

Example of essay on existentialism

Life



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Existentialism can be explained as a philosophical theory that insists on the existence of an individual as; a person should be free as well as determine their own development and destiny through the actions of their will and feelings. According to the theory, a person begins with the feeling of confusion in a life that seems meaningless as well as hopelessness. It is confusion that an individual makes personal discovery and accepts life the way it is while working hard for their development. During the late nineteenth century, with the world war and other happenings of the time, philosophers tried to reflect in their works into the absurdness of life. Camus and Wiesel are among the authors of the time to write about the sufferings of the time and the theory behind them. Camus' *Myth of Sisyphus* and Wiesel's *Never Shall I Forget* both capture historical events sharing common themes.

In his work, Camus views an absurd hero as the person who fights through life but lacks hope implying a successful person as the one who fights on but still keeps the hope alive. Any trial of running away from the fight as well as the hopelessness is like running away from the absurd confusion. According to Camus, “ The gods had condemned Sisyphus to ceaselessly rolling a rock to the top of a mountain, whence the stone would fall back of its own weight. They had thought with some reason that there is no more dreadful punishment than futile and hopeless labor,” (1). When Sisyphus pushes the stone to the top of the mountain it falls again back to the bottom but Sisyphus keeps on struggling doing the same task each time. After several attempts to push the stone he is well informed that the stone will fall back again, he still does it again and again. “ You have already grasped that Sisyphus is the absurd hero. He is, as much through his passions as through his torture” (Camus 1). Sisyphus displays life as a very futile and hopeless struggle

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As much as we may overlook the Sisyphus' futile struggle and hopelessness it is the reality of life. "The workman of today works everyday in his life at the same tasks, and his fate is no less absurd" (Camus 1). Even though, Camus is strongly convinced that life depends on fate and has no specific goal. He further explains that the fate is unpleasant if people keep on hoping comparing the fate with something else that can be an alternative. As humans we should accept completely accept life by living with fate without hoping for anything different and better. Life will be less horrible and worth living. Camus continues to illustrate that when Sisyphus knows about his fate, it turns out tragic. Even Oedipus gets tragic when it comes to his attention that he murdered the father and got married to the mother. Sisyphus and Oedipus are joyous when they comfort themselves "conclude that all is well" (Camus 1). We are robbed of hope when we keep the faith that something is going to change. Camus advises that it is the right thing to accept the way things are as well as our capabilities. Both Sisyphus and Oedipus have found joy when they forget about hope as well as fate. In Camus' own words, they eventually get the only genuine happiness," (1). According to Camus life gets enjoyable when people can be content about their limitations and believing that it is all that can be achieved. That is when a person gets happy and life becomes meaningful. Camus concludes the myth by saying, "One must imagine Sisyphus happy" (1). There is no other choice left but a substitute that depicts Sisyphus as an absurd hero. We can look down upon his futile effort to push the rock up to the top of a mountain only to come down to the bottom. He goes on doing the same futile. When he thinks about the knowledge of the absurdness he gets sad but when he assumes it and accepts it as the only choice he lives happily. As <https://assignbuster.com/example-of-essay-on-existentialism/>

Camus concludes his work, his stance becomes clear. He thinks and is strongly convinced that the only event in life that is real is the human experience. It is the only thing human beings can experience and extract happiness from it by assuming that it is real too and keeping off hope as well as the reality of fate.

Another author who captured the historical events of the late nineteenth century in his work is Wiesel with “ Never Shall I Forget”. This quotation is from the third section of Wiesel’s work. It reflects the hard forgotten human rights violations that followed the Nazism in Germany which saw more than six million Jews killed brutally in genocide. Wiesel wrote this heart touching lines when Eliezer takes a look at the burning babies at Auschwitz. Any other human being can be touched with such sorrowful moment. Wiesel uses repetition to bring the dehumanizing conditions that the people at the camp underwent. “ Never shall I forget “ is the word he repeats displaying the much sorrow that Eliezer cannot ever get out of his memories. As Wiesel expresses himself, “ the small faces of the children whose bodies I saw transformed into smoke under a silent sky,” (1). He was so much disturbed by the horrible scene that he felt betrayal from his god and from that day his believe in God was destroyed. Eliezer could not figure out how God could let that happen to such young beings. In Wiesel’s words, “ Never shall I forget those things even were I condemned to live as long as God Himself” (1).

