

ALBERT CAMUS' IDEA OF REBELLION IN *THE OUTSIDER*

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Abstract:

Albert Camus' political and literary writings reveal his revolutionary opinions about the various issues dominating the fourth and fifth decades of the twentieth century such as fascism, the Spanish civil war, poverty, social injustice, as well as the role of the intellectuals in the political life of his age. In his book, *L'Homme Revolte* he describes history as a series of horror and portrays Europe as a world lacking all moral and intellectual significance. Camus was considered a distinguished member in the French Resistance during the German occupation and an active journalist whose writings displayed a revolt against the enemies of democracy, the fascists fellow travelers, the feudal supporters of the industrial, banking and agricultural order. Through these writings he formulated his opinions about history, morality and revolution. He was the first among the French intellectuals who treated the case of Algeria seriously and called for equal treatment for the Arabs and the Europeans alike.

In his novel *The Outsider*, Camus depicts the reality of the French colonialism in Algeria. The novel presents Camus' condemnation of Meursault's indifference to the brutality of the colonial society he belongs to. Meursault kills an Arab and he is judged not for this crime but because he doesn't behave according to the codes of his society during his mother's death. This shows that the Europeans treat the 'others' as 'things', and for the European judges, the murder of an Arab is not different from breaking a stone or cutting a tree. Meursault is a stranger in a strange world and the revelation he experiences at the moment of facing this world splits him from the values of his society. He retreats into the world of sensations, he trusts only the things he can see and find meaning in, refusing the abstract values of his society which are devoid of meaning. This substantiates Camus's message of art as a rebellion against the rigid system imposed on man and his attempt to transcend the limits of his society and create his own world of ideas in which he feels free to enjoy what he never experiences before, art as a transformation of human existence and an everlasting struggle for giving it meaning.

ALBERT CAMUS' IDEA OF REBELLION IN *THE OUTSIDER*

The circumstances of Albert Camus' life in one way or another left their imprint on the thoughts he implied in his art. These circumstances urged in him the spirit of opposition to everything he found false or mean, a revolt against the injustice of his age. Though French by origin, he fought against all that was narrow and conventional and what he preferred to call 'sunless' in the French tradition.¹

Camus was born in Algeria in 1913. His father died in the Battle of Marne a year after his birth to be brought up by his Spanish illiterate mother. He studied philosophy at the University of Algiers. He joined the Communist Party in 1934.² And by 1935, as David G. Speer maintains,

Camus seemed to have been turning away from the Party leaning more towards the Socialist Party.³

Camus was one of the outstanding members of the French Resistance during the occupation of France by the Germans. Between 1944-1948 he was the editor of *Combat*, a vigorous left-wing (that is anti-fascist) but non-communist journal. The German occupation was the event that most influenced his writings.⁴ For him it was the alien force that destroyed human existence. His only attitude towards such a force was a revolt through which man finds his freedom. In 1938 he became a distinguished member of the staff of the newly founded paper *Alger- Re'publican*, a journal that considered its opponents all the enemies of democracy, the fascist fellow travelers, the feudal supporters of the industrial, banking, and agricultural order.⁵ In 1939 he became editor of the paper's evening edition *La Soir-Re'publican*. Through his writings in these two papers he formulated his attitudes towards history, morality and revolution.

The European countries during his time were threatened by Nazism and provocations of Mussolini. Disturbed by the force of the Stalinist Russia, France witnessed a civil war among the French parties. Camus experienced an anguish of seeing Europe divided, weary and addicted to internecine feuds.⁶

In his political writings Camus treated various issues prevailing during the fourth and fifth decades of the 20th century such as fascism, the Spanish civil war, poverty and social injustice, and the role of the intellectuals in the political life in his time. Though the situation in his play *The State of Siege* bears a very clear reference to Spain, it equally offers an evident example of the totalitarian regimes where the political community constitutes what he himself once calls "a mechanism for driving men to despair."⁷ In his *L'Homme R'evolte* he sees history as a succession of scenes of horror and acts of imbecility. Contemporary Europe is depicted as a hell, devoid of spiritual and intellectual significance, living not "an age of reason" but one of "adolescent fury".⁸

The main motive of French Empire, beside these of acquiring lands, plantations and other profits, was one of prestige.⁹ Scientific innovations were to serve the interests of the contemporary political orientations and colonial practices. Geographical explorations in particular were mainly dedicated to imperial domination and conquest as it came on the tongue of the president of The Second International Congress of Geographical Sciences in 1875 who says:

Gentlemen, Providence has dictated to us the obligation of knowing the earth and making the conquest of it. This supreme command is one of the imperious duties inscribed

on our intelligences and on our activities. Geography, that science which inspires such beautiful devotedness and in whose name so many victims have been sacrificed, has become the philosophy of the earth.¹⁰

