



Received: April 11, 2025
Accepted: May 21, 2025
Available online: May 25, 2025

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EXISTENTIAL HERO: THE PORTRAIT OF A LONELY INDIVIDUAL IN THE NOVEL *NAUSEA* BY JEAN-PAUL SARTRE

ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to the literary analysis of existential concepts in J.-P. Sartre's novel "Nausea". Existentialism is a tendency from the philosophical background that emphasizes the superiority and alienation of human experience in the world. From existentialists' point of view, human life is meaningless, though people can influence over their fate through freedom of choice.

The aim of this article is to analyze the novel "Nausea" according to existentialism. The tasks of the research are: to reveal key existential concepts; to clarify the image of the existential hero. In our research, we used historical-cultural, comparative, and psychological methods, implying theories established by S.Kierkegaard, I.Murdoch, C.Wilson, A.Camus, and J.-P. Sartre himself.

J.-P. Sartre (1905-1980) was a French philosopher and writer who refused the Nobel Prize in 1964. His most well-known fictional work is the novel "Nausea", published in 1938. In this work, the author shows the lonely individual who tries to overcome the existential crisis. The object of our research is the main hero of this novel, whom we labeled as an outsider, or an existential hero.

As the research result, we created an integral chain of the existential state of an outsider character. The whole novel portrays the life path of a protagonist, who goes through the existential state that includes transcendental steps like alienation, awakening, freedom, absurdity, and authenticity with the help of artistic narrating such as stream of consciousness.

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EKZISTENSIAL QAHRAMON: JAN-POL SARTRNING "BEHUZURLIK" ROMANIDA YAKKA SHAXS TASVIRI

ANNOTATSIYA

Maqola J.-P. Sartrning "Behuzurlik" romani-dagi ekzistensial g'oyalar tahliliga bag'ishlangan. Ekzistensializm tendensiyasining kelib chiqishi falsafa sohasiga borib taqaladi. Ekzistensializm – bu dunyodagi inson tajribasining ustunligi va begonalashuvini ta'kidlovchi farazdir. Ekzistensialistlar nuqtayi nazaridan inson hayoti ma'nosiz va absurd, ammo shunga qaramasdan odamlar tanlash erkinligi orqali o'z taqdirlariga ta'sir ko'rsatishlari mumkin.

Ushbu maqolaning maqsadi "Behuzurlik" romanini ekzistensializm asosida tahlil qilishdir. Tadqiqot vazifalari J.-P. Sartr mahorat bilan tasvirlagan muhim ekzistensial g'oyalarni aniqlash, ekzistensial qahramonning badiiy obrazini taqdim etishdan iborat. Tadqiqotda faylasuf-yozuvchilar S.Kerkegor, A.Merdok, K.Uilson, A.Kamyu va J.-P. Sartr tomonidan ilgari surilgan nazariyalar asosida tarixiy-madaniy, qiyosiy va psixologik metodlardan foydalanilgan.

J.-P. Sartr (1905-1980) 1964-yili Nobel mukofotidan voz kechgan fransuz faylasufi va yozuvchisi. Uning mashhur asari 1938-yili nashr etilgan "Behuzurlik" romanidir. Ushbu asarda muallif ekzistensial inqirozni yengishga harakat qilayotgan yakka shaxsni tasvirlaydi. Tadqiqotning obykti ushbu romanning asosiy qahramoni va u begona yoki ekzistensial qahramon deb atagan.

Tadqiqot natijasi sifatida begona obrazidagi qahramonning ekzistensial evrilish holatini bosqichma-bosqich tavsiflovchi jadval ishlab chiqildi. Butun roman yuqorida aytib o'tilgan ekzistensial holatni boshidan kechiruvchi bosh qahramonning hayotiy yo'lini tasvirlagan

The conclusion of the research includes several findings. Firstly, the novel “Nausea” clearly can be considered a model of an existential novel as it embraces all core concepts of existentialism. Many British writers who investigated J.-P. Sartre, such as I.Murdoch, C.Wilson, and H.Barnes criticized his existentialism for being pessimistic and egocentric, though this criticism cannot deny J.-P. Sartre’s great contribution to the development of contemporary literature.

Key words: novel, existentialism, absurdity, alienation, isolation, freedom, free choice, bad faith, authenticity, individualism.

holda, ong oqimi kabi badiiy rivoyat yordamida begonalashish, uyg‘onish, erkinlik, absurdlik va haqqoniylik kabi transsendental o‘tishlarni o‘z ichiga oladi.

