

الصراع الوجودي لـيوسف ك: دراسة نفسية في رواية كافكا "المحاكمة"
The Existential Struggle of Josef K.: A Psychological Exploration of
Kafka's The Trial

م.م. عمار حسن عيسى
Asst. Lect. Ammar Hassan Obayes
جامعة الحلة / كلية العلوم / قسم الادلة الجنائية / Collage of Sciences /
Criminal Evidence Department
ammar_hassan@hilla-unc.edu.iq

الملخص:

تناقش رواية "المحاكمة" لكافكا كيف يكافح الفرد مع العقل والمعنى عندما يواجه محكمة غامضة. يبدأ يوسف ك. واثقاً من نفسه، لكنه سرعان ما يشعر بالضياع في متاهة من القوانين التي لا تفسر شيئاً. يبدو أن القانون عشوائي، قاسي، وعبثي. ومع لقائه بالمزيد من المسؤولين، يتلاشى ثقته، ويزداد شكه. قد تشير الرواية إلى أن المؤسسات الحديثة يمكن أن تسحق إحساس الفرد بذاته. تترك الرواية القارئ في حالة من التساؤل حول الأدوار. تتغير حالة عقل يوسف ك.، ربما بشكل غير منظم، في ظل هذه المتاهة القانونية الغريبة. يحاول إيجاد معنى، لكنه يصطدم بمحكمة فوضوية تبدو وكأنها تقاوم أي منطق. يظهر كافكا العدالة وهي تنزلق بعيداً، مثل ظل عند الغروب. يشعر الفرد بالضآلة، والعجز الشديد. هل يوجد جواب واضح حقاً، أم أن السعي نفسه فارغ؟ تشير هذه الرؤية إلى أن المعنى قد يظل مخفياً إلى الأبد في النهاية، مما يعكس العزلة والعجز الذي يشعر به الفرد في نظام يفتقر إلى الشفافية والمعنى.

الكلمات المفتاحية: كافكا، "المحاكمة"، يوسف ك، الوجودية، التحول النفسي

Abstract:

Kafka's The Trial looks at how a person wrestles with mind and meaning when faces a baffling court. Josef K. starts out sure of himself, yet soon he feels lost in a maze of rules that never explain anything. The law seems random, harsh, and pointless. As he meets more officials, his confidence drains, and doubt grows. The story may suggest that modern institutions can crush one's sense of self. It leaves readers questioning roles. Josef K.'s mind shifts, maybe not neatly, under an odd legal maze. He tries to find purpose, yet he bumps into a chaotic court that seems to resist any logic. Kafka shows justice sliding away, like a shadow at dusk. The individual feels tiny, quite powerless. Does any clear answer really exist, or is the chase itself empty? This view hints that meaning might stay hidden, forever in the end isolation and helplessness that an individual feels in a system that lacks transparency and meaning.

Key words: Kafka, The Trial, Josef K, Existentialism ,Psychological transformation

1 Josef K. A Psychological and Existential Study

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In *The Trial*, Franz Kafka presents the character of Josef K. as a model of an individual who suddenly finds himself confronting an invisible and enigmatic authority without a clear explanation for the charges against him. Josef K., a successful bank employee, wakes up one morning to discover that he has been arrested without understanding the reason, raising questions from the outset about the nature of justice and the oppressive bureaucracy governing his world. Written in 1914 and published posthumously in 1925, the novel reflects Kafka's personal experience with feelings of helplessness and anxiety, making it a prime example of modern literature that explores the crisis of the individual in the modern age. From the moment of his arrest, K. begins to encounter a series of events that put him in conflict with both himself and the obscure legal system, making the novel a profound reflection of psychological and existential turmoil (Muir, 1955).

