

ALBERT CAMUS ON LAW AND MORALITY

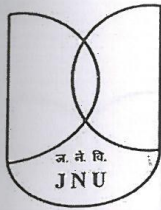
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled, “ALBERT CAMUS ON LAW AND MORALITY” submitted by Naşim Zandpour for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy of Jawaharlal Nehru University, is her bonafide work and to the best of our knowledge it has not been submitted by her or by anyone else, in part or full for any other degree or diploma of this or other University.

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DECLARATION

I, Nasim Zandpour, do hereby declare that the dissertation entitled, "ALBERT CAMUS ON LAW AND MORALITY," submitted by me for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy at Jawaharlal Nehru University, is my bonafide work and it has not been submitted by me or by anyone else, in part or full, for any other degree or diploma of this or any other University.

Nasim Zandpour

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Introduction

The purpose of the present study is to scrutinise Albert Camus' philosophy in regard to morality and legality. I will discuss how his philosophy and his view about the world and its meaning has shaped his moral stand point; and how his legal and political views are informed by the way he looks at the world and the way he defines values.

It is frequently observed that the modern age is described with a decrease of faith in supernatural power or some divine law, and in addition an emerging disillusionment with scientific reason and instrumental as a means of characterizing the moral basis of political life. This has resulted in the development of relativist, subjective accounts of political values which are being seen with both optimism and caution. From one viewpoint, it has meant the liberation of man from such ideological conventions and authoritative opinions often invoked to struggle against political injustice and oppression; it has supported libertarian, individualist trends in modern life. Whereas, from another perspective, the dismissal of faith in higher law or objective moral norms, it is frequently contended, makes the way for nihilist philosophies, which would ordain the power of irrational impulse as a definitive judge of political worth. In this way an essential issue facing modern man is regardless of whether it is conceivable to give rational value and worth to his existence during a time where there is no more certainty that reason can build up absolute or objective truths.

When we deny the existence of a higher power that dictates us all, and tells us exactly what is right and what is wrong, we are suddenly left with a void that we need to fill. With the absence of the all-knowing God to guide us, we are left to ourselves to find our way in this confusing world, a world that, as Camus defines it, is meaningless. Since we human beings are the only creatures who are insisting on finding a meaning in their lives, we are now left with the responsibility to create our own meaning; because now, there is no higher

authority who can give it to us. But now that we are left with this freedom to choose the meaning of our life and consequently the values we want to set for ourselves, it might sound like a dangerous outcome.

We are living in a world that already is going through so much of turbulence and blood shed due to the fights over whose values are superior and worth dying for and killing for. Each group, whether political or religious, believe they have the ultimate answer, so they are so sure with their ideology that they allow themselves to go to the extent of sacrificing lives of people, being opponents or allies, for it. So actually the realization of the fact that there is no absolute meaning or truth to fight and kill for can be somewhat of a relief. But on the other hand, in the event that man, alone, is the sole maker of his qualities and purposes, does this imply his freedom is boundless? Does it suggest the nihilist rationale that anything is in this way conceivable - including revolutionary viciousness and terrorism? Is it conceivable, as it were, to identify limits on the application of freedom without engaging higher law or target truth? Is it conceivable to characterize the positive, gentler substance of rebellion, as a challenge against injustice and oppression, without grasping the legitimate extreme of nihilist revolution?

It is this issue which has been given critical expression in the works of Albert Camus. What is unique in Camus' investigation is his effort to demonstrate that political rebellion, as the call for freedom against oppression and persecution, is contrary to the philosophy of revolutionary nihilism. In spite of the fact that rebellion includes the refutation of faith in God or higher law, it is not a convention that endorses the nihilist doctrine that everything is conceivable – including murder or suicide. For real rebellion, instead of revolutionary nihilism, is a confirmation, and also a refutation; an assertion that the distinct individual has a value that ought to be regarded and respected.

With the current situation, the world not seeing any peace due to the great fights over beliefs by the people who think they have the final answer to the great questions of life, it seems like it is the time to revise our outlook towards

the reality of the world. We human beings seem to be the only creatures who could not come to peace with the idea of absurdity of the world and the fact that the world does not follow the rational pattern of our brain. The world is as it is and our understanding of it is limited because our access to it, is limited. As Camus explains, the result of this constant tension between our desire for finding true meaning of life, an absolute and firm pattern that can provide us with the safety we dream of, and the meaninglessness of the world has left us with absurdity. So now maybe it is time to look around and see how this great desire for finding absolute and fixed values is taking us down to the point of us becoming our own greatest enemy.

We are at a juncture of history where we can deal with the natural disasters and calamities in a way that we could never do before, and now what we need to hide from is no longer the danger of wild animals or thunderstorm, because day by day we are developing increasing ability to keep ourselves safe. The real danger of our century is the danger of our fellow human beings. Just a look at what is going on in the world is enough to make us realize the harms we are causing each other in the fights we create over proving each of us having the final absolute truth. The religious fanaticism from one side is taking the life of thousands of our fellow humans, in the form of war or even the totalitarian governments that is the result of this ideology. On the other hand the political absolutism is providing a different form of excuse for starting wars between countries and taking lives of innocent people all around the world. Now it is time to understand the absurdity of our world and realize the meaninglessness of the causes we are fighting over.

At this point Camus' writings finds its importance, since, as it will be discussed vastly, he makes us realize how it is impossible to have fixed and absolute values and as the result how meaningless absolute laws would be. For this aim I will have a brief introduction to his life and works to make it more clear how his philosophy can be helpful in overcoming the problems discussed.

Albert Camus was born in Dreaan province in French Algeria. He was a prolific writer, dramatist and a distinguished author. In spite of the fact that he was not by any technical education nor by his occupation considered a philosopher, he still made imperative, powerful commitment for an extensive variety of problems within ethical philosophy in his books, journals, expositions and talks—from extremism and governmental savagery to suicide as well as capital punishment. He is frequently portrayed as an author with strong existentialist leanings, however he was not fond of this categorization himself. Camus started his scholarly profession as a writer regarding political theories as well as an on-screen artist, playwright and dramatist while living in Algeria. Afterwards, despite the fact that he was staying in France amid World War II, he got to play an active part in the Struggle and starting from 1944 to three years later, he worked as head manager of the newspaper named *Combat*. Within the middle of the century, in view of the quality of his most famous novels namely *The Stranger*, *The Plague*, and *The Fall*, and two other important works like *The Myth of Sisyphus* and *The Rebel*, he had already accomplished a universal repute and audience. In fact, within these works he presented as well as he built up on the two main philosophical thoughts—the idea of “the Absurd” along with the thought of “Revolt”. The Absurd could be characterized as an abstract restriction that is a consequence of the existence of consciousness of humans, with its constantly squeezing demand for direction and importance in life, in a fundamentally futile and unconcerned world. Camus recognizes “the Absurd” to be a basic as well as a well-defined feature for the present day situation of Man. The idea of Rebellion suggests a way for determined action and even a perspective. But this idea could manifest very dangerous forms, for example, extremism and a careless or over the top egotism, however essentially, and with completely straightforward expressions, it comprises of a state of mind of courageous insubordination or confrontation to whatsoever abuses individuals.¹

¹ Aronson, Ronald. "Albert Camus", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2012/entries/camus/>>. Accessed on 02/07/2016.

Not long after the flare-up of World War I, when Camus was almost an infant, his father was required to do service at the armed forces and on 11th October in the year 1914 he expired because of irreversible injuries endured within one of the major battles. When Camus was a juvenile, he found out that his father once became brutally sick when he saw an open execution. This account, which surfaces as an imaginary structure within the writer's book *The Stranger* and is likewise related in the philosophical exposition "Reflections on the Guillotine", emphatically influenced Camus while also affecting his deep rooted resistance to capital punishment.

Among his different occupations amid that particular age was periods of monotonous and boring administrative work where a particular work comprised of a "Bartleby-like recording" and filtering of meteorological information while the other one included newspaper rearranging in a vehicle permit agency. We can envision well that it was because of a consequence of this kind of involvement and gaining subsequent experience from which his prominent notion of "Sisyphean struggle", daring rebelliousness while facing "the Absurd", first began to take form inside his mind.

Camus ignored or contradicted system building philosophy, had little confidence in logic, proclaimed rather than contended a large portion of his primary thoughts, exhibited others in illustrations, was engrossed with direct and individual knowledge while at the same time agonized over certain inquiries such as the significance of life while at the same time facing death. In spite of the fact that he compellingly isolated his philosophy and thought process from that of existentialist philosophy, Camus postured this century's most famous existentialist interrogations, which unveils *The Myth of Sisyphus*: "There is only one really serious philosophical question, and that is suicide".² What's more, his philosophy of "the Absurd" has given the world a remarkable picture of the destiny of humans: "Sisyphus unendingly pushing his stone up

² Camus, *Myth of Sisyphus*, p. 3.

the mountain just to see it move down every time he reached the top.” Camus' reasoning discovered “political expression” in *The Rebel*, which alongside the daily paper publications, political papers, plays, and fictional writing got him a notoriety for being an incredible philosopher. It moreover involved him in struggle with his companion, Jean-Paul Sartre, inciting the “major political-intellectual” gulf of the post war period as both of them turned out to be, individually, the main scholarly expressions of the predominantly academic left. Moreover, in posturing and responding to philosophical queries of that time, Camus voiced a study of religious conviction also along with the study of Enlightenment, even with that of Marxism

Now, I am going to provide a short summary of the structure of the chapters of the dissertation, and what is going to be discussed in each chapter. In the first chapter, titled The Concept of Good Life, I will consider what can a good life mean and in this regard the ancient Greek concept of good life or eudemonia will be discussed. When good life is discussed, what we have in common is that we all want a good life, but the difficulty starts when we try to come to an agreement about what do we mean by it. Eudaimonia is a Greek word mostly understood as happiness or wellbeing. Discussion of the connections between righteousness of character and happiness is one of the main points of focus in ancient ethics, and there are many disagreements between philosophers when it comes to this topic that I will expand further on these differences in the first chapter. Despite the differences, all the virtue ethicists believe that there is a close connection between living a virtuous life and having a happy life.

Whether being a virtuous person will necessarily provide us with a happy life or not is an important issue. We will have a glance about some of the other major theories of morality, namely: Divine command theory which claims the right and wrong is decided by the divine being or God and the source of all our moral codes is God; Kant's moral theory that is a deontological moral theory, meaning the reason we should do certain actions and avoid the others

is the duty our reason will lead us to; utilitarianism that is the theory that aims at the maximization of happiness for the greatest number of people and in which the right and wrong is decided based on the principles of pleasure and pain; and finally contractarianism that legitimizes ethical values and political judgments keeping in view the notion of a “social contract” including some ideal circumstances, as absence of uncertainty; or a universal ethical theory that individuals make the correct decisions under a speculative “social contract”. Through this part I will examine if each of these theories can actually help us in achieving a good life, or in other words happiness. At the end I will discuss if the fixed moral values in general can guarantee us a good life. And this chapter will end with a short glance on what would be Albert Camus’ point of view on the topic.

The second chapter, named Value and Morality in Camus’ Philosophy, would be focused on Camus’ idea about the conventional moral ideas and how he believes we need to revise them. For this purpose, this chapter is consist of three sections. In the first section, called Nietzsche on Morality, I am going to discuss Friedrich Nietzsche’s views on morality and values since he had a great impact on Camus’ philosophy on the same subject. In this section various works of Nietzsche like “*On the Genealogy of Morals, Beyond Good and Evil, The Gay Science, Thus spoke Zarathustra*”, etc. will be discussed and how he is developing his philosophy in contrast to the ancient Greek philosophy. He blames the over rationalization in the philosophy post Socrates and how this have influenced the philosophy for ages after it. According to Nietzsche, who announces the death of God, we are left with no absolute values and at the end we are the ones who have to create the meaning for our lives and find our own values. In the second section, the focus is on the way Camus was influenced by Nietzsche’s philosophy. I will draw from various works of Camus and will point out some of the references and similarities to the Nietzschean concepts in them. And at the end, I will discuss the extent of this influence, and whether Camus actually accepts and follows Nietzsche’s philosophy in a complete manner or not. Finally, the third and the final section of this chapter is called

Camus on Morality. In this section, I will examine Camus' views on morality and how are they reflected in his writings. I will explain how life is considered as the primary value and how this will lead to the development of other values like freedom, justice, solidarity and etc. through the act of revolt. According to him as the result of revolt, every time that it happens, a new value is formed. Justice and freedom are two of the main values he is concerned with and he discusses them in length, but the problem he faces is reconciling these two values without one overthrowing the other. Further, the influence of the world war on the shifts we can observe in his moral views will be discussed and we will see how solidarity will be added to the list of his values in this section.

The third and the last chapter of this dissertation is titled Camus on Legality. As the title of the chapter suggests, I will be discussing Camus' idea of the legal system and how we can come up with a better system. The first section of this chapter is called Justice, Freedom and Happiness. In this section, his ideas of freedom and justice and how we should try to keep the balance between the two is the point of focus. According to Camus, the fact that we are free to choose our own values does not lead to the nihilistic conclusion that as the result everything is permitted. We are free but this freedom also has to have a limit. As it will be discussed, revolt is a key concept in his philosophy, but I will explain that even the revolt, that is the starting point for creating new values, is following certain conditions. Violence and revolt are not used as words with the same meaning for Camus; in reacting to the moral test of the connection between the two concepts, he attempts to find out the standards for the justification of political force natural for his image of political justice. Remaining adherent to an ethical driving force in any revolt is the benchmark of the search for progressive justice, and any form of "legitimization of violence" is going to go against this standard. Further in this section I will explain that according to him, the end does not justify the mean, and we should not allow injustice at the moment in the name of achieving justice in the future. According to him the freedom and justice have to be practiced in a way that none of them is overpowering the other one.

The second section of the third chapter is called Capital Punishment. In this section I will discuss how limit finds its meaning when it comes to the matter of life of a human being. Revolt, judgment, punishment and any other concept find their limits in death. For Camus, solidarity against death is the only thing that connects us in an absurd world, and we should not take away this solidarity by killing in any form, being murder or execution. I will discuss how he equates the capital punishment to a public version of murder and expands it in his essays *The Rebel* and *Reflections on Guillotine*. According to Camus, none of us actually have the ability to make a judgment that can lead to taking away someone's life. For Camus, death is where he draws the line. He argues for a society that does not ground its judgments on the old and conventional beliefs in absolute values that cannot exist in an absurd world. It will be explained in this section, that how this will lead to a legal system that is not absolute as well.

To put it in a nut shell, this dissertation is aiming at revising the beliefs and ideas that we are grounding our world on; to take a look and examine the direction we are heading as human beings. Camus' philosophy seems apt for the current situation as he understands the absurdity of human condition. He understands well how this futile struggle for finding one final and absolute meaning in the world, and fighting over proving each of us having the correct one is taking away our solidarity and is leading us to a world filled with hatred and fear. When we understand and accept the fact that there is no such absolute and final truth, many of our conflicts will lose their meaning. And finally when we start to form our values based on the situation and according to the time, our legal system also will end up being a healthy and useful system that will provide us with the opportunity of moving towards a more peaceful world.

Looking at the world from this perspective will give us the chance to give up on many dogmatic beliefs that result in values that are no longer valid. It will provide us with the opportunity of creating a system that is devoid of prejudices and is open to change anytime necessary. Of course this also will

not lead us to Utopia, but at least might take us closer to a more realistic life that can make sense to each person individually at the same time that it is providing us, human beings as a whole, with a better condition for living. This world will not have any place for honor killing, victim shaming, queer phobia, and anything that questions the individuality and authenticity of each of us. I believe being able to remove the sense of guilt imposed on many people due to what can simply be called a different outlook to life worth considering this option.

Chapter 1: The Concept of Good Life

To answer the age long question as to why human beings need moral codes I have found that many philosophers suggest the idea of having a good life, of which even though each of us may have a different definition, there is a possibility of finding a basic minimal answer on which most of people would agree upon. In this chapter I shall make an attempt to focus on elucidating the concept of good life; what can it mean and what would be the way to achieve it. The idea of a good life tends to bring the notion of material satisfaction to our mind at the first instance, but it does not need to remain limited only to that. A good life indicates not only material but spiritual or aesthetic satisfaction as well. We all desire a comfortable and safe lifestyle but at the same time our sense of self respect and dignity are also important to us. We find the need for safety, peace, being loved and having enough opportunities for growth and fulfilment equally important. In other words, we all want happiness. One of the most dominating ideas in regard to good life is the ancient Greek view that equates a good life with an ethical or a virtuous life.

