

## Chapter 1

### Animalistic Instinctual Life

#### Introduction

The term 'instinct' refers to irrational forces. Sex, violence, fear, desire, disgust are some examples of the instincts. It is believed that such instincts are innate in humans. Sigmund Freud says, "Instinct is an inherent in organic life to restore an earlier state of things" (567). But Paul Thomas Young considers it in slightly different ways. He says, "Instinct is a behavior in which innate structure plays a dominant role, activation typically comes with the internal psychological factors" (69). So, instinct can be taken as a natural tendency of human to behave in a particular way, using the knowledge and abilities that they were born with, rather than thought or training.

Albert Camus's *The Stranger* (1942) is divided into two parts in which there are six chapters in the first part and five chapters in the second part. In the first part, Monsieur Meursault, the narrator and the protagonist of the novel, hears the news of his mother's death. He goes to home but does not show interest to see his mother's body. Moreover, after the funeral, he goes to see a funny movie with a girl and also gets involved in sexual activities. He does not care any social norms and values. It seems that his activities are not better than the activities of animals. In the climax of the novel, Meursault kills an Arab boy without any cause. Raymond, a friend of Meursault, loves a girl only for physical sex and when he knows that she has some affairs with other men, he thinks to kill the girl. Salamano, an old man, lives alone and shows unusual relationship with a dog. To their relationship, Camus says, "They look as if they belong to the same species" (27). In the second part of

the novel, Meursault is imprisoned where he is not worried about his future life. He only thinks about sex and crimes. Finally, the court decides to kill Meursault.

In this regard, various questions can be raised for critical study of this novel. Why do the characters think only about sex and violence? Why are they so jealous and greedy for? Why are not they worried to their life and society? Why does the court decide to kill Meursault? What forces make them do such activities? Through the light of naturalism and the nature of innate instincts, this research will try to find the answers of these questions.

The second chapter of the research will deal with the naturalism and its relation to the animalistic instincts of the characters in *The Stranger*. It will try to show the nature of naturalistic writing and the link to the animalistic instincts. The chapter third will be about the activities of the characters and the relation to the animalistic instincts. It will focus on the immoral and irrational activities of the characters. It also will try to show the symbolic meaning of the text in relation to the animalistic instincts. In the same way, the chapter four will be the conclusion of the whole research. The chapter will focus on the innate nature of the human beings and its relation to the animalistic instincts.

### **About the Author**

Albert Camus was born in Mondove, Algeria, on 7 November 1913. His father, Lucien Camus, was an agricultural laborer, descended from one of the French families. His mother, Catherine Sintes, was of Spanish descent.

In 1914, his father volunteered for military service and was killed in action at the first battle of the Marne. Camus's mother then returned to Algiers, where she shared a small flat with her own widowed mother in the working class district of Belcourt, she earned money to bring up

her two sons by working as a charwoman. In 1923, Camus won a scholarship, which enabled him to go to Lycee in Algiers. He was helped to win his scholarship by Louis Germain , a teacher at the Ecote Communale which he attended from 1918 to 1923. Camus was an atheletic young man, fond of football and swimming and between 1928 and 1930, he kept goal for the Racing Universitaire d'Alger. In 1930 he fell ill with tuberculosis and was to suffer recurrent attacks of this illness throughout his life. In 1934, he joined in the communist party. His first marriage, to Simon Hie, took place in 1934 and was dissolved a year later.

In 1936, Camus collaborated with two of his friends in writing a play entitled *Revolte dans les Asturies*. In the same year, he began to write the essays later published under the title of *Betwixt and Between*. In the same year, he also completed a short thesis on the relationship between Plotinus and Saint Augustine. At the outbreak of the Second World War, Camus was rejected as medically unfit and continued to work as a journalist. He became editor of an evening paper, *Le Soir Republican*.

Camus himself dated his decision to join the Resistance Movement from 19 December 1941. He joined the network known as 'Combat', which formed part of the Movement Liberation Nord. Camus was a multi-dimensional personality. He tried his career in every field such as politics, journalism, theatre managing, literary writing philosophical essays, novels dramas, critical notes, etc. In 1942, his novel *The Outsider*, later named as *The Stranger*, made him well known in literary circles and the publication in the following year of *The Myth of Sisyphus* confirmed his reputation.

Camus married Francine Faure in 1940. In 1945, his twin children Catherine and Jean were born in Paris and Camus lived and worked there until his death. In 1943 he had accepted a post as a reader with the publishing firm of Gallimard and remained with them for the rest of his life.

Camus's great fame in post war France stemmed partly from his reputation as a writer from the performance of his plays and partly from his work as a journalist. His best-known novel, *The Plague* was published in France in June 1947. In 1948 and 1949 two more of his plays were produced *State of Siege (L'Etat de Siege)* and *The Just (Les Justes)*. Late in 1951, his major essay in political philosophy, *The Rebel (L'Homme Revolt)* presented an analysis and criticism of the tradition of metaphysical and political revolt from the Greeks to the present day.

Apart from the essays collected in *Summer (L'Et)* in 1954, Camus published no further major literary work until 1956. Then his short novel, *The Fall (La Chute)* presented his most complex fictional character, Jean-Batise Clamence , in whom many critics saw a self-portrait of Camus himself. In the same year Camus's adaptation of William Faulkner's *Requiem for a Nun* scored great success, and the publication in 1957 of a volume of short stories entitled *Exile and the Kingdom (L'Exile le Royanme)* showed an increased awareness on Camus's part of individual problems and a movement away from the political and philosophical preoccupations of *The Rebel*. In October 1957, he became the youngest French writer even to receive the Nobel Prize for literature.

In January 1959, Camus scored what was perhaps his greatest success in the theatre with his adaptation of Dostoyevskey's *The Possessed*. In the same year, he spent long periods of time working on a novel with the tentative title of *Le Premier Homme (the First Man)*, but had not finished it when he was killed in a car accident on 4 January 1960.

## Major Themes of Camus's Writings

Albert Camus's writings are associated with human character, moral attitudes, metaphysical belief, human values and nature of reality. Camus believes that with the decline of religious belief/faith in the modern period a number of secular religions-in particular Hegelian and Marxist historicism - we have attempted to tie values to reality by means of postulated schedule of historical development that guarantees eventual realization (Elmann, Vol. II, 16). He says that the only moral being is the human beings, which is called into question because of those secular religions. It is this isolation of man as an evaluative and purposive being in a world that affords no support to such attitudes (secular beliefs) that Camus calls the absurdity of the human condition.

Camus maintained that suicide cannot be regarded as an adequate response to the experience of absurdity. The reason he gives is that suicide deals with absurdity simply by suppressing one of the two poles-the human being and the "world" - that together produce the tension described above. Suicide is thus an admission of incapacity and such admission is inconsistent with that human pride to which Camus openly appeals. He says "there is nothing equal to the spectacle of human pride". It can be understood from his *The Myth of Sisyphus* that Camus believed that absurdity could itself generate a positive ethic. It is clear from his writings that Camus, from the beginning, regarded certain responses to absurdity as morally unacceptable. In his *Letter to a German Friend*, he interpreted Nazism as one reaction to the very nihilistic vision of the world that he himself had come to accept. He then went on to condemn it in the severest terms for its denial of human fraternity. Even at this stage in the development of his thought, Camus insisted that an authentic revolt against the human condition had to be a revolt in the name of the solidarity of man with man (Ellman, Vol. II, 16).

In the character of Meursalt, the 'hero' of *The Stranger* this tension between Camus's nihilistic vision and his ethical demands becomes particularly clear. Meursalt is presented as a man characterized by the moral equivalent of achromatic vision. Although he is not at all given to philosophical reflection, he views the whole conventional human apparatus of moral distinctions, of justice and guilt, as a kind of senseless rigmarole with no basis in reality. He stands, in fact, outside the whole moral world in a particular state that Camus describes as 'innocence' (Ellmann, Vol. II, 16). Like many of the existentialists, Camus tried to present these two revolts—the revolt against the human condition and the revolt against human injustice. In society, Camus advocated fraternity, brotherhood and equality. He opposed totalitarian concept either in the name of Fascism or Communism. He says that the revolutionary practices can only lead us towards a new enslavement of man by man instead of human fraternity.

Rebellion of the characters for their identity is another theme of Camus's writings. The idea of rebellion is seen in his book *The Rebel* as follows:

I proclaim that I believe in nothing and that everything is absurd, but I can not doubt the validity of my own proclamation and I am compelled to believe, at least, in my own protest. The first and only datum, that is furnished in me, with in absurdity experience is rebellion [...] rebellion arises from the spectacle of the irrational coupled with an unjust and incomprehensible condition. (16)

To the book, Sir Herbert Head says, "Camus believes that revolt is one of the essential dimensions of mankind. It is useless to deny its historical reality rather. We must seek in it a principle of existence" (8). Here, Camus sees existence in rebellion. One who rebels against the

absurdity of the situation, he exists, not simply exists but exists happily because Camus writes, "The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy" (*Absurd Freedom*, 852). Camus claims that Sisyphus is the ideal absurd hero and that his punishment is representative of the human condition.