Tadqiqot xulosasiga quyidagi natijalar kiradi: birinchidan, “Behuzurlik” romani ekzistensializmning barcha asosiy g‘oyalarni o‘z ichiga olganligi bois, uni ekzistensial roman modeli deb hisoblash mumkin; J.-P. Sartre badiiyati borasida ish olib borgan ko‘plab ingliz yozuvchilari, jumladan A.Merdok, K.Uilson va X.Barns uning ekzistensializmini pessimistik va egosentrik deb tanqid qilishgan, ammo bu tanqid J.-P. Sartrening zamonaviy adabiyotning rivojlanishiga qo‘shgan katta hissasini inkor eta olmaydi.

Kalit so‘zlar: roman, ekzistensializm, absurdlik, begonalashish, izolyatsiya, erkinlik, erkin tanlov, yomon e‘tiqod, haqiqiylik, individualizm.

INTRODUCTION

Having a Nietzschean perspective on the philosophy of an individual, J.-P. Sartre built up a new philosophical tendency, so-called Existentialism, with S.Beauvoir and M.Ponty. The main theory of existentialism was that *existence precedes essence*, which means an individual shapes his own essence after being born in certain circumstances, though rejecting the concept of destiny. Existentialism is a philosophical and literary movement of the 1940-1950s. However, its roots go back to the 19th century, and the fathers of existentialism are claimed to be S.Kierkegaard and F.Nietzsche. Existentialism appeared in Germany as a philosophical movement, and in France, it occupied the layer of intelligentsia. Existentialists described the atmosphere of postwar Europe and searched for treatment for nihilistic disease. That was the age of collapsed traditional values and beliefs, the first step into the godless, thus absurd world. Existentialism was officially introduced by J.-P. Sartre, and it became one of the most influential tendencies of the twentieth century.

J.-P. Sartre was prolific in both terms of philosophy and fiction; hence, he wrote essays on philosophy reflecting E.Husserl’s phenomenology and M.Heidegger’s theories on existentialism. His most famous philosophical work is “Being and Nothingness”. Also, J.-P. Sartre created a bunch of literary works, including short stories (“The Wall” [Sartre, 1969]), novels (“Nausea” (1938)), and plays (“Flies” [Sartre, 2023], “No Exit” [Sartre, 1958]). His novel “Nausea” became an iconic work of literary existentialism that contains J.-P. Sartre’s core philosophical debate. Through the consciousness of the main character Antoine Roquentin, the author highlights the principles of existentialism with key concepts like authenticity, freedom, and free choice. J.-P. Sartre’s existentialism later influenced British literature. English woman writer I.Murdoch was the first author who introduced J.-P. Sartre to the British audience

with her work “Sartre, Romantic Rationalist”. Her many novels were created being inspired by J.-P. Sartre’s philosophy and novel “Nausea”. Another British writer, C.Wilson, evaluated his own optimistic existentialism according to J.-P. Sartre’s ideas, creating work on philosophy and literary theory, namely “The Outsider”. Besides, J.-P. Sartre is partly responsible for expanding A.Camus’ *absurdism*, as the notion of the *absurd* is chiefly existentialistic. Today, A.Roquentin, the main hero of the novel “Nausea” became a literary prototype of an existential hero.

METHODS

In our research, we analyzed the novel with the help of the philosophical approach, implying the theories of philosophers-writers, such as S.Kierkegaard, A.Camus, I.Murdoch, J.-P. Sartre, and others. To investigate our research, we used historical-cultural, comparative, and psychological methods. Existential terms are clarified through the thorough analysis of the novel.

The evolution of existentialism is studied with the help of historical-cultural method, as the ideas of this tendency are not newly made but root back to ancient Greek times of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Later, it arose in Germany as an anti-Hegelian concept of individualism to be associated with an intellectual movement that flourished in Europe in the 1940s and 1950s as a result of the widespread distribution of J.-P. Sartre’s and his associates’ postwar literary and philosophical output.

J.-P. Sartre’s “Nausea” became the great example of a philosophical novel. Through the comparative analysis, we clarified the main features of a philosophical novel by comparing contemporary novels with “Nausea”. Mainly the characters of the works are compared, distinguished, and categorized.

A psychological method is used for the analysis of the consciousness of the main hero and the author of the novel. The unique style of J.-P. Sartre to present micro-chronotope, which is the inner world of the human, with the monologues, stream of consciousness, and flashback and flashforward, is analyzed with this method to reveal the philosophical basis of literary work.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Existentialism, originally a cultural movement of the past, remains a significant influence in contemporary thought. As a philosophical inquiry, it has shaped a new paradigm for understanding human existence. R.C. Solomon explains existentialism as self-consciousness in a ‘broken world’ as G.Marcel said, ‘dislocated world’ – S. de Beauvoir, ‘the world we are thrown into or condemned’ – M.Heidegger, the world where we are ‘abandoned and free’ – J.-P. Sartre, the world which is ‘absurd’ – Camus [Solomon, 2004]. Self-consciousness means to dive into self-awareness when an individual is separated from the universal and finds himself/herself isolated. Awareness of an individual as a separated being from society forces him to understand the absurdity of the world, which leads to anxiety and neurosis. An individual must now create meaning in life by expanding their understanding of the self. Then he starts to imagine; he is a hero, a revolutionary, a prophet, an anti-Christ, a unique, and a center of his own world. He is an outsider character who strives to find meaning in