The two writers; Camus and Wiesel were triggered by the historical events of the time to narrate their work. It was after the Second World War that Camus decided write about the Myth of Sisyphus. He reflected the sufferings and struggles that people went through as well as the slavery that followed the industrial revolution. Just how peoples’ labor was futile and their hopes kept

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them unhappy as is the case for the reality of their fate. Wiesel also writes about the genocide that the Nazis in German had on the Jews. More than a half a million Nazis were involved in the genocide that saw over six million Jews brutally killed out of hatred for the Jews. The Nazis power against the Jews did not even spare the babies that Eliezer in Wiesel's work shall never forget. The Nazis' hold of power was encouraged by the anti-Semitic tradition that was being practiced in Europe.

Both authors in their work bring out the following themes inspired by the historical events of the time. The common themes emphasized by the two authors include; emotional death, fight to maintain faith, poise in the face of human cruelty as well as self-preservation with the family obligation at stake. Firstly, emotional death engulfed the victims of the Nazis in the genocide. The babies were consumed in fire as smoke made its way. Wiesel says; " Never shall I forget the small faces of the children whose bodies I saw transformed into smoke under a silent sky" (1). During the industrial revolution in Europe there was wide spread industrial slavery that lead to dehumanizing conditions that resulted in emotional deaths. The people struggled to make the ends meet but their labor was futile with the poor mere survival conditions. As Camus says it out; " The gods had condemned Sisyphus to ceaselessly rolling a rock to the top of a mountain, whence the stone would fall back of its own weight. They had thought with some reason that there is no more dreadful punishment than futile and hopeless labor," (1). They sacrificed their efforts only to be stopped by emotional death from their cruel masters

There was a fight to maintain their faith during the historical events echoed by Camus as well as Wiesel. It the struggled for nations to display and prove <https://assignbuster.com/example-of-essay-on-existentialism/>

their superiority that led to the Second World War nations. Countries that considered themselves as the superpowers had to fight for their status so as to maintain the faith that other nations may have been holding. According to Camus, Sisyphus kept on doing the same thing every now and then (1). He rolled the stone up the mountain but it could still fall back (1). He did this everyday keeping the faith that it is the only thing he could do and had no alternative. In Wiesel's work, Eliezer had been holding fast to the faith in his God until that day when he saw babies bodies burn up in smoke. " Never shall I forget those moments that murdered my God and my soul and turned my dreams to ashes" (Wiesel 1). This shows that initially there had been the struggle to maintain the faith though not anymore in a world that was filled with much evil.

The dignity that existed in the face of human brutality as well as self-preservation with the family obligation at stake also inspired the two authors to write their work. There was much brutality in the killing of the babies in Wiesel's work. " Never shall I forget the small faces of the children whose bodies I saw transformed into smoke under a silent sky" (Wiesel 1). During the industrial revolution in the Europe individuals had to endure slavery for the sake of their families. During world war II men fought in war for the sake of their families as well as their nations. Sisyphus had rounds of futile labor for the sake of his wife as well.

Existentialist movement in Europe developed in the within the years of 1940s and 1950s. Albert Camus' work was rooted to the existentialist movement in a Europe at the time. Furthermore the two writers; Camus and Wiesel were triggered by the historical events of the time to narrate their work. People believed that choosing to act in the capacity of an individual

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was the same as acting for a group or more precise a country. This called for collective social as well as political action. It led to the political existence of the time in Europe for instance the Nazis in German. More than a half a million Nazis were involved in the genocide that saw over six million Jews brutally killed out of hatred for the Jews.

In conclusion, both authors in their work bring out the following themes inspired by the historical events of the time. The authors in their work bring out the following themes inspired by the historical events of the time. Camus and Wiesel were triggered by the historical events of the time to narrate their work. During the late ninetieth century, with the word war and other happenings of the time, philosophers tried to reflect in their works into the absurdness of life. Existentialism is therefore termed as a philosophical theory that insists on the existence of an individual as; a person should be free as well as determine their own development and destiny through the actions of their will and feelings. This must have led to the existentialist movement in Europe developed in the within the years of 1940s and 1950s. Existentialism emphasizes the existence of the individual person as a free and responsible agent determining their own development through acts of the will as well as the development of a society as a whole.

Works Cited

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