Albert Camus takes absurdity as the results between the relationship of same condition of man and the world. He seems more optimistic and brave in creating his characters. His characters memorize the futile and worthless punishment imposed on man by the mythical Greek gods. Sisyphus, in *The Myth of Sisyphus* can be seen as a brave and optimistic hero defying the order of God. For Camus, existentialism is connected to absurdity. Due to estranged, alienated and absurd condition of himself and the world, man strives for his self-identity, self-existence, and his self-hood. He presents the nihilistic and rebellious hero, who seeks freedom and tries to get rid of absurdity through rebellion. For him rebellion is the major action for the way to freedom. As Nietzsche's view, "Whether God exists or not that is not our concern" (754). Camus too seems to have had same view. In *The Stranger* through the speech of Meursault, the narrator-hero, Camus writes, "[...] that I had only a little time left and I didn't want to waste it on God" (120). He does not care any rules, norms and values of the society. He acts whatever his heart tells him to do. Throughout the novel, he behaves in irrational and immoral ways. It seems that the activities of Meursault are not better than the activities of animals.

In his *The Plague*, he has shown the problem of morality in humans. Regarding the novel, Philip Thody says, "a politically committed work as well as a statement of the more general problem of moral evil" (9). Similarly, his short novel *The Fall (La Chute)* has presented his most complex fictional character, Jean-Baptiste Clamence. To the character, Philip Thody says, "a self-portrait of Camus himself, and from whose

apparently total despair of man's natural goodness other readers inferred an imminent conversion to Christianity" (10). In this way, Camus's novels deal with the innate and real nature of the human beings. His writings do not try to guide the society but he just tries to depict the human nature and conditions. And in deep down, we find the animalistic instincts in most of his writings.

Camus also tries to show the condition and nature of justice at the law courts. He shows a callous picture of so-called justice of authority upon the victims. Crossing different ups and downs, and some stages, Camus' concept of human life is the latest and widely renowned philosophy among the crowd of modern thoughts

### **Critics on Camus's Works**

*The Stranger* is Camus's first novel which established his literary career. Since its publication in 1942, many critics have put their views on Camus and his works. In *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, Robert Audi considers Albert Camus as a prose poet apart from a French philosophical novelist and essayist. He says:

The odd anti-hero of *The Stranger* unconsciously accepts the absurdity of life. He makes no judgments, accepts the most repulsive charters as his friends and neighbors, and remains unmoved by the death of his mother and his own killing of a man. Facing execution for his crime, he "opens his heart to the benign indifference of the universe."(102)

W.M. Frolock takes *The Stranger* as a work dealing with the violence of human beings as committed by animals. He simply says, "The famous murder of the Arab, which climaxes part one of these novels, is an apt illustration of how violence can be conceived as animal" (8).



Similarly, Rene Girard takes the protagonist of the novel as an irrational character. She says, "Meursault is an irrational, unintelligent child, who kills a man because he wants attention from society"(531). To the same protagonist, Alice J Steange simply says, "Meursault's status as the stranger springs from his detachment from both his own emotion and those of others, making him unable to experience normal human connections" (36). But Steven Poser comments this novel through the light of main character's psychology. He admits:

Quite apart from the existential reading of this work as saying something about every men in an indifferent, meaningless, godless universe, the character of Meursault provides an uncanny portrait of a particular form of psychology that can be described dynamically both in terms of his unconscious motivation to become a murderer and more generally in terms of how and why affect of any kind is so forcefully and systematically rejected from his consciousness. (259)

Carl A. Viggiani says that Camus himself saw the novel as an incarnation of 'a drama of intelligence'. As a result, he says some of the formal and imaginative aspects of *The Stranger* have been neglected, with the further result that the full meaning of the novel has remained hidden. He says; "*The Stranger* is a dense and rich creation full of undiscovered meanings and formal qualities" (365). He also says that the novel is incomprehensible except in the context of all Camus' works. Viggiani tries to see this novel through different aspects, such as the use of time and structure as thematic devices, myth, names, patterns of character and situation, and symbols.

He compares the hero of the novel, *The Stranger* with the doomed man Oedipus and the sacrificial God-man. He says these two along with Sisyphus are represented as prototypes of the absurd man. He further says, "The Oedipus myth is reflected in the complicated trap set for

Meursault by chance, the sea, and the sun, and in his final attitude of reconciliation" (870). He also says that Camus' characters are type characters, not individual. He further writes about the hero:

The hero and the narrator of *The Stranger* has an occupation given him by the author expressly to universalize the man and his situation. He is a clerk. [...] who one day discovers the absurdity of his existence. The choice of a clerk as a hero is ironic; [...], plays the role of the traditional hero who faced death on the path to a new life and revelation. (879)

Viggiani suggests that with the murder of the Arab, Meursault becomes a rebel. It is the fate of the revolt to kill both God and men (883). He concludes his comment with the view that the fate of Meursault is the universal condition of men whose history is precisely death, injustice and their awareness of them.

Camus identifies the absurd in the confrontation between our desire, which is animalistic and our understanding of the world's irrationality. Neither the world nor the human mind is in itself absurd. Rather, absurdity finds itself in the confrontation between the two. To clarify the concept of absurd, Camus writes:

This world in itself is not reasonable, that is all that can be said. But what is absurd is the confrontation of this irrational and the wild longing for clarity whose call echoes in the human heart. The absurd depends as much on man as on the world. For the moment it is all that links them together. (*The fact of absurdity*, 827)

In the above concept of absurd, we are faced on the one hand with man who wants to find reason and unity in the universe, and on the other hand with the universe, that provide him with nothing but meaningless phenomena. As such the absurd does not exist either in man or in universe but in the confrontation between the two, we are only faced with the absurd when we take both our need for answers and the worlds silence together, the absurd is the relationship that links these two basic facts. Denis Hollier writes; "The novel, *The Stranger* is written without reference to cognitive states, thoughts, but speaks through its prime symbols, the sea, the sun, and death" (3). According to him, death itself becomes a central and recurrent theme. He further admits:

Camus moved onto other and more poignant themes, such as human solidarity, in his later works, but *The Stranger* stands as the expression of an entire country's sense of helplessness during and after the anti-climax of the second World War, and further, as an authentic and original expression of an author's convictions through the medium of literature as can be found anywhere. (3)

In the same way, Sir Paul Harvey says that *The Stranger* is one of the world famous absurd writings. He says, "The main character is not a hero, has no 'true' love affair and the pursuit of money and power never enters the story. He is an honest atheist, waiting for life to happen" (3). He further comments, "The Stranger implies that the main character, Meursault, has been viewed as a 'strange' or 'odd' person for some time. No one knows him. He is a stranger even to those who think they know him" (4).

According to him, Meursault is an anti-hero. His only quality is his honesty, no matter how absurd. In existential terms, he is "authentic" to himself. Meursault has faith only in what he himself can see or experience with his other senses. He is not a philosopher, a theologian or a

deep thinker. Meursault exists as he is, not trying to be anything more or less than himself (9). He also sees him as a prototype of modern man who thinks only his existence because of the loss of will. There is no hope and no desire in him as well as in the people of the world. The only goal for many people was simple survival. Even then the survival seemed empty and hollow. But Frederick Olafson takes the novel from nihilistic theme. He says:

Camus' philosophical career was essentially a movement away from the nihilism of *The Myth of Sisyphus* toward the humanism of *The Rebel*. Ideas that had been present in his work from the beginning, in one form or another, were to retain their place there; but he progressively revised his views of their relative importance within the moral life. (15)

Olafson clearly wants to express the ideas of Albert Camus from his earlier works to the later ones differ slightly in their theme. As our mind is not constant, but rather dynamic, it is true in the thinking of Camus also. His thinking over things and the world outlook had changed as per the time change. As said by Olafson, Camus believed that absurdity in the sense of recognition and acceptance of the fact that there are no metaphysically guaranteed directives for conduct, could by itself generate a positive ethic. Camus insisted that an authentic revolt against the human condition had to be a revolt in the name of the solidarity of man with man. About his first novel *The Stranger* Olafson admits:

In the character of Meursault, the "hero" of *The Stranger*, this tension between Camus' nihilistic vision and his ethical demands becomes particularly clear. Meursault is presented as a man characterized by the moral equivalent of achromatic vision. [...] He stands, in fact, outside the whole moral world in a peculiar state

that Camus described as "innocence", apparently because in a world that affords no transcendental sanction for human judgments of right and wrong there can be no real guilt. (16)