Eudaimonia is a Greek word generally interpreted as happiness or well-being. Debates of the connections concerning righteousness of “character (*ethikē aretē*) and happiness or eudaimonia” is considered as the foremost concerns of early ethics, and a topic of quiet a lot of difference. Thus there are variations within Eudaimonism. Although, there are many persuasive structures but two are the most important. These are that of Aristotle and the Stoics. Aristotle considers virtue along with the practice of it as the major component in Eudaimonia yet he recognizes also the significance of exterior factors, for example, being healthy, possessing riches, beauty etc. On the other hand, the

Stoics consider virtue as essential and adequate for Eudaimonia, and arguing along these lines deny the need for any external goods.³

Aristotle says in his work *Nicomachean Ethics* that there is an agreement that Eudaimonia is considered to be the highest good for human beings, but at the same time there is considerable disagreement on what does living well mean:

Verbally there is a very general agreement; for both the general run of men and people of superior refinement say that it is [eudaimonia], and identify living well and faring well with being happy; but with regard to what [eudaimonia] is they differ, and the many do not give the same account as the wise. For the former think it is some plain and obvious thing like pleasure, wealth or honor...⁴

Therefore, as Aristotle mentions that the “eudaimon life” is that form of a life that is factually necessary, and implies a life well lived, is actually not explaining a lot. Everybody desires for a “eudaimon life”; and everybody approves on the point that being “eudaimon” is identified with an individual's welfare. But the actual troublesome problem is basically to indicate exactly which kind of actions empower somebody to live a good life. One major change in Greek philosophy for finding a solution to the problem of how exactly to accomplish “eudaimonia” will be to involve *arête* ("virtue"), one of the most essential notions in Greek philosophy. According to Aristotle, “the eudaimon life is a life of virtuous activity in accordance with reason”.⁵ Even Epicurus, who claims that “the eudaimon life” is equal to that of the pleasurable life holds that the life of pleasure corresponds with that of the virtuous life. Hence, the ancient moral scholars have an agreement upon the point that virtue is firmly bound up with happiness.

³ Hursthouse, Rosalind. "Virtue Ethics", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2013/entries/ethics-virtue/>>. Accessed on 15/12/2015.

⁴ Aristotle/ David Ross, Lesley Brown, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, 1095a17

⁵ Ibid., 1097b22–1098a20

Same as all other ancient moral philosophers, Socrates felt that everyone needed “eudaimonia” more than any other thing. Although, Socrates suggested a rather systematic type of “eudaimonism”, but still it seems that he believed that virtue is as much essential as it is adequate for “eudaimonia”. Socrates is persuaded that certain virtues like discretion, bravery, justice, devotion, knowledge and associated characteristics of awareness and spirit are completely vital if a man wants a decent and “happy eudaimon life”. Virtues ensure a life happily lived. For instance, in the *Meno*, regarding insight, he says: “... everything the soul endeavors or endures under the guidance of wisdom ends in happiness...”⁶

In the *Apology*, Socrates mentions lucidly his obvious differences towards the ones who believe that “the eudaimon life” is equal with the pleasurable life or honor, when Socrates reprimands the people of Athens for being more interested in wealth and honor than the condition of their spirits.

Good Sir, you are an Athenian, a citizen of the greatest city with the greatest reputation for both wisdom and power; are you not ashamed of your eagerness to possess as much wealth, reputation, and honors as possible, while you do not care for nor give thought to wisdom or truth or the best possible state of your soul.⁷

... it does not seem like human nature for me to have neglected all my own affairs and to have tolerated this neglect for so many years while I was always concerned with you, approaching each one of you like a father or an elder brother to persuade you to care for *virtue*.⁸

We come to learn gradually that this sympathy toward one's spirit; that somebody's spirit may be in the most ideal condition, adds up for attainment of “moral virtue”. Hence, when Socrates states that the citizens of Athens ought to look after their spirits, it implies that they ought to tend to their virtue instead of seeking after honor or wealth. Virtues are conditions of the soul. At

⁶ Plato, *Plato's Meno*, 88c

⁷ Plato, *Apology*, 29e

⁸ *Ibid.*, 31a–b

the point when a soul has been legitimately tended to it has the virtues. In addition, as indicated by Socrates, this condition of the spirit or “moral virtue” is essentially great. The soundness of the spirit is superlatively more imperative for “eudaimonia” than say for example, riches and political influence. Somebody with a virtuous spirit is in an ideal situation than somebody who is rich and respected yet whose soul is undermined by out of line activities. This perspective is affirmed in the *Crito*, where Socrates somehow manages to compel Crito to concur that the flawlessness of the spirit, virtue or righteousness, is the most important good:

And is life worth living for us with that part of us corrupted that unjust action harms and just action benefits? Or do we think that part of us, whatever it is, that is concerned with justice and injustice, is inferior to the body? Not at all. It is much more valuable...? Much more...⁹

Socrates contends that if the spirit is demolished by certain offences, then life cannot be considered as worthy of living. In short, Socrates assumes that virtue is essential as well as adequate for “eudaimonia”. A man who does not have the quality of virtue can never call himself truly happy, whereas a man with virtuous righteousness can't neglect to be happy. We might observe later on that “Stoic ethics” takes clue from the particular Socratic knowledge as discussed.

In the *Republic*, Plato contends that virtues are conditions of the spirit, also the fair individual can be somebody whose spirit is methodical and agreeable, and every one of its fragments working appropriately for the individual's advantage. Interestingly, Plato also maintains that the spirit of the unfair man lacking any virtues is turbulent and self-destructive, so that regardless of the possibility that he could fulfill a large portion of his goals, his absence of internal concordance and solidarity frustrate all the opportunities he might

⁹ Plato, *Crito*, 47e–48a

have of accomplishing “eudaimonia”. Plato's moral hypothesis is eudemonistic on the grounds that it keeps up that “eudaimonia” relies upon virtue. On Plato's variant of the correlation, virtue is portrayed as something which is highly significant along with an overwhelming component of “eudaimonia”.

Stoic ethics is an especially solid rendition of eudaimonism. As indicated by the Stoics, virtue is essential as well as adequate for eudaimonia. (This proposal is by and large viewed as coming from the Socrates of Plato's prior dialogues.) Generally, the ordinary Greek idea of “*arête*” is not exactly the same as that meant by virtues, having Christian inferences of philanthropy, persistence, and honesty, since “*arête*” incorporates numerous virtues that are not considered to be moral, for example, bodily power and aesthetics. Be that as it may, the Stoic idea of “*arête*” is closer to the Christian origination of virtues, which alludes to ethics. Again, not at all like Christian identifications with virtue, nobility and devotion, the Stoic origination fails to put any emphasis on leniency, pardoning, self-disgrace, philanthropy and “self-sacrificial” affection. Maybe Stoicism underscores certain states, for example, equity, honesty, control, effortlessness, self-control, intention, determination, and boldness (states which Christianity additionally supports).¹⁰

Before getting to the discussion whether being a virtuous person will actually lead us to having a happy life or not, we will have a glance about some of the other major accounts of ethics and morality. The major distinctions that can be drawn between the different theories of morality is based on their idea about the source of moral codes. One group is the one which believes that moral codes are fixed and absolute because they are dictated to us from a higher authority like God; and the other group are the ones that bring down the decision into the human realm. The moral theory under the first group is called the Divine Command Theory. On the other hand, the other group includes the theories which do not ground their theories on God's commands. The second

¹⁰ Baltzly, Dirk. "Stoicism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/stoicism/>>. Accessed on 4/1/2016.

group includes different theories such as Kantian ethics, utilitarianism, contractarianism and more. Further we will have a glance into each of these theories.

Divine Command Theory

In regard to the first group, there are many who claim that there must be a fundamental association amongst morality and religion, in a way that, with the absence of religion (specifically, deprived of God and any other divine beings) morality cannot be there, i.e., nothing to judge what is a good and bad conduct. In spite of the fact that there are connected claims that religion is important to inspire and manage individuals to carry on in ethical manner, many people mention the case of the fundamental association amongst “morality and religion” to imply that the concepts of good and bad originate within the divine instructions of God (divine beings). This perspective of maintaining ethical standards is known as “Divine Command Theory”. The outcome of this kind of thought will be that any activity can be viewed as correct or mandatory if individuals believe that God has told us to do it, and it is wrong if individuals believe that God instructs us that we abstain from doing that particular thing. Not just does divine command theory give a metaphysical premise to morality, yet as indicated by many it likewise provides us with a perfect response to the problem before us, i.e. why should we be moral? William Path Craig claims that this is a perspective of morals that is completely based upon the premise of the existence of God. We are considered to be responsible for our activities by a higher authority or any divine power. “The individuals who do evil will be punished, and the individuals who live ethically upstanding lives will be vindicated and even rewarded. Good, at last, triumphs over evil.” Additionally, from a theistic perspective of morals, we gain motivation to conduct our behaviors in such a way that they run counter to our “self-interest”, in light of

the fact that such activities of selflessness have profound essentialness and legitimacy inside a theistic structure. “On divine command theory it is in this way rational to give up my own welfare for the welfare of my children, my companions, and even total strangers, since God affirms of and even orders such acts of selflessness.”¹¹

A vital objection to this theory is that there is something missing in regard to “punishment” and motivation for any kind of reward as far as following certain morals are concerned. That is, one may claim that if the motivation for behaving morally on “divine command theory” is to simply stay away from “punishment” and probably attain everlasting paradise, then it is not considered much of a perfect moral motivation, since in itself it is a sign of ethical naïveté. “Should we not rather try to live good lives in group with others because we value them and want their happiness”? In light of this, promoters of “divine command theory” may offer distinctive records of being morally motivated, approving that an ethical inspiration idea exclusively on incentive and reprimand is missing something. Giving instance, maybe the motivation behind being moral is that God deliberated individuals to be constituted in a manner that being good is an essential condition for human flourishing. Some may protest this is excessively egoistic, however at any rate it appears to be less problematic than the inspiration to be moral provided merely by the desire to staying away from punishment.

Kant`s Moral Theory

“Kant's moral theory” is a perfect instance of a “deontological moral theory”– in which, “the rightness or wrongness of actions does not depend on the consequences rather on whether they fulfill our duty (duty for the sake of

¹¹ Austin, Michael W. “Divine Command Theory”. *Internet Encyclopedia of philosophy*, ISSN 2161-0002, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>. Accessed on 14/01/2016

duty)”¹². Kant understood that there is an ultimate standard of morality, which he called it as “The Categorical Imperative”. Therefore, according to the deontological theory, the action is more important than its consequence (*deon-* originates from Greek language as “duty” or “obligation”).

“Kant’s moral theory” is structured within the notion that when someone acts morally and when someone acts in agreement with reason, it is considered as synonymous. Just because human beings are considered rational agents (that is, in virtue of possessing practical reason, reason which is interested and goal-directed), hence they are bound by obligation to practice the ethical law that “practical reason” would prescribe. To act in accordance with something else would be considered an irrational act. Since, Kant emphasizes more on the notion of duty which being a rational agent is a part and parcel of it, hence his theory is regarded as a kind of deontological ethics.

Similar to his proposed logic, Kant's pragmatic logic is “a priori”, formal and complete: the ethical law is acquired non-experimentally from the same arrangement of practical reason (its structure), and since every single rational being have the same pragmatic reason only, the ethical law ties and commits everybody similarly. So what is this ethical law that commits every rational being generally and “a priori”? The ethical law is dictated by something which Kant alludes to as the “Categorical Imperative”, that is basically the universal rule that stresses that one should regard the humankind in oneself, that an individual does not create an exemption for her/himself when thinking about acceptable behavior, and by and large that one should just act as per principles that everybody ought to comply.

While Kant maintains that the ethical law is similarly obligatory for every rational agent, he also claims that this obligation of the ethical law is also self-inflicted, i.e. we independently recommend the ethical rule for our self. Also,

¹² Kant, *Groundwork for the metaphysics of Morals*, p. 20.

since Kant considers that the type of independence mentioned is only likely with the prior supposition of a “transcendentally free” foundation of ethical selection, the constriction that the ethical rule puts upon an individual is not only reliable along with independence of the will but it entails it too. Therefore, the most vital feature of Kant’s thesis will be to demonstrate that we should consider ourselves right in assuming that our ethically important selections are based in “transcendental freedom”.¹³

Kant puts forward his ethical theory in “*Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*” (1785), “*Critique of Practical Reason*” (also known as the “Second Critique”; 1788), and the “*Metaphysics of Morals*” (1797). His philosophy in the “*Groundwork.*” is the most famous and significant.

Kant starts his argumentation by the proposition that any ethical theory should be based on something that is unconditionally good. All goodness, according to Kant, should eventually be linked to that thing which is “unconditionally good”. We normally observe that there are a lot of things that we consider as “good” still which are never in true sense “unconditionally good”. For example, strength of character is usually considered to be something with a good appeal, but if someone uses this strong character to carry out sinister plans, then this kind of a strength of character is never considered good. A notion like happiness also, for Kant, is not something which is “unconditionally good”. While everyone generally yearns for happiness but if some individual is actually happy without deserving this happiness (maybe because, he his/her happiness might result while pilfering money of the poor), in that case it will never be considered universally good as far as this particular

¹³ Johnson, Robert and Cureton, Adam. "Kant's Moral Philosophy", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2016 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), *forthcoming* URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2016/entries/kant-moral/>>. Accessed on 25/01/2016.

individuals happiness is concerned. “Happiness can be considered good only in the situation when the happiness is truly deserved.”¹⁴

Kant states that the only single thing that can be considered as unconditionally good is a “good will”. An individual is considered to have a good will insofar as that individual forms her/his intentions merely keeping in mind the “self-conscious respect” for the ethical law, i.e. for the regulations concerning what a “rational agent ought to do”, i.e. performing his/her own duty. The importance of a “good will” would lie in the values upon which it bases its purpose behind an action and not merely on the results of the actions that these purposes would lead to. This corresponds to the importance given by Kant on the “unconditional goodness of a good will”¹⁵: if a will was to be assessed according to the results it produces, then its goodness would be depending upon these results.

If a “good will” is considered as the one which bases its purposes upon accurate values of action, then it would be beneficial for us to understand what kind of values they really are. “Any principle that commands an action is known as an imperative.”¹⁶ Most imperatives are “hypothetical imperatives,” i.e., certain instructions which are true simply if certain circumstances are to be met. For instance: “if you want to be a successful shopkeeper, then cultivate a reputation for honesty.” Since these “hypothetical imperatives” are habituated on desires they cannot be considered as those values which define the purposes and desires behind an “unconditionally good will”. But we need in the words of Kant a “categorical imperative.” Where “hypothetical imperatives” are of the form, “if y is desired/intended, do x”, “categorical imperatives” merely are of the form, “do x.” Since a “categorical imperative” is devoid of any link

¹⁴ Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, pp. 55-62.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

towards the results of an action, it is thus also devoid of any “determinate content”, and therefore it is “purely formal”.

This formation of a “categorical imperative” might prompt Kant to his first proper construction of the “categorical imperative” : “act only in accordance with that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it become a universal law”¹⁷. A maxim is a universal instruction that may be used to define specific passages of actions under specific situations. The idea of Kant appealing to the “universal law formulation” of the “categorical imperative” is to display that an action can be ethically allowable just if the maxim upon which this particular action is grounded might be confirmed as a general rule that everybody has to obey without any exemption. The sign of unethicalness, then will be that somebody has to make an exception for her/himself; i.e., one should act in a way that they want everyone else to act.

Kant states that an ethical law should be targeted towards a consequence that is not just active but is reasonably considered as an “end in itself”. For Kant, only humans who have rationality are considered as “ends in themselves”. To act in a moral way therefore is to acknowledge reasonable human beings as an “end in itself”. Consequently, the “categorical imperative” can be restructured as follows:

So act that you use humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means. The basic tenet here is that it is considered as immoral to treat somebody as a commodity of just some instrumental value; people have a non-instrumental or rather an intrinsic value, and the moral law stresses that we should acknowledge this kind of intrinsic value.¹⁸

¹⁷ Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, p. 84.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

As discussed, in this theory of morality, happiness would be the consequence of the actions and Kant does not believe that the morality of an action should be judged based on its consequences. Even independently this theory is not concerned with creating happiness as a goal. Therefore, according to me it cannot be considered as a moral theory that will lead us to a good life under the definition given before of a good life being a happy life.

Utilitarianism

The first organized version of utilitarianism was developed by Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) but we can trace the central concept of the theory, which says a behavior is morally appropriate when it maximizes happiness rather than bringing harm to others, to the times much earlier. As early pioneers of the Classical Utilitarians we can mention the British Moralists, Cumberland, Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Gay, and Hume.

According to utilitarianism, morally correct and incorrect action is decided from the “total goodness” (utility) of the results of a particular action. All actions are directed towards a particular end, but at the same time, “there is a *summum bonum* which is the highest good/end and that is pleasure or happiness. There is also a First Principle of Morals, namely the Principle of Utility, alternatively called The Greatest Happiness Principle (GHP) which is commonly characterized as the epitome of working towards the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people”.¹⁹ The GHP suggests that all of us must act in such a way that leads to maximizing human happiness (though

¹⁹ Stephen Nathanson. “Act and Rule Utilitarianism”. *Internet Encyclopedia of philosophy*, ISSN 2161-0002, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>. Accessed on 17/02/2016.

Jeremy Bentham was in favor of including all conscious beings in this utilitarian calculation). Although, recent forms of utilitarianism have given up on the notion of “maximizing pleasure” and replaced it with the idea of “maximizing the satisfaction” of all significant individuals.

