

The stranger by albert camus



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Meursault's Indifference From the itself, the novel speaks about the world from the view of a universal indifference of one person. The Stranger by Albert Camus made the tenets of the philosophy of Absurdism work in the context of the narrative. Absurdism, in this sense, is not contained to logic but more of the failure of a man to find the meaning of life despite his efforts of seeking it. This could be the reason of Meursault's indifference towards anything. The character of Meursault does not really belong to the typical qualifications of a protagonist; the readers might have seen him as annoying rather than 'neutral' as what the character tries to project in the story. Meursault's character is a statement about the author's view of the irrationality of the universe and how humans are making it complicated through insisting that life is purposeful. The exposition part of the plot revealed so much about Meursault's concept of the word "emotions." The story began with news that his mother passed away through a telegram. Contrary to the expected reaction of a son who just lost a parent, he did not turn out to be sentimental, or at least sentimental in a masculine way. Instead, he cared more about what day and time his mother died. The diction and tone used by Camus is entirely helpful upon establishing Meursault's persona. To directly say that "Mother died today, or maybe yesterday; I can't be sure" (Camus 4) is a perfect portrayal of being indifference towards the death of a loved one. It is noticeable however, that Meursault is emotionally detached from his own mother, which made sense if he would be the same with the rest of the people around him. The physical world is more important to him than what really matters according to society's opinion, such as love and the concept of a meaningful life. When the trial has ended and the judge's decision is to end Meursault's life, paradoxically, he realized

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that he “ had been happy and that [he] was happy still” (75). This realization might have been caused by the order of execution inflicted to him, that after all he is correct about the “ benign indifference of the universe” (76) because he has been sentenced not according to what he had done but because of his own set of beliefs. The philosophy of the author greatly influenced the theme of the story about the essence of life and life within the compounds of Absurdism. Although Meursault’s character is less likely to pass social norms about human emotions and existence, it can be said that his concept of an “ irrational universe” is logical because of what the judges have done in the trial. The decision was made based on Meursault’s judgment on things and consequently treats him as a social threat just because he did not cry when his mother died. For the judge to base his decision on the accused personal belief is a point where the partiality of society comes in. While Meursault is considered neither moral nor immoral, the society he lives in could be blamed for such indifference. Work Cited Camus, Albert. *The Stranger*. New York: Vintage Books, 1942. Print.