Joseph McBride in his *Albert Camus: Philosopher and Litterateur* writes his works fall into three categories: literary, political, and philosophical. He also says that it is rarely possible to separate these categories in Camus' writing. He says that Camus refused to separate moral from metaphysics. About *The Stranger* McBride writes:

*The Stranger* is one of the most widely read, and arguably the most influential, philosophical novel of this century. It is, however, a work whose meaning has not always been well understood, for while it is generally agreed that its hero, Meursault, is an absurd character, it has rarely been made clear where its precise nature of the absurd in *The Stranger* is and where its philosophic matrix lies. (8)

McBride also says that Camus was influenced by Friedrich Nietzsche while writing his books. According to him both of them reject God and try to show the superiority of human being over other things. For Nietzsche, God is supposition. He says, "If there were gods, how could he endure to be a god. Therefore there are no gods. He says willing liberates: that is the true doctrine of will and freedom" (907). About religion, he said Christianity should not be beautified and embellished. It has waged deadly war against his higher type of man. It has brought only evil. About human psychology, Nietzsche wrote, "No poll could settle the question of what all men would prefer. What matters is not what they might say they prefer but what they really prefer" (511).

It is said that it was the injustice and cruelty of man to man that aroused Camus to action. Connecting on Albert Camus's literary writing Richard Ellmann writes:

He has performed habitually and unthinkingly, or rather, when he begins to demand that they have a meaning for him and discovers that they can provide none. Other men, nature, metaphysically reality, the very forms of logic strike him as absurd—that is, radically incommensurable with the one who appeals to them for his meaning. He can confidently assert nothing but the bare fact that he exists and that he is bound in a relation of incompatibility and hatred of things other than himself. (804)

Thus, many critics have put their views on Camus and his works from various perspectives. Some critics have viewed from existentialism and spiritualism perspectives where some of them have taken from social realism, quest motif and conflict between desire and responsibility. Some critics also looked from psychoanalysis point of view and the like. However, this research will only focus on animalistic instinctual life.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Naturalism and Camus's *The Stranger***

#### **Naturalism**

Naturalism is a belief that nature is truth and the reality can be achieved only by the means of scientific methods. It denies the existence of super naturals, rejects faith, revelation an institution of source of truth. The natural world of objects and events in space and time is all that is

real. Man is completely a part of this natural world and he is only an incidental product of the world process. In this sense, we can infer that naturalism is close to materialism. For it all meaning originates in experience in accordance with the general, cannons of scientific method.

Naturalists question existence of supernatural anywhere in the universe and hold that if any non-natural entities exist, they may be known by their observable influence on natural objects. For naturalists idealism is fickle in the sense that idealists believe in things abstract i.e. "idea" and imaginary unreal things which have no concrete existence. About the naturalism Jostein Gaarder says,

By 'naturalistic' we mean a sense of reality that accepts no other reality than nature and the sensory world. A naturalist therefore also considers mankind to be part of nature. A naturalistic scientist will exclusively rely on natural phenomena- not on either rationalistic suppositions or any form of divined revelation. (406)

The naturalist writers portray life as it is and believe that man is fundamentally animal without free will. To the naturalist writers, man can be explained in terms of the forces, usually heredity and environment which M.H. Abraham defines:

The thesis, a product of post-Darwinian biology in the nineteenth century, held that a human being exists entirely in the order of nature and does not have a soul nor any mode participating in a religious or being is merely a higher order animal whose character and behavior are entirely determined by two kinds of forces heredity and environment. A person inherits compulsive instincts - especially hunger, the drive to accumulate possessions, and sexuality and is their subject to the social and economic forces in the family, the class and the milieu into which that person is born. (261)

Naturalistic novel exposes the "tragedy" in which human being is crushed and destroyed by the operation of forces which has no power to resist or even to understand. The tragedy in Naturalistic fiction happens due to the circumstances and the loss of individual mind's struggle.

Karl F Zender writes in *Studies in the Novel*:

Naturalistic writers depict humankind as puppet like in its incapacity to resist the forces of heredity and environment. It contributes to the creation of tragedy only through its illusion making power believing they free. Characters in naturalistic novels forge even more strongly their enslaving chain. (2-3)

Naturalists believe that the instincts like sex, desire, violence, greed are innate in humans and they work in our irrational state of mind. Regarding the term 'sex', *The Colombia Encyclopedia* too says, "The sexual feelings form in the primitive part of the brain, but remind under control of the later developed cerebellum" (1119). In the same way, in *Sex is not Sin*, Meena Nanda says, "Sex is the unique gift of nature that can be put to various uses depending upon the user's bent of mind" (8). She further says, "Like acts of eating, sleeping, walking, thinking, sex has its utilitarian and survival values" (17).

A modified definition of naturalism appears in Donald Pizer's *Realism and Naturalism in Nineteenth-century American Fiction (1984)*. He says that the naturalist often describes his characters as though they are conditioned and controlled by environment, heredity, instinct, or chance. But he also suggests a compensating humanistic value in his characters or their fates which affirms the significance of the individual and of his life. He says:



[T]he naturalistic novel usually contains two tensions or contradictions, and the two in conjunction comprise both an interpretation of experience and particular aesthetic recreation of experience. In other words, the two constitute the theme and form of the naturalistic novel. The first tension is that between the subject matter of the naturalistic novel and the concept of man which emerges from the subject matter. The naturalist populates primarily from the lower middle class (10).

His fictional world is that of the commonplace and unheroic in which life would seem to be chiefly the dull round of daily existence, as we ourselves usually conceive of our lives. The tension here is that between the naturalist's desire to represent in fiction the new, discomfiting truths which he has found in the ideas and life of his late nineteenth-century world, and also his desire to find some meaning in experience which reasserts the validity of the human enterprise.

But the naturalist discovers in this world those qualities of man usually associated with the heroic or adventurous, such as acts of violence and passion which involve sexual adventure or bodily strength and which culminate in desperate moments and violent death.

A naturalistic novel is thus an extension of realism only in the sense that both modes often deal with the local and contemporary. The naturalist, however, discovers in this material the extraordinary and excessive in human nature.

However, naturalism is a broad term which is connected to the psychoanalysis. In the novel *The Stranger*, Albert Camus has studied the character's psyche activities by showing the immoral and violent activities of the characters. The characters in this novel have led their life on the basis of sensation and instinct which are animalistic in nature. The naturalistic writings try to depict the real nature or instinct of the human being

and in the novel, *The Stranger* also, the characters have tried to show the innate human instincts. The activities of the characters are very much irrational and immoral. In fact, the naturalistic writings also deal with the irrational and immoral activities.

The characters of the naturalistic writings do not care about their morality, social norms and values. In the novel also, the characters do not care any kind of morality and rules of the society. The environment is also very much important to the naturalistic writing. In the novel, *The Stranger* also, the hotness of the environment has disturbed the mind of the central character, Meursault. Most of his activities are connected with the hotness of the environment. In this way, the elements of naturalism have been applied and seen in the novel.

### **Naturalism vs. Realism**

Naturalism is a theoretical concept based on an objective presentation of human beings. The naturalistic writers regard human behavior as controlled by instinct, emotion or social and economic condition. It rejects free will, adapting instead, in large measure, the biological determinism of Charles Darwin and the economic determinism of Karl Mark. On the other hand, realism is an attempt to describe human behavior and surroundings or to represent figures and objects exactly as they act or appear. Regarding the relationship between the naturalism and the realism, Donald Pizer in his *Realism and Naturalism in nineteenth century America Fiction* says, "Naturalism is an extension of realism since both made often deal with the local and contemporary. The naturalist, however, discovers in this material the extraordinary and excessive in human nature" (10).

In naturalism, characters do not have free will and they are less selective than the characters of realism. Realism basically shows the human relationship and the social reality whereas the naturalism tries to show the basic human nature. Naturalism concludes that people's

decisions are predetermined by the scientific or natural forces that predisposed people to act a certain way. But realism concludes that people's decisions determine how they respond to a situation. Naturalism tends to see the scientific law which under girds to be interested in the relationship of innate forces whereas realism tends to concentrate its attention on the accurate description of that particular block, that special force and that definite acceleration to explain how the specific factors lead to the reaction. Naturalism is based on the presumption that humans are like animals in the natural world. As a result, humans respond to environmental forces and internal stresses and desires, over none of which they have either control or full knowledge. In Freudian terms, it's literature written to demonstrate how the id dominates the ego and superego.

