

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE ABSURD IN ALBERT CAMUS

Раджабов Руслан Раджабмуродович

Преподаватель Бухарского государственного университета

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1565-1119>

Пулатова Дурдона Лукман кизи

Студент Бухарского государственного университета

Abstract

The article presents the views of researchers on the concept of tragedy. Albert Camus's works raise complex issues related to the absurd. Camus deeply analyzes tragedy in a number of his works related to the philosophy of the absurd and existentialism.

Keywords: Absurdity, existentialism, suicide, tragedy, death, existence, philosophy, society, reflection, indifference.

Introduction

Albert Camus's philosophy is often associated with the absurd, a central concept of his work. Camus, a 20th-century French writer and philosopher, explored the themes of existence, rebellion, and human existence in his essays, novels, and plays. Albert Camus's philosophy, philosophy of the absurd or Camusian absurd is a reference to the work and philosophical reflections of the writer Albert Camus. Based on the theory of the absurd, this philosophy is influenced by the author's political, libertarian, social, and environmental ideas; and is inspired by earlier philosophical currents such as Greek philosophy, nihilism, Nietzscheanism, and existentialism "love". Each cycle is associated with Greek myth (Sisyphus, Prometheus and Nemesis) and explores specific themes; The guiding thread remains the despair of Man, constantly inspired by a tireless search for the meaning of the world and life.

For Camus, the absurd arises from the clash between the human desire for clarity and the irrational silence of the world. In his essay "The Myth of Sisyphus" (*Le Mythe de Sisyphe*), he illustrates this idea by comparing the human condition to that of Sisyphus, condemned to push a stone to the top of a mountain only to see it roll down forever. It is important to accept this absurdity and live life to the fullest. For example: "Il n'est qu'un problème philosophique vraiment sérieux: c'est le suicide¹." ("There is only one really serious philosophical problem: suicide.") - Camus poses the fundamental question of the value of life in the face of the absurdity of existence. If life has no original meaning, why not put an end to it? Thus, E. Durkheim writes: "Suicide is any case of death which is the direct or indirect result of a positive or negative act committed by the victim himself, and which, as he knows, should

¹ Camus A., *Le Mythe de Sisyphe*, Gallimard, Folio (Folio Essais), 1985 [1942]. Page 15.



lead to such a result²." "On comprend ainsi que rien n'est plus profond que cette grimace qui exprime à la fois la haine de l'homme pour le monde et la joie de l'avoir malgré tout en face de soi." "Thus, we understand that there is nothing deeper than this grimace, expressing both man's hatred of the world and the joy of being in front of it no matter what." - This quote, although not a sentence in the strict sense, describes the tension inherent in the absurd: the awareness of the lack of meaning and the will to live against all odds. "Il faut imaginer Sisyphe heureux." "We must imagine Sisyphus happy." - This symbolic phrase sums up the position that Camus proposes in the face of the absurd: to accept a repetitive and meaningless task (like Sisyphus, condemned to roll a stone forever) and find in it a form of satisfaction or joyful rebellion.

Or we can see such examples of absurdity in "L'Étranger": "Aujourd'hui, maman est morte. Ou peut-être hier, je ne sais pas."³ (Mom died today. Or maybe yesterday, I don't know). This opening sentence, detached and indifferent in the face of his mother's death, immediately sets the tone of the absurd. Meursault's protagonist does not seem to be capable of experiencing the emotions expected in such a situation. "Il me restait à souhaiter qu'il y ait beaucoup de spectateurs le jour de mon exécution et qu'ils m'accueillent avec des cris de haine." (I could only hope that on the day of my execution there would be many spectators, and that they would greet me with shouts of hatred.) This acceptance of death, and even a certain desire to arouse hatred in others, shows Meursault's indifference to the meaning of life and conventional morality.

Or it can be seen in his novel *La Peste* (1947): "Ce qui est vrai pour tous les hommes l'est plus encore pour les pestiférés. Ils apprennent qu'il n'y a pas de grandeurs et que les sentiments sont sans mesure." (What is true for all people is even more true for the victims of the plague, who learn that greatness does not exist and that feelings have no measure.) - The plague, a metaphor for the absurd and evil, reveals the futility of human values and the immensity of suffering. "Je n'ai pas le goût de l'héroïsme et je sais que c'est facile." "I don't have a penchant for heroism, and I know it's easy." (said Dr. Rieux) - This sentence expresses the banality of obligations in the face of absurdity. Heroism is not an innate quality, but a conscious choice available to all.

Camus's sentences illustrating the absurd are often characterized by the following:

- Emotional detachment: indifference, inability to experience expected emotions.
- Awareness of the futility of values: questioning moral, religious and social norms.
- Conscious acceptance of death: death as the ultimate and absurd end of existence.
- Rebellion against the lack of meaning: the will to live and act despite the absurdity.
- Simplicity and clarity of style: the absurd is presented in a straightforward manner, without embellishment.

Another key concept in Camus's philosophy is rebellion. Instead of resigning himself to the absurd, Camus preaches the position of rebellion. It means standing up for one's own existence

² Durkheim E., *Le suicide. Étude de sociologie*, Paris, Félix Alcan, 1897.

³ Albert Camus, *The Stranger*. From the Gallimard edition, 1957. Page 7.



and values, even in a world that seems indifferent. In *The Rebel*, he defends the idea that rebellion is a genuine response to absurdity and that it can lead to some form of human solidarity. Camus also emphasizes the importance of individual freedom and the responsibility that comes with it. In his works, he explores how people have to navigate a meaningless world while making ethical decisions. For him, freedom is not only a right, but also a duty to act honestly and compassionately. Although Camus is often associated with existentialism, he is distinguished by a special approach to the absurd. Unlike thinkers such as Jean-Paul Sartre, who emphasize freedom of choice and commitment, Camus emphasizes the importance of accepting the absurd without trying to give it ultimate meaning.

In conclusion, Albert Camus's philosophy encourages us to embrace the absurd while choosing to live with passion and dedication. It calls for a revolt against despair and emphasizes the importance of human solidarity in the face of an often difficult and discouraging existence. His thoughts continue to influence modern thought and remain relevant in our search for meaning in a complex world. And so the absurd is a central concept in Camus's philosophy, embodying the conflict between the human desire for meaning and the lack of meaning in the universe. It is a challenge, but also an opportunity to live an authentic life, to find freedom and to find joy in a world devoid of original purpose. By realizing the absurd, we can rebel against it and create our own meaning in life.

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