his life. These descriptions can be seen in the philosophical novels of contemporary writers. J. Malpas, in his article, distinguishes the terms existential from existentialism. Existential is a larger notion compared to existentialism, which is associated with a literary or philosophical movement in a certain period of time, while existential themes can be found even beyond the scope of the movement [Malpas, 2012; 293]. Till today, a large number of novels with existential themes were created, though the fully developed existential novel is certainly “Nausea” written by J.-P. Sartre, and the only novel that can stand by it is “The Stranger” by A. Camus [Camus, 1989], who was also a friend and a competitor of a latter.

The novel “Nausea” is constructed in the form of a diary held by the main hero, A. Roquentin. The author added an editor’s note mentioning that A. Roquentin has been settled in Bouville for three years before moving to Paris; hence, the existential quest of the main hero mainly takes place in Bouville. With the linear quest narrative style, the author portrays the psychological growth of the main hero through existentialism. The searching for truth is one of the main features of a philosophical novel that is the main motive of the “Nausea”. A main hero of this novel type usually tries to meet a certain person from his past, who is often far away from him. Many novels by I. Murdoch written in the 1950s, like “Under the Net” [Murdoch, 1954] and “Flight from the Enchanter” [Murdoch, 2000] share the same construction. In “Nausea”, A. Roquentin travels from Bouville to Paris to meet his old acquaintance Anny, hoping he would get answers from her. The question that disturbs him is about existence. The novel opens with A. Roquentin declaring about his strange condition, time by time experiencing an obscure state of nausea that feels like illness. The nausea always comes while the main hero realizes the existence of objects around him. The purposelessness of these objects disgusts him, pushing toward realization of his own meaningless existence. The author builds up a certain atmosphere to face his main hero with nausea by creative narrating. The first condition is *loneliness*, or *isolation* from the herd. A. Roquentin is a lonely hero without family and reliable friends, separated from his beloved women for several years. In the book, he admits: “I live alone, entirely alone. I never speak to anyone, never; I receive nothing, I give nothing” [Sartre, 1969a; 14]. A lonely individual, at some rate, is free from the influence of others; that state can keep him safe from *bad faith* in existential terms. Bad faith contradicts the next concept of existentialism – *authenticity*. Some existentialists claim that authenticity is a feeling of wholeness. When the life of an individual is composed by the whole story that makes him the main hero and the writer of his life [Nehamas, 1998]. On the other hand, being not authentic means to put your destiny upon the will of others. More exactly, existential authenticity is being free from social, universal, and mystical dependence.

A person who is in solitude can dive into his own consciousness and awaken. J.-P. Sartre describes herd being unable to awaken existentially. “From two to four the cafe is deserted, then M. Fasquelle takes a few dazed steps, the waiters turn out the lights and he slips into unconsciousness: when this man is lonely he sleeps... In order to exist, they also must consort with others” [Sartre, 1969a; 14]. From the

book, it's clear that A.Roquentin is from the layer of intelligentsia, a historian who is not striving for his life, well-educated, and financially stable. This condition of isolation from worries and people forces him to think beyond the material world. He sinks into his own consciousness, which causes him to feel anxiety and fear about existence. "There: I am quietly slipping into the water's depths, towards fear" [Sartre, 1969a; 17]. The post-war atmosphere in Europe reinforced existentialism with many young followers who were attracted to *the freedom of choice* offered by J.-P. Sartre. I.Murdoch states that J.-P. Sartre was one of the most appealing philosophers in 1945 as he offered the possibility to create a better world. "Existentialism was the new religion, the new salvation", comments I.Murdoch [Murdoch, 1999; 3]. J.-P. Sartre attracted the audience with freedom. However, he claims that the freedom that he is viewing is painful because of the solitude and lack of directions in life [Sartre, 1992]. Being more exact, man is responsible for himself, for shaping his own path, and this action defines him as being authentic. Fear and anxiety as existential concepts appear while facing chaotic and seemingly absurd existence without any signs of metaphysical explanation. For A.Roquentin, freedom mattered a lot, but he misunderstands it firstly. Existentially, the notion of freedom is not concrete but abstract. It is the realization of the absurdity of existence. A.Roquentin thinks that freedom is about being unique and distinguished. For instance, he admires his redhead, or loves Anny's character of remaining the same and loyal to her principles. "That is pleasant to see. Anyhow, it is a definite colour: I am glad I have red hair; perhaps this is what I liked best in her, this austere loyalty to her most insignificant features" [Sartre, 1969a]. Although the feeling of nausea that causes him discomfort pushes him to accept the existential truth, to which he desperately seeks a cure. The existential truth is associated with nihilism founded by Nietzsche – the absolute meaninglessness of the world [Pratt, n.d.]. J.-P. Sartre's nausea is the same; as his main hero starts to realize the absurdity of existence, his consciousness begins to reject it in a form of nausea. Existentialism is a philosophy of an individual, so it focuses on ontological problems, and the prime question is the meaning of life. A.Roquentin later says in the book that he himself is nausea, which means his existence is meaningless and absurd. A.Camus, the comrade of J.-P. Sartre, declares in his essay that the most important question in life is how to avoid committing suicide because of the meaninglessness of our existence. Thus, existentialists try to fulfill their life with meaning to avoid annihilation. Even though J.-P. Sartre shows the small distractor from this unpleasant feeling in his novel. It is a song called "Some of these Days". J.-P. Sartre defines it like this: "There is nothing extra-ordinary in this, it is a small happiness of Nausea; What has just happened is that the Nausea has disappeared" [Sartre, 1969a; 33]. One of the main functions of art is escapism that draws a person into the world of imagination, away from reality and truth. The creation of art has an important role, as J.-P. Sartre shows his solution for existential crisis by it at the end.