The French imperial policy in Algeria as early as the French existence there since 1930 was to make Algeria French: controlling the land, displacing the natives by French settlers, gaining the oak forests and mines from their native owners. Thus, the French colonialists subjected Algeria to a systematized process of marginalizing its economy. As it was elsewhere with the European in their colonies, the devastations of the French colonial policy are implanted under their pretences. The case is summed up by Abdullah Larouis who says:

The history of Algeria from 1830 to 1870 is made up by pretences: the colons who allegedly wished to transform the Algerians into men like themselves, when in reality their only desire was to transform the soil of Algeria into French soil; the military, who supposedly respected the local traditions and way of life, whereas in reality their only interest was to govern with the least possible effect, 'the claim of Napoleon III that he was building an Arab kingdom, whereas his central ideas were the 'Americanization' of the French economy and the French colonization of Algeria.¹¹

Critics, such as Philip Toddy who is one of the best authorities on Camus, considered Camus the first among the French intellectuals who took the case of Algeria seriously in their writings. Camus called, during the 1930s, for equal treatment for the Arabs and the Europeans alike, warning of the dangerous situations that will arise as a result of the French policy in Algeria.¹² He was heralded as a champion of the Algerian rights and he objected to the inhumanity the French display in their treatment of the Algerians, yet he does not approve of the Algerian dependence. Such opposition makes Mona Fayad call Camus "an exile both in Algeria and in France."¹³ And for the same reason, Peyre describes him as "to play the part of a lamenting prophet or that of a penitent –judge."¹⁴

Not until almost two decades after the appearance of *The Outsider* (1942) that critics started to read it as a racist novel.¹⁵ In his book about Camus, O'Brien writes about the relationship between Camus' novels and the colonial reality in Algeria and he dismisses his views on Africa as sheer hallucinations.¹⁶ And Edward Said argues that Camus belongs to the frontiers of Europe and he represents the European dominance in the non-

European world.¹⁷ But it is difficult to condemn Camus as a racist for the thoughts he puts in his character's mind; for the thoughts of a fictional character are not always those of its creator's. Taking this fact into consideration, the reader will approach the work as a condemnation of Meursault's indifference and a renunciation of the inhumanity of the colonialist society he stands for.

The execution of Meursault is the central event of the story in the novel. From the course of the events of the story, the details of the trial and the way Camus presents them, it appears that Meursault is executed not for killing an Arab, but because he does not behave according to the codes of his society during his mother's death. He receives the news of her death with cold reaction: "Mother died today. Or, may be yesterday; I can't be sure."¹⁸ He asks his boss for two-days leave. He shows no signs of sadness or regret and on the second day after the funeral he goes swimming, meets a girl, takes her to a movie then he goes with her to bed.

From the details of the scene of the trial the jury's decision is issued not according to the crime itself but for not respecting the conventions of the society. Meursault "does not play the game", as Camus says. He is honest with himself, he doesn't accept to tell a lie and he says what he feels. Camus continues: "He refuses to disguise his feelings, and immediately society feels threatened. He is asked, for example, to say that he regrets his crime according to the rituals formula. He replies that he feels about it more of annoyance than real regret and this shade of meaning condemns him."¹⁹ The corruption of the French Algerians represented by the dishonesty of the law can't be redeemed unless by the moral view of Camus' hero whose morality he based on the traits of those young Algerians he describes in his *Noces*. These traits could be a redeeming force for the corrupted European civilization.

The presentation of 'justice' is a caricature of it. The magistrate and the prosecutor appear as fools and through them Camus ridicules the moral and social codes they stand for. The court scene turns to be a parody of the state of the European morality. Meursault says:

The fact that the verdict was read out at 8p.m. rather than at 5, the fact it might have been quite different, that it was given by men who change their underclothes, and credited to so vague an entity as the 'French people'— for that matter, why not to the Chinese or the German people— all these facts seemed to deprive the court's decision of much of its gravity. (p.114)

Camus' renunciation of the values of his society is evident in his characterization of its representatives. His portrayal of the Warden of the old people's home who tells Meursault lies about his mother's wish for religious burial (p.14), and the Magistrate who is shocked when Meursault tells him coldly about his disbelief and the Priest who visits him in his prison cell, proves Camus' refusal of their hypocrisy. Meursault's exaltation of his physical sensations shows that Camus overrates them to his society conventions.

