Echoes*, a question is asked about how we were thrown into this life. This situation is revealed by the saying, "And no one showed us to the land. And no one knows the where's or whys". Existence is never evident, and we must search for the meaning of existence. However, the meaning of existence is closed, and we have to reach this.

Analyzing *Us and Them* Lyrics

Us and Them, a philosophically and existentially rich song, was featured on Pink Floyd's 1973 album *The Dark Side of the Moon*. The song's lyrics condemn the discriminatory policy that persecutes people. The conflict, it asserts, is artificially

manufactured, rendering any lingering resentment pointless. It's understood that Roger Waters, the song's author, examines the futility of war and the isolation of modern existence. You can find the song's lyrics for *Us and Them* below:

Us, and them
 And after all, we're only ordinary men.
 Me, and you.
 God only knows it's not what we would choose to do.
 Forward he cried from the rear
 And the front rank died.
 And the general sat and the lines on the map
 Moved from side to side.
 Black and blue
 And who knows which is which and who is who?
 Up and down.
 But in the end, it's only round and round.
 Haven't you heard it's a battle of words
 The poster bearer cried.
 Listen, son, said the man with the gun
 There's room for you inside.
 "I mean, they're not gonna kill ya, so if you give'em a quick short,
 sharp, shock, they won't do it again. Dig it? I mean he gets off
 lightly, 'cos I would've given him a thrashing- I only hit him once!
 It was only a difference of opinion, but really... I mean good manners
 don't cost nothing do they, eh?"
 Down and out
 It can't be helped but there's a lot of it about.
 With, without.
 And who'll deny it's what the fighting's all about?
 Out of the way, it's a busy day
 I've got things on my mind.
 For the want of the price of tea and a slice
 The old man died

These song lyrics are the mass conduct relating to the words 'we', 'they', 'us', and 'them'. So we have to ask this question: Who are you, or who are they? We and they are absent. Just a man is there, and he suffers on the land. We and they do not fight a war. The death just sprang out of the soul of a man. And the truth is, a man dies. For Kierkegaard, truth is not in the mass but in the individual. The individual has existed, and the individual breathes. In the Note, he remarks in the following passage:

Everyone in the state and the state Church is to be and therefore also ought to be an individual, but not an extraordinary individual. In conscientiousness and responsibility before God, that is, through his eternal consciousness, everyone is an individual. He never becomes mass; he is never enrolled in the public. With responsibility before God and after having tested himself in his conscience, he attaches himself to the whole as a limb and takes it as his task to be faithful in the reproduction, while the responsibility of eternity saves him from the purely animal category: to be the crowd, the mass, the public or whatever other droves there are that give one occasion to have to speak of human beings as one speaks of a drove of cattle. (2009a, pp. 149-150)

While Kierkegaard witnessed the European culture of the 19th century and the predicaments that people found them in, Pink Floyd also criticized European culture, especially British society, in the 20th century. Drawing attention to the human destruction caused by modern life has been the focus of these criticisms.

Conclusion

Philosophy's interest in practical problems has recently become a valuable development. Existential philosophy has been in pursuit of a practical philosophy. It is not only existential philosophers who advocate that theoretical issues should be demonstrated in practice. Kant, who left his mark on the 18th century and whose thoughts had a great impact on society, proposed this practical philosophy and put forward important thoughts on this subject. This proposal of Kant influenced Kierkegaard in the 19th century. From Kierkegaard's perspective, the direction of philosophy should be toward practical problems. The effect of the Pink Floyd music group, which included human crises in the lyrics of the 20th century, can be evaluated from many perspectives. The main purpose of this study is to evaluate the deep philosophical meanings of Pink Floyd's songs in Kierkegaard. It has been determined that Pink Floyd pursues a practical and existential concern in the lyrics of the examined songs. We tried to make a philosophical analysis of some lyrics in Pink Floyd's music from a Kierkegaardian existential perspective. Of course, Pink Floyd did not have a direct existential philosophy. However, Kierkegaard argued that philosophy should not have a certain standard and system. It is a fact that the critical approach has always existed in European culture. Pink Floyd is an important group that made music with an approach that emerged with the effects of two world wars in the second half of the 20th century. Kierkegaard, on the other hand, was the dissenting voice of Europe on his own and stood out with his critical style. In this study, we tried to address this dissent and make an evaluation of this subject.

Existential problems such as loneliness, death, and aging are topics that both Kierkegaard and Pink Floyd frequently deal with. They have shown a distinct attitude by putting the paradoxes, internal contradictions, and dead ends of man in this world on their agenda. In this study, a discussion was made about the content of the attitude in question and a comparative method was determined. For the content of the study, lyrics from Pink Floyd were selected, and this situation was evaluated from Kierkegaard's existential perspective. Although it is claimed that Pink Floyd and Kierkegaard have no connection, if examined carefully, they are close in terms of issues such as existence, human conditions, and social-individual conflict. For example, Pink Floyd's lyrics deal with alienation, existential crisis, subjectivity, and the attempt to suppress freedom with social pressures. There are huge walls in front of the individual (mass, society, etc.), and the decision-making process is constantly hindered. In addition, the individual is in a helpless state of mind in the face of the reality of time and death. This state is expressed from an absurd and ironic perspective. Therefore, the absurdity of humans is intensely described in Pink Floyd's lyrics. This perspective is directly related to existential philosophy. Kierkegaard tried to explain this situation in the 19th century. He tried to analyze and describe humans with concepts such as paradox, irony, and absurdity. When Kierkegaard talks about humans, he does not mean a general human being. He speaks directly of 'you' and for him, 'you' are the individual, not 'them', and you experience all the stages of existence (fear, anxiety, hope, suffering, etc.). In this respect, Kierkegaard's view of the individual overlaps with the individual disintegration (*Hey You*, etc.) and existential quest voiced in Pink Floyd's lyrics.

We can say briefly, some lyrics of Pink Floyd have touched upon existential themes, and we have tried to show that these themes can be evaluated in the context of Kierkegaard. In order to justify this, we have taken the lyrics of *Hey You*, *Echoes*, *Hey You*, *Us and Them* as examples, and we have determined that these lyrics deal with issues such as distress and fear that a person may face, time and death, individuality, and the mass. In order to reveal this, we have resorted to Kierkegaard's texts. In addition to the lyrics selected as examples, it is possible to state that there is an existential aspect in many lyrics of Pink Floyd's songs. Of course, Pink Floyd has never remarked that they have an existential perspective that they follow this philosophical direction, or that they are inspired by it. However, our aim is not to pursue such a claim. Pink Floyd has turned to the human crises of its age and has revealed this as music. Kierkegaard also wrote about humans of his age similarly. Based on this common ground, we have tried to show that Pink Floyd's protest perspective should be evaluated in Kierkegaard, an existential philosopher.

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