The next existential concepts are *freedom* and *awakening*. "I wanted to and could not pick up a paper lying on the ground. This is all and it is not even an event. Yes – but, to tell the whole truth, I was deeply impressed by it: I felt I was no longer

free” [Sartre, 1969a; 18]. This small extract shows the insecurity of the main hero and the lack of freedom. Without free will, one cannot pretend to individualism. Nihilism is experienced particularly by an individual; hence, F.Nietzsche distinguishes *an individual* from *a herd* [Westphal, 2012]. Herd is a system, community, and social convention. It is a unity where an individual is lost. On the other hand, an individual is an exception. He can see out of the scope; he is not a slave of herd morality. By his originality, he is condemned by the unity: “To be alone, to experience things by oneself, neither to obey nor to rule, to be an individual – that was not a pleasure but a punishment; one was sentenced to individuality” [Ansell-Pearson & Large, 2006; 222]. Also, the English writer J.Fowles in his non-fiction work, “The Aristos”, explains the complex tension between *Aristo* – intelligentsia and *hoi polloi* – the other. From his point of view, the envy of the herd and the snobbism of individuals are the main sources of the evil [Fowles, 1964; 10]. In “Nausea”, there is an episode of a luncheon organized by the self-taught man for A.Roquentin, where these two have a debate about humanism. In the novel, the name of the self-taught man is not mentioned, which is a highlighting point of lacking individuality and authenticity. By declaring himself a humanist and a socialist, he rejects the loneliness of a person. The self-taught man blindly follows established ideas, forcing his consciousness not to reveal his authentic being. “Empty a man! I salute, in passing, the Catholic humanism from which the Self-Taught Man borrowed this formula without realizing it” [Sartre, 1969a; 162]. The self-taught man only reads quotations modeling the way of life with bad faith.

As mentioned above, isolation is the primary condition that leads to an individual’s freedom and defines the outsider character. A.Roquentin is depicted as a wanderer – homeless and rootless. He has not got his past, and his future is obscure. He exists only in the present. “You don’t put your past in your pocket; you have to have a house. I have only my body: a man entirely alone, with his lonely body, cannot indulge in memories; they pass through him. I shouldn’t complain: all I wanted was to be free” [Sartre, 1969a; 91]. J.-P. Sartre compares existential freedom with a leader’s position. A leader who is responsible for others and who feels anguish while making decisions is truly free in an existential way. A leader is condemned to make choices [Sartre, 1992]. In the novel, A.Roquentin visits the gallery in the museum filled with the portraits of Bouville’s elite. He feels the stares of these people full of judgment that makes him feel pressure. He openly shows his admiration toward this elite, comparing them to the picture of a died bachelor: “...none of those painted had died a bachelor, none of them had died childless or intestate, none without the last rites. Their souls at peace that day as on other days, with God and the world, these men had slipped quietly into death, to claim their share of eternal life to which they had a right...For they had a right to everything: to life, to work, to wealth, to command, to respect, and, finally, to immortality” [Sartre, 1969a; 114]. A.Roquentin believes that this higher layer lived a meaningful life, and they have never felt stranger as him. He reckons the people in the portraits are godlike and were responsible for the creation of the city Bouville. Especially he admires Remy Parrotin, a doctor who substituted a priest

by curing the souls of his students. J.-P. Sartre's existential philosophy superseded man's position from the blind servant of the God to the creator of his own destiny. A.Roquentin's visit to the gallery reinforces the feeling of nausea. "But his judgment went through me like a sword and questioned my very right to exist; I existed like a stone, a plant or a microbe; My existence began to worry me seriously" [Sartre, 1969a]. The hero realizes that he is a part of the herd, alongside other visitors, without free will. "We were three soldiers manoeuvring in this immense hall" [Sartre, 1969a; 124]. Before leaving the hall, A.Roquentin points a very unexpected comment toward this elite, calling them *bastards*, which contradicts his admiration of meaningfulness. By I.Murdoch's explanation, the protagonist senses the bad faith in them as those people camouflaged the absurdity of existence [Murdoch, 1999; 20].