The judges base their decision on Meursault's behavior during his mother's funeral without understanding the nature of their relationship. It is as Meursault himself puts it, "mother and I had so little in common." (p.100) Early in the novel he says: "When we lived together, mother was always watching me, but we hardly ever talked." (p.13) They lived as strangers: "Neither mother nor I expected much of one another- or for that matter of anybody else." (p.93) The lack of love in his relationship with his mother results in an unhealthy love experience with his mistress. He responds to her suggestion of marriage saying: "I said I didn't mind, if one was keen on it, we'd get married. Then she asked me again if I loved her. I replied much as before that her question meant nothing or next to nothing – but I supposed I didn't." (p.50) Failing to understand Meursault's incapability to express or render love, the jury accuse him of being criminal and the prosecutor says: "I accuse the prisoner of behaving at his mother's funeral in a way that showed he was already a criminal at heart." (.102)

He looks at the jury not as individuals but he describes them as people who were "staring hard". He reveals his disgust of them when he remarks that "all these people loathed me." (p.89) The jury argue with the prosecutor that Meursault is criminal: "This man has--- no place in a community whose basic principles he flouts without compunction." (p.107)

Through the court's condemnation of Meursault, Camus presents an evident modern counterpart of the inquisition in its harshness. Using the pretext of the ethics the jury 'estranges' Meursault from the world and the rest of humanity. Thomas Hanna maintains that "Caught in the web of the absolute judgment, Meursault continues to be what he is: indifferent. Whereas Meursault finally realizes that he is 'stranger' to this world of absolute moral standards."²⁰

Meursault's relationship with his mother could be taken as an example of the sort of relationships in his own society. They are engulfed with ambiguity, a state between love and hatred. Other instances of relationships in the novel are of the same nature: Raymond loves Arab mistress but he beats her severely. Salamano, Meursault's neighbor who keeps a mangy dog, mistreats his dog but when the dog disappears

Meursault hears him crying all the night, which reminds Meursault of his mother as he says: " For some reason, I don't know what I began thinking of mother." (p.48)

Camus chooses Algeria to be a setting for his novel at a time when the French consist ten percent of the population of Algeria, but in the novel itself only the Europeans are given names: Meursault, Perez, Masson, Sintès, Salamano etc. The Arabs are not treated as individuals but as unidentified characters mass. The novel reveals an interest in presenting the European characters and in delineating European situations subordinating the Arabs to them and making them a mere physical background of the novel. Everything that is not European is sacrificed to the interests of the Europeans.

The Arabs in the novel are to be a subject of exploitation. The Arab woman is seduced by Raymond Sintès, an illiterate European pimp who tells Meursault to write a letter to persuade her to come. When she comes he treats her so severely. And when she resorts to the police for a help, he avoids any trouble with the law, and Meursault tells the police that the girl "does Raymond wrong." (p.46) Later when the girl's brother tries to revenge his sister's honour, Meursault shoots him dead. When he is tried in the court, it is decided that he is to be executed not for killing a native but because he violates his society's codes of behaving correctly during his mother's funeral.

Though the racial attitudes presented in the novel are not overtly evident, the presentation of the details of the story reveals the superiority of the European status and the European interests. In an essay entitled "Le Mythe de Sisiphe" Camus wrote while working on *The Outsider*, he illustrated that "a supernumerary employee in the post office is equal to a conqueror if they have the same degree of awareness."²¹ Meursault is characterized as being conscious of the blood-stained imposture dominating his world. He lives a state of weariness and surprise and because he has a high sense of morality he derives meaning from the culminating experiences of life, those of death and love.

The relationship between the Europeans and the Arabs, represented in the novel by Meursault and his victim, is that of the self and the other. It has bearing on the romantic agony that of seeing oneself as both subject and object, taking pleasure in the pain of the other and in the pain inflicted on oneself. Meursault, after killing the Arab, empties his gun from the last four bullets it has in the Arab's body, and later in his cell when he becomes conscious of his crime he has got a drive toward self-extinction in the material world.

The novel deals with narrating history with its binary opposition of master and slave; the European dominating his subject insisting on the

otherness and heterogeneity of that subject. Edward Said maintains that with the European colonization reaching its peak in the faraway countries, a new tendency of creating the 'other' appears through what he defines as "a notion identifying 'us' Europeans against all 'those' non-Europeans."²² Camus' delineation of Meursault's character is based on the construction of others against whom he can rebel and whom he must conquer to affirm his power. In the scene of the murder, Meursault feels that the hostile look of the Arabs reduces them to mere objects. Aubry says that "discrimination thrives only upon reducing the other to a thing, that the murder of an Arab by a Frenchman was no more than the breaking of a stone or the sawing of a dead tree."²³

The reader can realize that Camus makes use of the power of Meursault's language to reconstruct reality, to replace the lucidity of the universe with a lie, a means to cover the meaninglessness and indifference of his world. The metaphorical language of the hero together with the many personifications of the sun render the mystery that engulfs the scene making it more dreadful than the murder itself.