As Stephen Nathanson explains in his entry on “Act and rule Utilitarianism”:

Utilitarianism seems to be a simple theory since it contains only one evaluative standard which is we should do what leads to the best consequences. However, the theory is actually quite complex because we will not be able to understand its single principle unless we know (at least) three things: a) which things we consider as good and bad; b) whose good (i.e. which individuals or groups) we should focus to maximize; and c) whether actions, policies, etc. are made right or wrong by their actual consequences (the results that our actions actually produce) or by their predictable consequences (the results that we predict will occur based on the evidence that we have).²⁰

Since most of the utilitarians are also interested in political sciences and social strategies, they are mostly dedicated to finding out what are the actions and policies that would maximize the welfare of the relevant group. The method they would follow to determine the welfare of a group was basically summing up the profits and losses of the members of the group that were resulted from adopting a specific action or policy. The welfare of the group is simply the sum total of the interests of all of its members. In the situations in which the utilitarian analysis is focused on the benefits of specific individuals or groups, the utilitarian moral theory needs the moral judgments to be based on what Peter Singer calls the “equal consideration of interests.”

Utilitarianism moral theory then, consist of the significant idea that while calculating the utility of actions, laws, or policies, we must have an impartial perspective and not a “partialist” perspective that favors

²⁰ Ibid.

ourselves, our friends, or others we especially care about. Since this fair outlook is seen as essential for a utilitarian morality, both egotism and partiality to particular groups is disallowed as deviations from utilitarian morality. Though a utilitarian method for defining what people's interests are may come to the conclusion that it is rational for people to take actions that maximize their own welfare or the welfare of the groups they are interested in, utilitarian morality cannot accept this as a criteria for determining the morally right or wrong action.²¹

In the Utilitarian theory a distinction can be made between act utilitarianism and rule utilitarianism. Both of these groups have an agreement upon the idea that our general purpose in evaluating actions must be to achieve the best consequences that are possible, but what they disagree about is how to do that.

According to act utilitarians, in any condition that we are faced with the question what should we, we should choose the action that will lead to the highest net utility. They believe that the principle of utility which is doing what that will lead to the best overall results, must be practiced on a case by case basis. The correct action under any circumstances is the one that produces more utility (i.e. generates more welfare) over the other possible actions. On the other hand, rule utilitarians accept a view that consists of two parts and emphasizes on the significance of moral rules. As stated by rule utilitarians, a) a particular action is morally acceptable if it is consistent with a justified moral rule; and b) a moral rule is acceptable if including it in our moral code would lead to more utility than other alternatives (or no rule at all)²².

Based on this outlook, the ethical standards of individual actions must be judged based on universal ethical standards, and the particular ethical standard

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

must be adjudged by considering whether by accepting them in our moral codes we can produce more welfare than the other alternative rules.

What mainly differentiates act utilitarianism from rule utilitarianism is that in “Act Utilitarianism” the principle is used mainly for evaluation of the actions of persons, whereas in “Rule Utilitarianism” we evaluate the rules directly by putting the utilitarian principle in practice and then judging individual actions by checking their accordance with those rules which their acceptance will lead to the most utility. Act utilitarianism emphasizes on the particular context and the various distinct structures of the circumstances in which the moral problems arise, and it offers a single method for handling these individual cases. “Rule utilitarianism” emphasizes on the frequent structures of our life and the particular ways in which the same issues rise repeatedly. According to this view, we require rules that take care of types or classes of actions such as murder, theft, lying, dealing with our relatives or friends, putting punishments for wrongdoings, helping people, etc. However, what both of these perspectives agree upon is that what determines the rightness or wrongness of something is the relationship between our action or the method our ethical standards and the influence of our ethical viewpoint on the level of the welfare of individuals.

This moral theory, like all the other ones, has faced various criticisms. For the starting, Bentham`s hedonic ideal is considered practically, if not theoretically, impossible. One of the main problems this theory faces is the procedure of identifying the consequences of an action; this process has to deal with both theoretical and practical problems regarding what needs to be considered as consequences of the actions, even without exactly calculating the value of those consequences. As another example, act utilitarians accuse the traditional moral rules of being too rigid, but the critics believe that utilitarians fail to notice that this rigidity is what creates the trust between people. If in a society, people like judges, doctors, and promise-makers decide to act on the basis of being committed to doing whatever that will maximizes

happiness, then it will be very difficult to trust these group of people. For example how can one trust that the doctors will not use the organs of any patient with the chance of living for saving some other patients who are in the greater number? This perspective will lead to lack of a kind of predictability and consistency that we require for being able to form trust and stability in our social life. ²³

At the same time, utilitarianism faces the objection that preventing or removing the suffering must be given priority over any substitute action that would only lead to maximizing the happiness of somebody who is already happy. Therefore, we see that once more trying to find a pre-defined set of values, even if they are designed to maximize the happiness, is bound to fall short of its objective in the higher scale.

Contractarianism

Coming to the ethical theory of Contractarianism, we find that the principles of right and wrong (or Justice) are those which everyone in society would agree upon while forming a social contract. Various forms of Contractarianism have been suggested. In general, the idea is that the principles or rules that determine right and wrong in society are determined by a hypothetical contract forming method.²⁴

According to the moral theory of contractarianism, our moral standards are rooted in the idea of having a contract or coming to a mutual agreement. Contractarians are doubtful of the possibility of finding the roots of morality

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Narveson, *The Libertarian Idea*, p. 142.

in either a heavenly power or will, or in some purist ideal based on the nature of humanity. Recently the whole idea of the social contract thought has been considered as having two strains namely “contractarianism” and “contractualism.”

Contractarianism, that is rooted in the Hobbesian stream of social contract thought, argues that people are mainly self-centered, and that a rational calculation of the best approach for achieving the maximization of what their interest is will encourage them to act in a moral manner (while the moral rules are decided based on what maximizes the shared interest) and to accept the legislative authority. Contractarianism claims that each of us are driven to consent to morality, as Jan Narveson explains it, “first because we are vulnerable to the depredations of others, and second because we can all benefit from cooperation with others”.²⁵ On the other hand, contractualism, that has its roots in the Kantian stream of social contract thought, claims that respecting people is rationality`s requirement that consecutively needs the moral principles to be as such that they have the possibility of being justified according to each individual. Therefore, persons are not considered to be inspired by self-interest but rather their inspiration lies in a commitment to openly justify the principles of morality to which each of them will be held.

Now we need to explain what a social contract means. The social contract consists of two central elements: a characterization of the preliminary situation which has been called differently by different groups, like the “state of nature” by the contemporary political philosophers, the “original position” by Rawls, or the “initial bargaining position” by Gauthier, and a characterization of the people involved in the contract, especially in terms of their rationality and their motivating factor for coming to agreement. The initial situation posits what is called the “no agreement position” in bargaining theory that is the situation the parties return when they are not able to make an agreement or contract. This situation might be relatively hostile, and comparatively social,

²⁵Ibid., p. 148.

depending on how the theoretician describes human life in the absence of rules of morality. In modern normative contractarian theories, which are theories that try to ground the validity of government or theories that are claiming to develop a moral ought, the initial position stands for the origin of a fair, unbiased agreement. As contractualists defend the necessity of a fair, unbiased agreement by motives external to the contract, contractarians claim that the accomplishment of the contract in obtaining cooperative interaction itself needs the foundation and procedures to be just and unbiased. The second element in the contractarian theory portrays the possible parties of the contract. This element itself has two subparts: the first one is that contractors have nominal other-directed desires or preferences that are other-directed, and the second one is that contractors have an ability for rational communication with others.²⁶

Contractarians try to avoid the assumption that people naturally prefer the moral behavior by itself to set the base for rules that govern justice or morality in rational self-interest. As individuals' interests do not essentially include the welfare of others, Gauthier tries to show that it is rational for us to be moral even if we do not have this kind of other-directed concerns. Therefore, he assumes that individuals do not have any interest in other people's welfare. On the other hand, individuals are assumed to be rational, and consequently, they will be capable of understanding how cooperative social collaboration can help them in satisfying their wishes. Behaving rationally leads to the possibility of maximizing one's own subjective preferences' satisfaction. Contractarians depend on the vital fact about people that we can collaborate to produce more than what we can each do while working alone, therefore considering it rational to collaborate under at least some terms. Self-interest and rationality suggest

²⁶ Cudd, Ann. "Contractarianism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2013/entries/contractarianism/>>. Accessed on 28/02/2016.

a desire to collaborate given that cooperators can do this without letting go of their self-interest. The desire to profit by participation consecutively makes individuals rationally concerned regarding their statuses for obeying the moral standards that make collaboration likely and rational.

Contractarians try to demonstrate that without the rules of justice for collaboration, individuals are worse off on their own. Thus it is rational to adopt some standards for morality and justice. These two aspects of the contractarian individual—self-interest and the capacity to profit by collaboration with others—alongside the conditions of moderate scarcity suggest what Rawls called the "circumstances of justice": the conditions under which rules for justice could be both conceivable and essential. Justice, and a social contract, is conceivable only where there is some probability of benefit to every person from participation.

This theory also is not immune to the criticisms. One of the points of criticism that emerges from the portrayal of the parties to the contract is that they should have the ability to add to the social result of collaboration. This is on the grounds that every individual must have the ability to profit by the inclusion of each one of those included. Yet, this threatens to leave many, for example, "the severely disabled, the global poor, and animals outside the domain of justice, an idea that some consider as totally inappropriate."²⁷

Social contract theories require some guidelines to control the arrangement of the agreement as well. Since they are before the contract, there should be some basis for earlier ethical standards, whether natural, rational, or traditional. The first principle that is regularly prescribed is that there must be no force or misrepresentation in formation of the contract. Nobody is to be pressured into the agreement by the threat of physical violence. The reason for this is quite clear: if one is permitted to use violence, then there is no sense of security in the contract. However, there is an almost negligible difference between being

²⁷ Nussbaum, *Frontiers of Justice*, p. 58.

forced by the danger of brutality into surrendering one's rights and being persuaded by the risk of destitution to make an unfavorable agreement. Consequently contractarians like Gauthier can argue for a reasonable and fair-minded beginning point for bargaining that will lead to secure and stable contracts.

As mentioned in the beginning, the most prevalent idea of the good life is equating it with an ethical life which as discussed includes various theories. But with a closer look to the matter, I have reasons to believe that in the end none of these theories can be completely satisfactory for providing the opportunity of having a good life for everyone and to make being moral a convincing argument.

Having a good life is a matter of our interests when they are viewed critically—the interests we should have. It is therefore a matter of judgment and controversy to determine what a good life is. But is it possible to suppose that being moral according to the conventional moral systems is the best way to make one's own life a good one? In my view, it is wildly implausible if we hold to popular conceptions of what morality requires and what makes a life good.²⁸

As we see in the example given by Dworkin, we can discuss that it is not (conventionally) moral for someone to sell cigarettes but this moral behavior of not selling cigarettes is not providing him with a good life, on the contrary it might even make his life more miserable because he would not be able to provide for his living.²⁹

One of the aspect that shows the inadequacy of these theories, or any other theory is that they mostly suggest a set system of values, is that the whole idea is based on having fixed and absolute values for everyone. But the question is how we can discuss the absoluteness of a value when we do not even have a fixed definition for it. For explaining this objection further, I am going to start

²⁸ Ibid., p. 64.

²⁹ Dworkin, *Justice for Hedgehogs*, p. 102.

with an example which is used most often to prove that there are certain values which are considered valuable under any circumstance, i.e. the idea of no harm. Every time I start a discussion with someone in favor of existence of concepts that are inherently good and absolute in their values, the first example given to me is that harming someone is always bad, so not harming others is considered as a code of conduct with an inherent value. But let us first ask what exactly do we mean by causing harm and preventing it. Let us try and define harm in a case like abortion. Some will argue abortion is harming the fetus, some others will argue not doing the abortion is harming the mother, and even someone might argue that not aborting the fetus is also harming it; i.e. in a condition when the fetus is bound to be born as an addict or from a person who is HIV positive. Even in a less serious case it can be born into a family who are abusive or socio economically very backward and cannot provide their baby with a good life. In this example we can see that even in a contemporary context we cannot come to an agreement about what we mean by harming someone. At the same time, we can observe the change in the meaning of this concept through the course of time. Taking another example, maybe years ago the education system was such that it was completely normal to believe that if you are too soft to your kids you are harming them because you are not teaching them what they require to learn. Even in the recent past, it was considered permissible to have physical punishment for kids in school and hurting someone physically was not against our moral codes under certain circumstances.

The other problem that can be found in this recipe for having a good life is that the things I enjoy might be very much similar to what my fellow humans are enjoying in majority of the time, but definitely there are matters in which my personal taste will distinguish me from others. For example having a love relationship with our desired person and the ability to form a family can be considered from various points as one of the factors related to the experience of having a good life. But if a person who belongs to LGBT community is not even allowed to love the person he or she loves just because based on many of

our ethical systems it is considered an immoral act, how can he or she possibly call that life a good one?

We might want to talk about values and morality in the ideal or theoretical level, but we should not forget to consider how things work in the practical life. When we want to argue for no harm value, being told thousands of times that hurting animals is bad does not stop the person who hurts them unless he has the compassion and feelings for them or is convinced rationally that he has to stop it for this or that particular reason; equally a person who loves animals will not hurt them if he is not told that doing so is a bad thing. We are human beings and our behavior is not conducted by rules of nature that we can find a certain group of rules and expect everyone to behave, feel and think based upon them. I find it important to mention that here I am not advocating for a chaotic and unruly lifestyle; what I am suggesting is that regulating the life has to be done at a different level. By coming up with absolute sets of value we are dividing the society into good people versus bad people who the good part deserves receiving all the attention and the resources. When we are talking about good life, we must consider the possibility of a reformative system that leaves the possibility of building a good life for every group in society.

Coming to the modern philosophy, Albert Camus who is going to be vastly discussed in this dissertation, would definitely not agree with the idea that following the conventional value systems with pre-defined codes of conduct would lead us to the happy life. As it will be discussed in the coming chapters, for him affirming the life and not depending on an afterlife is a very important part of his philosophy. According to him, Christianity deprives people of their life on earth by giving them the hope of an afterlife. On the other hand, disagreement to the Christian concepts does not lead him to the nihilistic view of life, where we are free and as the result of this freedom everything is allowed. For him, having a good life consists of affirming the life and revolting against its absurdity and defining the meaning for our lives by our choice and finding our own set of values.

Chapter 2: Value and Morality in Camus' Philosophy

In this chapter I am going to consider Camus' views on values and morality. Friedrich Nietzsche is one of the philosophers who has influenced Camus greatly in this area. Therefore it would be helpful to have a glance at Nietzsche's views on morality and value and the history of moral philosophy to which Nietzsche was responding, in order to understand Camus properly. This chapter consists of three subsections in which I first discuss Nietzsche's perspective on the subject, how Camus was influenced by Nietzsche's ideas and finally Camus' view about values and morality.

Nietzsche on Morality

In this section I will present an introduction to Nietzsche's understanding of morality and his analysis of the history of evolution of our moral codes. Nietzsche critiques his own age (however his criticism relate similarly even to the present day) for being excessively rationalistic, for accepting that it is best to treat existence and the world fundamentally as objects of knowledge. For Nietzsche, holding this position makes life meaningless as rationality and knowledge do nothing to legitimize existence and the world in themselves. Life attains its significance, as indicated by Nietzsche, just through art.

According to Nietzsche, Socrates can be seen as the founding father of Western rationality, demanding that we must have reasons to justify everything. He considered instincts as an absence of understanding and wrongdoing as an absence of knowledge. By arguing that the world is rationally understandable and all truths rationally justifiable, Socrates brought forth the genesis of modern scientific perspective. Under Socrates' impact, Greek tragedy was changed into rational discussion, which comes to its fullest expression in Plato's dialogues.

The modern world has acquired Socrates' rationalistic position to the detriment of losing the artistic instincts identified with the Apollonian and the Dionysian. We now consider knowledge to be worth seeking after for its own particular purpose and trust that all truths can be found and clarified with the acquisition of sufficient knowledge. Basically, the modern, Socratic, rational, scientific perspective regards the world as ruled by reason as opposed to an option that is more prominent than what our rational forces can grasp. After Socrates, philosophy has been the quest for knowledge through rational strategies. Genuine wisdom cannot be generated by the reasoning mind, as indicated by Nietzsche. We discover genuine insight in the "Dionysian" disintegration of the self that we will be able to discover in tragedy, myth, and music.³⁰

Apollo and Dionysus are children of Zeus in Greek tradition. Apollo is the master of reason and order while Dionysus is the master or lord of the unreasonable and disorder. For the Greeks did the two divine beings were not considered to be alternate extremes or opponents, albeit regularly the two gods were entwining by nature. Nietzsche's aesthetic utilization of the ideas, which was later developed rationally, initially showed up in his book *The Birth of Tragedy*. His significant proposition here was that the combination of "Dionysian" and "Apollonian" "Kunsttriebe" (artistic impulses) structure sensational expressions, or tragedies. He goes ahead to contend that this combination has not been accomplished following the old Greek tragedians. To promote the split, Nietzsche analyzes the Socratic Dialectic as being sick in the way that it manages to look at life. The academic argument is straightforwardly restricted to the idea of the "Dionysian" in light of the fact that it just tries to invalidate life; it utilizes motivation to dependably redirect, yet never to make. Socrates rejects the inherent value of the senses and life for "higher" beliefs. Interestingly, the Dionysian presence always tries to certify life. Whether in torment or joy, enduring or satisfaction, the inebriating

³⁰ Nietzsche, *Birth of tragedy*, pp. 25-28.

celebration that Dionysus has for life itself beats the Socratic disease and propagates the development and thriving of instinctive life force—a grand Dionysian 'Yes', to a Socratic 'No'.