A.Roquentin is a great example of an outsider character. His isolation in the city Bouville, the understanding of his own uselessness and hollow existence, leads him to make his first free choice – giving up writing histories about M. de Rollebon, because from now on he would write his own history. Here, A.Roquentin realizes the truth that objects exist not only materialistically but also in consciousness. For instance, memories exist before they are forgotten. When he stops writing about M. de Rollebon, he triumphantly declares: "And suddenly, noiseless, M. de Rollebon had returned to his nothingness" [Sartre, 1969a; 131]. His work on this historical personage subdued his own existence. A.Roquentin embodied M. de Rollebon, eternalizing him by sacrificing his own essence. His existential awakening happens in the gallery while he understands that he is nothing compared to distinguished individuals. His life decision about giving up writing a historical book on M. de Rollebon is the intention to delve into his own self, to make himself someone whose existence is not in danger of annihilation. It is about surviving in absurd. In the gallery he admits, "I admired the reign of man" [Sartre, 1969a; 123]. These lines prove the existential doctrine, existence precedes essence. "We mean that man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world – and defines himself afterwards" [Sartre, 1956; 6], says J.-P. Sartre in the lecture given in Paris in late 1945. The lecture was titled "Existentialism is Humanism" and was produced by J.-P. Sartre as an answer for criticism by Marxists and secular Christianity of his newfound philosophy and an essay that was written accordingly, "Being and Nothingness". Some critiques reckon "Nausea" as a literary form of the philosophical essay "Being and Nothingness" which had been published later [Charlesworth, 1975; 92]. After being alienated both physically and psychologically, the protagonist of the novel starts to define himself in the third person perspective. "I am the Thing. Existence, liberated, detached, floods over me. I exist" [Sartre, 1969a; 134]. The state of realization of himself leads him to so-called existential crisis or neurosis. The narration style of the author to describe A.Roquentin's existential crisis is the monologue. The hero often accuses his consciousness as it never stops thinking. He speaks to himself, declaring about his existence. His psychological breakdowns are often shown with short statements. For instance, in a daily diary, A.Roquentin writes only two words on Tuesday: *Nothing. Existed*. These extremely short sentences

show that the hero has not got any strength to write on this day, that he needs a break. The concept of anxiety in existential terms means facing extremely difficult life choices where no instructions are given to choose the right one, and there is no escape of free choice; otherwise, you cannot be an individual but will be an unimportant and meaningless herd. In the description of foggy Friday, J.-P. Sartre used stylistic mastery by weather portrait to show the psychological state of A. Roquentin, his anxiety and being lost in an answerless world. The Friday starts with thick fog surrounding the city Bouville. "There were people around me; I sometimes heard the sound of their steps or the low hum of their voices: but I saw no one. ... I didn't know where I was going, ... I repeated with anguish: Where shall I go? where shall I go?" [Sartre, 1969a]. The blindness of the hero caused by the fog implicitly associates with his loneliness in the mute universe. The problem of existential crisis is also described neatly. It is how to avoid total annihilation in an absurd world. This same time, A. Roquentin finds refuge in the public library, though he admits that he is incapable of work that day. The day ends with pleasant rain, and the hero finds the courage to exit the library after its closing.

The English contemporary writer, C. Wilson, declares that all existentialists' texts own negative perspectives and are highly pessimistic toward the accidental phenomenon of life. He divides contemporary writers into two groups, pessimists and optimists, according to their ideology:

- pessimists: A. Huxley, S. Beckett, E. Ionesco, E. Hemingway, T. Eliot, and all French existentialists;

- optimists: H. Wells, B. Shaw, G. K. Chesterton [Wilson, 1966; 14].