Meursault does not feel that he is guilty for killing the Arab for he thinks that it is caused by the blinding presence of the sun: "beneath a veil of brine and tears my eyes were blinded: I was conscious only of the cymbals of the sun clashing on my skull, and, less distinctly, of the keen blade of light flashing up from the knife, scarring my eyelashes, and gouging into my eyeballs." (p.67) Here again the confrontation between the character and the alien natural world, as it is in Forster and Conrad, ends with catastrophe. The encounter between Meursault and the irresistible natural power, the sun, ends with a murder. As the caves in *A Passage to India* stunned Adela's senses, the sun confuses Meursault, and paralyzes him physically as he describes his situation at that moment: "Every nerve in my body was a steel spring, and my grip closed on the revolver. The trigger gave, and the smooth underbelly of the butt jogged my palm. And so, with that crisp, whip crack sound, it all began." (p.67) The shooting then becomes an unthinkable act against the hostile natural world that caught him.

Through a series of images, Camus gives the sun of Algeria a dominant role in the story. It appears as a strong force that its effects on Meursault are strongly emphasized. He is so sensitive to the morning sun that hits him in the face: "Once we were in the open, we lay on our back and, as I gazed up at the sky, I could feel the sun drawing the film of salt water on my lip and cheeks." (p.58) But Camus has already prepared the reader to this situation early in the novel in his reference to Meursault's sensitivity to the light when he is blinded by the light switched on while he is watching his mother's coffin: "The porter switched on the lamps, and I was almost

blinded by the blaze of the light."(p.17) And when he is suddenly awakened in the night he closed his eyes for the whiteness of the room hurts them:" I was awakened by an odd rustling in my ears. After having had my eyes closed, I had the feeling that the light had grown even stronger than before. There wasn't a trace of shadow anywhere, and every object, each curve or angle, scored its outline on one's eyes."(p.18)

Meursault goes for a walk on the beach, meets the Arab who has already quarreled with Raymond and wounded him. Meursault is just an observer of the event: "I was rather taken back; my impression had been that the incident was closed, and I hadn't given a thought to it on my way here."(p.66) The sun becomes an important factor that turns him to be the protagonist of the story. Camus' description of Meursault's sensations at that particular moment is conveyed through metaphorical expressions in which Meursault appears to experience a state of hallucination and confusion:

As I slowly walked towards the boulder at the end of the beach I could feel my temples swelling under the impact of the light. It pressed itself upon me , trying to check my progress. And each time I felt a hot blast strike my forehead, I gritted my teeth, I clenched my fists in my trouser pockets and keyed up every nerve to fend off the sun and the dark befuddlement it was pouring into me. Whenever a blade of vivid light shot upwards from a bit of shell or broken glass lying on the sand, my jaws set hard."(p.66)

The impact of the sun is rendered through personifying the heat as a hostile and destructive power:"But the light hadn't changed ; it was pounding fiercely as ever on the long stretch of sand that ended at the rock. For two hours the sun seemed to have made no progress; becalmed in a sea of molten steel."(p.66) This is followed by another image which emphasizes the pressure of the heat of the blazing sun:"It struck me that all I had to do was to turn, walk away , and think no more about it [the quarrel].But the whole beach, pulsing with heat , was pressing on my back."(p.66) The images of light are rendered as a dominant and blinding , and during the scene of the murder they are carried further to the peak when the flash of the glittering blade in the Arab's hand hits Meursault's forehead:

A shaft of light shot upwards from the steel, and I felt as if a long , thin blade transfixed my forehead. At the same

moment all the sweat that had accumulated in my eyebrows splashed down on my eyelids, covering them with a warm film of moisture. Beneath a veil of brine and tears my eyes were blinded: I was conscious only of the cymbals of the sun clashing on my skull, and less distinctly, of the keen blade of light flashing up from the knife, scarring my eyelashes, and gouging into my eyeballs. (p.67)

Later in the court the sun is taken to be the real motive for the crime.

Meursault himself ridicules this explanation when he tells the jury that he killed a man because of the sun:

I rose, and as I felt in the mood to speak, I said the first thing that crossed my mind: that I'd had no intension of killing the Arab . The judge replied that this statement would be taken into consideration by the court. Meanwhile he would be glad to hear , before my counsel addressed the court , what were the motives of my crime. So far , he must admit , he hadn't fully understand the ground of my defense.