Nietzsche's idea of the “Dionysian”, which he cultivates and changes through the span of his vocation, remains as a guided offset toward the methodical rationality that is so noticeable in most philosophy. In majority of scholarly examinations, the significance of truth and knowledge are considered as given, and scholars focus just over inquiries like how best to accomplish truth and knowledge. On the other hand, Nietzsche asks where is the origin of this drive for truth and knowledge and responds that they are results of a specific, Socratic perspective of the world. More profound than this desire for truth is the “Dionysian” drive to give free rein to the passions and to lose oneself in blissful craze. We cannot rightfully acknowledge or criticize the “Dionysian” within a tradition of rationality since the “Dionysian” stands outside rationality.³¹

As much as the civilized world might want to ignore it, the Dionysian is the wellspring of our myths, our interests, and our impulses, and none of these can be bounded by reason. While the civilizing power of the “Apollonian” is a crucial offset—in opposition to some generalizations of Nietzsche, he is completely against the complete surrender of reason and civilization—Nietzsche warns us that the most deep and rich parts of our nature might be lost when we decide to dismiss the “Dionysian” powers inside us.

Nietzsche lists some of the dogmatisms inalienable in rationality, for example, the division of ideas into binary opposites like truth and falsehood. According to Nietzsche, philosophy is concerned with giving us understanding not of truth but rather of the minds of the various philosophers. Everything is governed by a will to power, and in philosophy, we can see the great minds attempting to

³¹ Ibid., pp. 32-36.

force their will on the world by convincing others to see the world as they see it.

And do you know what “the world” is to me? Shall I show it to you in my mirror? This world: a monster of energy, without beginning, without end...as force throughout, as a play of forces and waves of forces...a sea of forces flowing and rushing together, eternally changing and eternally flooding back with tremendous years of recurrence...out of the play of contradictions back to the joy of concord, still blessing itself as that which must return eternally, as a becoming that knows no satiety, no disgust, no weariness; this my *Dionysian* world of the eternally self-creating, the eternally self-destroying, this mystery world of the two-fold voluptuous delight, my “beyond good and evil,” without goal, unless the joy of the circle is itself a goal....*This world is the will to power—and nothing besides!* And you yourselves are also this will to power—and nothing besides!³²

Some human types of cooperation in will to power are respectable, others shameful. Yet, in regard to these sorts of exercises, Nietzsche strains on *Beyond Good and Evil* (aphorism 9) the contrast between his own cosmology, which now and again appears to restore the spot of respectability in nature, and the "stoic" perspective, which attests the unity of mankind with Godlike nature:

According to nature you want to *live*? Oh you noble Stoics, what deceptive words these are! Imagine a being like nature, wasteful beyond measure, indifferent beyond measure, without purposes and consideration, without mercy and justice, fertile and desolate and uncertain at the same time; imagine indifference itself as a power—how *could* you live according to this indifference? Living—is that not precisely wanting to be other than this nature? Is not living—

³² Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 42.

estimating, preferring, being unjust, being limited, wanting to be different? ...But this is an ancient, eternal story: what formerly happened with the Stoics still happens today, too, as soon as any philosophy begins to believe in itself. It always creates the world in its own image; it cannot do otherwise. Philosophy is this tyrannical drive itself; the most spiritual will to power, to the creation of the world, to the *causa prima*.³³

It is vital not to isolate will to power from the individual's drive to generate values. Undoubtedly, Nietzsche is stating that the making of qualities communicates a longing for power, and the primary article of 1887's *On the Genealogy of Morals* comes back to this basic formula. Here, Nietzsche appropriates a surely understood component of Hegel's Phenomenology, the basic development of thought between fundamental sorts called "Masters and Slaves." This appropriation has the impact of underscoring the distinction between Nietzsche's own particular authentic "Genealogies" and that of Hegel's "Dialectic". Master and slave moralities, the truths of which are affirmed freely by sentiments that power has been expanded, are articulations of the person's will to control in subjectively distinct conditions of wellbeing. The former is an outcome of quality and lively positive thinking while the last comes from impotency, cynicism, sly and most broadly *resentment*, the innovative response of a "bad conscience" coming to shape as it betrays itself in contempt. The poison of slave morality is in this way coordinated ostensibly in *resentment* and deep down in bad conscience. Contrasting ideas of "good," in addition, have a place with master and slave value frameworks. Master morality supplements its "good" with the description "bad," comprehended to be connected with the person who is second rate, feeble, and weak. For slave morality, then again, the description, "great" is itself the supplement of "insidiousness", the essential comprehension of value in this plan, connected with the one having unrivaled quality. Therefore, the "great man" in the pure type of "master morality" will be the "abhorrent man," the man against whom

³³ Ibid., p. 68.

resentment is coordinated, in the purest type of "slave morality." Nietzsche is mindful so as to include, at any rate in *Beyond Good and Evil*, that all modern value frameworks are established by intensifying, in differing degrees, these two essential components. Just a "genealogical" investigation of how these present day frameworks came to shape will reveal the subjective qualities and shortcomings of any normative judgment.

As per Nietzsche, the will to power is the key drive in the universe. Behind truth, thought, and morality lie drives and interests that we attempt to veil behind a polish of peaceful objectivity. What we call truth, for example, is only the outflow of our will to power, where we proclaim our specific viewpoint on reality to be impartially and generally true. At last, all the truth is best comprehended as competing wills. Nietzsche admires "free spirits" who try to free themselves from other people's prejudgments and to question their own suppositions. Specifically, they will look underneath the "moral" perspective that analyzes individuals' motives and see rather the "extra-moral" perspective that inspects the unconscious drives that determine our expressed motives.

In the second article of the same book (the Genealogy of Morals), "'Guilt, Bad Conscience and the Like", Nietzsche proposes that our idea of guilt initially had no ethical or moral indications, distinguishing a similitude in the German words for guilt and debt. A man in debt was considered blameworthy or guilty and the lender could follow through on the obligation by punishing the indebted person. Punishment, therefore was not expected to make the debtor feel severely but rather essentially to convey a sense of delight to the lender. Punishment was savage at the same time cheerful: there were no hard feelings a while later. The general public with laws resemble a kind of leaser: when somebody infringes upon the law, they have hurt the society and this society can permit punishment. The idea of Justice essentially takes punishment out of the hands of people by asserting that, in a society, it is not the people but rather laws that are disobeyed, thus it is the laws, not people, that must exact

revenge or punishment. Discussing the wide range of purposes punishment has served over the ages, Nietzsche points out that all ideas have a lengthy and dynamic history where they have had a wide range of implications. The implications of ideas or concepts are directed by a “will to power” where ideas are given implications or utilizations by the distinctive wills that fit them.³⁴

Nietzsche recognizes the source of “bad conscience” in the move from hunter-gatherer to agrarian social orders. Our fierce creature impulses stopped to be helpful in an agreeable society and we tried to stifle them by turning them inward. By battling inside ourselves, we cut out an inward life, bad conscience, a feeling of excellence, and a feeling of obligation to our predecessors, which is actually nothing but the beginning of religion. At present, we coordinate our bad conscience essentially toward our creature impulses, however Nietzsche urges us rather to coordinate it against the life negating forces that oppress our senses.

Nietzsche follows our spiritual decay to the ascent of Christianity, which he calls the "slave revolt in morality." As the title of one of his books proposes, Nietzsche looks to discover a spot "beyond good and evil." His main aim is to uncover the psychological foundations of morality. He demonstrates that our values are not themselves settled and objective yet rather express a specific state of mind toward life. For instance, he suggests that Christian morality is on a very basic level resentful and life denying, degrading natural human impulses and promoting weakness and the possibility of a life after death, the significance of which supersedes that of our present life. Since the vast majority can't deal with the darker parts of their nature, and we would not feel safe in the event that all individuals are given free rein to the savagery and sensuality inside them, Christianity argues that only submission and timidity are holy and denounces other things as abhorrent.

³⁴ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, pp. 72-75.

According to Nietzsche, in majority of its rules, Christian ethical system sentences us to like tame and serene lives. Indeed, even in an atheistic age, this egalitarian concept goes on in democracy. Nietzsche aches for an era of "new philosophers" who can save us from our mediocrity. Nietzsche's new philosophers will be rebellious against the set values and will have the quality of will and inventiveness to avow something new. Instead of speculation on egalitarian lines that the same standards apply to all individuals, Nietzsche contends that there is an "order of rank," among both individuals and philosophies. Some individuals simply have more grounded and more refined spirits than others, and to hold those individuals to the same standards is to keep them down.

Nietzsche's goal is not to replace Christian morality with another one. Instead, he expects to expose the very idea of morality as just being another fundamental psychological drive with the attempt to make them appear to be more staid and respectable. By exposing profound morality to be merely a fiction, Nietzsche tries to encourage us to be more real about our drives and our motives and more practical in the disposition we take toward life. Such trustworthiness and authenticity, he argues, would bring about an essential "revaluation of all values." Without morality, we would turn into a completely different type of being, a healthier species of being.

We should be mindful so as not to mistake Nietzsche's critique of Christianity, and particularly his declaration that "God is dead," with pompous atheism. Definitely, Nietzsche has a great deal of venom towards Christianity, yet he is possibly essentially more tormented by the spiritless atheism that he fears will come with it. The announcement that God is dead is to a greater extent a sociological perception as opposed to a metaphysical declaration. Christian ethical system and its systematic thoughts of good and evil no longer have such a solid hang on our lifestyle as they once did. Nietzsche is worried that the world is progressively devoured by nihilism, the surrender of all beliefs. He shows this concern in explaining the characteristics of the last man, who is

the representative of the triumph of materialism and science. Nietzsche would similarly see a flawless articulation of the last man in the consuming culture of the beginning of the twenty-first century, where people direct our tremendous riches towards protecting themselves from all risks and all passions.

In Nietzsche's main work, *Thus spoke Zarathustra*, Zarathustra stresses on the notion of "the superman" without any intention to supplant Christianity but instead mainly to fill up the gulf that is a part of the general public where major qualities are diminishing. Zarathustra likewise lectures against the individuals who advance thoughts that are in opposition to life. His essential aim of attack is on religion, which concentrates on the soul and the life beyond. We are mortal animals, and the individuals who wish to turn consideration somewhere else are from a very basic level, contradicting life. Mildness and compassion are the ethics of the frail, advanced by the individuals who hate the force of the powerful. There is no uprightness in being compliant on the off chance that one is too powerless to be in any way equipped for being something else. Zarathustra commends the three things religion denounces the most: "sex, the desire to control, and selfishness". All of the three, when sought after with a decent conscience are festivities of one's life and force. Religion, be that as it may, is not by any means the only threat to pursuing a free and powerful life: the state, as well, tries to form individuals into an average crowd, and the populist soul of popular government is reproduced from the same disdain and contempt of life as religion.³⁵

The subject of will to power and slave and master morality can be found all through his works. All through his book, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche highlights the different drives and wills that lead us to embrace some ethical perspective. By doing this, Nietzsche would like to lead us to a point "beyond good and evil," where we see moral ideas as manifestation of more deep drives. In this situation, we will no more judge an activity in view of its intentions,

³⁵ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, pp. 24-27.

will judge intentions taking into account the spirit in which they were formed. For instance, we should not condemn a violent act for being violent; rather, we ought to ask about the will behind it. On the occasion that the violent action were roused by an spiteful, resentful will, then the violent act is contemptible, however in the event that it were propelled by a healthy will, guiltlessly asking for what it wants, then the violent action is acceptable. Nietzsche advocates for a solid and healthy will, which acts merrily, autonomously, and free from resentment.³⁶

In the event that we appear to have generally absolute moral concepts these days, that is just a consequence of the success of slave morality over all different perspectives. By accepting that these concepts have fixed implications, we are conceding our will to the wills of the individuals who outlined these concepts. Solid willed individuals, as per Nietzsche, oppose the classifications of thought that are imposed upon them and have the autonomy and creativity to see the world from their own unmistakable points of view.

We as a whole live as per certain suppositions or basic convictions, some more clear than others. One individual may hold fundamentalist religious perspectives, while another may stick wholeheartedly to the supposition that majority rule government is the best political framework. For Nietzsche, the subject of whether these assumptions and convictions are true or false, just or unjust is not of any concern. What does make a difference is that all convictions and assumptions speak to our personality—they are the foundation from which we manufacture ourselves. The best power that we can have is control over ourselves, and we pick up control over ourselves just like we pick up control over our outer enemies: by assaulting them and submitting them to our will. Solid willed individuals, whom Nietzsche regularly alludes to as free spirits, are constantly prepared to assault their basic convictions and assumptions, to scrutinize their very identity. There is abundant security in

³⁶ Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 83.

resting assured that specific truths or convictions are indubitable and it takes incredible boldness to scrutinize our basic "truths."

Influence of Nietzsche on Camus

The works of Albert Camus and Friedrich Nietzsche have a lot in common with regards to morality. For Albert Camus, Friedrich Nietzsche was a most remarkable philosopher, a man of clarity and bravery, a yes-sayer to freedom and imagination. Camus' writings give proof of a profound connection to Nietzsche and vouch for the idea that Nietzsche was one of his most noteworthy mentors. From the complex references in the *Notebooks* and references in *The Myth of Sisyphus*, *A Happy Death* and *The Stranger*, from the investigation of the will to control in *Caligula* to the chapters in *The Rebel*, which contemplates the ramifications of Nietzsche's later works, the influence of Nietzsche in Camus' thinking is clear.

As mentioned in the past segment, , in his book *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche depicts how society changed over many years of time from being content with delight to absolute discontent with sentiments of revenge. Moral judgments changed hugely and Nietzsche inspected the source of ethics by going back to the basic thought of good and evil. What is good, and in the event that it is, what is the reason for that?

Albert Camus' quest leads him to a similar direction. His main concern is not the source of fundamental moral questions but instead the development that accompanies them, most prominently freedom and the right to revolt. Camus kept on building up his concept of man rebelling against the absurd in almost all his works. An endeavor he had started in his essay collection *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1942). Years later, in 1951, the book length essay *The Rebel* would revive the idea of rebellion. It is inferred in the title itself of the French

original with *L'Homme révolté*, whose English translation *The Rebel* appears to give it a more political note.

All through, Camus discusses various philosophers from Epicurus to Hegel, from Dostoevsky to Breton and examines their ideas of man. Here, his work refer few times to Friedrich Nietzsche and most quite his concept of nihilism, a concept about a definitive negation of all values. Camus reflects Nietzsche's morality when he examines God as an ethical instance. Both philosophers appear to begin from a fairly humanistic perspective:

God is the constructed being, a named abstraction and an inspired instance to disperse what is ethically right and ethically wrong. At the point that man submits to God for moral judgment, he murders Him in his own heart. And after that what is the premise of morality? God is denied in the name of justice however can the idea of justice be comprehended without the idea of God? Have we not come to absurdity? ... man, to exist, must choose to act.³⁷

Despite the fact that the word itself is never specified in *The Rebel*, Nietzsche's idea of resentment seems to appear between the lines. Resentment, which is the inclination of the numerous or few in the public arena are very baffled with an aspect in their lives. The cause can be simple, (for example, envy) or complex (for example, a feud), yet the response is the same: with a specific end goal to satisfy their hurt self-image, they need to coordinate their resentment towards the reason for their emotions. According to Nietzsche, it results in a rebellion between the master and the slave. An issue he attempted to explain with the development of the superman ('Übermensch'), a man sufficiently superior to overcome his own tendency of guilt, envy and desire. He has no sentiments of resentment, since he just does not think about anything beneath his vision.

³⁷ Camus, *The Rebel*, p. 131.

The resentment of natures that are denied the true reaction, that of deeds, and compensate themselves with an imaginary revenge. While every noble morality develops from a triumphant affirmation of itself, slave morality from the outset says No to what is “outside,” what is “different,” what is “not itself”; and this No is its creative deed.³⁸

At first sight, both writers appear to greatly contrast in the idea of resentment. At that point the reader ought to recollect the drive for Camus' revolt: the aim is to overcome the absurd. When we put this condition into Nietzschean logic, then Camus' heroes like Sisyphus use their resentment against the source of their feelings, which is the absurd. In any case, rather than essentially rebelling against this concept, Camus adds an important step to it: acknowledgment. Sisyphus, similar to the man in revolt, conquers and opposes the absurd by accepting it. In doing so, he internalizes the focus of rebellion – it turns into a battle between the self and the absurd alone.

The grouping of events is intriguing on the grounds that it inquires as to whether individuals can comprehend the abstract all by self (here justice) without another power (here God). By taking off God from this picture, man has to deal with absurdity as the first difficulty to overcome. As per Camus, Nietzsche is confronted with this mentality, which is a conceivable reference to his famous case that God is dead.

In *The Rebel* there are a many claims to nihilism. Further, Camus separated himself from the existentialist philosophers, so the only option left is to step straight from Nihilism to the absurd. A stage that is as such not wrong in light of the fact that both ideas manage the freedom of the mind. Freedom of the mind, freedom of choice and freedom as a overall concept are consequently the connective themes amongst Nietzsche and Camus. Nietzsche's concept of freedom is to overcome resentment and furthermore to experience the Dionysian life power as explained in his work *The Birth of Tragedy*. Camus'

³⁸ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, p. 92.

concept of freedom begins in the exact instant one encounters bitterness. As it were, Camus' figures like Meursault, Jean-Baptiste Clamence or Sisyphus are the composed outlook of resentment, which in French terms is just *re-sentir* – to re-feel.

