

ABSURDISM IN COMMUNICATION BASED ON ALBERT CAMUS



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PLAGIARISM

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.



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ABSTRACT

Albert Camus, one of the pioneers of existentialism and absurdism, identified the search for meaning in a meaningless universe as "absurd" by defining the limits of absurdism in his work *The Myth of Sisyphus*. According to him, a person knows that he will die while trying to add value to his life. This contradiction brings out the "absurd". Because death is a tragic end for Man.

Another absurd work of Albert Camus, *The Stranger* is dominated by an incongruous sensibility. This novel of Camus, who argues that the world is absurd and meaningless, is considered one of the most important works of philosophy of the 20th century. The meaninglessness of life, alienation from the environment and oneself, and indifference are at the forefront in the novel.

Albert Camus, who has very influential works all over the world, knew today's people very well and expressed the problems of alienation and lack of communication in societies in a foresight way in 1942. In *The Stranger*, studies on absurd philosophy were carried out at the level of master's degree and doctorate, by considering other works of Camus. Some of these studies have dealt with Camus' philosophy of "absurd" by comparing existentialism, while others have touched on the concept of absurd in the context of the works. In my thesis titled "Absurdism in Communication Based on Albert Camus", I focused on the alienation caused by absurdism by taking Albert Camus's novel *The Stranger*, which tells the story of absurdism, and examined the absurd communication and alienation of today's people by using In-depth Interview method, based on reasons such as socioeconomic, cultural and digitalization.

Key Words: *Digitalization, Albert Camus, The Stranger, Absurd sama felsefesi*

ÖZET

Varoluşçuluk ve absürdizm akımının öncülerinden biri olan Albert Camus, Sisifos Söyleni adlı eseriyle absürdizmin sınırlarını belirleyerek anlamdan yoksun bir evrende, anlam arayışında olmayı “saçma” olarak tanımlamıştır. Ona göre insan; bir yandan hayatına değer katmaya çalışırken diğer yandan öleceğini bilir. Bu çelişki “absürt”ü ortaya çıkarır. Çünkü ölüm, insan için trajik bir sonudur.

Albert Camus’nün bir diğer absürt eseri, Yabancı adlı romanında uyumsuz bir duyarlılık hakimdir. Dünyanın saçma ve anlamsız olduğunu savunan Camus’nün bu romanı, 20. yüzyılın en önemli felsefe yapıtlarından biri olarak kabul edilir. Romanda yaşamın anlamsızlığı, çevreye ve kendine yabancılaşma ve aldırmaçlık ön plandadır.

Tüm dünyada çok ses getiren yapıtlara sahip olan Albert Camus, günümüz insanını çok iyi tanımış ve toplumlarda hali hazırda sürmekte olan yabancılaşma ve iletişimsizlik problemlerini 1942 yılında öngörülü bir şekilde dile getirmiştir. Yabancı adlı eserde absürt felsefe üzerine, Camus’nün diğer eserleri de ele alınarak yüksek lisans ve doktora düzeyinde çalışmalar yapılmıştır. Bu çalışmaların bazıları Camus’nün “saçma” felsefesi ile varoluşçuluğu karşılaştırarak ele almış, bazıları ise eserler bağlamında saçma kavramına değinmişlerdir.

“*Albert Camus Üzerinden İletişimde Absürdizm*” başlıklı tez çalışmamda, Albert Camus’nün absürdizmi hikayeleştirerek anlattığı Yabancı adlı romanı ele alarak, absürtizmin doğurduğu yabancılaşma üzerinde durulmuş, sosyoekonomik, kültürel ve dijitalleşme gibi nedenler baz alınarak günümüz insanın kurduğu absürt iletişim ve yabancılaşma Derinlemesine Mülakat yöntemi kullanılarak incelenmiştir.

Key Words: *Absurdizm, dijitalleşme, Albert Camus, Yabancı, saçma felsefesi, absürt iletişim*

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INTRODUCTION

Absurdism, which is related to existentialism but differs from existentialism at certain points; draws attention to the fact that the universe is devoid of meaning and to the human in the absurd cycle. In this study, it is discussed how the repetitive behaviors, absurd thinking style and "incompatible" elements in bilateral relations of Meursault, the main character in Albert Camus's acclaimed novel *The Stranger*, are integrated into our lives, especially with the acceleration of digitalization. In addition, empathy, which is the main subject of Bauman's sociology, was especially emphasized, and the emotions and actions of people in their daily lives such as fear, anxiety, and unresponsiveness were examined from an absurd point of view.

In the first part of the study, existentialism as a philosophical school, the points where existential philosophy intersects and diverges with absurdism, was studied from the perspective of the existential philosophers of the period; J.P. Sartre, Kierkegaard, Heidegger and the advocate of absurdism, Albert Camus.

In the second part, Camus' philosophy was tried to be explained by supporting it with absurdism, his cult work *The Myth of Sisyphus* and the *Stranger* novel, and the incompatible character of the novel, Meursault's cycle and relations were discussed by making references to the work.

In the third part of the study, the absurdism in communication is emphasized, the alienation and lack of empathy caused by digitalization, which has gained momentum in recent times, has been explained and the "feeling of absurdity" that has emerged in today's world has been tried to be explained.

In the fourth chapter, the reflections of the absurd communication that we all face but most of us do not realize in our daily lives, especially in our school, work and private lives, are explained, and the concept of social alienation is supported by the analyzes of Lefebvre and Eric Fromm.

In the last part of the study, "In-depth Interview Method" was used as a research method, and Camus's novel *The Stranger* was read to four people, two women and two men, from different professions and age groups. The findings and conclusion section were prepared by interviewing the people who participated in the interview on the meaning of the main character of the novel, Meursault, and on the absurd examples they encountered in their daily lives.

1.1 The Purpose of the Study

In my thesis on “Absurdism in Communication Through Albert Camus”, I will deal with the absurd communication, which is perhaps the problem of our age, which many of us are not aware of or because we normalize it, within the framework of Albert Camus' *The Stranger* and *The Myth of Sisyphus*. Starting from Camus, I will explain the absurd communication created by digitalization in the context of interpersonal relations in daily life.

While I was preparing this study, I did not come across that “Absurd Communication in the Digital World” was considered as a concept in the literature reviews I made, and I think that I will contribute to the literature by conceptualizing it. I will try to define the concept of Absurd Communication in the Digital World within the framework of the *Stranger* and the *Myth of Sisyphus*, through the Alienation explained by Camus

differently from Marx, the absurd philosophy rooted in Søren Kierkegaard, and the daily life theory of Agnes Heller and Gofmann.

In my study, in which I used the in-depth interview method as a method, one-to-one interviews were conducted with 4 people, 2 women and 2 men, who read Albert Camus' novel *The Stranger*, in order to understand people's perspectives on absurd communication, and the findings were analyzed and the result was tried to be reached.

1.2.Studies on Albert Camus

There is no study on Albert Camus and communication in the literature, but Camus has been discussed around existentialism, the philosophy of rebellion and the philosophy of incongruity.

Looking at the studies on Albert Camus:

Gürkan Bektaş's work "*Albert Camus and Existentialism*" deals with the relationship between Albert Camus and existentialism. In the study, the historical development of existentialism, existential philosophers, Camus' philosophy, absurd concepts and the philosophy of rebellion are emphasized.

In Jale Aktaş Türkmen's study titled "*The Ethics of Revolt in Albert Camus and Nurettin Topçu*", the philosophy of rebellion was emphasized by stating that Albert Camus and Nurettin Topçu had similar characteristics in terms of the subjects they dealt with in their works and the problems they discussed. In the study, consisting of three parts, the philosophy of rebellion that emerged with this philosophy was discussed by examining the absurd philosophy of Albert Camus, the theoretical process from Nurettin Topçu's philosophy of movement to the concept of rebellion was examined, and the similar and different aspects of the two thinkers were stressed out.

In Öznur Özdemir's study on "*The Alienation Problem in Albert Camus' Philosophy of Revolt*", the place and importance of the philosophy of alienation and rebellion in human life was tried to be explained. Although the main subject of the thesis is the philosophy of alienation and nonsense, it is also superficially mentioned that it is necessary to rebel to get rid of nonsense.

In Emre Tuncel's study titled "*The Concept of Hopelessness in Soren Kierkegaard and Albert Camus*", the concept of hopelessness, which is one of the basic concepts of existentialism, was studied in the philosophy of Kierkegaard and Camus.

In Ferhat Gülsün's work titled "*Incompatibility and Suicide in the Philosophy of Albert Camus*", the problem of incompatibility and suicide in the philosophy of Albert Camus was examined and the historical development of suicide was discussed.

In Semanur Çomaklı's work titled "*The Problem of Alienation in the Thought of Albert Camus*", the sense of alienation between absurdity and rebellion is analyzed and interpreted under the umbrella of existentialism.

Camus' thoughts on man's search for meaning are expressed by Nezahat Durmuş in the study named "*Man and Man's Search for Meaning in Camus*". In the study, the novel, the Stranger was used, and Dr. Rieux, the main character in the novel, the Plague, was also emphasized.

In Yasemin Akış's study titled "*Comparison of the Nonsense in Albert Camus and J.P. Sartre*", two philosophers were compared and the importance they attached to the "absurd" was emphasized. In the first part of the study, inferences were made from the works called The Stranger and The Myth of Sisyphus, focusing on Camus's absurd philosophy.

In addition to the thesis studies mentioned above, İbrahim Biricik, Sedef Ege Karataş and Hande Bağcı dealt with Albert Camus' concept of "alienation" with their articles *The Problem of Identity and Alienation in Albert Camus' Novel "The Stranger"*, *Analysis of the Film Melancholy in the Context of Albert Camus' The Harmful and Its Relationship with Philosophy* and *Alienation in the Lonely Man and the Stranger Novel* respectively. There has been no study on Albert Camus and absurd communication in the digital world in the literature, and unlike other studies in the literature, this study will explain the absurd communication caused by modernization and digitalization through everyday human relations.