In the naturalistic novels, the subject matters deal with those raw and unpleasant experiences which reduce characters to "degrading" behavior in their struggle to survive. These characters are mostly from the lower middle or the lower classes. They are poor, uneducated and unsophisticated. The milieu is the common place and the unheroic, life is usually the dull round of daily existence. But the naturalist discovers those qualities in such characters usually associated with the heroic or adventurous acts of violence and passion leading to desperate movements and violent death. The naturalists suggest that life on its lowest levels is not as simple as it seems to be.

The characters of the naturalistic novels are generally controlled by their instincts, society and the surrounding environment whereas in realism, characters are generally controlled only by the society or milieu. In fact, characters of the realistic novels play the role of social representative. About the characters of the naturalistic novels, Donald Pizer says, "Characters are conditioned and controlled by environment, heredity, chance or instincts; but they have compensating humanistic values which affirm their individuality and life" (45).

The naturalist program, as formulated by Zola, was substantially the same as that of the realists, except that Emile Zola put greater stress on the analogies to science, considering the procedure of the novelist as identical with that of the experimenting scientist. He also more definitely and exclusively embraced the philosophy of scientific materialism, with its deterministic implications, its stress on heredity and environment, while the older realists were not always so clear in drawing the philosophical consequences.

Emile Zola crystalized his views of naturalism in his treatise, *The Experimental Novel* (1880), which was based on the scientific Claude Bernard's in *Introduction to the Study of Experimental Medicine* (1865). Bernard was a determinist who believed all could be reduced to natural laws for nearly every occurrence. There is only physical nature; there is no metaphysics in Bernards views. Both Bernard and Zola based their investigations on the questions "how" something happened, not on "why" it happened. But Bernard dealt with experimentation on 'living' things; Zola does experimentation on the 'internal worldly' society. Using this experimental method, Zola created a distinction between the observer and the experimenter. In this way, his naturalistic literature would be similar to science. Furthermore, accepting the discoveries of recent science, Zola emphasized the interaction of heredity and environment on his subjects; for him, humanity was animalistic, insofar as Darwinianism maintained that humans were part of the evolutionary chain.

Zola realized that even purest naturalism requires personal artifice in its re-creation of the world as reflection of the author's image. Zola writes in the *Experimental Novel*:

A stupid reproach made against us naturalist writers is that we wish to be merely photographers. In vain have we asserted that we accept temperament and personal expression; people go right on answering us with imbecile arguments about the

impossibility of the strictly true, about the necessity of the arrangement of facts to make any work of art whatever.[...] we have to produce and direct the phenomena; that is indestructible base; but to show the mechanism of the facts, we have produce and direct the phenomena; that is our part of invention and genius in the work. Thus without having recourse to question of form and style ... I state right here that when we use the experimental method we must modify nature without departing from nature.(56)

The program of realism, while defensible enough as reaction against romanticism, raises critical questions which were not answered theoretically by its defenders. What is meant by "truth" of representation? Photographic copying? This seems the implication of many famous pronouncements. About the realistic novel, Marie Stendhal says, "A realistic novel is a mirror walking along the road" (4). But such statements can hardly be taken literally. All art must select and represent, it can not be and has never been a simple transcript or reality. What such analogies are intended to convey is rather a claim for an all-inclusiveness of subject matter, a protest against the exclusion of themes that were considered low or trivial. Anton Chekhov, a Russian writer says that a writer must be as objective as a chemist.

The realistic program, while it has made innumerable new subjects available to art, also implies a narrowing of its themes and methods-a condemnation the fantastic, the historical, the remote, the idealized, the "unsullied," the idyllic. Realism professes to present us with a "slice of life" - heroes drawn from the middle and lower classes, was a real innovation of the 19th century. But one should recognize that it is an artistic method and convention like any other. About the realism, Rene Wellek says, "Realism is the objective representation of contemporary social reality"(14). The value of realism lies in its negation of the conventions of romanticism; its expansion of the themes of art, and its new

demonstration that literature has to deal also with its time and society and has, at its best, an insight into reality that is not necessarily identical to that of science. Many other great writers make us 'realize' the world of their time, evoke and imaginative picture of it that seems truer and will last longer than that of historians and sociologists. But this achievement is due to their imagination and their art, or craft, two requisites that realistic theory tended to forget or minimize. In short, the naturalism can be taken as the extreme form of realism. So, they are interrelated to each other.

### **Naturalism in Literature**

In literature, naturalism is a style of fiction writing, which aims at scientific objectivity in the portrayal of characters and they are shown to be motivated primary by biological, economic, and social forces. Through this objective study of human beings, naturalistic writers believed that the laws behind the forces that govern human lives might be studied and understood.

Naturalistic writers thus used a version of the scientific method to write their novels; they studied human beings governed by their 'instincts' and passions as well as the ways in which the characters' lives were governed by forces of heredity and environment. Although they used the techniques of accumulating details pioneered by the realists, the naturalist thus had specific object in mind when they chose the segment of reality that they wished to convey. The naturalists exposed the horror, filth, sordidness lurking around the society and human psyche. It was indisputably true; that kind of writing would shock readers of that time.

With the help of naturalism, writers depict real life more than realism. It was an influence in the movement towards pessimism, materialism and despair. In naturalistic fiction, there is always a tension between hope and despair. The idea of perfect unity and brutal facts of experience come the themes, motifs, forms and style through which naturalism found literary expression.

'Determinism, survival, violence and taboo' are major themes and motifs of the naturalistic writings. "Natural law" and "socio-economic" influences are exposed being more powerful than the human will, which carries the idea of determinism. 'Emotion, motivation and conflict' are the best approaches for survival, which grows out of the application of determinism by leading the people of their roots. In the novel of naturalism, determinism is also an important factor. About determinism, E.H.Carr says:

Determinism, I will define- I hope, uncontroversially- as the belief that everything that happens has a cause or causes and could not have happened differently unless something in the cause or causes had also been different.

Determinism is a problem not of history, but of all human behavior. The human being whose actions have no cause and are, therefore, undetermined is as much an abstraction as the individual outside. (24)

Determinism is a philosophical doctrine, which holds that every event has its antecedent causes. Certain set of factors or causes are responsible in the occurrence of every event or action. Past events and circumstances have much to do with the present and future events. Dependence, inevitability and predictability are the terms connected with Determinism. Occurrence of any event depends on other causes; what is bound to happen is inevitable or unalterable and given all the conditions or causes necessary for any event to occur, we can predict, what will

happen in the future. That is to say specific set of conditions will determine a specific set of events and if these conditions are present again the same may be predicted.

Most of the naturalistic fictions deal with the theme of survival, which grows out of the application of determinism to biological competition. The survival of animal is a matter of violence and intimate sexual disclosure of force against force. Like animals, the lower nature of man is also disclosed and explored by violence. From this violence and survival, there comes an attack on taboos. Sex, disease, bodily functions, obscenity and depravity which are considered improper is known as taboo. In naturalistic novel taboo is found in the province of physical survival.

Naturalistic novel is often written like a documentary because it intends to report certain episodes of reality with scientific accuracy and objectivity. Satire, mockery and ironic reversals are the weapons against the values which they are attacking. Camus often uses ironic reversal to undress the conservative morality. Naturalists are also considered as impressionists; for they capture the mood, color, tone of setting and psyche upheaval undergoing inside the character's mind. The characters in naturalistic fiction enjoy with material prosperity but never become happy and they are ignorant of prosperity, which can not buy happiness because this is not infantile desire. Emotions, passions such as lust, greed or the desire for dominance or pleasure and the fight for the survival in an amoral, indifferent universe are the subject matter of the naturalistic novels. The conflict in naturalistic novel is often 'man against nature' or 'man against himself or herself'. The characters struggle to retain a veneer of civilization despite external pressures that threaten to release the brute within. About the world and nature of man in naturalistic novels, Charles Child Walcott says:



The world is a jungle, where men grapple with one another for life and its accessories murder and are in turn murdered, fly after pleasure, and resign themselves with store calm to whatever pain they can not elude. Man's only duty is to discharge his energy and die, at the same time expressing his individuality as best he can. (93)

Emile Zola, Stephen Crane, Jack London, Frank Norris, Theodore Dreiser, John Steinbeck and the other are the theorists of "naturalism."

In the nineteenth century, naturalism became the mode of fiction in which many novels were written.

In literature, naturalism is an approach which proceeds from an analysis of reality in term of natural forces, e.g. heredity, environment, physical drives and the naturalists tended to concern themselves with the harsh, often sordid aspect of life. The chief literary theorist of naturalism was Emile Zola who said in his essay *Le Roman Experimental* (1880), "The novelists should be like the scientists examining dispassionately various phenomena in life, and drawing indisputable conclusion" (449). He considers human beings as beast so; he views that the character should be studied through their relationship to their surrounding to be impartial without moralizing about their nature.