I tried to explain that it was because of the sun, but I spoke too quickly and ran my words into each other. I was only too conscious that it sounded nonsensical, and in fact, I heard people tittering.(p.108)

The metaphorical style used to describe the scene of the murder is to enhance the motion of the action. Sun, sand, and sea are personified and given powerful qualities .The natural elements in that particular geographical location are animated. The heat 'leans' , the sand 'vibrates' and the light 'squirts'. One is reminded of the scene in which Aziz and Adela in *A Passage to India* approach the caves. The similarity between the two scenes could be extended more as to the real motives of both experiences. Here again Camus withholds the real cause inexplicable through creating a sense of hallucination. Everything is attributed to the effect of the sun. The Arab pulls out his knife while Meursault is in the peak of tension: the light that is reflected on and from the blade makes a line till Meursault's eyes which he takes to be the knife itself. The reader is left with the impression that the murder is the result of involuntary action. Thus Camus frees Meursault from the responsibility for his inability to comprehend the difference between reality and fantasy.

One who detects the meaning that underlies Meursault's story may look at him as an outsider in an alien world. In these moments of confronting that alien world, Sartre maintains that the outsider lives a sort of revelation that splits him from his own conventional values making him a passive observer similar to those watchers of dancers from behind a glass door or a man gesticulating in a telephone booth.²⁴

The African natural world serves to provide the opposition between the masculine and the feminine worlds. Sun and sea are represented as the two opposing forces of the world. Images of light and heat of the blinding sun prove to be a disturbing power. Images of cooling, evening, and the sea are associated with Marie and with Meursault's mother. Marie is associated with the sea where he meets her and he remembers the sea when she visits him in the prison, and the cool evening reminds him of his mother: "For some reason I don't know what, I began thinking of mother." (p.40) The persecutor associates Meursault's crime with that of the parricide whose case is to be next to Meursault's in the court agenda. So Meursault's revolt against the sun is one against the oppressor. The romantic refuge in a peaceful external world he enjoys while in prison is an attempt at reaching a state of harmony with a beautiful feminine world. His withdrawal into the world of speculation is due to his refusal to find an escape in the world of the accepted norms in his society.

The novel is divided into two almost equal parts. The first one is marked by a large number of references to time. On the contrary, in the second, time is almost neglected and instead there are symbols of external recurrences such as sky or stars. The shift is not sudden and it emphasizes the change of the narrator's awareness of time and his attachment to the world of sensual experience, from his indifference to his world to his gradual withdrawal to the world of sensations. He finds in living in the world of sensations a refuge from the moral ambiguity which is at the core of his society. His honesty with himself initiates an honesty with the concrete world around him. That generates a desire within him to speak only of things he can see with exactitude. His honesty prevents him from assuming the role of a loving son even if this sends him to death.

Confronting the reality of his life and the fear of death, Meursault resorts to the external world with which he reaches a peaceful reconciliation. He looks for a meaning in concrete experiences rejecting the universe of the abstract as meaningless and unpleasant. He says that the sun is the only motive for his crime and he doesn't listen to the defense counsel who pleads to him to say that the cause is the grief for his mother's death. He refuses to commit himself to false void abstractions. His awareness of the worthlessness of his world makes him to look at the physical sensations as the only reality. The preference of the physical to the ethical is exemplified by taking the mere activity of drying his hands with a crisp towel as more enjoyable and even more important than the promotion to better job. Meursault's commitment to truth is after his preference of the sun-drenched beaches of Algeria to the cold country yards of France (p.25), of his sensual attraction to Marie, to her notion of love and of the dreadful reality of death to living and breathing the air of insincerity.

Meursault's withdrawal into the world of sensations is justified by Camus' insistence "on a basic concern with the way in which a novel organizes and shapes an experience. The novel in his view poses certain aesthetic questions first of all."²⁵ One of the absurdist doctrines is that it is vain to subject the human experience to a rational interpretation. Malraux, a very famous exponent of the absurd movement, defines art as a "permanent accusation"²⁶ of the world. In his view art is a rebellion against the rigid system imposed on man by his physical universe. In order to transcend the limits of the material world man can create his own world of ideas in which he feels free to enjoy what he never experiences before, without eradicating, inflicting destruction on, or changing that material world. Art in this sense becomes a revolt, a creation, a replacement, and a transformation of the existence.