2. EXISTENTIAL PHILOSOPHY'S VIEW ON ABSURDISM

While humankind, who started to become mechanized with the Industrial Revolution, could not keep up with this situation, yet, they suffered a psychological breakdown with the First and Second World Wars, and began to question their existence by feeling alone and in fear. While it was thought that prosperity would be achieved with modernization and developing technology, it was seen that this new, modern world was not as imagined, and alienation from the world they lived in began. “In this sense, existential philosophy emerged at a time when the individual was under threat, became a meaningless being, became alienated as a result of not being able to adapt to society, and wanted to save himself and reach his essence.” (Beyazyüz, 2020:300)

Existentialism derives from the French word “L'existence”, and according to Sartre, philosophers working on existentialism interpret existentialism differently; Weil described existentialism as depression, but for Mounier it was merely hopelessness. (Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, 1946)

The individual, who cannot adapt to society with modernization, reaches “absurd” while questioning their existence. From the point of view of existential philosophy, the individual who lives under the pressure of their instincts realizes that the world is a place of confusion, which leads them to their own meaninglessness. This intersection point can be seen as the intersection point of existentialism and philosophy of the absurd. Because perspective and perception style are on the same line (Akarsu, 1994:5). A person in the absurd cycle cannot find a way out against the world and their existence in the universe, and the individual who cannot find a way out cannot get rid of the absurd. However, on

the contrary, existentialism gives the individual a chance to escape, and the way to get rid of alienation and absurdity is either suicide or rebellion.

According to Camus, suicide is another absurd event, arising from the acceptance of the absurd. Instead of committing suicide, Camus argues that living in harmony with the absurd - but hoping one day to get rid of it - is a philosophy of rebellion, and that this way, it is possible to get rid of the absurd. (Camus, Sisifos Söyleni, 1997)

For example, in the Myth of Sisyphus, in which Camus describes Sisyphus as an "absurd" figure: *"Sisyphus was condemned by the gods to constantly lift a rock up to the top of a mountain. Sisyphus carries the rock to the top, but each time the rock falls back down under its own weight. The gods thought that there was no more terrible act than this useless and hopeless punishment."* (Camus, Sisifos Söyleni, 2010) Sisyphus actually emphasizes the meaningless effort of today's man in his ordinary, monotonous life. A person trapped in the cycle of life realizes the meaninglessness of the world and the reality of death. Sisyphus is also aware of this, but Camus does not remind the reader of suicide. His basic statement is that the real rebellion against the disharmony of existence is not suicide but continuing to live (O'Brien, 1984).

2.1. Existentialism as a Philosophical School

Existentialism can be called a theory about the "authentic" and "non-authentic" modernist movements that emerged in the first half of the 20th century and will be summarized with "deepening models" for the issues discussed in modern philosophy (Jameson, 1991:11). Despite this definition of Jameson, for Sartre: *"Existentialism is a doctrine that makes human life possible; it is a doctrine that affirms that every truth and action points to an*

environment, as well as to a human subjectivity.” (Sartre, 1966: 24) Existentialism can also be described as a revolt against the socio-cultural, psychological and traditional philosophical problems of the period.

Undoubtedly, there are two great masterpieces in the field of existentialism. The first of these is *Being and Time*, written in 1927 by Martin Heidegger, in which he tries to explain human being and humanity. According to Heidegger, a human being is just a body left to the world, tossed in the void. When the decision to come to the world is not left to the individual and there is the fact of "death" at the end of life, it is not possible to talk about the freedom of the individual. This “captivity” pushes the individual to seek meaning or, in other words, compels him to be free. Existentialism is the search for meaning of a person who wants to make today more free than yesterday, by emphasizing that existence, the meaning of existence, and that human life is an experience consisting of choices.

Another important work in the field of existentialism is *Being and Nothingness*, written by J.P. Sartre in 1943, seeking an answer to the question of “whether essence comes from existence or existence comes from essence.”

“Mankind exists first, then this or that. In short, human beings have to create their own essence with their own hands; they gradually determine their personality by throwing themselves on the world stage, by suffering, by fighting, and the definition is clear to the end; it cannot be said what they are until Man dies and humanity disappears” (Sartre, 1981, p. 322).

Sartre considers existence as a conscious managerial relationship between Man and the world. Just as it is not possible to talk about existence without consciousness, consciousness is needed to be able to talk about being and existence. *“So consciousness is intentional, it cannot exist on its own. This situation led Sartre to the concept of nothingness. In Sartre's ontology, it is precisely nothingness that distinguishes human existence from all other beings.”* (Barnes, 2020, p. 153). Being or nothingness, according to Sartre, are concepts that consist of Man's relationship with the world. It is not possible for a person to exist only for himself. Man is in communication with other people in the universe, and this necessary communication pushes him to exist for someone else. In addition, according to Sartre, the object has an essence and an existence (Sartre, 1999: 9; Magill, 1992: 11). Answering the question of whether existence comes from essence or essence comes from existence, that man does not have an innate essence, he continues as follows: *“In this case, human nature is nothing unless there is a God to comprehend and design. Man is not only as he understands himself, but also as he wants to be.”* (Sartre, 2019, p. 39).

Kafka, who has produced works bearing the effects of Marxism and Nihilism, emphasizes the existential problems of Man by working on an absurd theme, especially in his novel *The Metamorphosis*, the age's transformation of man, his questioning how he is seen by others, and his struggle to live with others. According to Kafka, absurd situations still continue to exist, even if they detach the experience from the ordinary. In an indefinable place, an indefinite time prevails. The real problem is that the person is infested, stuck rather than living or dead. (Bal: 377) Kafka, who draws attention to the concepts of despair, alienation, loneliness, freedom and absurdity frequently in his works, tries to

explain the existence of human in daily life, anxiety and freedom arising from their existence.

The “loneliness”, which existentialism considers as one of the main problems, appears in all three philosophers. In the 20th century, one feels alone, away from society. Loneliness also detaches the person from the state of "being in touch" by separating them from society. While lack of communication breeds loneliness, on the other hand, loneliness also breeds communication and the person finds himself in an endless cycle.

“Loneliness is a self-constructing process. Society is an effective element in the process of creating the existence of the individual. In this context, loneliness can be defined as the distance and communication gap between people. The individual defines loneliness and his relationship with others. Loneliness naturally entails not-me. In the variables between me and not-me, it is loneliness that affects and transforms the relationship between the two.” (Güner, 2019)

3. ABSURDISM AND ALBERT CAMUS

Born to a poor family in Algeria in 1913, Albert Camus lost his father in the Battle of the Marne in World War I. After the death of his father, he started to live with his mother, brother and sick uncle in one of the working-class neighborhoods of Algeria. After graduating from high school in 1923, he started his academic life at the University of Algeria, but had to take a break from his education due to tuberculosis. He returned to the academy in 1935 and graduated from the philosophy department. In the same years, Camus joined the French Communist Party, but was expelled from the party, accused of being a Trotskyist because he found himself distant from Stalinist communism (Albert Camu Hayatı, Edebi Kişiliği, Eserleri).

In his first work, *Between Two Worlds* (*L'Envers et L'endroit*), which was compiled from his essays and published in 1937, Camus describes the working-class neighborhoods of Algeria, his mother, uncle and grandmother.

During the World War II, he joined the French Resistance to organize against the Nazis (Albert Camus, 2022). While still being a part of this resistance, he published *Combat* magazine, which was related to the resistance. Camus, who also assumed the editorship of the magazine, left the magazine as he was disturbed by the commercialization concerns of the magazine. During the war, he met Jean Paul Satre, being unaware that he would later become his close friend.

He began to meet Satre and Beauvoir frequently at the Cafe de Flore in Paris. He began to lecture on existentialism in various parts of America and wrote his famous work *The Stranger* (*L'Étranger*) and *The Myth of Sisyphus* (*Le Mythe de Sisyphe*) in 1942. Camus, with the main character Mersault in his work *The Stranger*, emphasizes the feeling of

disharmony and the concept of alienation, which this feeling gradually replaces. In the *Myth of Sisyphus*, on the other hand, he often focuses on the concept of incongruity and suicide.

After his illness relapsed, he rested for a while, compiled his essays on social issues, and published *L'Homme révolté*. However, this work drew the reaction of the left wing in France, especially Sartre, and caused the discord between Camus and Sartre. Because although he was politically inclined towards leftist views, his opposition to communism did not gain him friends in the communist parties, but also distanced him from Sartre. After parting ways with Sartre, Camus wrote only plays for a while. After becoming the Nobel Prize winner in 1957, his fame spread all over the world and he became one of the most important writers of the 20th century.

When asked about the most absurd form of death, Camus answered "traffic accident" and, ironically, died on January 4, 1960, as a result of a traffic accident near Sens. After his death, *Happy Death (La Mort Heureuse)* in 1970 and *The First Man (Le Premier Homme)*, which was unfinished in 1995, were published.

Albert Camus, who is accepted as one of the pioneers of the existentialist movement by many philosophers, defined himself neither as an existentialist nor an absurdist, and did not include himself in any philosophical movement in this meaningless universe.

Camus argues that life is meaningless, human consciousness and existence and the world cannot gain meaning, and absurdism arises from the contradiction between consciousness and existence.

Camus states that Man will ask himself the reason for his existence at some point in his life, but cannot find an answer to this, because our existence on earth is a set of contradictions. Even though we know that the cycle called life consists of birth and death and that we will die one day, being alive is the starting point of nonsense. Our rational expectations in life do not exist and will not exist in this world. All of these have separated Man from the world and imprisoned him in an incompatible cycle.

Camus summarizes alienation as "dialogue fragmentation". It provides people's feelings, thoughts, grievances, sadness and troubles through communication and dialogue.

However, with the hesitation brought by modernism; nature is in distress because it shatters this dialogue against its things and their kind. (Karaca 2014:73)

According to Camus, where there is consciousness, there is Man, and in the world where there is Man, there is the absurd, in other words, the concept of "absurd". Since it is not possible to talk about a world in which there is no human, and accordingly consciousness, consciousness, and therefore man, must disappear in order to overcome the absurd. At this point, the person who faces existence also faces death.

So, is suicide the way out of the absurd cycle? To what extent is extinction a solution to absurdity?

Albert Camus, in his work *The Myth of Sisyphus*, in which he deals with the sense of absurdity, says that the only philosophical question that really matters is suicide.

Explaining the absurd on the roof that it is not possible for Man to consciously take part in the world and to live knowing the fact that life is finite, Camus continues as follows:

“To make a judgment about whether life is worth living for is to answer the fundamental question of philosophy. The rest comes next, whether the world is three-dimensional, whether there are nine or twelve categories of thought. These are games. First, it is necessary to answer this fundamental question of philosophy.” (Camus, *Sisifos Söyleni*, 2011)

According to Camus, despite our physical existence in the universe, there is only one reality that we will definitely encounter; and that is death. Meaning, the absurd is possible only in this world, cannot exist beyond this world, and absurd starts with people and ends with people.