Zola's experimental novel, as he termed it, grew from contemporary scientific practices as well as from the philosophy of positivism. In order to discover fundamental truth the scientists must arrange and observe his data carefully. In fact, observation and experiment depict the accurate reality of the nature. In *The Experimental Novel*, Zola describes and emphasizes upon the observer and experimentalists in the following way:

The name of 'observer' is given to him who applies the simple or complex process of investigation in the study of phenomena which he does not vary and which he gathers consequently, as nature offers them to him; the name of experimentalist is given to him who employs the simple and complex process of investigation to vary or modify, for an end of some kind, the natural phenomena, and to make them appear under circumstances and conditions in which they are not presented by nature. (52)

Zola was deeply impressed by the scientific fidelity of the Concourts' *Germinie Lacetux*. He reviewed it and wrote in Charle's Child Walcutt's book named *American Literary Naturalism: A Divided Stream* that; "The drama is terrific, it has the powerful interest of physiological and psychological problem, of a case of physical and moral illness, of a story which has to be true" (31). The experimental idea which he found in this novel derived Zola for more than 20 years.

The historian Hippolyte Taine had claimed that the literary genius should be accounted in terms of the race, the milieu, and the moment. But Zola challenged Taine for his negligence to give proper emphasis to the importance of individual temperament in art. For Zola, reality had to be converted into art where he writes as an experimental scientists in the preface of *Therese Requin* (1867) that, "I have tried to study temperaments rather than characters. There is whole book [...] my two heroes are the satisfaction of physical needs" (Zola 32). Here, it is clear that the love of his two heroes is not the love of spirituality. His heroes intend to love not for spirituality but to fulfill their physical needs.

Zola's characters are primarily from the lower class or from the middle class. The world of his characters is the common place and unheroic in which life seems to be dull and actions are violent and passionate which involve sexual adventure. It also displays the bodily strength which at last culminates in desperate moments and violent death. Zola's attempt in his novel was quite contemporary.

In the naturalistic writing, the actions of the characters are inevitable in which forces come in such a way that they have no control over the forces. Their lives are very smooth and at distance from sin and sorrow but unfortunately misfortune enter in their lives. Due to their own pressure, nature and weakness, they turn the way of their physical and moral degradation. This kind of inevitability runs through his novel. Another naturalistic writer Stephen Crane who is known as Christopher Marlowe of American Naturalism, shows his characters frustrated in a crazy world, where they do not function well enough to control their own destinies as well as unable to understand them very well. His naturalism is to be found in his attitude towards received values, which he regularly attacked through his naturalistic method. Crane's success is a triumph of style, manner and meaning because these things are same, we can also label that his naturalism is descriptive. He says that sequence of events is caused due to the will and judgment of the people involved. He simply portrays that men's will do not control their destinies.

Like other naturalist writers, Jack London also denies the existence of free will. He saw life as a "struggle" for existence in which quarter is always denied and only the strong can survive.

In this sense, London's thought is linked to Darwin in that "strength is pure, strength is good, and weakness was therefore evil" (54). London believes that man moves by natural steps to the superman where he considers one to be superior because amoral and at another antisocial irritant who can not survive in the complex modern world.

The main problem of any naturalistic novel is that the external forces oppress or control the activities and the wills of characters.

According to Charles Child Walcott, in his book *American Literary Naturalism: Dividend Stream*, Frank Norris says, "novelist should present life realistically, but his concern must be with the people rather than theories" (116). He employs the appearance of factual reality to explore the unplumbed depths of human heart and mystery of sex. The dominant passion, love, hate, greed, sexuality are found in his novels.

Theoder Dreiser, an American naturalist, mixes despair and idealism, wonder and fear pity and guilt in his novels. Like most of the characters of the naturalistic novels, his characters too, come from lower class who have no money, no background, no sophistication and no special talent. He shows that will is not free to operate independently and it lacks the power to bring its impulse for fulfillment. His characters seek a meaning in their which they can not find. Dreiser has always been seeking solid foundations for social and personal order. His characters are always bewildered because the world is too complicated and they are not equipped to understand it. Dreiser deals with things as they are. He demonstrates the evils of our society and says that these evils follow us, but never leaves us. Same kind of evils and intentions can be found in Camus's *The Stranger*. The people in the novel are always in the verge of becoming human but never do. The activities, intentions and motifs seem to be guided by the animalistic instincts. All the characters of the novel behave in irrational and immoral ways. In literature, naturalism came as the extreme realism. In the novel also, the characters show their extreme and real nature.

To sum up, the elements of naturalism, more or less can be found in any works which deal with human behavior. The naturalistic novels always try to depict the innate nature of human beings. The Stranger also has tried to depict the innate human nature. To the naturalist writers,

human being can be understood in terms of the forces, usually heredity and environment. Emile Zola, Stephen Crane, Jack London, Frank Norris, Theodore Dreiser, John Steinbeck are the some important leading figures of naturalistic novels.

### Chapter 3

#### ***Animalistic Instinctual Life and The Stranger***

##### **Indifference and Animalistic Nature**

'Indifference' is a lack of interest, feeling or reaction towards somebody or something. The characters of *The Stranger* show their indifference throughout the novel. The main character Meursault's indifference can be noticed from the very opening lines of the novel; "Maman died today or yesterday may be, I don't know. I got a telegram from the home: "Mother deceased funeral tomorrow faithfully yours. It doesn't mean anything. May be it was yesterday" (3). Here, he is confused concerning the exact date of his mother's death. Being based on the date of his mother's death, he only talks about the telegram from the home. He is not sure whether it is today or yesterday that his mother died. The details of the telegram which he does discuss only reinforce his uncertainty concerning the date. He mentions nothing else of the telegram's effect on him. In fact, his boss also shows indifference to him because he hesitates to grant leave.

Meursault is so indifferent and careless about his mother's death that after getting two days leave from the office, he heads towards his home and on the way he falls asleep, which is not considered from any mourners. In home also, he does not become interested to look the dead body of his mother although the director asks with him about his interest to look the dead body of his mother. "The director spoke to me again

but it was not really listening anymore. Then he said, I suppose you'd like to see your mother. I got up without seeing anything and he led the way to the door"(5).

The director of his Mama's home asks him about his interest to see the dead body of his mother many times but he seems totally indifferent about his asking. Meursault's indifferent feeling can be traced in the following lines:

The caretaker came in behind me. He must have been running. He stuttered a little. "We put the cover on, but I'm supposed to unscrew the casket so you can see her." He was moving toward the casket when I stopped him, He said, "You don't want to?" I answered, "No". He was quiet, and I was embarrassed because I felt I shouldn't have said that. He looked at me and then asked, "Why not?" but without criticizing, as if he just wanted to know. I said, "I don't know." (6)

Monsieur Meursault in his own world of indifference; he does not care about others. He is not affected even by the death of his mother. For him, every thing is strange. So, he does not care what other people say. He does whatever his heart tells him to do. About the activities just after his mother's death, he says:

I decided to go for a swim. I caught the streetcar to go to the public beach down at the harbor. Once there, I dove into the channel. There were lots of young people. In the water I ran into Marie Cardona, a former typist in our office whom I'd had a thing for at the time. She did too, I think. But she'd left soon afterwards and we didn't have the time. I helped

her onto a float and as I did, I brushed against her breasts. I was still in the water when she was already lying flat on her stomach on the float. She turned toward me. (19-20)

Throughout the funeral ceremony many other people, especially Thomas Perez, his mother's fiancé, and one of her friends, weep but Meursault expresses no sadness. He is totally indifferent. At one moment Meursault finds his indifferent world by comparing himself with the empty cab. He speaks, "The streetcars, packed a few minutes before, were almost empty" (22). Here, the streetcar's fulfillment earlier is parallel to his past life. Meursault mostly hates Sundays. On this day he really feels like an alien, discarded and worthless being in the world. Only Marie's frequent visit makes his Sundays meaningful but partially. He sees all happy except himself:

I recognized the distinguished little man among the others. [...] Almost all at once moviegoers spilled out of the neighborhood theatres into the street. The young men among them were gesturing more excitedly than usual and I thought they must have seen an adventure film. The ones who had gone to the movies in town came back a little later. They looked more serious. They were still laughing, [...]. The local girls, bareheaded, were walking arm in arm. The young men had made sure they would have to bump right into them and then they would make cracks. The girls giggled and turned their heads away. Several of the girls, whom I knew, waved to me. (23-24)

It is obvious that Meursault here compares his estranged and alienated condition with that of the people he sees on the street through his windows. He seems more envious of them that they are with their friends, relatives and partners, but Meursault has been cast off alone in a narrow room. He has nowhere to go because he has nobody to go with.