But Meursault's attitude is not without heroic implications. He himself puts it in the last sentence of his narrative: "For all to be accomplished, for me to feel less lonely, all that remained to hope was that on the day of my execution there should be a huge crowd of spectators and that they should greet me with howls of execration." (p.127) And the writer's real intention in *The Outsider* is made clear in the short Avant-propos he was asked to write to the school edition of *The Outsider*:

Meursault for me is not a piece of human wreckage, but a man who is poor, naked and in love with the sun which leaves no shadows. Far from being lacking in all feeling, he is inspired by a passion which is profound because unspoken, the passion for the absolute and for the truth. It is not still a negative truth, that of being alive and experiencing life, but without it no conquest of oneself or of the world will be ever possible. One would not therefore be much mistaken in reading *L'tranger* as the story of a man who without any heroics ,accepts to die for truth.²⁷

The passivity the hero shows in accepting his world is due to his moral limitations. His innocence leads to his murder of the Arab. In the excessive passivity and the excessive innocence of the hero Camus implies caution of their dangers as Germaine Bre'e writes in her introduction to the novel: "His murder of the Arab, by its very lack of conscious motivation , reveals his attitude , it has dangerously inhuman implications. Yet society's answer to this act seems to Camus totally invalid."²⁸ The indifference of the hero becomes a sound example of the indifference of the French Algerians. Meursault proves to be a passive and insensitive in his relationship with others, his mother, Raymond, Marie. Even when he kills the Arab, he plays the role of the fool because he kills the Arab and it is Raymond who benefits from it , Raymond gets rid of his enemy. Meursault writes a letter to Raymond's Arab girl luring her to be beaten and humiliated, and when Marie put off her lunch to watch the police who come to protect the girl he simply continues to eat. Through presenting his numbness Camus attacks the insensitivity of Franco-Algerian society to their political evil and human exploitation. And Meursault's acceptance of the punishment : " It came to this ; the man under sentence was obliged to collaborate mentally , it was in his interest that all should go off without a hitch."(p.116), and the peaceful refuge he seeks in the natural world shows his readiness to live what he has lived again. This in itself asserts the potential of subsequent generations to live the colonial reality. In her last day, Meursault says , "mother had to feel free and ready to live everything again."(p.127) Hence the above-mentioned division of time in the novel assumes its significance that France neither admits the inhumanity of its past ravishes in Algeria nor refuses its unjust strategy of political dominance.

There remains the question why does Camus uses Algeria as a setting for his novel without attempting to tackle explicitly the nature of the French colonial presence there? Critics, Said in particular, find the answer in relating Camus' novel to the most clearly imperial French narratives that

have bearing on the French colonial enterprise. It becomes clear to Said that Camus is most concerned with the Franco-Algerian affairs as status quo and not with the history of its dramatic changes, nor with the role to be assumed by the intellectual he talks about in his political writings. Said says: " Camus' novel , therefore would be an interaction in the history of French efforts in Algeria, making and keeping it French, not as novels that tell about their author's state of mind ." ²⁹ To look at Camus's novel from an Algerian point of view would certainly demonstrate some racial aspects that Camus takes for granted and shows no willing to touch up explicitly. It is valid to ask why does a writer like Camus known as apolitical moralist hide in his fiction things about the French outrageous practices in Algeria.

True, if the reader of Camus relates his novel to the contemporary colonial literature he will realize that what Camus presents in his novel corresponds to the French colonial claims on Algeria .Said quotes The French minister Chauamps who declared in March 1938 that Arabic was a 'foreign language' in Algeria.³⁰ So the absence of the background of the Arab in *The Outsider* may be attributed to Camus's recognition that these details have been inherited and accepted as part of the colonial tradition. Killing the Arab, the blankness of his history, the negligence of the judicial apparatus to give him his due all talk about a corresponding absence of the French conscience in their campaigns against the Algerians during their colonial dominance, raiding their peaceful villages, homes, women and children.

The answer to the question of the novel's handling of the French colonial existence in Algeria is provided by the occasion of the central event of the story itself. 'Shooting an Arab' is what Camus chooses to be the convenient event to give his own interpretation to the European concern and to manifest any indication of justification of scarifying the Arab to the European dogmatism.

When reading *The Outsider*, we should have two things into consideration; first ,that it is difficult to consider a work of art without relating it to its time, and second, we should not always assume that the thoughts of a fictional character are his creator's. To come to *The Outsider* with Camus' attitude towards the Algerian case and the efforts he made to bring about a more just society in Algeria we will consequently reach the understanding that it is Meursault , and not Camus , who is racist. It is through Meursault's eyes that the Arabs are seen as marginal and it is the European law that decides that killing an Arab does not deserve its discussion. The tone that underlies the events of the novel and its protagonist's conception of them betray the prejudice of the French colonialists in Algeria. The story assumes its strength as a metropolitan transfiguration of an imperial nature from its dimensions in time and place,

from the history of French existence in Algeria and in the Franco-Algerian society itself.