C. Wilson is famous for creating his new, optimistic existentialism to express the progressivity of this philosophy. He wrote his point of view about existentialism and its influence on contemporary literature in his non-fiction book "The Outsider" [Wilson, 1963]. The author's main concern lies in the belief that the existentialism of J.-P. Sartre and S. Kierkegaard is struck a dead end and impossible to progress anymore. Another English representative, I. Murdoch, in her essay "Existentialists and Mystics," draws a similar distinction between the works of writers of the XIX and XX centuries. She mainly speaks about the novel genre, saying that this type of literature provides the full potential to define the modern character. As the title of her work shows, she divides the novel into two types. The existentialist novel featured the outsider character, who is a lonely neurotic: D. Lawrence, E. Hemingway, A. Camus, J. Satre, K. Amis; and the mystical novel portrays the mystic who does not lose faith in metaphysical: G. Greene, P. White, S. Bellow, M. Spark, W. Golding [Murdoch, 1997; 186]. By such categorizing, these English writers tried to react to the negative possibilities of French existentialism, like egoism, indifference, and the problem of suicide.

The following state of an outsider character is the feeling of *absurdity*. Absurdity is one of the key terms of existentialism. The term was even separated as a philosophical and a literary movement from existentialism and being called absurdism. F. Kafka, A. Camus, and S. Beckett are the representatives. The distinctive feature of absurdism

is that it does not deny the existing nature of a human. The objects and a man cannot be absurd separately, but their interrelation creates absurdity [Webber, 2018]. If J.-P. Sartre suggests producing essence to overcome absurdity, A. Camus offers to accept it. Sisyphus, the ancient Greek hero, in his essay, finds meaning and joy in his punishment – rolling up a boulder for eternity [Camus, 2024]. J.-P. Sartre's A. Roquentin finds truth about his existence and nausea in absurdity. Absurdity in an existential way means existing without reason, which means there are no rules, no moral codes, no afterlife, nor divine punishment. Existence is contingent, not necessary. The notions of life and death embody being and nothingness. In the novel, A. Roquentin explains that every living thing keeps its existing exhaustingly because they do not have the courage to die. As an example, he says about people and trees: “So many existences missed, obstinately begun again and again missed – like the awkward efforts of an insect fallen on its back? (I was one of those efforts) ... They did not want to exist, only they could not help themselves” [Sartre, 1969a; 179]. Like in F. Kafka's “Metamorphosis” [Kafka, 2021], J.-P. Sartre compares A. Roquentin's and other people's lives to the struggle of an insect. Also, he personifies trees whose roots are *tearing at the earth*.

Another crucial problem in existentialism is the following, if there is no reason to exist and no courage to die, everything in this life would be permissible, or people would live a hedonistic style of life. J.-P. Sartre in his philosophical work quotes from F. Dostoevsky's “The Brothers Karamazov”: “Everything is permissible if there is no God” [Dostoevsky, 1992]. J.-P. Sartre adds to F. Dostoevsky's lines: “If there is no God, a human is the king of the world” [Sartre, 1956; 28]. However, F. Dostoevsky's philosophical frame is more like a neoplatonic, as his solution to existential crisis does not refer to reason but finds means in faith and love. In “Nausea”, A. Roquentin's freedom leads him to understand his permissiveness. “Do I frighten people now? I shall end up that way. But it makes no difference to me. They aren't completely wrong to be afraid: I feel as though I could do anything” [Sartre, 1969a; 166]. The philosopher and writer from Denmark, who is one of the foundation stones of existentialism alongside F. Nietzsche, S. Kierkegaard, found three modes of being in his theory. They are the followings:

A. Aesthetical mode – libertine type of life, which is equal to permissiveness.

B. Ethical mode – rational type of life.

C. Religious mode – *leap to the faith*, rediscovering faith without religious dogmas. J.-P. Sartre's philosophy stops at the second mode, finding rational solutions to existential chaos. S. Kierkegaard believes that existential truth needs to be experienced, and for that a man must exist as an individual, which means to be an outsider [Hannay, 2012; 73]. Self-awareness happens through the isolation and having the immunity to bad faith. As a consequence, it makes a man totally free. J.-P. Sartre states that a person is condemned to be free thanks to the contingency of the world [Kaufmann, 1960; 242]. Individuality is the key feature that forces a person to awaken and to dive into his own consciousness.

The novel “Nausea” does not contain many leading characters, but plenty of

side ones who are the representatives of the herd. One of the episodic characters whose function is to push the leading hero toward the truth is Anny. Anny can be considered as an individual, though she stops only in the first, aesthetical mode of being and struggles to step into the ethical mode. The conversation between Anny and A.Roquentin is full of misunderstanding. They want to find answers and consolation from each other, though they fail both attempts. Both of them in an existential crisis, they are aware of the absurdity and meaninglessness of the world. Anny desperately repeats, *I outlive myself!* She must be considered as a supportive character. In philosophical novels, this prototype is marked with mysteriousness, romanticism, the sublime, and individuality. A.Roquentin remembered her like this: “Anny would cause dark little tides to be born in our hearts” [Sartre, 1969a; 97]. Despite being the symbol of passion, she faces hollowness in isolation that arises due to discontent in the aesthetical mode of life. I.Murdoch, in her first novel, “Under the Net” [Murdoch, 1954] creates a similar personage whose name is Anna. Even their names are very similar. I.Murdoch was greatly influenced by J.-P. Sartre, so it reflects her novels written in the 1950s. Both of the heroines work in a theatre, passionately loved by the main heroes, own the room filled with exotic items like masks, shawls, and turbans, and they lead a libertine style of life. What is important is that both of them mislead the main heroes like mythological sirens or fairy enchanters. Another contemporary novelist, M.Kundera, who is Czech and French, also evaluated this type of character in his existential novel “Unbearable Lightness of Being” [Kundera, 2004]. Sabina is an artist and lover of the main hero. She lives a fully aesthetical mode of life without regrets till the end. She is the only static character whose essence is not violated or progressed. Her relationship with Tomas is also full of confusion; even though they represent each other as reflections in the mirror, both of them are the representatives of light life, which is sometimes unbearable.