Although there are similarities between the idea of nonsense and the concept of nonsense, they are two issues that need to be dealt with separately. The concept of the absurd must be based on the sense of absurd, and then the conceptual rise of the absurd begins. For example, in Camus' *The Stranger*, he draws attention to the absurd with the main character Meursault, while in *The Myth of Sisyphus*, he deals with the absurd intellectually and conceptually.

Camus defines the absurd/nonsense with four main stops, the first of which is modernism. The Industrial Revolution gave birth to modernism, and modernism gave birth to the mass-human. The most basic characteristics of the mass-human are miscommunication or the cessation of minimal communication and questioning. If the mass-human, after a while, ceases to be mechanized and begins to question life, he will come out of his sleep state and arrive at one of two results; recovery by suicide or rebellion. The second stop of

the absurd is the concept of time (life goes by and nothing can prevent it), which the individual is faced with, hurting with its cruelty. Living in the moment, instead of living in the moment for worldly goals and dreams, to live a life by adhering to the future and to become a slave of time at some point. Future expectations, working and living for the future really break the person and turn him into a machine that works for time.

Modernism and the concept of time now give rise to “alienation”, which leads to the emergence of absurd thought. Consciousness gets stuck in the face of the reality and limitation of the world. Although consciousness tries to explain the finitude of the world with its own consistency, it cannot find an answer. Because time will pass, human life will end and the meaninglessness of being alive despite this awareness will eat away at you. Camus states that being in this world with consciousness is one of the most important factors that leads to absurdity, and therefore alienation, with the following words: “If I were a tree among trees, a cat among animals, this life would have meaning, or rather this question would have no meaning because I would be a part of the world.” For Camus, it is impossible to find a place in this world with human consciousness; consciousness prevents one from being a part of the world because consciousness questions, consciousness seeks meaning. Therefore, this disharmony involves a constant opposition. Man's obligation to live on one side, and the reality of death on the other...

The last stop of the absurd is death, in other words, finitude. *“According to Camus, the main source and last stop of the sense of absurd is our thoughts about death”* (Eren, 2011, p.67). Man, working for his future and being a prisoner of time is also aware that

one day he will die. He lives even though he is aware that life is not eternal and will disappear from this world, and at this point, nonsense is born. Man becomes fully aware of the meaninglessness, the absurdity of life. However, if a person continues to hope despite everything and does not choose death in this meaninglessness, he creates the concept of nonsense out of the sense of absurdity. The concept of absurdity is also realized by rebellion. A person who is aware that this world is finite and mortal, if he accepts his destiny and chooses to hope instead of living in despair, he will reveal a movement of rebellion within himself. When a person's death occurs with this awareness, it does not mean that he has accepted his fate, on the contrary, it means that he has passed away for the sake of a value because he has managed to hope in despair.

3.1. L'Étranger (Novel)

The Stranger (L'Étranger) is undoubtedly Albert Camus' most important work. The work, published in 1942, is about the murder of an Arab in Algeria by a middle-class Frenchman, Meursault. Camus, who processes the events very quickly in the work, also conveys the restlessness of the main character Meursault to the reader.

In Camus' *The Stranger*, the story, which begins with the sentence of, “*My mother died today. Maybe yesterday, I do not know. I got a telegram from the nursing home: Your mother is dead. Her funeral will be held tomorrow. Not much is understood from this. Maybe she died yesterday.*” makes us feel the concept of absurd intensely. Meursault received the news of his mother's death in a telegram, and he took it in a cool manner. Meursault, who had to leave for the funeral, thought about his insomnia throughout the journey, refused to see his mother's face "for no reason" at the ceremony, could not remember his mother's age, and absurdly, he dreamed that if there was no funeral that

day, he would travel and have fun. While this situation can be a way to cover up the pain, a kind of defense mechanism, it also brought to mind the reality of alienation.

Meursault thinks of everything but death at the funeral. After the funeral, he spends time with his girlfriend, Marie. The calmness when he receives the news of his mother's death continues throughout the work. He spends weekends with Marie, goes to the movies, swimming, work. There is nothing missing or wrong in his life; his mother's death is perfectly normal and life continues in its routine.

“Again, another Sunday goes by. My mother is lying under the ground now, I will go back to my work and in the end everything is just as it was before.” (Camus, Yabancı, 1984) Whenever Meursault's neighbor Salamano loses his dog and Meursault sees Salamano crying, he then thinks of his mother's death.

“From the strange, faint voices coming from behind the wall, I knew that the man was crying. I do not know why, I thought of my mother (Camus, Yabancı, 1984)

With this sentence, Camus emphasizes Meursault's indifference, carelessness or delaying experiencing certain emotions. While the cry of his neighbor, who lost his dog, is a reaction of every person who is helpless in the face of death, Meursault realized this emotional reaction that he did not give with the death of his mother, through the tears of Salamano.

“In a moral indifference and despair, he describes his mother's death in a plain and silent style, with very limited words that do not add emotion, elliptical sentences (with missing words without deteriorating their meaning), and creates a novel character who commits

murder without a cause and runs to his death with anger and happiness, in spiritual relief as his death approaches.” (İnal, 1991: 29)

The first part of the work, which consists of two parts, ends with Raymon, Meursault's neighbor, getting involved in a fight, killing an Arab during a fight with Meursault's gun, and persistently firing four shots at the dead body lying on the ground.

The second part deals with the trial process of Meursault. Meursault appears in court for his crime, but before the murder, his unresponsiveness and composure in the face of his mother's death are discussed.

Meursault did actually not commit an unprovoked murder. On the contrary, he killed someone who pulled a knife on him in self-defense. While there is a chance that he can be acquitted by defending himself by saying that it is self-defense, he prefers not to do so.

“He said he wanted to hear from my own mouth what the reasons were that led me to commit crimes. As the words filled my tongue, I replied in one breath, knowing that I was ridiculous, that *it was because of the heat*.” (Camus, Yabancı, 2006) This answer given by Meursault at the trial proves that the murder was committed "without reason".

After being questioned why he committed the murder, the delegation asks why four more shots were fired at someone who was already dead: “Why did you wait between the first and the second? Why did you shoot at the corpse lying on the ground, why?” (Camus, Yabancı, 2006)

Meursault continues to give absurd answers while the questions are listed one after the other. It does not matter if you go to jail or be executed, for Meursault he cannot even see

much of a difference between the two. He was born when a person does not choose to be born, he exists, but he lives knowing that he will die. Death is an end written at the birth of Man, and everyone's end is the same. It does not matter when or how the person died. When Meursault goes to jail, all he does is think about death. It shows the courage to challenge and face death with a reflex given by a high philosophy of indifference.

(Unique 2016: 90)

Knowing that he will be executed for deliberate manslaughter, but refusing to defend himself, Meursault chooses death himself. On the contrary, he could have been acquitted by defending himself. While it is the reality of death that makes life absurd, if death is chosen with the free will of the person, this is not an acceptance towards life with death at the end, but rather managing/determining one's destiny. Not existing or even choosing to exist is as meaningful as existing. "It was as if I had waited my whole life for this moment, this dawn, to justify myself. Nothing, nothing mattered, and I knew why."

(Camus, Yabancı, 2006)

Meursault learns that he will be beheaded in a public square. However, according to Meursault, this death sentence is not because he committed murder, but because he did not mourn at his mother's funeral. According to him, as soon as a person exists, he somehow begins to commit crimes and no one is innocent in this world. In a world where no one is innocent, a "guilty" person can only be judged by a truly "innocent" person. How ethical is it for Meursault to be put on trial for his crime when no one is innocent? Living, knowing that there is death at the end, pushes people to live the way they feel.

Every event occurs as a result of a psychological state. Meursault's thought also questions social norms and the concept of morality and clearly shows that he is an alienated character from society. Meursault's alienation from society is actually a symbolic value. "Since they cannot find anything worth holding on to in the life they live, it is a form of rebellion that they live alone in the crowd." (Özkaya 2019: 384)

3.1.1. Making Sense of Meursault

In *The Stranger*, Camus confronts the reader with the absurd in the first line. Meursault's reactions to the outside and his inner process throughout the work show that he is alienated from both himself and the society. When Meursault receives the news of his mother's death, he is unresponsive, and feeling compelled to go to the funeral, begins to plan the next steps. He focuses on the train journey he will take, how he should take time off from work, the temperature of the air, and such matters less serious than "death".

Meursault's communication is generally inconsistent and indecisive. When the other person asks a question or answers the question asked, he cannot continue the communication. He limits bilateral communication to one or two sentences. From time to time, while he can understand and answer the question asked by the other person, he gets stuck in the follow-up question on the subject and finds this question meaningless.

However, he did not find the previous question meaningless. While Meursault's communication includes information transfer, decoding is not always successful.

When Meursault asks his boss for permission for the funeral, he happens to say "It's not my fault.", and then thinks that he should not have said this: "I asked the boss for two days off, he could not say no when there was such an excuse. But he did not look very pleased. I even told him, 'It's not my fault.'" He did not respond. "At the time, I thought, *I*

wish I should not have said that." Absurdism is dominant in this discourse and thought. In fact, Meursault would have established a successful communication if he had behaved as he should have and had chosen the right words. Because this was the behavior that society determined and taught. Meursault, however, chose not to do so and said honestly what he felt or believed he needed to say, without hiding behind any lies. So what made Meursault believe this? Meursault has been a character who avoids experiencing negative emotions throughout the work. This situation emerged as a totalitarian discourse that masked every negative emotion and event. According to Meursault, perhaps it was necessary to ignore them in order to solve the problems.

For Meursault, it does not matter who the communication is with. The only thing that catches the reader's attention in the double dialogues is Meursault's indifference. He believes that by continuing to communicate, he fulfills the task given to him by the society.

Meursault is not an "evil" character, as in *Caligula*, another work of Camus that he wrote with absurd thought; on the contrary, he can show pity and mercy to people from time to time. When his neighbor's dog dies, he tries to make sense of his neighbor's pain in his inner world, albeit for a short time, and states that he feels sorry for him.