Camus now seeks after an alternate way and spares his figures from getting to be slaves in Nietzschean terms. The negative part resentment is pivoted into a positive one: these figures attempt to re-feel themselves yet they can do that only when they acknowledge their destiny as their own and not made by society.

William E. Duvall, in his article "Camus' Fall- From Nietzsche", shows that the content of *The Fall* reverberates with thoughts and expressions from Nietzsche. This comparison goes as it follows. He suggests that Camus uses Nietzsche's thoughts and pictures as a part of the early pages of *The Fall* to build his character, a "hero of our time" as the epigraph for the novel proposes. The first chapter, for instance, concentrates on the banality of society as it is built on herd or slave values. Jean-Baptiste Clamence, the storyteller in the novel, continues his talk before his ever silent audience in a bar in Amsterdam called 'Mexico City.' The bar is located amidst a middle-class hell (i.e., Amsterdam, with its circles of canals) where everybody wishes to be elsewhere, where cash and imperialist expansion rule (through open prostitution one can purchase a trek to the islands of the South Pacific), and where individuals try to get over their dull day by day schedules primarily by fornication and reading the newspapers. The herd, in its disdain of distinction, will clean one "right down to the bone" in case one is not cautious, Clamence says.³⁹ (p. 8) And he makes reference to that most terrible manifestation of the late herd behavior, Hitler's Nazism, the revulsions of which uncover how much the herd replaces character with technique. Amongst all this Clamence stands

³⁹ Camus, *The Fall*, p. 8

out, he is articulate, sophisticated, cultured, and perceptive; he is not of the herd.⁴⁰

Clarence proceeds with this self-portrayal of distinction and respectability in the second chapter, and does as such to a great extent in Nietzschean terms. He is "above the human ants," a man of preeminent summits, lofty places and mountain tops, "the only places I can really live," the spots "where I could breathe most freely."⁴¹ He "lived with impunity,"⁴² providing for others as a Nietzschean creditor. As an attorney he defended his clients, yet with no feeling of obligation, remaining above and protected from judgment, "bathed in a light as of Eden,"⁴³ pure. He took delight in his own excellence and making the most of his "own nature to the fullest."⁴⁴ Above all, he was clear and conscious. As if taking after Nietzsche's lead, he had genealogically deconstructed all of his own virtues, recognizing the self-interest which exists at their base, even aware that his tendency to self-denial was selfish or self-centered. He was aware of his play-acting and self-veiling. For him there was "no mediator amongst life and [himself]"; he was "always in harmony."⁴⁵ He delighted in the physical and sensual, he dismisses or prevented nothing from life, he had no religion. He goes so far as to allude to himself as a superman and as a burning bush; he was marked out and literally soared. And his discourse suggests the Dionysian as he portrays evenings and days of dancing, intoxication, wild eagerness, vicious unrestraint, euphoria. He had come to comprehend the secrets of the creatures and of the world. Not at all like the herd, which was resentfully sitting tight and waiting for something to happen and which was constantly exhausted and feeble, he was riding the peak of a wave, getting a charge out of "a vast feeling of power." In the early parts of the third chapter, Clarence manifests his need to dominate as we can see he

⁴⁰ Duvall, "Camus' "Fall"—From Nietzsche", p. 2.

⁴¹ Camus, *The Fall*, pp. 23-24.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

says: "Power... settles everything."⁴⁶ Slavery, he claims, is the basic human relationship, although we need to preserve the facade of good society and call slaves free men; or else, everything would be possible!⁴⁷

The self-image (of the Clamence pre fall) is strikingly that of the Nietzschean noble, maybe not of the superman as Nietzsche and Zarathustra would imagine him, yet at least of a higher man. At about one third of the path through the book, the depiction of the "fall" starts, and it goes on in a way that echoes Essay Two of *On the Genealogy of Morals* (Essay One concentrated on the distinction amongst master and slave values and points of view, much as the initial section of *The Fall* does). Clamence initially experiences this through public humiliation, that is, through his open mortification by a motorcycle rider. His mask of prevalence was stripped from him, the agony of embarrassment blazed itself into his memory, and he started to feel "a bitter resentment."⁴⁸ While the "others" who had seen the occurrence with the motorcyclist had probably long back forgotten the entire accident, he memorized it, was resentful and looked for an opportunity to get back. His will to soar and his feeling of power were changed, distorted to a will to strike, to beat and to oppress. He no longer was active, but has become reactive. From being noble and free, he has tumbled to a kind of enslavement. He can just live against others. He had accomplished a transformation, not the trans-valuation of the noble but rather the inversion of the slave, having moved from action to reactivity, from nobility to slavery, from one point of view on life to another. Trying to escape himself through dreading punishment and not being able to consider living within limits, Clamence had not possessed the capacity to acknowledge his deeds and omissions and their outcomes. He had not been able to acknowledge his life, or in Nietzschean terms to become who he actually was. Instead he felt regret, or a longing to change his past, and disdain at his failure to do as such, which are rather herd and not noble feelings. He is

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 45.

⁴⁷ Duvall, "Camus' "Fall"—From Nietzsche", p. 5.

⁴⁸ Camus, *The Fall*, p. 54.

genuinely a great case of the herd man, basking in his very own feeling of superiority, and of the priest, as Nietzsche depicts both of them in *The Genealogy of Morals*.

As Walter Kaufmann suggested in his book *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, Clamence is an embodiment of the will to power of the weak:

Camus' last novel, *The Fall*, for example, is a veritable case history of the will to power of the weak who, as a last resort, derive a sense of superiority from their insistence that they are unworthy and guilt-ridden-adding that they are better than other men who refuse to admit that they are no less guilty.⁴⁹

Clamence embodies all that Camus, as he wrote in *The Rebel*, attempted to battle in the mid-part of the twentieth century-excess prompting nihilism, skepticism, and oppression or servitude. In any case, Camus accomplished more than simply developing the character of Clamence with the assistance of Nietzsche's ideas, and it is important to insist that *The Fall* is more than only a similarity to the works of Nietzsche. Camus' creation of the book and its characters is not merely an imitation of Nietzsche.

Here I am going to take a glance into Camus' essay, "*Nietzsche et le nihilism*," which was initially published in *Les Temps Modernes* and was included as a significant and main chapter in *The Rebel*. The initial segment of this short essay is strikingly positive about Nietzsche and his clarity. For Camus, Nietzsche was the main diagnostician of nihilism." With Nietzsche, nihilism seems to become prophetic. . . .With him nihilism becomes conscious for the first time. . . .He recognized nihilism for what it was and examined it like a clinical fact"⁵⁰. The base of nihilism for Nietzsche was the death of God, and to the inquiry, can one live believing in nothing? Nietzsche could say a vehement yes! Discovering God dead in the souls of his peers, Nietzsche got a

⁴⁹ Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, p. 280.

⁵⁰ Camus, *The Rebel*, p. 62.

complete hold of the ramifications of that death and looked for the "destruction of everything that still hides nihilism from itself, of the idols that camouflage God's death."⁵¹ For Camus, Nietzsche endeavored to develop "a philosophy of rebellion"⁵² against each one of those frameworks of thought which try to deny the reality of the world as it may be, in particular Christianity and present day socialism. No God implied no last judgment with respect to the nature of the world, no solidarity of the world, and no supreme and absolute values; no God implied a complete absence of limitation, freedom. Camus' Nietzsche declares that "a nihilist is not one who believes in nothing, but one who does not believe in what exists."⁵³ He faced the freedom and absurdity of the human condition and pushed them to extremes, and still he could affirm life.⁵⁴

Camus continues to appreciate Nietzsche's genuineness in recognizing that the freedom, leading to the vanishing of God and to systems of truth, would not be a simple one. Full responsibility regarding everything goes with this freedom. One must make one's own values. Be the question is on what basis? "If nothing is true, if the world is without order, then nothing is forbidden.... But at the same time, nothing is authorized...." Making the values requires a superman and a heroic effort, "the bow bent to the breaking-point." Here, regardless of his own elevated idea of innovativeness and creation, Camus turns the paper from praise for Nietzsche, the diagnostician, to criticism of Nietzsche, the philosopher who tumbles to servitude. For "on the point of achieving the most complete liberation, Nietzsche... chooses the most complete subordination," communicated as inadequate acknowledgment of the world as it is, without sense and without law; his decision, Camus claims, is that if nothing is true, nothing is permitted.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 66.

⁵² Ibid., p. 68.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 69.

⁵⁴ Duvall, "Camus' "Fall"—From Nietzsche, p. 7.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 8.

So as we see, despite all the similarities between their works and influences Nietzsche had on Camus, however Camus in isolating himself from Nietzsche, does not completely deny him. Subsequent to writing *The Fall*, in his 1957 acceptance speech for the Nobel Prize in Literature, he talks about Nietzsche as a model for the writer and artist, for Nietzsche, he says, had a place with the group who imagined a society where judges are no longer the rulers, yet where artists and creators would rule.⁵⁶ He finishes up another lecture of that year with a positive and influential picture of Nietzsche bearing in isolation the gigantic work he needed to carry on, strolling during the night in the slopes behind Genoa, building fires and thinking as he watched them burn.⁵⁷ Indeed, Camus closes various pieces with reference to Nietzsche. As late as 1959 in an interview which comes to an end with the inquiry, what wish Within a superabundance of life-giving and restoring forces, even misfortunes have a sun like glow and engender their own consolation.' This remark of Nietzsche's is true, and I have experienced it myself. And all I ask is that this strength and this superabundance should be given to me again, even if infrequently....⁵⁸ The feeling of kinship Camus has toward Nietzsche can mostly be regarding his concurrence with the German philosopher's clear investigation of the modern human situation; however the inner conflict of his relationship to Nietzsche comes from his dismissal of what he comprehended to be Nietzsche's conclusions.

In Camus' eyes, the central philosophical figure in the rebellion of modern men against God and the human condition is Friedrich Nietzsche, in whose thought the nihilistic elements latent in metaphysical revolt are clearly articulated for the first time. For Nietzsche the death of God means that there is no law superior to or apart from man nor any lawgiver but man - no external standards transcend human values. But this very absence of eternal law does not mean

⁵⁶ Camus, "Discours de Suede", p. 172.

⁵⁷ Camus, "Create Dangerously," p. 271.

⁵⁸ Camus, "Replies to Jean-Claude Brisville," p. 365.

solely that everything is permitted; it means that nothing is allowed apart from human denial or permission. No liberty is possible except in a world where both the permitted and the prohibited are delimited. Since man must generate his own values, Nietzsche suggests to substitute all value judgments with total and exalted devotion to this world. Total devotion to total necessity, this is his absurd definition of freedom. In effect, destiny becomes divine and the world, as the ultimate, is God. As part of the world, men, by passionately accepting and asserting its reality partake of the divinity.

Camus indicates that Nietzsche's nihilism implies that man lives without restraints, except for those he places upon himself; that he can re-create the world in whatever image he desires. And though Nietzsche did not so conclude, it is possible to use his ideas to justify, as did the Nazis, the conclusion that to say yes, unqualifiedly, to the world, includes affirming the legitimacy of murder. Nietzsche goes beyond nihilism in leaping from the negation of the ideal to its secularization: he concludes that since men cannot attain to salvation through God, their salvation must come through their own efforts on earth. Philosophy makes the idea secular. But dictators come, and soon they secularize philosophies which put them in the correct. This was the fate of Nietzsche's thought at the hands of National Socialism. As Camus views the recent past, metaphysical rebellion and nihilism have continually revealed the visage of human protest against the injustice and absurdity of Creation and the human condition. Nihilism concludes in declaring the solitude of all earthly creatures and the nothingness of all morality. But few have been able to live with these conclusions; most rebels have sought to re-create the world and its values in their own image, often by unleashing personal desire and the will to power, ending in suicide, madness, murder, and destruction.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Camus, *The Rebel*, p. 26.

Camus on Morality

In the previous section we saw how Camus was influenced by Nietzsche and his ideas on ethics and morality. In this section, we will examine his views on the matter and how are they reflected in his writings. The main part of his work can be summed up as an examination of two essential, major inquiries that will come up once a man has acknowledged the absurd: that of suicide and murder. In *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Camus considers whether, coming to the conclusion that life is absurd, one will conclude that it is not worth living. This inquiry is likewise a major concern in *The Stranger* and *Caligula*; and Camus' answer to this enquiry is that regardless of its absurdity, life is for sure worth living. From that point Camus asks, subsequent to the absence God or a transcendent moral system, are we given the freedom to kill others? This is the central issue of *The Rebel* and a major theme in his books *The Plague* and *The Fall*. Camus reasons that the same way absurdity will not justify the taking of our own lives it as well will not the taking of others' lives.

Camus as well as many other philosophers such as existentialists went through the struggle of finding the values in a world with no absolute values. Camus had planned a chapter to be titled "We Nietzscheans" in his *Notebooks* for the work then in progress, *The Rebel*.⁶⁰ Earlier in the *Notebooks*, citing a speech he had given at a political rally, he gave a hint as to what such a chapter might have contained, had it been written:

Don't you believe that we are all responsible for the absence of values?
And that if all of us who come from Nietzscheism, from nihilism, or
from historical realism said in public that we were wrong and that there
are moral values and that in the future we shall do the necessary to

⁶⁰ Camus, *Notebooks*, p. 239.

establish and illustrate them, don't you believe this would be the beginning of a hope?⁶¹

He had come to the understanding that only by rejecting a part of this world could the world be livable, that rebellion meant clinging to the tension between a yes and a no, between affirmation and resistance. He could not give himself to what he believed to be Nietzsche's total acceptance, he could not remain beyond good and evil and, at the same time, commit himself to human solidarity and community and to the value he saw in human nature. In the year that *The Fall* was published, Camus wrote to Pierre Moinot: "We have another duty which is to create, that is, to illustrate and incarnate the positive values which will aid one day others than ourselves to live better."⁶² Though he had articulated this position earlier in *The Rebel*, he was still struggling to cope with the Nietzsche temptation and to free himself from it when he wrote *The Fall*.

Camus' beginning stage is that of looking at man within this very moment without the likelihood of any kind of jump to an arrangement of "transcendent values" to affirm a man's quality. For Camus, all information should be based on the premise of "immediate individual experience". An investigation of "immediate individual experience" - and one that rests inside this domain - uncovers that man's connection to the world must be depicted as "absurd". "The Absurd" is not in man himself nor on the planet without anyone else's input, yet in the connection amongst man and the world. "The Absurd" is never within man nor in the universe, rather in their occurrence together. For the time being, it is the main bond joining both of them.

Death, considered along with suicide, is the main subject matter of Sisyphus. The man in Sisyphus finds that "essences are non-existent"; absolutes, mysteriously absent. Urgently, he looks all through the world in order to find the good, the genuine, and the aesthetically delightful, and always he is faced

⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 145-146.

⁶² Camus, "Deux lettres k Pierre Moinot," pp. 32-33.

with frustration. The world, considering all of his interests, uncovers itself just as immaculate, "brute facticity", without any inherent worth whatsoever. Misery appears to be inescapable.

As per Camus, the ontological connection amongst man and his environment offers us with the most noteworthy inquiry in philosophy, to be specific, "Can man discover life absurd and still continue living?" The very fact that the importance of life is considered to be a major part of Camus' work demonstrates that his work is morality all through. With the disclosure of "the absurd", two options are there for the man "who lives on the premise of what he knows" and "does not cheat". Man must pick between either suicide or reclamation. The question that can be put forward is whether man can consider life as absurd and still continue living? The likelihood is there, for amongst suicide and death a third component can be mediated, the component of hope.

Camus rejects any attempt to offer an explanation beyond human reason. Such attempts unjustly dismiss the absurd by altering the problem. He notes: The leap in all its forms, rushing into the divine or the eternal, surrendering to the illusion of the everyday or of the idea - all these screens hide the absurd.⁶³ Camus' response to any attempt to go beyond human experience and reason is unequivocal: "I don't know whether this world has a meaning that transcends it. But I know that I do not know that meaning and that it is impossible for me just now to know it. What can a meaning outside my condition mean to me? I can understand only in human terms."⁶⁴

Upon the acknowledgment of absurdity, Camus realized that one could "go back into the chain" or go to the direction of considering suicide or recovery. Suicide is discounted as well as any kind of the otherworldly hope; if so, what structure could recovery take? Camus' answer is found in the actions of the Rebel.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 67.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 38.

The rebel is revolting against death and in favor of life. His "no" is at the same time a "yes." In understanding the absurdity of his connection to the world, he revolts, however the rebellion does not eradicate, circumvent, or even alleviate the absurd. The absurd is maintained at the same time with the revolt. Camus' emphasize that the individual can do nothing, yet he can do everything, is the attestation that the I and the we will both be affirmed at the same time; neither can be asserted over the other. Rebellion started on the grounds that the individual was called into question, the individual was oppressed. Yet, the rebel can assert nothing for himself that he would not likewise claim for everybody. Henceforth, as he says:

Man's solidarity is founded upon rebellion, and rebellion, in its turn, can only find its justification in that solidarity. We have, then, the right to say that any rebellion which claims the right to deny or destroy solidarity loses simultaneously its right to be called rebellion and becomes in reality an acquiescence in murder.⁶⁵

The rebel asserts his freedom at the same time; however, this freedom cannot be absolute for it discovers its limits in "the other." Therefore, freedom cannot be asserted separated from justice. However, revolt was conceived from a perspective of justice which did not guarantee the individual's freedom. Henceforth, justice cannot infringe upon freedom. Neither can it be absolutized. Each must be asserted all the while and discover its limits in the other. Both of them should support the value of life. This matter will be discussed vastly in the next chapter. Revolt was born in freedom however "rebellion puts total freedom up for trial." In the rebel Camus notices:

The rebel wants it to be recognized that freedom has its limits everywhere that a human being is to be found - the limit being precisely that human being's power to rebel. . . . The freedom he claims, he claims for all; the freedom he refuses, he forbids everyone to enjoy.