The main concern of existentialist thinkers is to overcome meaninglessness while avoiding permissiveness. To ensure a morally better world, J.-P. Sartre introduced the concept of responsibility through freedom. Awareness of not only existence but also nothingness can help to progress. Death is one of the main motives of existential works of fiction. For instance, J.-P. Sartre’s short story “The Wall” [Sartre, 1969b] shows the contingency of the death and human anxiety after facing it. A.Roquentin, in his existential crisis, repeats: “I was in the way for eternity” [Sartre, 1969a; 173]. Death is the thin line between existence and nothingness. For existentialists, it causes anxiety, and for neoplatonists – or mystics – it helps to become morally better by understanding the value of others. Through the dialog between Anny and A.Roquentin, J.-P. Sartre defines the perfect moments and the privileged situations. The perfect moments are the euphoric experiences people live for. From Anny’s point of view, death is the privileged situation that can stimulate the perfect moments. However, it fully depends on human effort: “In fact, then, the situation is the material: it demands exploitation” [Sartre, 1969a; 199]. The privileged situations mentioned in the novel are contingent, but the perfect moments are achieved by individuals, and they provide meaning to life. C.Wilson calls the perfect moments the peak experiences, linking

them with contingency. He contrasted J.-P. Sartre to a poet; hence, a poet faces the accidentality and the sublime with shock of delight, while J.-P. Sartre with nausea [Wilson, 1966; 27]. A.Roquentin associates the perfect moments with art, but Anny links them with morality: “No: it was ... a duty. You had to transform privileged situations into perfect moments. It was a moral question” [Sartre, 1969a; 199]. In the end of their debate, both of them lost their hopes: “I had counted on Anny to save me I realized only now. My past is dead. The Marquis de Rollebon is dead, Anny came back only to take all hope away. I am alone in this white, garden-rimmed street. Alone and free. But this freedom is rather like death” [Sartre, 1969a; 209]. In his rediscovered absurd life, A.Roquentin had a crucial choice to continue existing, which defines existence precedes essence. He himself creates a situation to fulfill his life with meaning. Inspired by his favorite song, “*Some of These Days*” that he listens to in the café before leaving Bouville, he decides to write novels. “And I, to, wanted to be. That is all I wanted; this is the last word” [Sartre, 1969a; 234]. He chooses to exist as a form of idea by being remembered as an author of a book like he remembers and loves the singers of this song.

For J.-P. Sartre, a man is a supreme being, and while he is responsible for his life choices, he is equally responsible for others, and this is the reason why he calls existentialism humanism and defends it against being called pessimistic: “Man is nothing else but what he purposes, he exists only in so far as he realises himself, he is therefore nothing else but the sum of his actions, nothing else but what his life is” [Sartre, 1956; 6]. J.-P. Sartre’s existentialism is about a human’s possibility to change and progress.

Existentialism, pioneered by J.-P. Sartre, extended into the realm of fiction, shaping new directions in prose writing. Notable for its engagement with Modernism, it introduced distinctive outsider characters – prototypes of existentialists – who became central figures in both prose and drama. This type is marked with isolation and dislocation: “humanity was no longer at home in the world, or even in itself” [Slocombe, 2003; 213]. Contemporary English writer I.Murdoch accuses J.-P. Sartre of being romantic and his philosophical framework of being solipsistic. Still, romantic heroes are driven by passion, but existential ones by reason. Fiction created by J.-P. Sartre emphasizes the meaninglessness and indifference of the surrounding world and the loneliness of an individual with his existential crisis.