Meursault, who absurdly realizes interpersonal communication through the monotony and mediocrity of life throughout the work, never blames himself for this communication style. At the end of the day, the world we live in is absurd and what is absurd pushes it to absurd communication. Meursault prioritizes the function and quality of communication. He communicates functionally on the issues he deems necessary. Although the communication established is absurd, it actually concludes everything with a pragmatic

point of view. The world we live in obliges people to survive, and this obligation pushes people to communicate at some point. Established communication is interest-oriented. One does not speak unless necessary, speaks when needed, gives result-oriented answers. Communication is short and concise. This communication, devoid of empathy and self-interest, is absurd.

For Mersault, communication means nothing; meaningless and empty. After her mother's death, he goes to a nursing home and spends the night, guarding her mother's coffin. Many nursing home residents also join Meursault.

“As they sat down, most of them looked at me and nodded shyly, their lips stuck in their toothless mouths, I did not know if they were greeting me or if it was a tic. But I guess they were greeting me. It was then that I noticed that they were all sitting in front of me, around the doorman, shaking their heads. At one point I had the ridiculous feeling that they were coming to judge me.” (Camus, Yabancı, 2018) Meursault finds it strange that people greet him, probably because he cannot internalize it and finds it meaningless. He interprets this greeting as being “judged”. Because his failure to respond at his mother’s funeral may cause him to be ostracized and judged by the society.

Throughout the work, Meursault gives extremely honest answers to everyone he comes into contact with, often so honest that it can be considered “brutal”. For example, on his first encounter with Raymond, he talks to him because he cannot find a reason not to do so. When Marie asks, “Do you want to marry me?”, he says it does not matter to him, they can get married if she wants to. Then when Marie asks, *“Do you love me?”*

Meursault says: *“I replied again as before, that it did not make any sense, but of course I did not love her.”* (Camus, Yabancı, 2018)

Meursault's communication style is seen as abnormal according to society's value judgments. The fact that he is not aware of whether he loves Marie or not and that he acts with his instincts causes him to be accepted as an absurd individual. Because one of the only things that separates humans from animals is consciousness. Acting with instinct makes a person an animal. Meursault has been described as immoral by the society as someone who acts with his instincts and exhibits attitudes far from empathy.

“An animal's life is lived by obeying the biological laws of nature; the animal is a part of nature and can never exceed it. The animal has no moral conscience; the animal is not aware of itself, of its own existence; if we define mind as the ability to go deep into the outer appearances that we perceive with our emotions and to grasp the essence behind this surface, then the animal does not have a mind either; therefore, the animal does not have a concept of truth, even if it only knows what is beneficial to it.” (Fromm, 2006)).

This communication style that Meursault maintains is actually what caused his death.

Killing someone, not feeling remorseful, not defending himself brings the end of Meursault. According to him, there is no point in communicating or expressing anything in this meaningless world. The meaninglessness of the world and communication move in the same direction.

There will be those who would say that Meursault is a “monster” given the way he communicates and behaves with others. Meursault is referred to as a “monster” when sentenced to death at trial. The only reason Meursault was declared a monster is because he did not “communicate correctly”. If he had given the usual reactions, acted according

to the values of the society, and regretted the things he had done, he would not have been stigmatized as a deviant by the society.

Ioanna Kuçuradi, who works on the problem of good and bad and the usual value judgments, said that the problem of values cannot be reduced to the issue of good and bad, that these concepts cannot be at the base of ethics because good and evil are not real values, and that the evaluation of people's discourses and actions as good or bad, depends on the person and the group who evaluate it and will change depending on his initiative, and therefore this is a relative situation. (Kuçuradi, 2013)

3.1.2. Communication Barriers of Meursault

In his work, Camus reflects the human life, the anxiety of the human, the difficulty of holding on to life and the traces of not being able to get rid of the mental depression while processing Meursault. Meursault cannot find feelings of freedom, love and justice in this world, but he has to live with people living in a social order for certain behavior patterns.

The process of Meursault's existence in society causes him to express his inner world with a new voice. Throughout the work, we see that Meursault's inner voice speaks, questions, judges, and sometimes mocks: *“In inner speech, there is a logical connection between thoughts. In the stream of consciousness, there is no logical connection to the thoughts flowing through the mind of the character. They flow more on the principle of association.”* (Moran, 1983: 67)

Throughout the work, Meursault lives according to his instincts and the motives that go through his mind, without making any distinction between time and space. Accordingly,

the most important factor preventing Meursault from mixing with society is his inability to establish the usual and socially accepted “healthy” communication. Throughout the work, Meursault has a communication problem, which causes us to think about communication barriers.

Interpersonal communication, also called face-to-face communication, is defined as communication whose source and target are people (Dökmen, 1995). Interpersonal communication is carried out verbally or non-verbally between at least two people using symbols/codes. This is the only thing Meursault lacks. Meursault does not use codes or symbols in his bilateral relations and generally prefers to remain silent and unresponsive. For example, in the work, when his neighbor asks Meursault how he is doing, Meursault does not want to give an answer. His inner voice, on the other hand, does not attribute his unwillingness to answer to a logical reason. It often cannot be bothered to respond. This shows that Meursault's most important communication barrier is that he cannot establish interpersonal communication.

Another communication barrier from Meursault is Intrapersonal Communication.

Intrapersonal communication is the individual dimension and forms the basis of communication experiences. “*Intrapersonal communication is the individual dimension of making meaning*” (Edward Sereno, 1975). The state of communication with oneself is constant and unlimited. “*As one communicates with others, one also communicates with oneself. That is why intrapersonal communication is the most common form of communication.*” (Sereno-Bodoken; 1975, p.105). Self-questioning, self-criticism,

seeking answers by asking questions to oneself is a form of intrapersonal communication. It is the state of communicating with oneself as a second person instead of communicating with a second person at some point. Before a person communicates with the outside, he first communicates in his inner world. Because in order to establish interpersonal communication, internal communication must be established and planning must be made. Throughout the work, we see that Meursault establishes interpersonal communication intermittently. Meursault, who offers Marie to eat at Celeste's restaurant, finds out that Marie is busy:

“She wanted to as well, but she was busy. We were close to my house; I said good-bye to her. She looked at me, *Don't you want to know what I am busy with?* she said. I'd like to know, of course, but I didn't think to ask. She also had a way of reproaching me for this.” (Camus, Yabancı, 2018)

In this process, Meursault cannot fully realize intrapersonal communication by thinking superficially instead of questioning the reasons and how in his inner world, and creates a barrier in the transformation of intrapersonal communication into interpersonal communication.

Meursault avoids thinking too much about himself or people. He is aware of how he should behave in society, people's expectations from him, and even how a healthy communication process will be carried out, and he prefers not to do them. Because it means nothing to him. As long as he exists, there will be people around him, these people will expect something from him, and they will categorize the behaviors as right or wrong. Today will be the repeat of yesterday; tomorrow will be the repeat of today and it will be extremely meaningless to spend any effort on anything in this absurd cycle.

3.2. Myth of Sisyphus

The Myth of Sisyphus is a philosophy book by Albert Camus, in which he describes absurd philosophy through the myth of Sisyphus, and published in the same year as his novel The Stranger. In this work, he examined “absurd (nonsense) philosophy” in depth.

In Greek mythology, Sisyphus, punished by the gods by raising a rock to the top of a mountain, is in a desperate effort. When he reaches the top of the mountain, the rock will roll down with all its weight and Sisyphus will push the rock up again. The gods agree that there is no more terrible punishment for Sisyphus than an unsuccessful effort.

The book begins with the sentence “There is only one philosophical problem that really matters, suicide.” According to Camus, the fact that life is worth living and the fact that life is finite is comprehended with consciousness, and life that ends with suicide gets rid of the absurd.

“...even though it is difficult to determine at what moment and with what behavior the mind chooses death, it is not so difficult to deduce the consequences of the action from that action itself. To kill oneself is to say what is inside, as in melodramas. It is to say that life has surpassed us or that we do not understand life. It just means it's not worth the effort. Of course, life is never easy. For many reasons we keep doing the commandments of life, the first of which is habit. To die willingly requires an instinctive acceptance of the ridiculousness of this habit, the fact that there is no deep reason to live, the meaninglessness of this daily struggle, the futility of suffering.” (Camus, Sisifos Söyleni, 2011)

Although the absurd cycle of being in the world with consciousness can be broken by suicide, Camus also states that it is not the only way. He continues by examining the emotion that compels a person to live as follows:

“A world that can be explained, even for bad reasons, is a familiar world. On the other hand, in a world that is suddenly deprived of dreams and lights, one finds oneself a stranger. This break between the Man and his life, the actor and his decor, is the very feeling of incompatibility. Since even among healthy people there is no one who has not thought of his own suicide, it can be accepted without further explanation that there is a direct link between this feeling and wanting nothingness.” (Camus, Sisifos Söyleni, 2011)

While committing suicide is an option, another option is to be able to live the absurd, that is, to resist. Camus states that it is necessary to stay in the disharmony by accepting it and making an effort. Although Sisyphus is in an effort that seems to many to be meaningless, for Camus he simply lives. Camus states that we should accept Sisyphus as a happy person; a smile appears on Sisyphus's face every time the rock he brought to the top is rolled, Sisyphus accepts the absurd, the incongruous.

“Existence reveals itself in the incongruous, if the light accumulated in the incongruous does not come out to illuminate that hill, the absurd will remain a tragic discourse. In short, he should live as a happy earthling in the world he lives in, freed from mismatched suicide and deadly escapism.” (İlem Blog, 2018)

4. ABSURDISM IN COMMUNICATION

The concept of the absurd, which the Turkish Language Association explains as meaningless and absurd, consists for Camus that due to the existence of consciousness in the changing world, the relationship between the world and the individual cannot be fixed, and even if the world remains as it is, the relationship with it constantly changes, so it is not possible to talk about an absolute truth. For Camus, the concept of the absurd, unlike Heidegger and Sartre, does not emerge from the existent, but arises directly from consciousness. Accordingly, where there is no consciousness, the absurd cannot be mentioned.

Absurd is the expression of Man's detachment from the world and his inability to establish a meaningful relationship with it that fits his aspirations (Gündoğan, 1995: 56-57).