Even in the question of love and marriage with Marie, he responds in a perplexing and mysterious way. In another words, he seems indifferent towards her. As an animal, he advances whenever he meets her but regarding the feeling of love and marriage, he is quite indifferent. About their relation, he says:

Marie came by to see me and asked me if I wanted to marry her. I said it didn't make any difference to me and that we could if she wanted to. Then she wanted to know if I loved her. I answered the same way I had the last time, that it didn't mean anything but that I probably didn't love her. "So why marry me, then?" she said. I explained to her that it didn't really matter and that if she wanted to, we could get married. Besides, she was the one who was doing the asking and all I was saying was yes. Then she pointed out that marriage was a serious thing. I said, "No". (41-42)

This shows that Meursault is quite indifferent towards other. He does not have sense of responsibility, inspirations, liking, and hatred and so on at this stage. He does not oppose other's proposals. He just accepts without caring about the future not for his own benefit but for others. Here whatever Marie proposals he goes on accepting to please her. In the same manner he replies to her from the prison too, "She shouted again, 'You'll get out and we'll get married!' I answered, 'You think so?' but it was mainly just to say something" (75). In the same way, Meursault does not show any interest even for his job promotion. About the job promotion, he says:

Just then, my employer sent for me. [...] He wanted to discuss he had in view, [...] He was to open a branch in Paris [...] and he wanted to know if I'd like a post there. I said yes but that really it was all the same to me. He then asked in a



"change of life", as he called it, didn't appeal to me, and I answered that are never changed one's real life; anyhow, one life was as good as another and that I wasn't dissatisfied with mine here at all. (41)

Right after the murder of the Arab, Meursault has been arrested and presented to the court. He was asked by the examining magistrate if he had an attorney. But he says, "I admitted I hadn't and inquired whether it was really necessary to have one." Why do you ask?" he said. I said I thought my case was pretty simple" (63). For Meursault even a murder case is pretty simple! He does not have any motives of profit and loss. He just acts according to his free will which is animalistic in nature. Meursault sees court hearings and verdicts as meaningless and corrupt. In another words, he shows no interest on this matter. About the questions of the court he says:

'Do you know what this is?' in a completely and cracked voice the examining magistrate shouted showing a silver crucifix. 'Yes of course', I said. Speaking very quickly and passionately, he told me that he believed in God, that it was his conviction that no man was so guilty that God would not forgive him, but in order for that to happen a man must repent and so doing become like a child whose heart is open and ready to embrace all. [...] At the same time I knew that was ridiculous because, after all, I was the criminal. (68)

Meursault is not only indifferent to other persons but also to himself. He does not worry about his own life. After the murder of the Arab boy, he was imprisoned but in the prison too, he was not serious about his future life. Moreover, the court decides to kill him and at that time also the judges of the court ask many questions about his life but he does not show any interest even to live. For him to die at the age of twenty and at the age of seventy is same. About the decision of his death penalty, he says:

It does not much matter whether you die at thirty or at seventy, since in either case other men and women will naturally go on living and for thousands of years. In fact, nothing could be clearer. Whether it was now or twenty years from now, I would still be the one dying. At that point, what would disturb my train of thought was the terrifying leap I would feel my heart take at the idea of having twenty years when it would all come down to the same thing away.[...] Since we are all going to die, it's obvious that when and how doesn't matter. (114)

Before people attending the law court, Meursault finds himself as a new comer on a vehicle. He thinks that idea as funny that the attendants were not looking serious but funny. The people in the court were waving and exchanging greetings and talking as members of the same club or a family. But they were not supporting Meursault rather they intended to prove his culprit and a real criminal. Moreover, he had been asked different unrelated and unnecessary questions about his childhood, love affairs, marriage mother's death and his escape from his mother. Over a matter of crime or murder, Meursault explains:

I sat down with the policeman standing on either side of me. It was then that I noticed a row of faces in front of me. They were all looking at me. I realized that they were the jury. [...] I had just one impression. I was sitting across from a row of seats on a street car and all these anonymous passengers were looking over the new arrival to see if they could find something funny about him. I knew it was a silly idea since it wasn't anything funny they were after but a crime. There isn't much difference though-in any case that was the idea that came to me. (83)

For Meursault and for Camus, the state institutions stand as offensive and tortuous. There is no sympathy and consolation for prisoners, or the culprits, or the criminals. Camus makes Meursault feel like a new passenger on a public vehicle where everyone looks at him and tries to annoy and ridicule him as if there is something the matter with him. Meursault says that he had nothing funny or to be annoyed, rather he was a culprit and the case was a serious crime. He says, " There isn't much difference between a new passenger on a public vehicle and myself in the court it was the idea that came to me" (83). Here, Meursault quotes the prosecutor's saying in his own words:

He concluded by saying that his duty was a painful one but that he would carry it out resolutely. He stated that I had no place in a society whose most fundamental rules I ignored and I could not appeal to the same human heart whose elementary response I knew nothing of. "I ask you for this man's head", he said, "and I do so with a heart ease. [...]". (102)

This was the verdict given by the court over the case of Meursault. There is no chance for reformation and improvement. Only they can carry out is death penalty. It means even the court is indifferent towards Meursault. But on the other hand, with reference to the sentence of his execution, he takes it very lightly and doesn't give much importance. He accepts his sentence very properly and doesn't regret. His feeling of indifference is reflected in these lines; "What would it matter if he were accused of murder and then executed because he didn't cry at his mother's funeral?" (121).

In this way, all the characters of the novel are indifferent to each other. Nobody shows any kind of sympathy to anybody. In fact, this type of indifference to each other is nothing but the animalistic nature because even the animals are indifferent to each other.

## **Irrational Activities and the Instinctual Life**

The irrational activities refer to the activities which are not guided by reason or logic but by passion, emotion and instincts. The activities of violence, fear, greed and even the sex are the examples of the irrational activities.

Violence is unlawful physical force which results in irrational level. In the novel *The Stranger*, the activities of violence have played major roles. The major character Meursault kills an Arab boy without any significant reason. It seems that while killing the Arab boy, he is not guided by reason but by irrational thought or passion. In fact, his murder of the Arab is not his intention and motive but it is his just free will. Naturalists believe that human beings do activities according to their free will. Charles Darwin, the pioneer of the modern science says that apes are the ancestors of the human beings. Having been the off-spring of the animals root, human beings have also the animalistic instincts and the activities of the instincts are irrational. While killing the Arab, Meursault says:

My whole being tensed and I squeezed my hand around the revolver. The trigger gave; I felt the smooth underside of the butt; and thee, in that noise, sharp and deafening at the same time, is where it all started. I shook off the sweat and sun. I knew that I had shattered the harmony of the day, the exceptional silence of a beach where I'd been happy. Then I fired four more times at the motionless body where the bullets lodged without leaving a trace. (59)

Here, it is clear that Meursault is totally guided by the irrational thought of violence because he even fires the dead bodies for four times!

After the murder of the Arab boy, Meursault is imprisoned and in the prison too, he thinks and reads only criminal or violent activities. He himself says that he read a violent story thousand times. The story is worth mentioning here.

A man had left a Czech village to seek his fortune. Twenty-five years later and now rich, he had returned with a wife and a child. His mother was running a hotel with his sister in the village where he'd been born. In order to surprise them, he had left his wife and child at another hotel and gone to see his mother, who didn't recognize him when he walked. As a joke he'd had the idea of taking a room. He had shown off his money. During the night his mother and his sister had beaten him to death with a hammer in order to rob him and had thrown his body in the river. (79-80)

The story also proves that human beings are guided by the animalistic instincts. Here, the mother kills her own son for money. Knowingly or unknowingly, that is different thing but the important thing is that she should not have done that - as a 'human'.

The court of Meursault also decides to kill him. In fact, this type of law or thought to kill someone itself is the product of the irrational thought. Here, Meursault quotes the prosecutor's saying in his own words:

Here the prosecutor wiped his face, which was glistening with sweat. He concluded by saying that his duty was a painful one but that he would carry it out resolutely. He stated that I had no place in the society whose most fundamental rules I ignored and that I could not appeal to the same human her whose elementary response I knew nothing of. "I ask you for this man's head," he said, "and I do so with a heart at ease. For if in the course what has been a long career I have had occasion to call for the death penalty, never as easier, lighter, clearer by the certain knowledge of sacred imperative and by the horror I feel when I look into a man's face and all I see is a monster." (102)

The activities and the thoughts of Raymond are also violent and irrational. He loves a girl only for the physical love. Moreover, after the relationship, he makes a plan to kill her. This type of thought itself is very much irrational and instinctual. About their relationship of Raymond to the girl, Meursault says:

He wanted to punish her. First he'd thought of taking her to a hotel and calling the vice squad cause a scandal and have her listed as a common prostitute. After that he'd looked up some of his underworld friends. But they didn't come up with anything. As Raymond pointed out to me, a lot of good it does being in the underworld. (31)

In *The Stranger*, the activities of 'sex' have dominated the characters. The characters become totally blind in the matter of sex. It seems that their activities are not better than the activities of the animals. Meursault, the main character of the novel gets involved in sexual activities just after his mother's death. About such activities to Marie, he says, "I brushed against her breasts [...] she turned towards me" (19-20). Marie also seems to be guided by the same instincts. About her activities Meursault says, "She had her leg pressed against mine. I was fondling her breasts"(20). For Meursault, sexual activities are more important than his own life! After the murder of the Arab boy, he is sent to a prison. But at the prison also, he is not worried about his life but sex. There, he says, " I was tormented by my desire for a woman" (77).