⁶⁵ Camus, *The Rebel*, p. 22.

Absolute freedom mocks at justice. Absolute justice denies freedom.
To be fruitful, the two sides must find their limits in each other.⁶⁶

The Rebel is not the person who, by his revolt, overcomes absurdity. The relation between man and the world is absurd and remains so even after facing rebellion. The primary value is life, life asserted despite the fact that absurdity remains. For Camus, individuals who live as per religious regulations, for example, that of Christianity are subordinating the value of their own life to something external to it. Their idea that life is worthy of living is not according to the value of life itself, but rather in the guarantee of an endless reward to be achieved once life is over. Life is not an end in itself, but rather only the way to a higher end. Be that as it may, for the atheist, there is no higher end to which life brings us. If life is to be appreciated, it must be acknowledged for its own sake. To live simply for the hope of another life is to deplete one's own life of value. "For Camus, to live life in its fullest is to live it because of itself in unfazed acknowledgment of the absurdity. Rather than being humbled by the world's absurdity and absence of hope, we ought to defiantly affirm our autonomy by declining hope and affirming life".⁶⁷

By dismissing the concept of a Divine Will, we are only left with our will. We push off the chains of the Master and find ourselves free to do however we like. In this manner, "the discovery of the absurd is liberating. It frees us from our precious illusions. But the price of this freedom is high. If the world has no moral order, no meaning, direction, or standards by which our choices can be judged, how can we lead meaningful lives?"⁶⁸ So there is a drawback: man can actually appreciate the fact that he have a choice, yet he should likewise confront the anguish of realizing the fact that he must choose. With his descriptions in the section "The Absurd Man" in *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Camus

⁶⁶ Camus, *The Rebel*, p. 284.

⁶⁷ Kamber, *On Camus*, p. 59.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* p. 56.

starts forming the kind of value he is suggesting, and in the next section, “Absurd Creation,” he gives a name and a description to it:

In that daily effort in which intelligence and passion mingle and delight each other, the absurd man discovers a discipline that will make up the greatest of his strengths. The required diligence, the doggedness and lucidity thus resemble the conqueror’s attitude. To create is likewise to give a shape to one’s fate. For all these characters, their work defines them at least as much as it is defined by them.⁶⁹

The value consists of forming one's own destiny as per one's own values and wishes. Instead of submission to the will of a higher being that does not exist, people should live by their own will, in consistent confrontation with the absurd. By performing an activity while in the meantime perceiving the futility of that action, the action takes on a new value. On the off chance that one can live by this value, then one's life can without a doubt be worth living.

Camus is suggesting that we will never have the capacity to get past the absurdity of life, yet we can transcend it by accepting it and enduring in facing it. We might not have the ability to modify our condition but we do have the ability to change our attitude with respect to it. “The gods have assumed that Sisyphus will be crushed by the misery of his fate. But Sisyphus in Camus’ tale proves stronger than the gods. He scorns the gods by embracing his labor with perverse enthusiasm and by refusing to be miserable.”⁷⁰ This is precisely the attitude that Camus is going on with. It might appear that we have only two options when we face the absurd, denial and despair. Camus does not want to go on in the path of religion and deny the absurdity of life; however, he at the same time, does not want to despair. As a result, he gives us a third alternative—acceptance.

Thus Camus comes to the conclusion that suicide does not necessarily follows absurdity. Life can still be worthy of living even if there is not any higher

⁶⁹ Camus, *Myth of Sisyphus*, p. 86.

⁷⁰ Kamber, *On Camus*, p. 61.

power to grant it divinity. Similar to Sisyphus, we also can accept our fruitless struggles happily and mock our absurd condition. Why should we anguish over the nonexistence of a divine world when there is a lot to acknowledge in this world, “absurd” as it may be? Life does not need a celestial reason to be considered as worthy of living—it is sufficient to live for the sake of life. In this manner, the message Sisyphus is conveying is for us to value each fleeting minute, to live without a hope for anything above life as it is, and to choose a positive attitude in regards to absurdity of life.

With the beginning of the Second World War and France being occupied by German, Camus discovered his absurd world flipping around. Even though he was doubtful about the nature of good, there was no uncertainty for Camus that the Nazis characterized evil personified. Conquered and dispirited by the Nazi occupiers, France saw its confidence in the kindness of God vanishing, and nihilism was taking over like “a plague” (an image Camus would later use greatly). The requirement for a concrete moral voice had rarely been more prominent, and Camus made it his own responsibility to make sure that the voice is heard. He realized that his arguments for living without plea and enjoying the earthly life would not be sufficient any more, and he would now need to handle one of the hardest issues he could ever confront: finding an ethical justification to fight oppression without depending on divinity.

To start with the acknowledgment of an absurd and cruel world, one can either accept this condition as a definitive value or turn the cruelty to serve one's own wishes, or fight against it and replace it with new values. In other words, when facing an idea like, “The world is shaped by murder,” one can either come to the conclusion, “I am therefore justified in murder,” or “The world must change its shape.” The second one is a way more difficult conclusion to accept because of the tremendous responsibility that accompanies it, yet given the option Camus is more than willing accept that responsibility.

In case Camus needs a moral premise by which he can condemn the Nazi's activities, he should look past the absurd. While the Nazis had seen life's

cruelty and ended up willing to add to it, Camus tries to discover a justification to battle against it. The only place to discover this justification is humankind, which is precisely what Camus comes to in *The Rebel*. Values don't originate from God but from the human mind. At whatever point a slave declines to comply with his master's order, a value is made. The slave draws a limit past which he won't go. Since he would prefer to die than to follow the order, the order gets to be unethical—not only for the slave but as well for all humanity.

When religion has been rejected as an origin of values, nature is the following place that many individuals will look. When God is not going to tell us how we should live, maybe we should live as nature would recommend. The Nazis observed nature and saw survival of the fittest as a definitive value. Camus, however, observed human nature and saw the yearning for happiness and justice as—if not an absolute value—as the value we should fight for. The moral case he makes can be comprehended in the following way: “Since it is natural for human beings to desire justice and happiness despite the world's indifference to these desires, human beings ought to band together to fight injustice and create happiness.”⁷¹

Beside justice and human happiness, Camus starts developing another value that had been missing from his past work: that of solidarity. Though his absurdist stage concentrates on the predicament of the individual inside a world without meaning, he now discovers meaning and value in the intentional commitment to a common cause.⁷² Though this is not surprising, considering the circumstances in which Camus was facing at Combat. Prior to the war, Camus was concerned only with figuring out how to live happily in an absurd world, a task restricted within the limits of every individual mind. Though, when faced with the genuine and threatening force of the Nazi regime, one can't confront such evil alone, and it gets to be important to depend on one's brethren and also to recruit assistance from however many others as possible.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 71.

⁷² Ibid., p. 70.

In fact, Hitler could never have been defeated if his adversaries has not united against him.

On the other hand, as discussed the slave does not rebel only for himself but rather for the benefit of everybody, since he is ready to give his life for his conviction. In the event that he declines to be a slave, he invokes the ethical principle of the right to self-determination, in this manner making a reality of what was at one time an abstraction. If we consider absurdity as the primary premise of Camus' ethical argument, revolt would be the second. However, just declining to be a slave is not adequate to make a value. For this to happen, the third element that is solidarity must be brought in. As long as others stand with the slave in his refusal to comply with the master, the master loses his order giving power. What was at one time a dubious thought in the mind of the slave—"I should not be forced to do this"—is presently a solid moral standard. One slave's rebellion has turned to an enormous revolt, and through this revolt another value is made—the value of freedom. This value is not given to every man by God, but rather conceived of by man himself, battled for by man, and paid for with man's blood. Moreover, the value must be consistently reaffirmed to stay alive. In the case that a master can oppress his people again at the end of the day and deny them their freedom, their right to freedom will vanish.

This is the most significant component of Camus' idea of morality, and it is the last premise which justifies the conclusion. Not at all like moral frameworks taken from religious doctrine, values in an absurd world are not marked on stone. They resemble living, breathing creatures that must be constantly fortified and reasserted for staying alive. What makes freedom a value is not the gift of the Creator, not a stone tablet whereupon the word is written, yet only the fact that individuals are ready to give their lives for it. Should individuals ever choose that freedom is not worth giving their life for, freedom itself will vanish as a value.

The requirement for a moral framework by which to decide our actions is integral to our lives, and satisfying that requirement turned into Camus' long

lasting commitment. On account of our freedom, we are always compelled to pick some path, and our ethical convictions provide us with rules to picking the right path. When we do anything, we require an explanation behind doing it. In any case, Camus constrains us to recognize that there is no genuine reason to pick one activity over another. Without God to legitimize our activities, we are left with just ourselves, and complete responsibilities regarding all that we do. Camus wants us to recognize this, and in *The Myth of Sisyphus* he asks us to select our own values. Be that as it may, one may ask by what method would we be able to utilize only our own self-selected values to legitimize our activities when they are so transient and defective? Sadly, we must choose the option to do as such. We are slaves to our freedom, and we should have required validation for our activities, so we keep on improving upon our system of values despite the fact that we might know that it will mostly be bound to defect.

Chapter 3: Camus on Legality

As the title of the chapter suggests, I propose to discuss Camus' idea of how we can come to a better legal system through studying his idea of freedom and justice, and his views on the idea of punishment and specifically death penalty.

As already discussed in previous chapters, Camus proposes three methods for handling the absurd: suicide, hope or living with it. Camus rejects the option of suicide since it is a getaway from, as opposed to an answer for, the issue of the absurd; suicide wipes out the issue at hand, it doesn't tackle it. The option of hope comes as a result to the same thing; it is, as Camus proposes, "philosophical suicide". Hope is found in an affirmed answer for the absurd which lies past learning or knowledge. It might be "God" or "history" or "reason," yet such an answer again does not take care of the issue, it eradicates the issue by contentions for which there is lack of evidence. The absurd being the main reality or the core of the human circumstance, the only appropriate option left for us is to live with it. He later lucidly summarized his argument in the introductory passages of *The Rebel*:

The final conclusion of absurdist reasoning is, in fact, the repudiation of suicide and the acceptance of the desperate encounter between human inquiry and the silence of the universe. Suicide would mean the end of this encounter, and the absurdist reasoning considers that it could not consent to this without negating its own premises. According to absurdist reasoning, such a solution would be the equivalent of flight or deliverance. But it is obvious that absurdism hereby admits that human life is the only necessary good since it is precisely life that makes this encounter possible and since, without life, the absurdist wager would have no basis.⁷³

⁷³ Camus, *The Rebel*, p. 6.

Predominantly Camus' contention is a confirmation of the estimation of human life and there is unquestionably nothing extremely startling about this conclusion. What is imperative is the path in which he contends for this conclusion. He talks intentionally as present day man for whom the conventional contentions are inaccessible. To have the capacity to live without appeal to the supernatural or the suprarational-this is Camus' aim. He tries to demonstrate that the supposed nihilist premises don't necessarily lead to nihilist results, and he talks along these lines straightforwardly to those people who consider the nihilist premises sound. So far this is yet an answer for an individual issue whether my own particular life is advantageous living in the situation where the absurd is present.

In any case, it can't remain just individual, for to reject death for the sake of "the Absurd" is one thing, yet to live for the sake of the absurd is another. Could society be appropriately managed by a conceptual arrangement of total good and moral standards? This, it appears to me, is unquestionably one, if not the, imperative inquiry of his novel, *The Stranger*. The hero, a man who couldn't be more conventional, ends up in an arrangement of circumstances which come full circle in his executing a man. Camus forcefully depicts the difference between life as it is and the objective standards which look to manage it. Could society, unexpectedly, be administered by "the absurd"? Camus' first real play, *Caligula*, is coordinated at this inquiry. The head Caligula begins with the absurdist statement "since there is no right and wrong, everything is permitted" and continues to regulate by simple individual impulse. Camus' emotional and philosophical recommendation toward the latter part of the play is that everything is not allowed and that "the absurd" conveys inside within it what Camus refers to as boundaries.⁷⁴

The issue of the results of "the absurd" gets to be for Camus all the more specifically and quickly political with the Nazi rule. His noteworthy short expositions which he referred to as "Letters to a German Friend" are composed

⁷⁴ Thorson, "Albert Camus and the Rights of Man", p. 288.

in this connection. The potential results of nihilism had gotten to be genuine, and for Camus the issue was in this manner all the more intense. His response here is more from his heart than from his brain, however it recommends what is to come. He addresses his "German friend" to some extent as:

For a long time we both thought that this world had no ultimate meaning and that consequently we were cheated. You never believed in the meaning of this world, and you therefore deduced the idea that everything was equivalent and that good and evil could be defined according to one's wishes. Where lay the difference? Simply that you readily accepted despair and I never yielded to it. Simply that you saw the injustice of our condition to the point of being willing to add to it, whereas it seemed to me that man must exalt justice in order to fight against eternal injustice, create happiness in order to protest against the universe of unhappiness.⁷⁵

As you see, from the same principle we derived quite different codes. In short, you chose injustice and sided with the gods. Your logic was merely apparent. I, on the contrary, chose justice in order to remain faithful to the world. I continue to believe that this world has no ultimate meaning. But I know that something in it has a meaning and that is man, because he is the only creature to insist on having one. This world has at least the truth of man, and our task is to provide its justifications against fate itself. And it has no justification but man; hence he must be saved if we want to save the idea we have of life.⁷⁶

However what type of reasonable justification can be presented for what Camus refers to as "justice"? In the coming section, I will discuss what would be Camus' idea of justice and its relation to freedom and happiness.

⁷⁵ Camus, *Resistance, Rebellion and Death*, p. 27.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

Justice, freedom and happiness

A first purpose of enthusiasm about Camus' postwar moral vision is identified with the importance he places on the objective of accommodating justice and freedom in society. As a matter of fact, in promising his devotion to the Resistance movement against the German Occupation, Camus had encouraged the battle against Nazi oppression for the sake of these beliefs: for Camus, the Resistance signified the strength of renewal that considered the possibility of a highly “just” France, while struggling for a free France. It is, nonetheless, just in his thoughts on the negotiations identifying with postwar France that Camus details unequivocally the objective to unite justice and freedom as a premise on which to make an ethically feasible arrangement of the state. As cited by Orme in his book *The Development of Albert Camus' concern for social and political Justice* from *Combat* published on October 1, 1944 Camus stated his terms of reference in the following words:

We will call justice a social state in which each individual receives all his or her opportunities at the outset, and where the majority of a country is not kept in a shameful condition by a minority of privileged people. And we will call freedom political climate in which human beings are respected for what they are as for what they say.⁷⁷

The idea of justice is frequently expressed as a social association guiding the shared relations of individuals. On the other hand, put in an unpredicted way, justice can be thought about as social bliss, whereby “individual freedom” is ensured by a social order. Later we will see that for Camus, there is a close connection amongst justice and happiness or bliss. Camus is suspicious of setting “absolutes of morality”. All things considered, pretty much a circumstance in which personal freedom represses social communication bargains the prosperity of all, so an arrangement of social justice that neglects

⁷⁷ Orme, *The Development of Albert Camus' concern for social and political Justice*, p. 128.

to regard individual freedom can't give a setting in which human happiness or bliss can thrive.

As "moral absolutes" justice and freedom are, then, conflicting and inconsistent ideas. The Rebel would exhibit it in detail, as we might find in the accompanying would show this part, however Camus is as of now mindful of the issues at hand when in *Combat* on September 8, 1944, he expresses that freedom for every individual is additionally the freedom for the eager individual: "that is unfairness reestablished. Justice for everybody is accommodation of individual personality to the benefit of society."⁷⁸ So in what manner would we be able to discuss supreme freedom? It ought to be clear from the above comments that Camus, in the essay under reference, was stirring far from his prior moral point of view where, justice (as contradictory to absolute freedom) was the apex moral idea, toward a dialogic code of morals. Justice and freedom are presently "sought together" and each, as Camus demands in his plea the essential compromise or resolution and unrivaled harmony between the two beliefs, should be seen to be suitable for the other. Putting it in simple words, to be ethically responsible, justice, as Camus now details the idea, must serve as an underwriter for human freedom and freedom must at the same time acknowledge social happiness or bliss characteristic of justice.⁷⁹

Be that as it may be, now we ought to see where Camus draws a meaningful boundary for creating justice. Revolution is a noteworthy idea in Camus' philosophy, however violence and revolution are not basic equivalent words for Camus; in reacting to the moral test of the relationship between the two concepts, he tries to figure the standards for the justification of political force natural for his vision of political justice. Keeping up an ethical driving force in any fierce revolution is, for Camus the touchstone of the quest for progressive justice, and all "legitimization of violence" is seen to take away

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 130.

⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 130-131.

this catalyst by surrendering the moral on the sacrificial table of radicalism correspondingly. For Camus, justice and oppression are totally unrelated; he can't approve the utilization of human grief as a political advantage since, as he later puts it amid the discussion encompassing the production of *The Rebel*, he states that to unshackle individuals from all confinements so as to then for all intents and purposes confine them up in “historical necessity” in truth returns to taking ceaselessly as a matter of first importance their reasons for fighting in order to at last toss them into any kind of gathering, provided that this has no principles other than efficiency. So it is about passing through, as indicated by the rule of nihilism, from great freedom to compelling need; it is nothing other than committing oneself to assembling slaves. Camus' dismissal of Stalinist totalitarianism is made, then, on political and moral grounds. From his perspective, political justice can't grasp the rule that the end legitimizes the means where moral responsibility disintegrates despite ideological preference; to acknowledge such logic was to overlook civil persecution for the sake of political absolutism. To support Stalin's communism would be to acknowledge the legitimacy of dictator communism what Camus calls the communism of death camps and consequently dismiss morality for political philosophy.

The promise of justice for a later time can never validate the practice of injustice today since, as Camus highlights that none of the evils which dictatorship (beginning with the rule by a single party and the suppression of all opposition) claims to rectify is eviler than dictatorship itself. For Camus, failure to apply moral principles to the means, and also to the end of the quest for revolutionary justice renders the progression morally unacceptable. A further example of what, according to Camus, is the “moral indefensibility” of the opinion that the end would justify the means is given by “*The Just Assassins*”, a play grounded on historical accuracy. In that work Stepan is a man who values justice over life which he considers something higher than life, it also mentions the Stalinist conviction that all means are justified in the

quest for justice; "Nothing that can serve our cause ought to be discounted".⁸⁰ With no appreciation for human life, and unequipped for communicating human feelings like love-his experience of torment exhausts such sentiments Stepan is the dictatorial incarnate. His restrained viewpoint requires the penance of good contemplations for revolutionary justice. By difference, Kaliayev, who "joined the revolution on the grounds that [he loves] life"⁸¹, and who battles oppression or tyranny for the sake of humanist standards, can't legitimize the executing of innocents "for some obscure distant city"⁸², that is, for the sake of a deliberation of justice; "I decline to add to the living injustice around me for the sake of a dead justice."⁸³

Further backing for the case that, in the postwar time frame, Camus' political vision of a normative framework within which human rights are articulated is given by his details of a politically "modest" moral vision for the world stage. Two of the central issues that now encroach on Camus' concern with political justice are namely, the issue of how best to accommodate the conflicting beliefs of justice and freedom and the quest for a course of treatment without good absolutes now come together in his reaction to the new situation rising up out of the years of war. In fact, the consequence of the hostilities solidifies and develops the global dimension of Camus' sympathy toward socio-political justice in as much as that national boundaries are currently being surpassed by the dynamic or changing historical circumstances. As Camus notes in "Neither Victims nor Executioners", one doesn't cure plague with the methods connected to healing head colds. An emergency which splits the entire world must be settled on the universal level. Instinctually restricted to political fanaticism in his belief "there is nothing more dignified than refusing reasons of State set up as an absolute"⁸⁴, Camus now continues on the premise of what he calls moderate political thinking, that is to say free from all "messianism"

⁸⁰ Camus, *The Just Assassins*, p. 23.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 27.

⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁸⁴ Camus, *Neither Victims nor executioners: An Ethic superior to Murder*, p. 15.

and discharged from sentimentality for a quick road to an early heaven. The main point here is that as he tries to sustain moral measures in the new world situation, Camus afresh draws on the standard of liberal democracy, "the social and political activity of control", by which to ingrain, on the worldwide scale, the much "sought after" dialogue between justice and freedom which kind of proved non realizable for post war France; "The democrat, all things considered, is one who acknowledges that a rival can be correct, who subsequently permits him or her to express him/herself and who approves to consider his or her contentions"⁸⁵.

In wording exceedingly reminiscent of his views upon the occurrence of hostilities in Europe, Camus lays weight on the possibility that to leave oneself to the terrible certainty of another war amongst the East and the West is consequently to compromise the mission for justice by which global politics will be resolved;

We are addressing the general population of Europe and the world so as to recommend to them a common activity and to request that they perceive with us that war can and should be evaded, not because it is more imperative to live in peace than in justice, which would be the language of subjugation and capitulation, but since starting now and into the foreseeable future it will be difficult to have faith in the light of justice if we stop for a single moment to... fight in peace.⁸⁶

To comprehend Camus' vision here of "common action" with a perspective to prevent another worldwide clash, we require again to turn our attention towards "Neither Victims nor Executioners", the arrangement of articles offering a moral harmony between the contradicting political belief systems of the East and the West yet which strikingly enough was conceived and formed before the principal events in Europe before the Cold War. This last observation draws into inquiry how vital a commentary on Camus' articles

⁸⁵ Orme, *The Development of Albert Camus' concern for social and political Justice*, p. 137.

⁸⁶ Camus, *Neither Victims nor executioners: An Ethic superior to Murder*, p. 25.

really are on the issue. In any case, Camus details his mission for a universal popular government naturally approved at an international level, where the law is above governments, law being the outflow of the will of everybody, represented by a lawmaking body. Given that national governments are not generally adequately representative of their own people, Camus now contributes the envisaged new order in a global context: the new world order that we are searching for can't just be national or even continental and particularly neither western or eastern, It must be universal. Predicated on the guidelines of "justice and fairness" through different countries, such a dream of worldwide solidarity produces, for Camus, another atmosphere of collaboration helpful for making and redistributing wealth thus guaranteeing free commerce across national borders.⁸⁷

Generally, what Camus is doing here is figuring an outline or a blueprint for a worldwide set of principles introducing a new age of promoting respect for human beings and their fundamental freedoms on to the global stage. It ought to be underlined, in any case, that in this manner requiring another social contract, Camus is not offering voice to an ideological outlook; rather, in his requests for an international order taking into account justice and discourse, he is principally preoccupied with the issue of how best to understand the success and yearnings of the international or worldwide group at large; it is obviously apparent that it would not be an issue of making another philosophy. It would just be an issue of looking for a lifestyle. Despite the fact that a criticism can be leveled against Camus that his anticipated new request is pitifully hopeful in nature, it is noteworthy that "the main article" of the "code of international justice," that he conceives as a means by which to manage the new social contract, is the worldwide abolition of the death penalty or capital punishment. This is an essential segment of his perspective of social justice

⁸⁷ Orme, *The Development of Albert Camus' concern for social and political Justice*, p. 141.

which, as will be further affirmed later, would likewise remain an individual fascination for Camus.

Central to the possibility of a "code of international justice" is the issue of rights and, in one of its measurements, "Neither Victims nor Executioners" is equivalent to a Bill of Human Rights. This last claim can additionally be validated by reference to Camus' concern, all through the unsettled period as of now under consideration, for casualties of intolerance and human rights infringement and by his intrusions, attempted in the spirit of the 1946 articles and for the benefit of casualties of worldwide abuse. For sure, his practical moral mandate in such manner can be said to clarify the hypothetical thoughts of the imagined new world order mentioned in "Neither Victims nor Executioners". Consequently, halfway recorded in Camus' contemporary compositions, his concern toward sociopolitical justice on the global scale now additionally finds commonsense expression.⁸⁸

Capital punishment

It was noted in *The Myth of Sisyphus* that Camus utilizes his idea of rebellion as a reaction to the moral nihilism of the "absurd sensitivity".⁸⁹ Expanding on this prior thinking, now shaped by the verifiable context of War and Resistance, he contemplates in *The Rebel* on the issue of whether, in a world without "transcendental meaning", it is conceivable to characterize a human type of rebellion as a dissent against injustice and oppression, without falling into the ethical pit of progressive nihilism. At the end of the day, in a universe where God is dead and where there is no higher law to decide moral conduct, Camus now investigates whether alternative human qualities can be made by

⁸⁸ Ibid., pp. 145-146.

⁸⁹ Camus, *Myth of Sisyphus*, p. 10.

which to maintain measures of justice and freedom inside the historically unstable setting of revolutionary ideas. Along these lines, from the quest for happiness in a world accustomed by the Absurd (*The Myth of Sisyphus*), Camus goes ahead to seek after the journey for a moral justification of justice in our current reality where moral absolutism wins (*The Rebel*). He explored different avenues regarding it in his plays “*The State of Siege*” and “*The Just Assassins*” and in his intricate novel *The Plague*, and all over he appeared to reach with difficulty and often with something less than clearness of a thought that "rebellion" suggested "limit," or, as such, some standard of progressive worth.

In *The Rebel*, Camus tackles this issue solidly. He settles here on the issue of murder. Where suicide, the individual matter, was once in the past an issue, he contends, now murder, “the social problem”, is the issue. If the absurd prompts to the refusal of suicide, it affirms the worth of life. Such an affirmation implies declining to take one's own particular life, as well as declining to permit any other person to take it, and, also, declining to take the life of another. From the earliest starting point, then, this refusal or this "rebellion" suggests an arrangement of limits, however as an issue of history the issue is in no way, shape or form this simple. Revolt as it happens generally is rebellion against something, that is, rebellion against some specific discrimination or set of mistreatments. Acknowledgment of the absurd leads instantly to the denial of conventional values and to rebel against the “historical embodiment” of these values, that is, the current authority figure/s, for the sake of individual value. Therefore, solidly it leads to murder. Rebellion (or, all the more definitely, "perverted rebellion" which Camus calls "revolution") obliterates the old qualities since they have no worth from the absurdist viewpoint, however as an issue of history looks to replace them with new values. Along these lines, murder starts in the name either of the absurd or of new values, and it proceeds for the sake of protecting those new values. Yet, Camus demands, revolt for the sake of life can't reliably end in murder. This truly is the power of *The Rebel*: “Revolt when precisely broke down contains its own

limits, not limits which are effortlessly specified, but rather limits regardless. And this without any plea to the transcendental.”⁹⁰

Subsequently, criticism of capital punishment or the death penalty is both clear and implicit in Camus' works. For instance, in *The Stranger* Meursault's long imprisonment amid his trial and his inevitable execution are introduced as a part of a detailed, traditional custom involving both public and religious authorities. The bleak unreasonableness of this procedure of legalized murder stands out especially from the sudden, irrational, almost unplanned nature of his actual wrongdoing. Likewise, in *The Myth of Sisyphus*, the eventual suicide is contrasted with relation to his lethal opposite, the man sentenced to death, and we are constantly reminded that a sentence death is our common destiny in an absurd universe.

"Reflections on the Guillotine" is an extended article written in 1957 by Albert Camus. In the exposition, Camus takes an uncompromising position for the complete obliteration of capital punishment. Camus expresses that he doesn't construct his argument with respect to sensitivity for the convicted however on coherent grounds and on demonstrated statistics. Camus additionally contends that death penalty is a simple choice for the legislature where cure and reform might be conceivable.

Camus also reviews criminological information invalidating any defense whatsoever of capital punishment taking into account the high occurrence of legal blunders and variability in verdicts starting with one time and place to another. This information gives us the premise to argue against capital punishment on the grounds of its irreversibility; on these grounds alone, Camus contends life imprisonment without the chance for further appeal as an option. He goes on, be that as it may, to philosophical, religious, and political levels of contention. He doesn't entirely dismiss conservative defenses of punishment as vengeance or retribution, yet adheres to a meaningful boundary at death,

⁹⁰ Thorson, "Albert Camus and the Rights of Man", p. 290.

not just in light of the risks of mistaken executions but since society drags itself down to the level of its most irrational individuals in indulging the drive to slaughter, and in fact may instigate a greater amount of those individuals to murder through emulation than it discourages.⁹¹

While most of it is a spine-chilling depiction of the death penalty in France, it contains additionally his last and maybe most compact proclamation in backing of the rights of man against the state, a subject which had been from multiple points of view his focal concern toward numerous years. The issue with the modern world is not, says Camus, the kind of murder which the guillotine was designed to punish; that is, "private" murder, a wrongdoing against society; rather "public" murder, the act of society against the person. The murders conferred by the Nazi state alone are many times more vicious in quality and quantity than the majority of the "private" killings of the twentieth century. His contention against state-forced death, what he calls rational murder, relies on the very truth that he talks as a modern man.

On the metaphysical level, Camus assaults the notion of capital punishment as sacrilege against Christian mercy and apology:

There could be read on the sword of the Fribourg executioner the words: 'Lord Jesus, thou art the judge.' . . . And, to be sure, whoever clings to the teaching of Jesus will look upon that handsome sword as one more outrage to the person of Christ.⁹²

Moreover, he contends that the religious faith undergirding prior church states can no more legitimize modern secular states' suspicion of Godlike control over life and death. It was once conceivable, he contends, to sensibly support capital punishment on Christian grounds, for man's judgment regardless of the possibility that it were in mistake could simply be superseded by the last judgment of God. Be that as it may, for Camus, modern man has no such reason; For the larger part of Europeans, faith is lost and what's more, with it, the

⁹¹ Camus, "Reflections of Guillotine: An essay on capital punishment", pp. 18-21.

⁹² Camus, *Resistance, Rebellion and Death*, p. 171.

various justifications faith gave in the domain of punishment. Yet, the larger part of Europeans likewise dismiss the State idolatry that intended to replace the position of faith. Consequently in mid-course, having made up our brains never to submit and never to persecute, we ought to concede at one and the same time our trust and our lack of awareness, we ought to decline absolute law and the irreparable judgment. We know enough to say that any criminal deserves hard labor forever. Yet, we don't know enough to decree that he be shorn of his future at the end of the day, of the chance we as a whole might have of offering some kind of reformation. In light of what I have quite recently said, in the unified Europe without bounds the sincere abolition of capital punishment should be the main article of the European Code we as a whole hope for.⁹³

Here, more unequivocally than somewhere else, Camus voices a defense of men against the state, a defense which is in some ways strikingly similar to a contention which may be advanced by a practical person. Society has no right to kill without total conviction, firstly, that it has an otherworldly or religious right to do as such, and second, that there is no conceivable doubt in a specific case that there is no mistake in legal judgment. Given the fundamentally restricted character of human knowledge-both in common, philosophical matters and in the pragmatic details of evidence-neither of these conditions can ever be realized. But Camus's contention is not merely practical; rather it is a pragmatism enriched by the existential arguments. Man is not simply the mortal cognitive machine-a sort of imperfectly automated computer-he is also a being conscious of impending death for whom his own mortality reveals the valuable quality of life. It is significant to say that, because we can never be sure that we are completely right, we can never be justified in performing actions as heartless as taking away a man's life, rather it is more noteworthy to affirm simultaneously the value of that life.

⁹³ Camus, "Reflections of Guillotine: An essay on capital punishment", pp. 18-21.

Camus' primary point in his contention against the death penalty is its ineffectiveness. Camus points out that in nations where capital punishment has been abolished crime has not risen. He clarifies this by arguing that the world has changed so that death penalty no more serves as the hindrance that it might once have been. Probably, In Camus' father's day the guillotine was still used to execute criminals out in the open however by the time Camus composed his exposition executions occurred secretly in jails. Despite the fact that Camus endorsed of the view that the executions should be held in private, he contended that it removed the component of deterrence and rendered capital punishment as just a means for the state to discard those whom it saw as irremediable.⁹⁴

Camus additionally contended that the fear of death is inadequate to keep individuals from carrying out violations as death is the common fate shared by all, paying little respect to guilt. He likewise thought that in light of the fact that most murders are not planned no impediment can be effective and on account of a planned murder the hindrance would be lacking to stop the individuals who have already chosen to act.

Without filling a need Camus contended that capital punishment is reduced to a demonstration of vengeance that only breeds further brutality, energized only by hostility and sustained by custom. He compared this demonstration of state revenge to the idea of an eye for an eye and expressed that justice ought to be founded on law and standards and not impulse and emotions.

In spite of the fact that Camus challenged the use of the capital punishment today, he gives example in the article of how it might have been consistent and proper in devout or extremely religious civilizations. In such developments, Camus mentions that capital punishment was typically managed by the Church with a specific end goal to deny the convicted the perfect gift of life. In any case, by doing so, the convicted would then face judgment and have the shot

⁹⁴ Lazere, "Camus and his Critics on Capital Punishment", p. 371.

for penance on account of God. In an unbelieving world, Camus contends, the convicted is given zero chance of reparation. The procedure happens totally separate from the convict and essentially dismisses him as beyond salvation or any cure.

Camus additionally expressed that in an unbelieving world there is no total power capable for passing judgment as no man has supreme guiltlessness himself. In light of this Camus recommended that the greatest punishment ought to be set at labor for life because of the likelihood of legal or judicial error, a life of labor as Camus would see it, being harsher than death yet at any rate conveying the likelihood of being reversed. The convicted would then likewise also have the alternative of picking death by means of suicide.

Camus likewise contended that capital punishment was not appropriate in light of the fact that by affecting revenge for grievances it at the same time harms the family and friends of the convict in the same way as those being avenged for were harmed by the initial wrongdoing.

