

Existentialist and Absurd Aspects in Franz Kafka's *The Trial*

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Abstract

In this Article I discussed about the most important themes of Kafka's writing: existentialist, absurd elements and the instability of the human condition. Through the interpretation of absurd communications between characters as well as the disjointed and distorted environments that permeate in his works Kafka create a tension that resonates deep within the reader and the audience.

Martin Esslin coined the phrase "*The Theatre of the Absurd*" in 1960. Esslin grouped these plays around the wide theme of the Absurd connected to the way Albert Camus uses the phrase in his essay *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1942). The people are answerable for their own actions despite the prevailing insecurity about right or wrong. A lot of people have scrutinized the plays such as Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, and Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* through an existential lens. Important of an existential work includes the subsistence of anti-heroes, unstable consideration of the past and unbalanced identities.

Most of scholars argues that the Absurd term have to be used only to submit to the educational group in Europe in the 1950s - 1960s connected with the works of the Samuel Beckett, Jean Genet, Edward Albee, Frank Kafka, Harold Pinter, and Tom Stoppard. Important scholars enlarge the term to Albert Camus and yet others extend it as far back as Socrates.

Key words: Absurd Theatre, The Trial, Existentialism, Franz Kafka, meaningless, nothingness and Joseph K.

Full Length Paper

Franz Kafka was a well-known German-speaking writer born on July 3, 1883 in Prague, Czech Republic. He is widely regarded as one of the most important and significant writers of the 20th century known for his typical style and explorations of themes such as bureaucracy, alienation and existentialism. Franz Kafka's writing has had an insightful impact on modern literature. His legacy keeps on influence writers and scholars around the world. His best known works are *The Metamorphosis* and novels *The Castle* and *The Trial*. His others like *The Judgment*, *The Castle*, *Contemplation*, *A Hunger Artist* *Letters to Felice*. The term Kafkaesque has come in English to illustrate absurd situations like those represented in his writing.

The Trial is written by Kafka in the year 1914-1915 and then novel is published posthumously on 26 April 1925. One of his important works it advise the story of Josef K. a young man arrested and accused by unreachable authority, a remote with the scenery of his offense revealed neither to him nor to the person who

reads. Greatly influenced by Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov* and *Crime and Punishment* Kafka yet went so far as to describe Dostoevsky a family member. Kafka's two novels *The Trial* & *The Castle and Amerika* was never completed though it does comprise a chapter which appears to bring the story to an intentionally abrupt ending.

Franz Kafka sketched the opening sentence of *The Trial* in August 1914 and continuous work on the novel during 1915. This was an strangely productive period for Kafka in spite of the outbreak of World War I which notably increased the pressures of his day job as an insurance agent.

Joseph K a chief clerk at a bank with a good status. The novel argues the absurd series of proceedings he had to face after he was unexpectedly arrested one morning. Kafka transports to the front position the theme of aggravation and defenselessness while dealing with a dishonest, unintelligible and unjust fairness system that seemed to be extremely stifling to those who seek honesty. This is one of the finest examples for Kafkaesque approach of writing. Having begun by characters the opening and concluding sections of the novel Kafka efforts on the intervening scenes in a disorganized manner using several dissimilar notebooks simultaneously. His friend Max Brod, expressive Kafka's habit of obliterating his own work eventually took the script into protection. This script consisted of 161 loose pages torn from notebooks, which Kafka had bundled together into chapters. The arrange of the chapters was not made clear to Brod, nor was he told which parts were entire and which incomplete. Subsequent Kafka's death in 1924 Brod shortened the work and accumulates it into a novel to the best of his capacity. Additional perspective work has been done by later intellectuals but Kafka's ultimate vision for *The Trial* remains unidentified.

The human situation for Kafka is well further than tragic or miserable. It is "absurd." He assumed that the whole human competition was the creation of one of "God's bad days." There is no "meaning" to make intelligence of our lives. Ironically that purposelessness allows us to read into Kafka's novels such as *The Trial* or his stories like "*The Metamorphosis*," whatever meanings we please.

Albert Camus's opening proposal in his best-known essay *The Myth of Sisyphus* is that "There is but one actually serious theoretical problem and that is suicide". It resonance Kafka's bleak maxim: "A first sign of the commencement of sympathetic is the desire to depart this life." Why not when life is senseless? Camus's treatise pictures the human circumstance in the legendary figure Sisyphus, doomed for perpetuity to roll a rock up a hill only for it to fall down again senseless. Only two reactions are possible in the face of man's Sisyphean destiny: suicide or revolt. Camus depicts that "Hope and the meaningless in the Works of Franz Kafka" to his Sisyphus essay remember the writer to whose pressure he was indebted.

In our modern world, the terms Kafkaesque have become adjectives used to describe the illogical and menacing situations and sensations of the modern, fractured world, and of the individual's struggle to find importance in the midst of the misleading and unfaithful society whose purpose always remain mysterious.

The Trial has the structure of a quest by Joseph K.evidently also a quest for what is unreachable but it has the narrative quality of a frightening. Guilt emerges to be an innate part of the human situation but it is indeterminate, unquantifiable. A series of unreliable and at times absurd mentors, who disagree with

themselves and each other offer him doubtful guidance on his quest-the uncle the advocate, the painter, the priest; his hopes are invested in indefinable and sporadic female figures that do not advance his cause at the slightest Fraulei Burstner, the washer woman at the court, Leni. The ambiance of the court chambers of any of the legal institutions is tyrannical, claustrophobic, suffocating; Kafka spoke of experiencing feelings of sickness like 'area sickness on dry land'- a panic loss of psychic equilibrium that is expressed most vibrantly towards the end of chapter three when the passage of the court chambers pitches and heaves under Joseph K. like a ship in a storm.