A person who tries to exist in the world with consciousness, but enters into the absurd, is also under the shadow of the absurd in his bilateral relations. With modernization, the person who starts to work like a machine in business life experiences the repetition or similar of the previous day every day. He wakes up at the same time every day, goes to work, works between 8 and 10 hours, if he has time after work, he takes time for himself and sleeps. The next day will be no different from yesterday. A person who has to work to exist in this world cannot get out of the “tomorrow of yesterday” cycle.

Working like a machine in order to survive, the Man returns to himself in time, begins to live individually, and the communication he establishes in his bilateral relations becomes “goal-oriented”. He communicates within the framework of certain rules in order not to be excluded by society. Although he is not curious about how the other person is doing,

he starts with the question “Hello, how are you?” However, he does not care about how the other party is. He fulfills the tasks given to him by the society in order to quickly reach the thing that causes him to communicate. This brings out the absurd communication.

4.1 Digital Communication

For centuries, the way of human existence has been through communication. The basic rule of socialization is communication. The need to be in constant communication has reshaped the way of communication from society to society in the historical process (Aytekin, 2018, p. 7).

With modernization, communication has also changed shape and the concept of “digital communication” has been integrated into our lives.

Cultural critic Neil Postman explains this new society shaped by technology with the concept of “technopoly”. In this society where technology is deified, satisfaction and dominance are only possible with technology. Many concepts such as the internet, social media, and the virtual world have settled in our lives, and sociological and cultural changes and transformations have taken place.

Our social transformation has taken the name “network society”. According to Manuel Castell, who introduced this concept, network society refers to concepts such as individuals' lifestyles, brands, personal weakness, ego satisfaction, and social networks, without discriminating between culture and nation, and the state where there is no time, place and body when desired (Balatongoz, 2018, p.iii). With the development of technology day by day, a life without the Internet, social media and many concepts that

we are not aware of yet is not possible. Because the basic principle of the Internet is to create a worldwide communication network and to make people the users of this network.

(1)

The most important factor that makes digital widespread is globalization. Bauman expresses globalization as: *“It is the uncertain, elusive, and self-directed nature of world affairs; it is the absence of a center, a control desk, a board of directors, an administrative office.”* (Bauman, Social Consequences of Globalization, 2010, p. 64).

With globalization, technology develops and spreads without slowing down, so daily life becomes digital and this appears as a social reality.

Bilateral relations have changed shape with digitalization, and the environments where people talk, discuss and make decisions have been moved to social media. Business and educational life has also pushed people to be “online”. However, this type of communication established over devices has led people to absurdity, loneliness, unhappiness and alienation. (Gulmammadzada, 2021)

For the first time, the concept of “alienation”, which was used by J.J. Rousseau and then analyzed in depth by Albert Camus, is often striking in the digital communication brought by modernism. The modern Man's communication via the Internet and its normalization have made him dependent on the screen, but have begun to host individuals who have become alienated from himself in the society. The concept of place and time has lost its importance, and instant and result-oriented communication has begun to be established.

The feeling of “empathy”, which is one of the most important values that face-to-face communication brings to the individual, has also been lost with the communication established through screens, and the importance given to emotions has decreased.

Over time, the relationship between the individual and the world he lives in has weakened or broken, and his social relationships have been interrupted. However, not only his social relations were interrupted, but also the individual turned inward, submitted to the monotony of life and remained alien to the world he lived in.^[1]

4.2. Digitalization of Communication and Alienation

With the development of technology, the phenomenon of socialization has become digital and has caused the person to communicate as much as he or she needs. We started to communicate through screens in work, school and private life. Especially in the use of messaging applications, human communication has been moved away from, and direct question-answer-oriented, short-term and self-interested communication has begun to be established. This has increased the rate of deterioration of the relationship between the individual and the world he lives in. However, this digital world, the individual's perception of this foreign world as his own world and the necessity of living in it are the structural barriers to developing social relations by staying on his own (Wendling, 2009: 13-88). The deterioration of the relationship between the world in which a person lives and his/her self has also led to alienation. If we consider this situation with a Marxist approach, we can say that with the modernization of societies, people have become

¹[] <https://sophosakademi.org/cevrim-ici-yasam-ve-yabancilasma/>

alienated from their wishes and private areas and that this disconnection that the person experiences stems from modernization.

Hegel was the first to use the concept of alienation in a philosophical sense, but Marx took the concept of alienation as a phenomenon.^[2]

Marx explains that private property arises from the alienation of labor, and the stages of alienation are four stages as the alienation of nature, vital activities, his own body and self, and finally, the alienation of Man from Man: “The more a Man gives to God, the less he has in himself. The worker puts his life in the object. But then his life is not his own, but the object's. The greater this activity, therefore, the more objectless the worker is.” (Marx, 2011)

Camus concept of alienation differs from Marx's. Camus defines alienation as an internal process. “This paradox, which arises from the inability of Man as a social being to know “who” and “what” in the dimension of society and self, alienates the individual from his “self” and society. This identity problem, which pushes the individual to loneliness, also marginalizes the individual to society in sociological terms. Alienation of the individual by alienation from society triggers religious alienation. The inability of the individual to find answers with religious alternatives to the questions that come with modernity drags the individual into depression in the metaphysical dimension. Depression, on the other hand, is the expression of his detachment from social values, as well as causing a weakening of self/identity.” (Biricik, 2016)

² [] <https://t24.com.tr/yazarlar/erol-anar/yabancilasma-kavrami-ve-gunumuz-toplumu-uzerine,8523>

The time spent in the digital world causes the person to distance himself from himself after a while. In this world shaped entirely by virtual concepts, a person begins to lose his real identity; he is getting stuck between the real and the virtual world. After a while, this process is completed with the alienation of the person from the real world. "Alienation can also be interpreted as the inability of the adaptation process of people to keep up with this speed in the rapidly advancing digital world, the individual's need to use digital networks as a tool, but by making this a goal, a rift between himself and the real world and society he lives in and breaking away." (Coral, Time, Space, Human Relations and Alienation in the Digital World, p:11).

This exposure to digitalization and the loss of the concept of time lead human relations to be transformed as well.

The modern digital life we live in has brought many benefits to individuals and societies. Digitization, which gained momentum with modernization, has given rise to two separate problems; social and individual. One of the most important reasons for the emergence of this concept of alienation is massification. Gustav Le Bon explains the concept of crowd as follows: "The word crowd, which means a mass in its simple and ordinary sense, refers to a random collection of individuals, regardless of their race, occupation, gender, and whatever the coincidence that brings them together. From a psychological point of view, the term mass is used in a completely different sense. From a psychological point of view, the mass describes an organism that is very different from the individual characters of the individuals who come together in certain special situations and bring it out. Here, the conscious personality disappears, and the thoughts and feelings of the gathered people turn to one side. In this case, a temporary but collective consciousness is formed." (Bon,

2005) Alienation begins with the massification brought about by the concept of mass. The person tries to do the actions that are imposed on him in the society he is in and he is obliged to do. The importance of his own feelings and thoughts gradually decreases and he acts within the framework of the norms determined by the masses in order not to be excluded from society. With the consent and acceptance of this, the process of alienation from oneself begins.

While digitalization has settled in our lives and 90% of our lives are in the virtual world, with virtual communication, we can show the digital world as one of the main reasons for alienation in our new modern world. For example, a white-collar employee working in a corporate company establishes almost all communication during the day through the chat application. Refusing to use the application will result in him being excluded from the group. Because communication, information flow, meeting or gathering plans are made through the application. The person is obliged to use the application in order not to fall behind or get away from both his work and private life. When all communication is established through the application, it is noticed that there is hardly anything to talk about in real terms. Communication established through an application devoid of empathy, without seeing, touching, perceiving gestures and mimics, prepares the environment for the rupture of real communication. The person communicating through the virtual environment withdraws and finds himself in a brand new world; the virtual world. As in the example of the chat application, the person is also included in the photo sharing application, where photo sharing is made and people share photos taken side by side by “tagging” each other. Because his social circle uses this application, and even the fact that

this application is not installed on his mobile phone is met with astonishment. The pressure brought by the society obliges the person to use such practices. When deciding whether a person is compatible or not, society considers whether he or she acts with the truths determined by the society. While all this is happening, the virtual world begins to take the place of the real world of the person, and the individual ceases to be an individual and turns into a tool that is integrated with social media and cannot act without social media. “The digital pushes into the subconscious, the subject taking a selfie becomes unable to distinguish between real and virtual, night and day.” (Lovink, 2018).

4.3. Lack of Empathy

Empathy plays an active role in interpersonal communication and social relations. Bauman used themes such as fear, insecurity, helplessness, conscience and anxiety in his texts, and often included the feeling of empathy and worked on how social phenomena felt on the person, how they were perceived and experienced. (Bauman, 2017, p.137) In this context, what people feel during their routine activities in their daily lives becomes the subject of Bauman's sociology. (Blackshaw, 2005, p.3)

Bauman also establishes a relationship between empathy and morality. According to him, the empathetic stance arising from empathy is determined individually, has no limitations such as good or bad, and is far from ethics. There is no room for someone else's pain in the living area of ethics, where the boundaries are drawn, and good and bad codes are determined. Bauman evaluates all these in the moral dimension as follows: “First of all, emotions prevent indifference that causes interpersonal relations to be experienced in the dimension of objects; secondly, it allows for questioning and openness by opposing

stereotypes in interpersonal relationships; finally, emotions challenge ethics by removing the other from the realm of normative, universal rules.” (Bauman, 2001, p.81)

According to Bauman, morality is also related to the social context. In the social context, a moral empathic stance should be considered in the framework of the “other”, and should be characterized as acting without any expectation or interest, without thinking of oneself. Thus, the society will accept this action as a positive social behavior or benevolence.

Depression, hopelessness and anxiety, which were initiated by the two great world wars, grew exponentially with digitalization, and people who started to lose their sense of curiosity began to act in a “purpose” oriented manner in bilateral relations. Digitalization and the use of social media have also changed when and how people interact with others. The ability to instantly share feelings and thoughts with the rest of the society through digital channels has also eliminated the ability of empathy that comes with traditional communication. Moreover, digital communication has often led to impersonal interactions that lack many of the emotional signals and cues experienced in face-to-face settings. (Christopher Terry, 2016)

Digitalization, which pushes people to be constantly online, has led to the loss of the feeling of “empathy”, which is at the forefront of human values. The question “How are you?” directed to the digitally contacted person is empty, and the answer "I'm fine." or “I am not well.” has become meaningless to the person asking the question. Today, the person who focuses on the axis for which communication is established positions the question “How are you?” as the introductory sentence of a text. These human

characteristics, lost in the digital environment, have also affected the person's face-to-face communication. When a person sees a human or animal in need, he has turned into a robot that can move on without compassion and empathy.