Raymond is another character who also spends much of his time thinking on sex and other criminal activities. He lives in a dirty room, puts "photos of naked women on the walls" (28). He loves a girl only for physical sex. He does not have any respect towards her. His sexual desire is so strong that he makes a plan to kill the girl but at that time also he desires to have sex with her. Regarding this matter, Meursault says, "He still had sexual desire to her but he wanted to punish her" (31). The unusual relationship of Salamano also can be taken as irrational activity.

Salamano has been living with a dog for many years. About their relationship, Camus says, "They look as if they belong to the same species" (27).

Thus, all the characters of the novel seem to be guided by sex, violence, desire, jealous and greed. Having guided by such instincts, they perform 'irrational' activities. The disgust, threatening behavior, anger, the crime of killing, lust, the comparison with the animals, prove the characters' animalistic nature. The irrational behaviors performed by the characters in the novel are the product of negative instincts.

### **Choice and Freedom**

Albert Camus' characters prefer freedom and choices as most of the naturalists' and other freedom fighters' do. Almost all in his writings, Camus presents his heroes as freedom fighters. Undoubtedly his characters are more inclined towards absurdity. His concept of choice and freedom is concerned more with inner reality of the hero. His hero is more subjective, thoughtful and alienated. Whatever his inner heart suggests, his character just does it. In this context, Soren Kierkegaard writes, "The choice itself is decisive for the content of personality, through the choice the personality immerses itself in the thing chosen and when it doesn't choose it wither way in consumption" (829). Kierkegaard is of the opinion that man cannot create but choose himself.

Meursault in *The Stranger* from the very beginning to the end is apparently seen as indulging in choice. Like an animal, he wants no bondage, barriers and restrictions for the will. Regarding the choice, a phenomenologist, Jean Paul Sartre says, "What we choose is always better; and nothing can be better for us unless it is better for all" (835). Meursault chooses death penalty and incessant struggle all over his life than false refinement, suppression, oppression, torture and bad faith. He declares:

I started yelling at the top of my lungs and I insulted him and told him not to waste his prayers on me. I grabbed him by the collar of his cassock. I was pouring out on him everything that was in my heart, cries of anger and cries of joy. [...] He wasn't even sure he was alive because he was living like a dead man. [...] But I was sure about me, about everything, surer than he could ever be, sure of my life and sure of the death I had waiting for me. (120)

Meursault says no to false sentimentality. He absolutely refuses to lie about his emotions even though that stand will cost him his life. He knows he's convicted of the Arab's murder because he did not mourn for his mother. Yet he doesn't pander to this societal expectation. Drajem says that Meursault says yes to life-to his life of sun, sea, sex, food, drink and crisp dry towels. He is an aesthete of everyday life. He neither demands nor expects anything beyond that. Even prison is not a terrible punishment for Meursault. He learns to do without the experiences he loves even without cigarettes. However, he suffers a great deal contemplating the executioner's blade. Linda Drajem describes Meursault's confrontation with the chaplain in these words:

Just as he refused the temptation for legal redemption during his trial, he refuses the metaphysical redemption offered by the chaplain. He is faithful to his beliefs, limited though they are he has struggled in prison with the concept of death.

Death negates all those beautiful experiences he so enjoys. [...] The only thing that could make his death happy is to maintain his stance as a rebel, a social outcast subject to the 'howls of execration' by a mob of spectators. (3)

Meursault looks totally free of outside factors that he doesn't like to be obstructed by those factors. What is good and what is bad, what is moral and what is immoral, what is religious and irrational and what is non-religious and irrational he knows nothing about. He just feels and



smokes cigarettes and offers them to the caretaker before his mother's dead body. Later on, in the court, he is asked about this act. He as well as the caretaker gave actual answer to the court that he did not know about the rule that a son should not smoke before his parents' dead bodies. Whatever he feels true, he just goes on doing. Throughout the novel nobody is pressing him to do anything except in the court. Even the court fails to give good judgment.

On the every next day to his mother's funeral, he goes towards sea-shore and enjoys and embraces with his mistress, Marie Cardona, sees a sensual film, *Fernandel* on request of her. He writes a letter to his friend, Raymond's sweetheart on his request for attracting her and for avenging. He admits, "I wrote the letter. I did it just as it came to me, but I tried my best to please Raymond because I didn't have any reason not to please him" (32). Meursault's murder of the Arab is not his intention and motive, it just his free-will. He went to the sea-shore alone for the third time from the beach house others unnoticed. He writes about his arrival to the beach house with his friends and his in no time departure in these words:

I went with him as far as the bungalow and as he climbed the wooden steps, I just stood there at the bottom, my head ringing from the sun, unable to face the effort it would take to climb the wooden staircase and face the women again. [...] To stay or to go, it amounted to the same thing. A minute later I turned back toward the beach and started walking. (57)

The trouble of climbing the wooden staircase and facing the women's complaints about Raymond's hurt at the sea-shore he preferred to go towards the sea-shore again without consulting anybody, but it just asking within himself. As Sisyphus in the myth raised stone challenging

the god for the sake of his freewill and eternal happiness Meursault too, is ready to accept the fertile and irrelevant punishment instead of the presence of the false god, false concept of god as the priest and the court authority believe. He pours his hatred against the machinery sort of justice, false refinement, corruption, and suppression through the court chaplain in these words:

I don't have anything to say to him; I don't feel like talking, and I'll be seeing him soon enough as it is. All I care about right now is escaping the machinery of justice, seeing if there's any way out of inevitable. They've put me in a different cell, prison. [...], I see the sky and that's all I see. I spend my days watching how the dwindling of colour turns day into night. Lying here, I put my hands behind my head and wait. I can't count the times I've wondered if there have ever been any instances of condemned men escaping the relentless machinery, disappearing before the execution or breaking through the cordon of police. Then I blame myself every time for not having paid enough attention to accounts of executions. A man should always take an interest in those things. (108)

We must imagine Meursault at the same stand as Sisyphus is. Meursault like Sisyphus, dares to revolt against the so-called providence because he properly knows the helplessness of his condition. He acknowledges his guilt from the beginning but that feeling acts as a form of stimulant to revolt against the absurdity. He perpetually strives to justify the authentic individuality and freedom of mankind. He is reduced to the state of spiritual impotence, but he persists in seeking to grasp the truth at any cost. Finally, he comes to know that there is no meaning in the universe. He is more towards rebellious and realistic freedom to affirm his being. He is just a victim of cruel and unsystematic circumstances. His pitiable but adventurous quest for existence manifests his greatness. No longer believing in heaven and hell he has ceased to search for

rational justification because that is only an illusion. *The Stranger* affirms no principle of moral or spiritual transcendence; rather it presents the unjustified and unrelieved sufferings of modern men. Like Sisyphus, he also teaches us same fidelity that negates gods and accepts death penalty. About his death penalty, he says:

"Well, so I am going to die," Sooner than other people will, obviously. But everybody knows life isn't worth living. Deep down I knew perfectly well that It doesn't matter whether you die at thirty or at seventy [...] - and for thousands of years. In fact, nothing could be clearer. Whether it was now or twenty years from now, I would still be the one dying. [...] Since we're all gong to die, it's obvious that when and how doesn't matter. (114)

Meursault opposes the whole creation like Sisyphus calling it ridiculous and irrational. He loves the naturalness of animals than absurdity, perversion, treachery and false refinement of humanity. This is commitment towards choice and freedom.

### **The Sun as Nature Symbol**

Symbol is an image or object referring to something else. Symbols play vital role in the literary texts to give clear meaning of any other images. In *The Stranger*, the sun and its heat trouble the characters and are developed as a symbol in the novel. When Meursault, the protagonist of the novel receives the news of his mother's death and leaves for his home, he is troubled by the sun. He says, "I caught the two o'clock bus. It was very hot. I ate at the restaurant, at Celeste's as usual" (3). Here, Meursault talks about the outside environment which is very hot. He is rendered by the tragic thinking of his mother's death and finds the environment forcing to this tragic mood.