Camus's indifference to the Arabs could be also attributed to what Laurensen and Swingewood call "the limits of his revolution."³¹ The restriction of his revolt comes as a result of his recognition that as Fred Rosen puts it: "To seek an absolute freedom leads to nihilism and absolute justice to totalitarianism."³² As a rebel Camus' difficulties detract from his concern with limited justice and liberty. He admits the limitations of man's rebellion when he tries to express his ethical philosophy in *The Rebel*:

The words which reverberate for us as the confines of this long adventure of rebellion, are not formulae for optimism, for which we have no possible use in the extremities of our happiness, but words of courage and intelligence which, on the shores of the external seas, even have the qualities of virtue.

No possible form of wisdom today can claim to give more. Rebellion indefatigably confronts evil, from which it can only derive a new impetus. Man can master, in himself, everything that should be mastered. He should rectify in creation everything that can be rectified. And after he has done so, children will still die unjustly even in a perfect society. Even by his greatest effort, man can only propose to diminish, arithmetically, the sufferings of the world. But the injustice and the suffering of the world remain and, no matter how limited they are, they will not cease to be an outrage. Dimitri Karamazov's cry of "why?" will continue to resound through history; art and rebellion will only die with the death of the last man on earth.³³

To Camus, man must rebel in order to exist, and since his rebellion is limited by necessity of his situation, he should accept its limits. It is a rebellion that gives significance to a world which is bleached dry of it. Camus' rebellion as Robert Zaretsky comments "is an eternal human condition, a timeless struggle against injustice that makes life worth living."³⁴

The Outsider, then, is a presentation of the devastations the French colonists did in Algeria and their indifference to the suffering of its people in the pretext of developing the country and cultivating the Algerians. The novel is, a revolt against the injustice in the world; an outrage of man, despite his limitations, against the political evil, the human exploitation and the insensitivity to the destruction of the humanity of the others.

NOTES

- 1-See Henri Peyre, *French Novelists of Today*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1969,p.310.
- 2-Diana Laurenson and Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of literature*, London: MacGibbon and Kee ,1972, p.227.
- 3-David G. Speer, 'Mearsault's News Clipping' in *Modern Fiction Studies*, vol.XIV No.2, Summer 1996, p.127.
- 4-Philip Hallie, 'Camus and the Literature of Revolt', *College Notes* vol.16 No. 1, Oct.1954, p.26.
- 5-Edward T. Gargan, 'Evolution and Morale in the Formative Thought of Albert Camus' in *The Review of Politics*, vol.25 No.4 Oct.1963,p.484.
- 6-Peyre, *Op.cit.*, p.11.
- 7-Albert Camus, *Resistance, Rebellion and death*, trans. Justin O'Brien, London,1961, p.172.
- 8-Quoted by Gargan *Op.cit.*, p.495.
- 9-Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, (Chatto , 1993) p.169.
- 10-Quoted by Said , *Ibid*, Pp.169-170.
- 11-Quoted by Said,*Ibid*,p.182.
- 12-Philip Toddy, 'Camus' L'Etranger Revisited' in *Critical Quarterly* vol.21, No.2 Summer1979,p.62. See also Claire Messud, 'Camus and Algeria: The Moral Question' *The New York Review of Books*,Nov. 7,2013.
- 13-Mona Fayad, 'The Problem of the Subject in Africanist Discourse : Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Camus' *The Renegade*', *Comparative Literature Studies* vol.27, No.4, 1990, p.300.
- 14-Peyre, *Op. Cit.*,p.311,
- 15-See Toddy, *Op. Cit.*, P.61.
- 16-Conor Cruise O'Brien, *Albert Camus of Europe and Africa* (New York: Viking Press,!970), p. 11.
- 17-Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, p.173.
- 18-Albert Camus, *The Outsider*, trans. by Stuart Gilbert, London: Hamish Hamilton, 1958, p.11.All subsequent references will be to this edition and page numbers will be parenthetically cited within the text.
- 19-Quoted by Laurenson, *Op. Cit.*, p.230.
- 20-Quoted by Philip Mooney, 'The Theistic Basis For Camus' Ethics Of Charity', *Thought*, vol.52,No.204, March 1977, p.88.
- 21-See Toddy, *Op. Cit.*,p.63.
- 22—Said,*Orientalism*, (New York: Vintage),p.7.
- 23-F.C.ST.Aubyu, 'Albert Camus and the Death of the Other: An Existentialist Interpretation' *French Studies* vol. XVI, No.2 April 1962, p.130.
- 24-See Henri Peyre, p.323.
- 25-John Cruickshank, *Albert Camus and The Literature of Revolt*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1960, p.144.For more details about the novelist's aesthetic theory see Cecil Eubanks and Peter A. Petrakis, 'Reconstructing the World: Albert Camus and the Symbolization of experience,' *The Journal of Politics*,Vol.61,No.2,May 1999.
- 26-Quoted by Cruickshank , , *Ibid*,p.145.
- 27-As translated by Philip Toddy, *Albert Camus:1913-1960*(New York,1961,p.30.
- 28-Quoted by C. Roland Wagner, 'The Silence of the Stranger', *Modern Fiction Studies* vol.XVI., No.1, Spring 1970, p.27. In his article, 'Facing History: Why We Love Camus' in *The New Yorker*, April 7,2012, Adam Gopnik takes killing an Arab for no good reason as a key to the world's lack of any human purpose.
- 29-Said, *Culture and Imperialism*,p.175.
- 30-*Ibid*,p.180.
- 31-Laurenson and Swingewood, *Op. Cit.*, p.236.