Camus exemplified the incompatibility of Meursault, the character who lacks empathy, stating that the lack of empathy and not conforming to socially accepted values and behavior patterns lead to “incompatible”:

Marie asks him if he loves her. “It's pointless, but I guess I do not love you.” Meursault replies. “Then why will you marry me?” Marie asks. Meursault says it does not matter, they can get married if they want. “Marriage is a serious thing.” says Marie. “It is not,” Meursault says. (Camus, Yabancı, 2006)

Meursault has become incompatible because he does not take anything about life seriously and is alienated from socially accepted values. Today's people have also turned into Meursault at some point with the loss of empathy, which accelerated with digitalization, alienation from ethical values, and decreased feelings of compassion and internalization. For this reason, the moral empathic stance that Bauman deals with in the social context is not observed in today's Meursaulted people/society.

4.4. Feeling of Nonsense and Incompatible

Camus describes absurd as “the world's indifference to man and human aspirations, and the collision of man who wants to be happy, who feels the desire for happiness deep in his heart, with the irrational silence of the world.” (Cevizci, 1997) According to Camus, the disharmony arising from the absurd consists of the inability to establish a meaningful

and consistent relationship between consciousness and the existing human being with the world. In other words, it is unrelatedness or disconnection.

Camus interprets the absurd in two different ways. The first of these is the sense of absurdity. He states that every living person has a sense of absurdity, but few of them are aware of the situation, and some even go on with their lives without being aware of the feeling of absurdity. (Yurday, 2019, p.3)

In his work *The Myth of Sisyphus*, in which Camus describes his philosophy of the absurd, he emphasizes two basic distinctions. The first of these is the state of being conscious of people's sense of nonsense, and the second is their ability to distinguish between the feeling of nonsense and the concept of nonsense. (McBride, 1992, p. 3-4).

Human existence is meaningless and not everyone has this awareness. On the other hand, Camus explains absurdity as the relationship between the existence of the world and whether its existence is in line with our demand, and argues that the absurd has both a metaphysical and epistemological side. While he explains the metaphysical side as the indifference arising from the confrontation of the human mind and the world, the epistemological side expresses the absurd concept, which arouses curiosity and the desire to learn, for people to draw the limits of “knowing”. A person who lives monotonously and starts to question the meaning of life in his routine cycle finds himself in a sense of absurdity. In the same cycle, people come face to face with the thought of hopelessness and death. While questioning his place and meaning in the world he lives in, Man turns into a stranger living in this world. A person who becomes conscious of the reality of

death accelerates the process of alienation from himself. Because this life, where plans are made, dreams are made, steps are taken, is finite, the reality of death is inevitable. In this direction, Man tries to make sense of the world that surrounds him, and he comes face to face with the world while questioning whether life is meaningful or not.

Addressing suicide, Camus makes the following statement about death: *“To kill oneself, in a sense, is to say what is inside, as in melodramas. It is to say that life has surpassed us or that we do not understand life”*. (2010, p. 17)

According to Camus, it is not possible to understand the world rationally, but suicide is the biggest obstacle to human perception of life. If Man had been a part of this world like other living things, he would not question concepts such as happiness, hope and death. However, a person who has settled in the world with his mind and consciousness is trying to make sense of his existence. At this point, people have two options: suicide or life. Physically, suicide means ending existence, and in a world where there is no person, it will not be possible to talk about the absurd and incompatible. But still, death should not be the ultimate ideal one chooses to achieve. Another option is to continue the search for meaning despite the dissonance with the world we live in. According to Camus, the most important element that makes life meaningful is actions; life gains meaning with actions. The absurd is not an end, but a new action that will spur people into action. The absurd and incongruous help one's existential awakening. When a person realizes and resists absurdity despite the indifference of the world, he finds life meaningful in the face of death. Achieving awareness of the dissonance between death and life is the only way out for Camus.

In today's digital society, people complain about the mediocrity of life. There is no difference between today and tomorrow except time. The person will wake up, go to work, communicate with others online or face to face in line with his purpose, meet his basic needs to ensure his survival, and the next day, he will re-enter the cycle of today. A person who is conscious of this cycle will also be conscious of the absurd.



5. REFLECTIONS OF ABSURD COMMUNICATION IN DAILY LIFE

In the 21st century digital world, individuals' lifestyles, habits, behavior patterns, and even their psychological reflexes, which are the whole of their reactions to events, have changed shape. In the new digital world, both traditional mass media and new media tools have begun to shape our daily lives.

According to Goffman, there is a difference between real life and the media in terms of rituals. According to him, a hyperritual has now been produced from rituals that have been standardized, exaggerated and simplified through the media (Bayad 2016: 88). With the integration of social media channels into every aspect of life, the individual has built a virtual identity for himself, and has been left all alone behind this virtual identity he has built.

5.1. Daily Life

Daily life is something that is quite difficult to determine, but on the other hand simple and obvious. However, it is superficial; it is vulgarity. Vulgarity is repetition, but is also profound; it is what needs to be changed and is the most difficult to change (Lefebvre, 2013, p. 55). The everyday covers a very wide area stacked between routines and rituals such as eating, drinking, sheltering, security, which are the simple activities of people's self-sustaining (Şahin and Balta, 2001, p. 185).

Daily life constitutes the whole of our life. Lefebvre explains daily life by objectifying it as follows:

“Daily life is not an abandoned space; it is not an area left to individual freedom and reason, to the cooperation of the individual. It is no longer the place where human misery and greatness emerge, and where the human condition is experienced. It is no longer a

rationally operated, colonized sector of social life; because daily life is no longer an industry, and rational business has discovered more subtle forms than before. Daily life has now become a meticulously studied object; the domain of organization has become the space-time of voluntary and planned self-regulation.” (2016a. p:86)

With the objectification of space and people, daily life has also become an object.

In order for the individual to be accepted by the society and live in peace with the society, it is necessary to fulfill the routines of daily life. The person must continue to fulfill his routines to ensure the continuity of his life; he wakes up, eats breakfast, goes to work, comes back from work, he lives the next day the same as yesterday, tomorrow the same as the next day. This routine repeats itself every day, reincarnating itself every day. The person continues to live his routine without being aware that he has to do this. The necessity of living in harmony with the society begins with fulfilling these routines, but the society processes that the individual must voluntarily fulfill all these routines. These have become implicitly unwritten rules. Despite these routines and social judgments, Lefebvre argues that daily life must change. He believes that life has two sides, like the "ant hovering over the Möbius Strip". When there is only one sheriff, one bends this sheriff and connects it with the other end, and after working on one side of life, waiting to be rewarded on the other side.

A person transforms his mental and physical strength into a “daily character” and spends doing the same things every day. It repeats every moment with the same routine, the memories become ordinary, the same, one cannot even think about the same ones, and

becomes a robot. This indicates the symbolic death of man. In fact, a person dies twice; in one of them, his body becomes earth, and in the other he dies mentally because of his will to live and his mediocrity.

It is necessary to consider the sociology of daily life together with the concept of leisure. In their free time, people are intertwined with technology. The modern world we live in is shaped by new media tools. Social networks are at the center of our daily lives. Social media is a new technological development that allows people to present themselves as they wish (Kavut 2018: 4).

5.2. Absurdity and Social Alienation in Daily Life

Daily life encompasses a vitally important environment where one enters into a transformative praxis with nature, where companionship and love are learned, communicative skills are acquired and developed, normative concepts are applied pragmatically, various desires, pains and emotions are felt and eventually faded (Gardiner, 2016: 14).

Daily life has no limits. It is a synthesis of nature and culture, individual and social, real and unreal, it is mixed, a place of conflict, a level of reality. In addition, daily life is a collection of rude, repetitive and vulgar things. It is existence and “experience” that is not speculatively conveyed, but revealed. It is the thing that needs to be changed and is the most difficult to change (Lefebvre, 2015: 55).

In the midst of all this sequence, crowd and vulgarity, the individual becomes a robot devoid of emotion and has lost the ability to communicate, and absurdity also occurs in daily life. Eric Fromm argues that for a species to exist, it must communicate. While the

greatest danger in history was people becoming "slaves", the present danger is people becoming "robots". In order to get rid of this situation, it is necessary to establish a healthy social structure in accordance with the real needs of people. Such a social structure should be shaped according to the needs arising from human existence. A social order in which people love each other, live in fraternity and have the opportunity to develop themselves will be the end of today's societies, but at the same time it will mean the birth of a real social order (Fromm, 1982: 135-136).

Bauman, emphasizing a similar point with Fromm and putting human emotions and communication at the center, states that his hope from modernism has failed, and states that he *"turned to a new moral consciousness based on compassion, deciding that humanity's most precious treasure is our innate, moral drive that enables us to consider, care about, and take responsibility for others."* (Smith, 1999, 33).

The human mind is an entity that is not related to nature with its desires and emotions. Man has no connection with the environment and differs from animals because he is a free creature that can make decisions with his mind.

"Man is freed from the bonds of the environment. We call this being open to the world. Such a being now has a "world". He can turn the centers of "resistance" and resistance around him into "objects", in return for the animal to lose itself in them and dissolve" (Scheler 1968: 41). Man is a being in a state of being. *"To succeed in being human is given to man as a duty by his place in the universe and his structure of being"* (Scheler 1968: 5).

“Man of the ancient world felt himself as a part of the universe. Medieval man had attached himself to God. The people of the New Age trusted the power of reason. Today, however, people have lost all their bases and as a result, people have become problematic for themselves” (Akarsu 1994: 188).

Alienation, initiated by the Industrial Revolution and accelerated by digitalization, has made many people, like Meursault, a silent stranger to the social values they live in and the actions of the individuals who make up this society. Not many of us have time to understand each other. Business life, digital applications integrated into our lives, the differences between the life we want to show and our real life, the indifferent attitudes that are far from wondering about each other are absurd in this world, they show us the incompatibility we live in. At some point, there is a Meursault inside all of us, and like Meursault, we live our own loneliness in the absurdity of the world we live in. While the society is disturbed by Meursault's silence, the silence and unresponsiveness of today's people in the face of events no longer draws attention. Meursault was actually executed not for his crime but for his indifference to the established order, which means that if Meursault were alive today, he would not have been executed. Because the execution of Meursault today means the execution of a large part of society. Because, as a society, we have no interest or reaction to the established order and events. Roger Quillot describes Meursault as *“in the minds of most of us, as a person who is not fully developed, with a raw consciousness, who does not know the order of values.”* (İnal, 1991: 33).