S.Beauvoir stated that the first existentialists were S.Kierkegaard and K.Jaspers. After them came the Christian existentialism of G.Marcel and the atheistic existentialism of J.-P. Sartre [Charlesworth, 1975; 5]. It can be distinguished between two approaches to existentialism in general:

1. Atheistic: F.Nietzsche, J.Sartre, A.Camus, and others.
2. Religious: S.Kierkegaard, G.Marcel, K.Jaspers, and others.

Atheistic existentialists believe in individual supremacy. A human is king of his life; thus, he is free in his actions, a free agent. He must shape his identity and choose his own way, but the problem is in his loneliness. He is shockingly free, as J.-P. Sartre stated, because others could not direct him and could not be in bad faith. There is no

universal truth for him, no God to worship in his hard times, and the contingency of life makes him feel absurd or nausea. Free choices make him responsible for his actions, and self-consciousness forces him to accept the absurdity of life, to face anxiety, and to overcome it.

Religious existentialists are likely to be *mystics*. The chaos and absurdity of life make them turn their backs to churches but face God instead. I.Murdoch suggested substituting God in the godless age for *goodness, attention, and love*. Thus, for religious existentialists, it is not necessarily worshipping God but having faith in the metaphysical. It can be God, nature, universal power, or love. In S.Kierkegaard's point of view, one must leap to the faith to understand the truth or the true way of living and existing as an individual.

J.-P. Sartre's widely known novel "Nausea" is built upon the frame of his own-found existentialism. In this analysis we investigated the portrait of an outsider character that became the prototype for contemporary literature with philosophical inclination. The novel "Nausea" is a character-driven fiction that shows the inner metamorphosis of a protagonist in a short period of time. The certain characteristic of the outsider character, or the existentialist, is that he or she starts to reject all existing values, moral codes, theories, and rules, referring to them as bad faith. Then the hero begins his quest to find the truth about being and nothingness. His deep diving into his own consciousness forces him to be separated from the people and embrace his own existence. Two pessimistic existential notions, like anxiety and fear appear as a result of disability finding meaning in life by facing absurdity, which leads to nihilism. This state of the hero portrayed by the author is called an existential crisis. I.Murdoch refers to them being neurotics. Hence, the prime question in a philosophical novel is how to overcome the existential crisis, or neurosis. Neoplatonic finds a solution in virtue, absurdist by accepting the absurd, nihilist by faith in eternal recurrence, and existentialists by creating meaning. An existential hero awakens by accepting himself, so he can write his own story or shape his essence. The novel "Nausea" approves the doctrine existence precedes essence, highlighting free will, individuality, and authenticity. In the following graph, the psychological quest of the outsider character according to the main hero of "Nausea", A.Roquentin, is drawn.

The novel "Nausea" is distinguished by the lack of action or plot progress. The progress can be seen mainly in the consciousness of the hero. However, the only episode where several characters are involved is the banishing scene of the self-taught man from the library. This episode shows the incorrectness of the self-taught man's beliefs and proves his inauthenticity and pretentiousness. Being a humanist, he is beaten by humans, though he tries desperately to prove his love of people to A.Roquentin before. J.-P. Sartre portrayed the unconscious layer, which is the true self of person, with the self-taught man's banishing scene and the heroism of the main hero, where he shows compassion to him by approving of his authentic self, though it may cause nausea. The author's intention or philosophical message is presented through the dialogs, and the problem is displayed through the interior monologues of the protagonist.

Existentialism of J.-P. Sartre had an immense influence on contemporary English, American, and Japanese literature. Influenced by M.Heidegger's work of philosophy, "Being and Time" [Heidegger, 2001], he evaluated the idea of freedom, free choice, individuality, absurdity, and responsibility, as well as inspiring many modern writers like I.Murdoch, J.Fowles, C.Wilson, K.Isiguro, A.Rand, R.Pirsig, H.Murakami, and K.Abe. In contemporary English literature, the new literary tendencies like neoplatonism and optimistic existentialism, in American literature, objectivism appeared thanks to existential themes.

CONCLUSION

Contemporary literature has diverse approaches and styles that illuminate different colors. Fantasy, dystopia, thriller, documentary, or even modern love romances are part of this era. However, the fiction with philosophical inclination has always been worth investigating, as it contains crucial philosophical debates, the wisdom of the past, and knowledge that has been evaluated, then implied to fiction. The theoretical base of a philosophical novel can make it quite complex to comprehend, though it can boost critical thinking. J.-P. Sartre's influence on contemporary literature is undeniable. His philosophy of an individual became an inseparable part of modernism and postmodernism. He teaches to value human capacity and progress. From an existentialist perspective, individuals must acknowledge full responsibility for their actions. The awareness of being ultimately accountable for one's choices, behaviors, and values often leads to existential anxiety, as it underscores the weight of personal autonomy and ethical decision-making. They attempt to stop feeling anxious by refusing or dismissing their freedom. Existentialists criticize this fall into self-deception from a position of autonomy. They stress that, no matter how challenging it can be, people must take complete responsibility for their actions. If one wishes to live a reasonable and fulfilling life in a strange and absurd universe, one must first become completely conscious of the true essence of human existence and bravely embrace it.

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