While possessed of a profound desire to live in community Joseph K. situates on the edge between sociality and solitude. He is torn by conflicting choices. No matter what he prefers he still sins and is compulsory to punish himself. He seems to be on the part of his assassins he is defeated by pity for the examiner who have arrested and deprived him; and he goes back to the court although he has not been summoned. This anguish dominates his life, his sleep. He is the culprit and the judge. What is the method out of this impasse? How could he make a choice? There is no more heavenly norm for God has twisted missing from the earth. The Law is no longer understood life is monadically absurd and Joseph K., like Camus's *The Stranger* has the experience of total superfluousness. He regards his arrest as a "ridiculous nothingness". He has a vague feeling of contingency and looks for judges to justify his survival. He does not acquire the power to stand up and to presume a loneliness which scares him. He would like to be included into a chain of command. These are unproductive hopes for the adjudicators he meets are minor, corrupt judges.

The Trial can be read as highlighting a world that has lost its spirituality, where man has become an abstract being without fervor. The Law occasionally issues cautions to this impecunious humanity but such calls are never noticed. And so one Sunday morning when he wakes up a man finds a sharp edge lodged in the back of his neck the sharp edge of the Law. He pulls it out and neglectful of God he is not worrying and happy when he joins his friends in the recognizable world of the Sunday amble. The divine Law is mysterious and the court positively does not possess the key. Therefore any moral judgment becomes both true and vain, for it is true only because its truth is human and family member. That is why the give confidence which instruction Joseph K. is made up of secondary, corrupt judges. When life isn't related to a complete standard, it becomes extra, absurd, and sin may be the receipt of this indefensible life since the supreme judges cannot be touched. Religious conviction born of man's existential suffering was meant to be the highest demonstration of the human spirit wondering about its fortune. But it has become tainted and outdated. One must therefore find again this forgotten holiness. The cathedral is empty, badly empty and gloomy. It's no longer a place for contemplation it is an historical tombstone which Joseph K. visits. The priest does not sermonize from the main pulpit but is pleased with the small pulpit and prefers for his sermon a most strange hour when the building is not profaned by a mass that pay only lip examination to faith. In the podium and at the altar: There was no longer a Moses or Aaron. The wonderful service was carried on like any other thing which. Subsequent the course of the world Is dry and withered with age.

Nietzsche who killed God held up to man a new principle the conqueror who replaced God the eternal return restored eternal contentment. Kafka took only human flaw for according to one of Kafka's maxim we not only "sinned when we ate the outgrowth of the tree of awareness, but also because we have not yet eaten of the fruit of the tree of life" (The Diary of Kafka). He seems both to refute and to assert, not daring to make alternative; he lives in suffering. Mr. Joseph K was under capture on his 30th birthday. His first trial was in a clandestine "cupboard." The trial process never seemed to be end. Mr. K might not even know what his accused name was. And he was implemented straight away in undisclosed way. From the point of view of illegal law on this case nowadays, it was obviously not due process of law. Due process of law means that law should rule the complete process. The process should be fair and sensible. The political system is incomplete by this typical. In this way the fact finding and self-respect of human being could be maintained. The chastisement should be conducted in a just way. The proceedings rights which are confined by the constitution could be put into practice when the procurator and advocate would be on the fair stage.

The Trial was very mysterious. Mr. Joseph K tried hard to determine what his accused name was. Nevertheless in the end he still could not know it. The indecision of the trial opposes the standard of "due process of law." Justice would not exist. "The Court" was established in a dark corrupt cabinet. Kafka tried to complaint the vagaries and inefficiencies of the court. The symbolization can be seen all through the novel.

Joseph K had practiced a mysterious and unanticipated series of events since the very beginning of the novel when men who uphold to be guards (police) walked into his room whilst he was still in bed and claimed that he was under take into custody. This arrest was tremendously peculiar on a couple of grounds. Separately from that fact that the guards did not have any merit for the arrest or proof of recognition to validate the arrest, the guards themselves had no in sequence about the reason for the arrest apart from for the fact that an significant person had accused Joseph K of committing an fault.

There is also a necessity for clearness of court proceedings to make certain a fair trial and management of justice. This means that anybody who is involved in the happening has the right to know of the details of the offense dedicated and the consequential trial. The concepts of clearness and fair trial were almost absent in this novel. Through this impractical and metaphorical novel Kafka has tried to highlight the dishonesty, relative aloofness to law and difficult nature of arrest and trial. Joseph K woke up one morning to a scene that was very strange and unwanted. His arrest was tremendously eccentric and the trial was infuriating. The fact that neither the characters in the book nor the booklover knew exactly why K was arrested, tried and finally executed which was again in a way that is eccentric especially in current standards and system, added to the underlying theme of aggravation and bewilderment. The allegory "Before the Law" that was included shaped the core theme of the story and tinted all the above facts.

Joseph K's experience is perplexed with ridiculous paradigms Kafka always deal with through what I distinguish as allegory to state an insatiable sympathetic that through absurdity, surrealism, illogic and isolation there is a common ground to which everyone can appreciate because there is no one in this world that cannot relate to the experiences Kafka presents, be it that most situations are of a more sensible nature.

The Trial I had undergone a total amendment of my insight of Kafka's use of the absurd. The extreme use of

mistaken alliteration and was unable to decode the motivation behind such baseless inconsistency, but by the conclusion of the novel I was struck with Kafka's resourceful expos of the true inconsistent association between sagacity and the completely absurd. Through tact and literary treatment the liberation of such a makeover was truly articulated and implied in as such away as to totally envelop and situate Kafka's spectators in the trials and troubles of Herr. Josphe K's tragic experience the affect being that of direct relation and consequently uniting the irrationality of the absurd with the mockery that was twisted from the absurd.

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