The modern life we live in has many benefits. One of them is the emergence of the concept of "mass". With the emergence of the concept of mass, the problem of communication and alienation of the individual has emerged with the modernization and the integration of humans into technology. (Gündüz, 2013, p. 83). The alienation that started in the individual has also led to social alienation over time. Another reason for the emergence of social alienation is massification. One of the important features of the mass is that it erases the individual, almost dissolves it (Kiraz, 2015)

The thoughts of the individual in the audience do not matter and he has to obey the rules determined by the audience. Rebellion is also an option, but if he rebels, he will be marginalized by being pushed out of the mass. In order not to be the opposite or the other, the person is aware that he has to comply with the situations that he does not want and that are contrary to his feelings and thoughts. When he turns a blind eye to this in order not to become alienated, alienation begins.

A person who is alienated from himself is also alienated from others. It is unthinkable that a person, who is a stranger even to himself, should not become alienated from those other than himself. The alienation of man from his labor alienates him from other people as well as his alienation from himself and the product of his labor. "What is true of man's relation to his own labor, to his product of labor, and to himself is also true of man's relation to the other man and his labor and object of labor" (Marx 2007: 29).

The behavior that society expects from the individual and the behavior that the individual should exhibit often conflict. For example, if a man is shot in the middle of the road

during the daytime, the people around should help the man that got shot and give a reaction to the event at that moment – or rather; society expects this from us. However, being shocked by the event, not being able to speak, not being able to react, choosing not to react, or going away from the scene because of feeling uneasy is considered "strange" by society. Because there are moral rules determined by society. Personal morality does not matter much in this case. Social morality and value judgments come into play, and not reacting as determined by the society causes the individual to be marginalized.

To give another much more subjective example; Meursault shed no tears when he went to bury his mother. When a person who lost his mother does not show his pain by shedding tears, he is described by the majority of the society as "not suffering, not sad". We have been taught by society that we should cry when we lose a loved one. Loss can only be "true" pain when it is crowned with tears. However, silence and unresponsiveness can also be a way of experiencing pain. It is also a choice to accept the loss and leave it in yesterday. Another alternative might be to not suffer. The death of a person who has accepted the fact that the world is finite can normalize the loss of a loved one. He or she may not feel any sadness, anxiety or pain in the face of something that is considered normal. However, when society sees this, it finds it abnormal again, and the individual becomes "alien" again. What is expected and what is wanted to be done becomes a constant conflict, and the individual is dragged into distress, depression and unhappiness. The concept of depression, which leads to both deterioration and corruption, is actually the concept of our era. The people who make up the mass are faced with the concept of depression after alienation by the mass they form (Kiraz, 2015, p. 134-135).

Alienation also has a serious effect on the spiritual structure of the person. As Erich Fromm quotes: *The word "alienation" was formerly used to describe the mentally ill. The words aliene in French and alienado in Spanish used to describe psychosis, that is, a person completely, absolutely disconnected from himself*" (Fromm 2006: 116).

On the other hand, in order to survive in world conditions despite alienation, a person must be in constant communication. The individual, who is alienated from his environment, falls under the spell of the deterministic effects of technology over time. Digital communication, which we have to establish in various applications, especially in our work / school and private life, causes the loss of the concept of time and space, making the person a prisoner of the deterministic effect. The person turns into a being that communicates in need and result-oriented. Face-to-face communication with the immediate environment is limited, and at some point, the person is isolated.

In order to survive in the community, the individual has to fulfill the roles assigned to him completely: The obligation to establish digital communication in order to establish bilateral relations that are accepted as "healthy", to give reactions determined by the society in the face of events, to maintain the balance in work, school and private life. It would not be out of place to say that we are not free due to the roles that society has given us in the world we live in, that today is not different from yesterday, and that we will continue this absurd cycle even though we know that we will die one day.

6. RESEARCH METHODS

In this study, the "In-depth Interview Method", which is used to address the opinions, feelings and solution suggestions of the participants on the subject, was applied.

“In-depth interview is a data collection technique that covers all aspects of the researched subject, asks mostly open-ended questions, allows detailed answers, and allows information to be collected through face-to-face interviews. The feelings, knowledge, experiences and observations of the other person are reached through interviews.” (Tekin, 2006)

A total of four people, two women and two men, from different professions and age groups, who read Albert Camus's novel *The Stranger*, were interviewed by asking the following questions. With this method, the meaning of absurdism for the participants, the behavior of the main characters Meursault and Meursault's behaviour, the absurd examples in their daily lives and the concept of alienation were analyzed with the questions asked and the responses given were tried to be measured.

PSEUDONYM	AGE	SEX	OCCUPATION
Ahmet	30	Male	Lawyer
Serpil	45	Female	Teacher
Hakan	29	Male	Communication Professional
Fatoş	28	Female	Editor

6.1 Findings

“The Age of Emptying the Meaning...”

Although most of the people I interviewed described Meursault's reaction or unresponsiveness to his mother's death as "distant from humanity, from human emotion", they did not find it strange because they associated this reaction with today's society. It was stated that most of the people approached the events indifferently, and the pain and losses were normalized due to digitalization. It has been concluded that the fact that many losses and suffering are shown on social media every day causes us to normalize these events and remain unresponsive as a society.

Fatoş, one of the interviewees, thought about this question for a while and confidently stated that it is not correct to evaluate people independently of the society they live in and said that our feelings and thoughts are shaped around what society imposes on us. By giving an example of an event that has affected her a lot recently and which she finds absurd, she addressed the person who burned himself in Galata, which was on the agenda on social media in the past months (02.06.2022), and was thrown in the trash by the

shopkeeper, and that no one intervened at the time of the incident, on the contrary, the people around him took a selfie of this tragic event and made it absurd. She likened this event to Meursault's unresponsiveness to the death of his mother:

“Apathy is not Meursault's fault. I do not find it strange that he faced his mother's death like a robot, this is not foreign to me. We are in an age where the meaning of everything is emptied and this is not a choice, it is a necessity of this age. We are in a society that thinks that it is suffering by sharing the news of a death or in the event of a natural disaster on Instagram.” (Fatoş, 28, Editor.)

In the society we live in, everyone leads a self-directed, individual life. Even though everyone knows that when a woman who is subjected to violence is seen on the street, she should be helped, many people prefer to walk away. Because the feeling of compassion and pity has almost disappeared. Eric Fromm stated that the most dangerous thing for today's people is to turn into a robot. A person who lacks empathy and compassion becomes alienated and, in Fromm's words, becomes a robot. At this point, based on the example of Instagram given by Fatoş, it would not be wrong to conclude that, like many things, with the digitization of pain, human beings begin to turn into a feelingless robot.

“A Defense Mechanism: Unresponsiveness”

When respondents were asked about the event in the book that most impacted them, the majority addressed the opening sentence of the book, namely Meursault's reaction to the telegram he received from the nursing home.

“Today my mother died. Maybe yesterday, I don't know. I got a telegram from the nursing home: Your mother is dead. Her funeral will be held tomorrow. Not much is understood from this. Maybe she died yesterday” (Camus, Yabancı, 2006)

Hakan, with an attitude stating that he justifies Meursault, raised his eyebrows and argued that the way to cope with the pain of such great losses and to normalize it is possible by remaining unresponsive. Because for him, unresponsiveness was also a kind of defense mechanism. For this reason, Hakan said that instead of criticizing and marginalizing Meursault, his reaction to loss and the way he lived his feelings should be respected. Based on this question, Hakan was asked whether he has encountered people who react like Meursault to pain and loss in his daily life:

“I work in the PR industry, we work very hard most of the time, and the PR industry is a very crisis-prone industry. Therefore, regardless of the time, we need to have access to computers and e-mails. Last month, my colleague’s father passed away. He learned of his father's death on the phone with us. He left the office, asking permission from the team director. I observed that he was quite cold-blooded and controlled. His father was buried the next day. Two hours after the funeral, when he should have used his funeral leave, he continued to return to e-mails and work. I had a hard time understanding this event. Let alone replying to e-mails, if I found out that my father passed away while I was in the office, I would not even think of getting permission from my director, I would go straight out. A few weeks later, while I was chatting with my colleague, I said that I was surprised that he sent e-mails the same day. He, in return, told me that putting on a negative psychology would drive him to extremes, it was better for him to keep busy and work, and that is why he preferred to act like this. We all have different ways of perceiving and experiencing pain. We normally choose to do what feels good to us. Unresponsiveness is also a defense mechanism and it is necessary to respect the way people experience pain.”

(Hakan, 29, Communication Professional)

What was considered absurd by the interviewees was that Meursault had an unorthodox reaction to his mother's death. Although the participants other than Hakan found Meursault's unresponsiveness absurd, Hakan thought that being unresponsive is also a kind of reaction, and stated that it was a defense mechanism, and stated that he often sees unresponsiveness in today's world. What we have all learned from childhood, what we have been taught, is to react to any loss and pain. While it is normal to react by crying and shouting, remaining unresponsive or silent has been described as abnormal and absurd by society. Every reaction out of the ordinary is the other for the person and the society. In particular, not responding to the reaction imposed and taught by the society may lead to the marginalization of the person. Camus states that non-compliance with socially accepted values and behavior patterns leads to "incompatible". (Camus, Yabancı, 2006)

“The absurd is anything that falls outside of one's normal perception.”

The interviewees defined absurd as *non-normal, unusual, meaningless, nonsense*.

Serpil, one of the participants, explained absurd as something outside the normal perception of the person, subjective and unprovable. She supported the intolerableness of the absurd by saying “*We cannot fully know and prove whether the things that are shown and taught us, that seem normal to everyone, are absurd or the opposite is absurd.*” In this meeting on the absurd, Serpil gave an example by stating that absurd elements in society are more visible, especially with social media, with an attitude trying to persuade: “*I spend a lot of time on Facebook and almost every day I see posts that are absurd, weird, out of my normal. From posing next to the tombstone of a person who lost a loved one, to sharing a photograph of his uncle on his deathbed. Many people who saw the post laughed at this content, I actually laughed, as well. However, when I thought about it, I*

realized that the absurd thing was to be able to make such a post in a situation as serious and painful as a funeral. While death is a very serious and deep situation, it seemed very strange to me that it was described as "magnificent" and affirmed at one point. However, since the absurd is also a subjective thing, this post, which I see as strange, is not absurd for the person who posted it, but rather normal... I think we can best explain the absurd with this example.” (Serpil, 45, Teacher).