Capital punishment is the most premeditated of murders, to which no criminal's deed, however computed, can be compared. For there to be an equivalency, capital punishment would need to punish a criminal who had warned his victim of the date on which he would inflict a horrible death on him and who, from that moment onward, had confined him at his mercy for months. Such a monster is not to be encountered in private life.⁹⁵

Camus recommended that as opposed to affecting capital punishment as a cure for the problem, the French government could do better to enhance living conditions and disallow liquor which Camus claimed was directly connected and responsible for a considerable amount of homicides which actually prompted utilization of capital punishment in France.

⁹⁵ Camus, "Reflections of Guillotine: An essay on capital punishment", p. 29.

Toward the end of the essay, Camus expressed that action must be made instantly. Camus suggested that France lead the way for the rest of the world by embracing a trial time of ten years in which the death penalty be substituted with labor of love. Camus proposed that the alternative of self-controlled lethal injection (a somewhat modern likeness to hemlock in Ancient Greece) would be an initial phase in a more humanistic course. In 1981 capital punishment was nullified in France, the last execution having occurred four years before in Marseille.

So Camus' case lays not on a refusal of individual duty or punishment, but only on adhering to a meaningful boundary at carrying them to the point of death. The former words might be a sufficiently precise record of *The Stranger*, however without a doubt not of "Reflections" or of Camus' work in general. (Indeed, even *The Stranger* does not suggest that staying alive at any expense is extremely important; Meursault could evade execution by lying about the circumstances of the murder he committed, however he declines to). In actuality, friendship and intimate solidarity are among the best values all through Camus' work. He sees this valuable solidarity continually menaced both by the absurdity of life's physical requirements and the ridiculousness of society's subjective traditions - prevalently the force of the state to stifle individual lives through war and capital punishment.

By disposition a private individual and an astute political scholar, Camus nonetheless underlined the paradox that the metaphysical and social seclusion of every individual makes a bond between her/him and each other individual; as he places it in *Lyrical and Critical Essays*, "Solitudes unite those society separates."⁹⁶ This bond thus ought to lead people to join in the common struggle against social forces infringing on individual freedom, and for the foundation of social conditions and political approaches maximizing that freedom. Subsequently, Camus' own particular deep rooted political commitments, comprising of taking a chance with his own life in the

⁹⁶ Camus, "Lyrical and Critical essays", p. 12.

Resistance, and his compositions, (for example, *The Plague*, *The Rebel*, and *The Just Assassins*) portraying circumstances where giving up one's life takes moral priority over staying alive at any expense. Lastly, in "Reflections" Camus makes it clear that killers must be condemned and punished for disturbing our "solidarity against death," however that by executing them society drags itself down to the identical level and- in fact much more terrible - regulates their own inability to purify life.

There is no question of giving into some ordinary arrangements of sentimental pictures and bringing to mind Victor Hugo's good convicts. The time of enlightenment, as individuals say, needed to overpower capital punishment in light of the fact that man was actually good. Obviously he is not (he is more terrible or better). Following a quarter century of our sublime history we are very much aware of this. In any case, exactly in light of the fact that he is not completely great, nobody among us can act like an outright judge and maintain the authoritative disposal of the most exceedingly worst among the guilty, on the grounds that nobody of us can make a case for supreme blamelessness or innocence. Capital judgment annoys the only undeniable human solidarity -our solidarity against death- and it can be legitimized just by a truth or a rule that is better than man.⁹⁷

On the political level, Camus contends as a radical that bourgeois society breeds and benefits from anti-social situations like poverty and liquor abuse, however thoroughly acquits itself of any responsibility regarding the criminal outcomes of these situations. His contention is not that people bear no obligation regarding wrongdoing or that society is not qualified to protect itself, but rather as long as society bears the slightest part of obligation, it is unjustified in setting 100% of obligation on culprits in executing them; the expense of life imprisonment ought to be viewed as society's negligible share of obligation. Lastly, and most compellingly, he contends that capital punishment is a definitive weapon of excessive state control over the

⁹⁷ Camus, "Reflections of Guillotine: An essay on capital punishment", p. 32.

individual, and ought to be canceled as an initial move toward reversal of the idolization of the state and patriotism that has driven us in the twentieth century to two world wars, the dangers of an atomic war, totalitarianism, and the reducing of individual freedoms, even in majority rules systems.

The catchphrase here is "absolute." Likewise for Camus' perspective of discipline:

The instinct of preservation of societies, and hence of individuals, requires . . . that individual responsibility be postulated and accepted without dreaming of an absolute indulgence that would amount to the death of all society. But the same reasoning must lead us to conclude that there never exists any total responsibility or, consequently, any absolute punishment or reward The death penalty, which really neither provides an example nor assures distributive justice, simply usurps an exorbitant privilege by claiming to punish an always relative culpability by a definitive and irreparable punishment.⁹⁸

And,

Compassion, of course, can in this instance be but an awareness of a common suffering and not a frivolous indulgence paying no attention to the sufferings and rights of the victim. Compassion does not exclude punishment, but it suspends the final condemnation.⁹⁹

And finally,

We should admit at one and the same time our hope and our ignorance, we should refuse absolute law and the irreparable judgment. We know enough to say that this or that major criminal deserves hard labor for life. But we don't know enough to decree that he be shorn of his future.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 37.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 41.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 48.

Conclusion

Camus claims that we as humans cannot evade the enquiry, "What is the meaning of existence?" Camus, on the other hand, denies the existence of any response to this inquiry, and discards each teleological, supernatural, scientific or human-made conclusion that claims to provide a sufficient answer. Accordingly, while accepting that people anyhow will try to comprehend the purpose of life, Camus chose to stand for the skeptical position that the universe, the world, and the human beings in general will remain silent in regard to this goal. As world itself is meaningless, we need to figure out a way to tolerate this irresolvable void. This strange struggle, between our motivation for inquiring about the ultimate and the inconceivable possibility of finding any satisfactory answer, is the meaning of "the absurd" in Camus' philosophy. Camus investigates the results emerging from this paradox in his philosophy of the absurd.

Camus' idea of "the absurd" is best caught in a picture of Sisyphus struggling to push the rock up to the top of the mountain, and see it rolling back down, then going down following the rock to start it all once more, in an everlasting cycle. Just like Sisyphus, we human being can't resist the opportunity to keep on asking about the significance of life, just to find out our answers being caught in the same cycle.

Camus sees three conceivable philosophical reactions to this issue, two of which he rejects, and the other one he advances as an appropriate solution. The first option is simple and straightforward: "physical suicide". On the occasion that we choose that an existence without any particular purpose or significance is not worthy enough, we can decide to end our life. Camus discards this kind

of decision as weak. According to him, it is a negation or abandonment of life, and not in any way a genuine rebellion.

The next decision is the religious answer of setting a divine universe of comfort and significance beyond “the Absurd”. Camus considers this arrangement as “philosophical suicide” and discards it as clearly elusive and deceitful. To accept a supernatural answer for the issue of “the Absurd” (for instance, with some kind of mystical believes or leap of fate) is to ignore reason, which according to Camus' perspective is as lethal and self-damaging as “physical suicide”. Actually, rather than expelling himself from the absurd meeting between the self and the world similar to the “physical suicide”, the religious devotee basically eliminates the culpable world and substitutes it with a more pleasant option.,

The third option—which Camus considers as the sole genuine and acceptable one—is just to acknowledge absurdity, or to put in in a better way, to embrace it, and to go on with life. As “the Absurd” in his perspective is an inevitable, in fact essential, feature of human condition, the only appropriate reaction to it is complete, constant, fearless acceptance. Life can be experienced even better when there no meaning for it.

The perfect illustration of this courageous choice is Sisyphus in Camus' *Myth of Sisyphus*. Bound to everlasting struggle of rolling his rock, completely aware of the crucial hopelessness of the condition he is in, Sisyphus nonetheless decides to go on. By doing that, he gets to be for Camus a sublime symbol of the spirit for the rebellion and of the “human condition”. To wake up every day to battle a fight knowing you will not win, and to still being able to hold on to wit, elegance, sympathy for others, and even a feeling of mission, is to confront “the Absurd” in a soul of genuine heroism.

Throughout his profession, Camus analyzes the Absurd from various points of view and through the eyes of a wide range of characters—from the distraught

Caligula, who is fixated on the issue, to the unusually indifferent but then all the while self-ingested Meursault, who appears to be unconcerned with it even though he represents it and is finally a victim of it. In *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Camus follows the concept of absurd in particular personas in mythology and literature (Don Juan, Ivan Karamazov) furthermore in particular forms of character form (the Actor, the Conqueror), who all might be comprehended as somehow a variant or appearance of Sisyphus, the original “absurd hero”.

Now that we accept the absurdity of the world and the meaninglessness of existence, the next step is the realization that in such a world there can be no absolute truth, meaning, or set of values. In the situation that no absolute values exist, the advancement of values on earth must be done based on some different patterns. How then should we understand them? The presence of a value presumes a value-creating point of view, and the values will be made by individuals as helps for endurance and development. Since values are critical to the welfare of the human beings, since faith in them is necessary for our survival, in many cases we tend to overlook the fact that values have been created by ourselves and to protect them as though they were absolute. Consequently, social organizations upholding loyalty to hereditary values are given the chance to use power to serve themselves, insofar as people depending on them are insured of security and opportunity in their lives. Nonetheless, every now and then the values we receive are regarded no more appropriate and carrying them out further will be helpful no more. To keep up faith in such values, even in a situation that they no more appear to be practicable, turns what once served people for their benefit, and what was at one time the reasonable application of values that were preventing the misuse of power. Under this circumstance, the person has to revive his inventive, value-creating abilities and develop new values.

The companion concept to “the Absurd” in works of Camus (which is actually the only philosophical matter besides “the Absurd” he has written a whole book about) is the concept of rebellion. What is rebellion? To explain it in simple

words, it is the life-force in Sisyphus that rebels and confronts the Absurd. To explain it more precisely and less allegorically, it is the act of confronting any apparent injustice, tyranny in the human condition.

Revolt, in Camusian context, starts with an acknowledgment of limits, of boundaries that characterize the indispensable sense of self and primary concept of existence and as the result must not be overstepped—like in the situation that a “slave” confronts his “master” and claims “thus far, and no further, shall I be commanded.”¹⁰¹ At first it might seem like a merely individualistic concern and it might even seem like a pure act of egoism. But actually Camus discusses extensively to clarify the fact that a conscious revolt is eventually way beyond an only personal motion or a demonstration of an individual rebellion. He claims that the rebel believes in the idea of existence of a “common good more important than his own destiny”¹⁰² and that there are “rights more important than himself.”¹⁰³ He acts “in the name of certain values which are still indeterminate but which he feels are common to himself and to all men.”¹⁰⁴

Camus continues then to state that an examination of defiance or revolt ends in any event to the doubt that, in spite of the suggestions of modern philosophy, instinct exists in humans, as the Greeks held. In the end, “Why rebel,” he wonders, “if there is nothing permanent in the self-worth preserving”¹⁰⁵? The slave, who affirms himself by standing strong, really does this for everybody on the planet. He argues that “all men—even the man who insults and oppresses him—have a natural community.”¹⁰⁶ Genuine rebellion, then, is accomplished for the person himself as well as in cohesion with and due to empathy for other people as well. Therefore, Camus is led to infer that rebellion too has its points

¹⁰¹ Camus, *The Rebel*, p. 15.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹⁰⁵ Camus, *Myth of Sisyphus*, p. 98.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

of confinement. If it starts with and fundamentally includes an acknowledgment of "human community" and a mutual self-worth of human beings, it can't regard other people as they were inadequate in that self-worth or did not belong to that particular group, without revealing its own particular genuine character.

Following this example, as proposed by Camus, will lead to an arrangement of qualities that is alive and breaths and also develops. It is not stiff and static since it is no more considered a wrongdoing to scrutinize the legitimacy of any of the values. The values are effective just to the extent the general population trust they are reasonable for their situation and the minute individuals don't find that value worth deserving of conservation, that quality is dead. This procedure will prompt the development of a legitimate framework with adaptable laws too, since there is no outright values any more, there can be no supreme laws in view of them.

Clearly living the human condition, Sisyphus considers himself to be the expert of his time. By getting to be aware of this point, Camus takes responsibility for it. As the result, Sisyphus remodels his destiny into a state of "wholly human origin." "Wholly" might be a misrepresentation, in light of the fact that all things considered, death is unavoidable and terrible, yet by recognizing this, Sisyphus decides to live different from what the gods have forced on him; hence, he gets to write his own desired ending. Similarly, Meursault, hero of *The Stranger*, becomes conscious in the later part of the book in the wake of committing the strange homicide that closes the book's initial segment. He has experienced his life starting with one minute onto the next without much mindfulness, yet at his trial anticipating execution he gets to resemble Sisyphus, completely aware of his situation and his horrific destiny. He is going to face death gloriously representing the absurd man.

The *Myth of Sisyphus* is not in any way leading to a skeptical ending. When it comes to taking one's own life, Camus directs a strongly mindful and dynamic non-determination. Dismissing all kinds of expectation for solving the pressure

is equal to discard despair. For sure, it seems conceivable to talk about happiness within these points of confinement. "Happiness and the absurd are two sons of the same earth. They are inseparable".¹⁰⁷ It does not mean that finding the absurd will fundamentally end in happiness, in fact recognizing the absurd at the same time signifies tolerating human weakness, "an awareness of our limitations", and the constant wish for going above what can be conceivable for us. These all can signify the marks of being completely alive. "The battle itself toward the statures is sufficient to fill a man's heart. One must envision Sisyphus happy".¹⁰⁸

This struggle, is a challenge that Camus invites us to take, with the hope of improving the conditions we are facing as human beings. We might have tried for centuries, to soothe or fears of living in an absurd and confusing world by trying to prove that there is a guideline, a sacred manuscript, to lead us out of the darkness, but it seems like the time to look for the answer in a different direction. Maybe after all there is no guideline given to us, prepared and written on stone; maybe we, the human beings, are the answer. Happiness is what we all are looking for, whatever our idea of it might be; and the search for happiness is what drives us through all the struggles we face in both individual and social realm. Though the absolute happiness, as well as any other absolute concept, cannot be achieved, but it would be our rock which we have to push even though we know there is no final point to reach to. This search would be a never ending one. But what we can aim at, can be the attempt to include as many number of people as possible in the circle of happiness and try for achieving a higher standard.

According to what all which have been discussed throughout the dissertation and in the light of what discussed in the previous pages, we can sum up what Camus would aim at in the personal and social level according to his ideas about morality and legality as it will be mentioned in the following paragraphs.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 122.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 123.

Firstly, we need to remember that as discussed, the inherited moral values are not absolute, and they are as well the result of people's reaction and decisions on particular situations during the human history. As the result, they can change, or better said they must change according to the time and situation. Therefore, the judgments we make in society, whether it is in the private or the social realm, has to be based on the revised values and not on the old fixated ideas that are not valid anymore. As Camus gives a perfect example for the consequence of adhering to old and fixated values in his novel *The Stranger*, the judgments have to be free of the prejudices created by the blind following of certain beliefs without questioning them. We see that Meursault is convicted in his trial mostly because of his different perspective towards life rather than the crime he has committed. The fact that he does not feel sad for his mother's death is more troublesome for the people than the actual crime. This kind of judgment definitely has no place in the society Camus' is trying to build.

The second important point that can be taken from the study of Camus' philosophy is the value of life as the only value that we can start from. *In Myth of Sisyphus*, he clearly comes to the conclusion that definitely life worth living, even in an absurd meaningless world. For him revolt is the important act that leads to creating new values, but even revolt has to be restricted to the point it leads to death. Death is the limit he draws for any attempt in making a better society. The disagreement to capital punishment is easily traceable in many of his works and as discussed in the third chapter, he has an extended essay on this topic called *Reflections on Guillotine*. Camus does not deny the act of punishment all together, but he draws the line at taking a life. According to him, by adherence to any set of values, at the end we are not immune from mistake. The chance of error in the judgment is one of the reasons Camus claims that the capital punishment has to stop. But of course this is not the only reason. He refers to capital punishment as the public murder and believes by taking the life of the convicted person, the law comes down to the level of the murderer who have been convicted. As I have discussed in length in the

third chapter, according to Camus, the death penalty is not an effective way of reducing the crimes and it mostly seems like an easy way out of the trouble. He does not take away the responsibility from the people, but believes that we cannot put the hundred percent of the responsibility of the crimes on the individual's shoulder. The society as a whole has a great role in the way people behave and the actions they take, it has to be aware of its effects while passing the judgments.

This point will lead to the next important matter in Camus' philosophy. As I have mentioned, happiness is a key concept in his philosophy and making a better society is what he aims at. But we must not forget that this happiness should include as many number as possible. Even the convicted has to have a chance for coming back and being able to revise their decisions. He claims that by execution we are taking away the chance of coming back to a normal life and the opportunity of having a good life from those individuals; Specially that many times the murders are not premeditated and on the other hand there is always the chance of error in the judgment. So he suggests reducing the death penalty to an option like life time imprisonment and in this way create a more reformative society.

At the same time, we should remember that Camus by valuing life over anything else does not mean that we have to live by any cost. Life matters above any other thing, but at the same time, the values we are making for ourselves might lead us to the decision of giving our life for some particular value. We can see an example of this situation in *The Stranger*, when Meursault has the option of saving his life by lying about his circumstances, but he prefers to tell the truth and face the consequences.

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