This same sun and hot environment is represented as the cause of the execution of the hero when he says with the magistrate that he killed the Arab because of the sun. On the day of his mother's funeral too, he is greatly tormented by the heat of the sun. On that day he is troubled by the hot sun more than by the funeral of his mother, and describes his bodily experience in a great detail. He says, "The sky was already filled with light. The sun was burning to bear down on the earth and it was getting hotter by the minute. I don't know why he waited so long before getting under way. I was hot in my dark clothes" (15). Meursault describes the effects of the sun up on him. He is hot in his dark clothes. He becomes greatly tormented by the sun and its heat on the day of his mother's funeral. He again talks about the sun "All around me there was still the same glowing countryside flooded with sunlight. The glare from the sky was unbearable. At one point, we went over a section of the road that had just been repaved. The star had burst open in the sun" (16). He is found careless about his mother's death throughout the novel and, he talks about the sun and its heat.

The effect of the sun is pervasive throughout the novel especially in the first part of the novel. It is fully devoted to describe the sun's effect on Meursault and his works. In the same chapter, he has killed the Arab. Not only the event of killing the Arab but also the preceding events are described with the help of the imaginary of the sun. Meursault says:

The sun glinted off Meursault's gun as he handed it to me. But we just stood there motionless, as if everything had closed in around us. We stared at each other without blinking and everything came to a stop there between the sea, the sand and the sun and the double silence of the flute and the water. (56)

Meursault took the gun from Raymond and shot the Arab boy. His taking the gun from Raymond and shooting is also fully inspired by the hotness of the day. He has described the effect of sun and the hot beach upon himself and Raymond. Even the act of killing the Arab boy is inspired by the sun. The day was hot when he shot the Arab boy. Even in court he says he killed the Arab boy because of the sun. He says:

The sun was the same as it had been the day I'd buried Maman, and like then my forehead especially was hurting me, all the veins in it throbbing under the skin. It was this burning, which I could not stand anymore, that made me move forward. I knew that it was stupid that I would not get the sun off me by stepping forward. But I took a step, one step forward. And this time, without getting up, the Arab drew his knife and held it up to me in the sun. The light shoot off the steel and it was like a long flashing blade cutting at my forehead. (58-59)

Meursault describes the environment of the day of killing the Arab boy. He killed the Arab because of the sun. The sun and its heat inspired him to kill the Arab. And the same act of killing the Arab boy brought Meursault's execution.

The sun represents nature throughout the novel. In the beginning of the novel, Meursault is tormented by the sun. On the day of his Maman's funeral, he is greatly tormented by the heat of the sun. He talks about the sun's bad impact on him. Whenever he is in tragic mood, he talks about sun, its glare and heat obstructing for his routinely deeds. And ultimately the sun becomes the cause of his death. Whenever Meursault is in crisis and is in instinctual mood, the sun becomes the affecting cause of these acts. The sun becomes the cause of Meursault's tragedies:

I was walking slowly towards the rock and I would feel my forehead swelling under the sun. All that heat was pressing down on me and making it hard for me to go on and every time I felt a blast of its hot breath strike my face, I greeted my teeth, clenched my fists in my trouser pockets and strained every nerve in order to overcome the sun and the thick drunkenness it was spilling over me. (57)

The sun badly troubles Meursault. He feels his forehead swelling in the sun. The sun has obstructed his daily works. It attacks Meursault's sensibility as he walks back towards his chosen route. His body tenses as the sun is symbolized as a knife, foreshadowing the knife which will set him off. He is dazed and feels drunk because his senses have been overwhelmed. It is Meursault's existential struggle against the world and other in it which moves him nearer to the encounter which will bring him meaning. He has the power to kill or not to. He is influenced by no outside influence other than the beating sun and drunkenness of his senses. He becomes totally irrational in the presence of the sun.

At his trial, Meursault says that he never intended to kill the Arab. When the judge asks him to state the motive for that act, he blurts out it was because of the sun. He asserts that he killed the Arab because of the sun, which makes clear that he kills the Arab not being negative towards him. As we go back to the murder scene, walking back to the bungalow after their first encounter with the Arabs in which Raymond is wounded, Meursault stood in the intense heat, his head ringing from the sun, "to stay or to go, it amounted to the same thing. A minute later, I turned back toward the beach and started walking" (57). Camus's depiction of Meursault takes on a hallucinatory quality at this point, as though

he were a sleep walker as if his body were being moved along by a power entirely outside his mind on his will. He is totally tormented by the heat of the sun and is shown as having lost his control whether to go or to stay.

This sun and heat in this novel therefore represents the hero's stimulating force for the animalistic behavior. Meursault's tragic, melancholic, alienated and indifferent mental state are picturized by the use of the sun as the symbol to show his irrational mental state, representing the animalistic nature caused by the innate instincts.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Conclusion: Innate Instincts**

Albert Camus's *The Stranger* deals with the innate instincts of the human being. Most of the characters in the novel are characterized as animals through the activities they performed. The novel exposes the immorality of the characters in detail to depict their irrational behaviors. The naturalistic novels focus on the primitive brute, unfeeling attitude and instincts. Having guided by the primitive brutality and instincts, the characters of the novel behave in irrational and immoral manner.

The novel takes its title from the behavior of its protagonist, Meursault, the whole novel roams around his behavior and activities. The activities and the behavior of Meursault represent the real nature of any human being. In this sense, the protagonist of the novel is a 'type' of the general human being. Through out the novel, Meursault shows strange, irrational and immoral activities. He is far from the man made social norms, rules and values. He does not regard even the minor system of the society. He is quite indifferent towards his mother's death. Just after the death of his mother, he goes with a girl, Marrie to swim and also involves in sexual activities. Like an animal, he forgets about the death of his mother and enjoys in his own instinctual life.

Raymond lives in a dirty room. He puts the photos of naked women on walls. He loves a girl only for sex. Moreover, when he knows that she has some affair with other men, he makes a plan to kill her. This types of dirty living, criminal thinking and jealous nature also nothing but the effect of innate or primitive nature of the human being.

According to Charles Darwin, the apes are the ancestors of the human beings. For him, anger, violence, sex, desire, flight, fear and disgust etc are innate in the human beings which are not intellectual motives. In the same way, naturalism also believes that human beings are the animals, with animal thoughts and instincts. In the novel, *The Stranger* Salamano has been compared with a dog. About the relationship to Salamano and the dog, Camus says, "They look as if they belong to the same species" (27). In fact, he shows unusual relationship to the dog. He does not live with his other family members but only with the dog!

In the climax of the novel, Meursault kills an Arab boy without any cause. When he is asked about the reason of killing the Arab boy, he says that he killed because of the 'sun'. Here, the sun can be taken as a symbol of nature. It means Meursault killed the Arab boy because of his



'killing' nature which is innate. After the murder of the Arab boy, Meursault is imprisoned and in the prison too, he behaves like an animal in a zoo. He does not think about his future life but thinks only about criminal and sexual activities. He reads a book thousand times in which a mother kills her own son for money. At the end of the novel, judges decide to kill Meursault. In fact, in the name of social 'order' to give someone death penalty is also the function of animalistic instinct.

'Indifference' is another term related to the animalistic nature. All the characters of the novel are indifferent to each other. Meursault is indifferent to his mother; his boss is indifferent towards his leave. Marie is indifferent towards Meursault's suffering. She knows the death of Meursault's mother but she neither shows any sympathy nor expresses condolence but just wants to sleep with him. Raymond is indifferent towards his girl friend. He never tries to understand the feeling of the girl but like an animal, whenever he fulfills his sexual desire he leaves her. Sometimes he even beats her! In the same way, Salamano is indifferent towards his other family members. He lives only with a dog.

In the case of Meursault, he is not only indifferent to the worldly happening things, but also to himself too. After the murder of the Arab boy, he is put in a prison and judges ask him many questions regarding his history, desire to live but he seems quite indifferent. About his own death penalty, he says, "It does not matter me" (114). This type of indifference is also nothing but the impact of innate instincts. The decision of the judges also seems indifferent to the life of Meursault. In fact, to live until one dies in a natural death; is the natural right of every human being. But, it does not seem here because even the judges of the court are guided by the instincts.

To sum up, all the characters of the novel seem to be guided by sex, violence, desire, jealous and greed. Having guided by such instincts, they perform the irrational and immoral activities. The disgust, threatening behavior, anger, the crime of killing, lust, the comparison with the

animals, prove the characters' animalistic nature. The behaviors which are performed by the characters in the novel are the product of innate instincts.

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