
The Stranger: Existentialism in A Novel

Every people have their own philosophy around the world. Therefore, many people can all take a different view of morality with different philosophies. In the book "The Stranger" by the author Albert Camus. In this book, there are three different point of view, one is The Irrationality of the Universe, another one is The Meaninglessness of Human Life, and other is The Importance of the Physical World. This essay will focus a little more in meaningless in human life and morality.

Meursault, the main character in this book, he has cold- heart and has no feeling. Following quote explain the character well. "Madman died today. Or yesterday maybe, I don't know. I got a telegram from the home: "Mother deceased. Funeral tomorrow. Faithfully yours." That doesn't mean anything. Maybe it was yesterday". This quote was spoken by Meursault, the novel's narrator and protagonist, these are the opening lines of the novel. They introduce Meursault's emotional indifference, one his most important character traits. Meursault does not express any remorse upon learning of his mother's death, he merely reports the fact in a plain and straightforward manner. His chief concern is the precise day of his mother's death a seemingly trivial detail. Meursault's comment, "That doesn't mean anything," has at least two possible meanings. It could be taken as part of his discussion about which day Madame Meursault died. That is, Meursault could mean that the telegram does not reveal any meaningful information about the date of his mother's death. However, the comment could also be read more broadly, with a significance that perhaps Meursault does not consciously intend; Meursault might be implying that it does not matter that his mother died at all. This possible reading introduces the idea of the meaninglessness of human existence, a theme that resounds throughout the novel. Meursault is psychologically detached from the world around him. Events that would be very significant for most people, such as a marriage proposal or a parent's death, do not matter to him, at least not on a sentimental level. He simply does not care that his mother is dead, or that Marie loves him. Meursault is also honest, which means that he does not think of hiding his lack of feeling by shedding false tears over his mother's death. In displaying his indifference, Meursault implicitly challenges society's accepted moral standards, which dictate that one should grieve over death. Because Meursault does not grieve, society sees him as an outsider, a threat, even a monster. At his trial, the fact that he had no reaction to his mother's death damages his reputation far more than his taking of another person's life. Meursault is neither moral nor immoral. Rather, he is amoral he simply does not make the distinction between good and bad in his own mind. When Raymond asks him to write a letter that will help Raymond torment his mistress, Meursault indifferently agrees because he "didn't have any reason not to." He does not place any value judgment on his act, and writes the letter mainly because he has the time and the ability to do so. At the novel's outset, Meursault's indifference seems to apply solely to his understanding of himself. Aside from his atheism, Meursault makes few assumptions about the nature of the world around him. However, his thinking begins to broaden once he is sentenced to death. After his encounter with the chaplain, Meursault concludes that the universe is, like him, totally indifferent to human life. He decides that people's lives have no grand meaning or importance, and that their actions, their comings and goings, have no effect on the world. This realization is the culmination of all the events of the novel. When Meursault accepts "the gentle indifference of the world," he finds peace with himself and with the society around him, and his development as a character is complete.

A major component of Camus's absurdist philosophy is the idea that human life has no redeeming meaning or purpose. Camus argues that the only certain thing in life is the inevitability of death, and, because all humans will eventually meet death, all lives are all equally meaningless. Meursault gradually moves toward this realization throughout the novel, but he does not fully grasp it until after his argument with the chaplain in the final chapter. Meursault realizes that, just as he is indifferent to much of the universe, so is the universe indifferent to him. Like all people, Meursault has been born, will die, and will have no further importance. Paradoxically, only after Meursault reaches this seemingly dismal realization is he able to attain happiness. When he fully comes to terms with the inevitability of death, he understands that it does not matter whether he dies by execution or lives to die a natural death at an old age. This understanding enables Meursault to put aside his fantasies of escaping execution by filing a successful legal appeal. He realizes that these illusory hopes, which had previously preoccupied his mind, would do little more than create in him a false sense that death is avoidable. Meursault sees that his hope for sustained life has been a burden. His liberation from this false hope means he is free to live life for what it is, and to make the most of his remaining days. "A minute later she asked me if I loved her. I told her it didn't mean anything but that I didn't think so". According to this quote from part one, chapter four, Meursault relates an exchange he has with Marie. With characteristic emotional indifference and detachment, Meursault answers Marie's question completely and honestly. Always blunt, he never alters what he says to be tactful or to conform to societal expectations. However, Meursault's honesty reflects his ignorance. His blunt words suggest that he does not understand fully the emotional stakes in Marie's question. Also, in Meursault's assertion that love "didn't mean anything," we see an early form of a central idea Meursault later comes to understand the meaninglessness of human life.

Meursault offers no explanation for his belief in the equality of human lives. In the novel's final chapter, he identifies death as the force responsible for the constant and unchangeable nature of human life. A comparison of this quotation to Meursault's ideas following his death sentence highlights Meursault's development as a character whose understanding of the human condition deepens as a result of his experiences. "I said that people never change their lives, that in any case one life was as good as another and that I wasn't dissatisfied with mine here at all". This quotation is Meursault's response in part one, Chapter five, to his boss's offer of a position in Paris. Meursault's statement shows his belief in a certain rigidity or inertia to human existence. His comment that "one life was as good as another" maintains that although details may change, one's life remains essentially constant. The comment also implies that each person's life is essentially equal to everyone else's.