32-Fred Rosen, 'Marxism, Mysticism, and Liberty: The Influence of Simone Weil on Albert Camus', *Political Theory* vol.7, No.3, August 1979, p.315.

33-Leslie Paul, 'The Writer and the Human Condition', *The Kenyon Review*, vol. XXIV, No.1, Jan. 1987, p.28.

34-Robert Zaretsky, *A life Worth Living: Albert Camus and the Quest for Meaning*, Belknap Press, 2013, p.174.

فكرة التمرد عند البرت كامو في رواية الغريب

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الملخص:

ولد كامو في الجزائر وعاش فيها وانضم للحزب الشيوعي عام ١٩٣٤م انفصل عنه ليصبح عضوا بالحزب الاشتراكي في العام التالي. وقد كان عضوا بارزا في المقاومة الفرنسية أبان الاحتلال الألماني لفرنسا. وقد كان صحفيا ناشطا احتوت كتاباته الصحفية على أفكاره ووجهات نظره في التاريخ والأخلاقية والثورة. وقد عدّه النقاد بأنه الأول من بين المفكرين الفرنسيين الذين اخذوا قضية الجزائر على نحو جدي في كتاباتهم . فقد دعا الى تعامل العرب و الفرنسيين على حد سواء ، و حذر من المواقف الخطيرة التي قد تنتشأ نتيجة سياسة فرنسا في الجزائر. و قد كان مناصرا لحقوق الجزائريين معارضا للمعاملة اللإنسانية التي مارستها فرنسا في ادارتها للجزائر. في رواية (الغريب) يصور كامو حقيقة الاستيطان الفرنسي في الجزائر و الهيمنة الأوربية على شعوب البلدان اللأوربية .والرواية تمثل ادانة للامبالاة التي أبداهـا (ميرسو)، بطل الرواية، إزاء وحشية المجتمع الاستيطاني الذي ينتمي اليه،حيث يقتل (ميرسو) عربيا دون مبرر كاف ويحاكم لا لقتله العربي بل لأنه لم يتصرف وفق تقاليد مجتمعه خلال وفاة والدته. ويظهر التمييز بين الأوربي و العربي من خلال نظرة القضاء الأوربيّ " للأخر " على انه "شيء"، أن قتل العربي من قبل الفرنسي ليس الا من قبيل كسر صخرة او قطع شجره.

يبرر ميرسو قتله للعربي بتأثير الشمس الأفريقية عليه ، انه غريب في عالم غريب، وفي لحظات مواجهته لهذا العالم الغريب ينفصل ميرسو عن قيم مجتمعه ليصبح مجرد متفرج سلبي على الأحداث .ولكن في سجنه حينما يعي جريمته يقرر الانسحاب الى عالم الأحاسيس ليجد فيه ملاذا من الغموض اللأخلاقي الذي يشكل جوهر مجتمعه. ان صدقه مع ذاته قد ولد لديه انسجاما مع عالم الأشياء المادية حوله. فهو لم يعد يثق بغير تلك الأشياء التي يراها على وجه الدقة ليجد فيها معنى، رافضا عالم الأفكار المجردة الذي يخلو من أية هدف. ان سلوك ميرسو هو تجسيد لفلسفة كامو الأدبية التي تتجلى في رفضه لقيم مجتمعه المجردة وشجبه لممارساته التي تتسم بالعنف تجاه الآخرين. إنّ مغزى الرواية يكمن في اعتقاد كامو انه من العبث ان يخضع الانسان التجربة الانسانية لتفسير عقلانيّ، وإنّ الادب في رأيه هو تمرد ضد النظام الصارم المفروض على الانسان و محاولته السمو على القيود التي يفرضها عليه عالمه. الأدب بعبارة اخرى اعادة خلق وتحول وجود، دعوة لصراع أبدي يضفي معنى على الوجود الانسانيّ.