(Facebook Post)* Foot Note: This image, which was viral for a while and became a joke, was found on the internet.

Although it was determined that the absurd connoted similar meanings for its participants, only one person made a definition that the absurd is subjective, varies from person to person, and it can never be proven whether what is considered absurd is absurd. Kierkegaard, who lived a century before Camus, took absurdity from a religious point of view and described it as a synonym for existence at the religious level. In his work *Fear*

and Trembling, he drew attention to the incompatibility between rationality and religious belief in the face of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac. Since rationality is objective and religious belief is subjective, the accuracy and provability of the absurd concept is not possible.

“Digital Meursault”

The vast majority of respondents said that there are people around them who are similar to Meursault, but that they do not have similar characteristics to Meursault individually. Only one person (Fatoş) stated that while reading the work, she found similarities between herself and Meursault, and that the most important reason for this was digitalization.

Saying that she encounters people similar to Meursault in her daily life, especially on social media, Fatoş stated that social media transforms us into insensitive individuals:

“I use social media actively due to my job. I have contact with many people from different sectors, races and cultures. But there is this one same thing and it is that we do not even consider it necessary to react to what is going on around us. We are used to the negative news we see on social media, we are not surprised. We even hesitate to support someone who needs help because we do not trust them. For example, we saw a help post on social media, we kept getting lost in the timeline by scrolling down. Looking at it this way, what is the difference between Meursault's unresponsiveness and ours? We are also Meursaults, digital Meursaults...” (Fatoş, 28, Editor)

Fatoş stared into space for a few minutes and sighed, noting that she observed a similarity to Meursault in herself from time to time:

“Recently, during working hours, one of my friends in the office told me on Whatsapp that she was not feeling well. At that moment, in a way that I could not even explain to myself, I said, “Well, it will pass” and ended the correspondence. I did not care why she was not feeling well, nor did I say anything that might help her. Because at that moment I had work to do. When I thought about this incident later, I realized that it was not human communication and I was literally acting like Meursault.”

With our changing lifestyle after the Industrial Revolution, the acceleration of technological developments and the digitalization of our lives, we can define the lack of empathy, indifference, lack of communication and alienation, which Fromm describes as robotization, as “Digital Meursault”. In addition to the social media applications mentioned in the previous questions, the fact that we communicate without getting face-to-face over instant messaging applications can distract the person from empathy. This causes the other person to be insensitive and unresponsive to the emotional state of the other person. With digitalization, a person can become alienated from himself by losing his human feelings such as empathy, curiosity and compassion, while staying away from his environment and remaining unresponsive to events. Considering that Fatoş could not explain the empathetic response she gave to her friend via Whatsapp, even to herself, we can say that Fatoş became alienated from both her surroundings and herself.

“The Inevitable End: Alienation”

Almost all of the participants stated that acting by focusing only on oneself will break the person out of the society after a while, and as a result, it will turn him into an individual who is alienated from the society. The participants, who made a connection between alienation and selfishness, stated that the first and most important step of alienation is selfishness, and then it progresses gradually as insensitivity and alienation from self and society.

Ahmet stated that everyone living in the metropolis is disconnected from the society due to the rush to get somewhere, and therefore has become selfish over time:

“We live in the metropolis now. No one has a more serious problem than himself. The time most of us wake up, start work, and leave work are the same. Our only concern is to earn money and live on good terms. Because we live for this purpose, we often do not see, communicate or understand each other. We live for our individual interests. Moreover, people do not have time to communicate and listen to each other in this rush. I spend most of my time in the courthouse. I come across many cases, from the victim woman who has a trial because she was subjected to violence by her husband, to the boss who employs child workers. At the beginning of my career, I cared about listening and understanding people. I used to make time for it. Most of the time the stories had a deep impact on me. But I have seen so many similar incidents that I am used to negative things now. Murder, violence, theft do not seem strange to me. I enter the courthouse, listen to the defendant, do the legal proceedings, then I leave. This has been making me think a lot lately. I realized that while I was doing my job, I stopped empathizing. I guess I have

become estranged from the outside. As we continue to live an individual, business-oriented life, the inevitable end for all of us will be alienation” (Ahmet, 30, Lawyer).

Individuality, selfishness, isolation, detachment from society and alienation emerge when we lose human values. Bauman states that we lost these values with modernism. Having lost his hope in modernity, Bauman decided that the most precious treasure of humanity is our innate, moral impulse that enables us to take others into account, care and take responsibility, and turned to a new moral consciousness based on compassion (Smith, 1999). The individualization that came with modernism gave birth to selfishness, and selfishness to alienation. In the hustle and bustle of daily life, many of us, like Ahmet, are alienated from society by exhibiting behaviors devoid of empathy.

“Forgetting the Existence of Death”

All of the participants stated that they did not think about death in the hustle and bustle of daily life and that they could not find time to think about death. However, they stated that they were aware that the reality of death would suddenly knock on their door.

Stating that people place death far away from themselves, Fatoş said that in modern life, no one has time to think about death, and that modernism makes us forget about death:

“Modernism has taught us that we have to be busy with our day-to-day work, to try to survive. We live so focused on ourselves that we have forgotten the existence of death. Even when we come face to face with death, we think of ourselves. For example, when visiting home where a person passed away in the city, people want to eat another plate of rice or question whether the halva is made with pistachio or is pistachio-free. At that moment, the only concern of these people is to fill their tummies and eat more. Death is

so far away from them at that moment that even being in the funeral house is not enough for them to remember death. There is no empathy for the relatives of the deceased. I guess that is how death is greeted in the city now. I think this is due to modernism. In the villages, the pain is experienced deeply, there is mourning, even for weeks, there is no wedding, no music is heard. The one who suffers is respected. I think we lost our human feelings with modernism.” (Fatoş, 28, Editor).

Modern life has turned man into a machine, and human mechanization has interrupted communication, socialization and empathy, which is the most important human trait. The life we live now is not daily, but casual (Özmen, 2019). In the hustle and bustle of daily life, the individual's transformation into a casual person has made him an entity who is only interested in the “moment”. The person does not have time to question not only death, but also his existence, why he lives, and even the meaning he attributes to life. Fatoş gave examples of funerals from both city and village life and stated that modernism changed the way of perceiving life and death. Modernism has transformed us into individuals who live with the memory, impulses and desires as if they will never die.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is that I wanted to try to explain the absurd concept of communication that most of us are not aware of, that we are used to, normalized, but that we establish/have to establish with each other in some way every day, through the main character Meursault in Albert Camus' *The Stranger*. The digitalized world, our digitalized identity has disrupted our bilateral relations, even though we do not accept it. Now, the state of “being in touch” has become purely for individual purposes, far from empathy and curiosity. The meaning of the question “How are you?” was made meaningless. Especially in our business and education life, we start our target-oriented communication with the question “how are you” in order not to be accepted as a rude or contradictory person, but we do not wonder how the other party actually is.

Is there any human communication left in this dialogue that we all see and establish over and over every day? Curiosity or empathy?

The only thing that is real in the dialogue that starts with “how are you” is that the person asking the question “how are you” has an exposure and will ask something. Since this is now the problem of the period, I wanted to work on this absurd communication that is established consciously or unconsciously. Since I did not come across that “Absurd Communication in the Digital World” was considered as a concept in the literature reviews I made while preparing the study, I tried to contribute to the literature through the lack of communication, which is now the problem of our age, by conceptualizing it. By examining the concept of Absurd Communication in the Digital World within the framework of the *Stranger* and the *Myth of Sisyphus*, I tried to shed light on the

communication of today's people by defining it through Alienation, which Camus explained differently from Marx, the absurd philosophy whose roots are based on Søren Kierkegaard, and the daily life theory of Agnes Heller and Gofmann.

“Today my mother died. Maybe yesterday, I don't know. I got a telegram from the nursing home: Your mother is dead. Her funeral will be held tomorrow. Not much is understood from this. Maybe she died yesterday.”

Camus' *The Stranger* begins with the lines above. On the first page of the book, the reader marvels at the reaction of the main character, Meursault, to the event. The two-line sentence gives us an idea of Meursault and shows us the absurd. The work, which consists of two parts, begins with death and ends with death. At this point, it is realized that living knowing that one will die creates an absurdity.

At certain stages of his life, a person asks himself the reason for his existence and cannot find an answer. Because the existence of man on earth is a set of contradictions. A person is conscious of the cycle of life and lives knowing that he will die. Our rational expectations in life do not exist and will not exist in this world. This gives rise to the absurd.

Man is a conscious being, so where there is consciousness there is man, and in the world where there is man, there is the absurd, in other words, the concept of "absurd". It is not possible to talk about a world in which there is no human and, accordingly, consciousness. Overcoming the absurd is possible only by transcending consciousness, which shows us the fact that man must perish.

When a person begins to question his existence, he finds himself in an incompatible cycle. Every day is the same as the previous day, he has to work to live, he has to

communicate to be accepted, he has to live within the framework of the rules determined by the society, according to the morality determined by the society. There is a gap between what has to be done and what is wanted to be done, and this gap creates alienation. Alienation takes place towards the society by breaking away from society, limiting bilateral relations, and avoiding communication. Then, the process of listening, understanding and talking to oneself decreases and alienation is completed within the individual.

The individual, whose daily life somehow continues, but turns into an object that has lost its effectiveness, finds himself in a state of perpetual unhappiness and despair. People's personal and social behaviors, social interactions and movements are surrounded by daily life. However, one's self and social self must be in harmony. Otherwise, it is accepted as “foreign, other” by society.

When we look at today's society, alienation is clearly seen. While a human is a creature that needs to communicate, our state of being in communication now is completely obligatory. We do not react to many things happening around us, we do not feel sorry for people's pain. When we interact through digital applications and come face to face most of the time, we lose our words. In today's society, Man has now turned into a creature that is alien to the society, and this will lead to individual alienation in the coming period, leading to a complete isolation of the person.

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