(Adorno, 1944) argues that Kafka's *The Trial* portrays Josef K. as a figure alienated by an incomprehensible system. K.'s attempts to rationalize his predicament are met with contradictions, revealing the absurdity of a system devoid of logic or transparency. This reflects the modern individual's struggle against oppressive institutions that marginalize and dehumanize. K. embodies the Kafkaesque experience—an alienated individual trapped in a futile quest for meaning within an indifferent system.

Although Josef K. begins the novel as a confident individual, he undergoes profound psychological changes as the events unfold. At first, he refuses to acknowledge the legitimacy of the trial, believing that he can easily justify himself and prove his innocence. However, as the trial becomes increasingly complex and he receives no clear answers from those in charge, K. begins to lose confidence in both himself and the world around him. This psychological deterioration is evident in his growing distress and isolation, as he gradually loses control over his life, highlighting the deep internal conflict between his desire for freedom and his limited power over his own fate. This psychological state reflects the sense of helplessness that many individuals experience when confronted with oppressive systems that remain invisible yet exert a powerful influence over human destiny (Robertson, 1985).

The Trial reflects the human condition, depicting an individual's struggle against incomprehensible systems. Josef K. symbolizes the

conflict between the individual and authority, as his psychological transformation mirrors the existential tension of confronting an irrational world. Kafka's critique of opaque bureaucratic systems remains relevant today, where individuals still grapple with forces beyond their control. Josef K. embodies the psychological and existential struggles of modernity (Deleuze & Guattari, 1975).

Josef K. , In *The Trial* experiences an inexplicable sense of guilt that profoundly impacts his psychological state. Despite not knowing the true reason for his trial, this feeling persists, subjecting him to intense psychological pressure. This guilt creates an internal anxiety that drives him to seek answers while simultaneously deepening his sense of helplessness. In psychology, guilt is often associated with an internal conflict between the ego and the id, where the ego experiences guilt over actions that seem incomprehensible or unjustified. In Josef K.'s case, there is no clear evidence proving either his innocence or his guilt, which further amplifies this feeling. As noted in "The Ego and the Id", guilt can lead to severe psychological distress, increasing anxiety and depression when an individual lacks a clear understanding of its origins (Freud, 1923).

Internal alienation in *The Trial* is vividly expressed through Josef K.'s experience with the enigmatic judicial system. He feels powerless over his fate and unable to comprehend the legal proceedings surrounding him. This alienation reflects a philosophical concept explored by Sartre, who associates such feelings with existentialism, where individuals face an identity crisis when confronted with a reality devoid of meaning and control. In the novel, Josef K. cannot make sense of what is happening to him or determine how to navigate his trial. His attempts to explain or justify his situation prove futile, deepening his sense of estrangement. In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre describes this internal conflict as a consequence of human consciousness struggling to impose meaning on life in a chaotic world. This alienation results in ongoing psychological turmoil that Josef K. cannot overcome, leaving him powerless against forces beyond his control (1943).

(Blanchot, 1955) asserts that the mysterious judicial system in *The Trial* causes Josef K. constant anxiety. He does not understand his trial or how to confront an unfair reality. This anxiety worsens as he fails to find answers. In Heideggerian terms, anxiety arises not from events but from existence itself. Josef K.'s distress stems from the system's ambiguity and his loss of control. Blanchot, in *The Space of Literature*, sees

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anxiety as a natural response to the human condition, deepening Josef K.'s sense of powerlessness.

(Sartre, 1943) contends that one of the defining elements of *The Trial* is the complete ambiguity surrounding Josef K.'s case. This uncertainty leaves him in a state of confusion, as he does not know the real reasons for his accusations or what the future holds. This ambiguity heightens his anxiety, creating a constant internal disarray. Josef K. cannot understand the system he is dealing with or how to influence it. In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre links uncertainty with the absolute freedom of the individual, where one must make choices without guarantees or clear standards. For Josef K., this uncertainty becomes a core aspect of his existential experience, as he is unable to act freely or make decisive choices, deepening his anxiety. Sartre discusses how the absence of certainty heightens personal isolation and increases human tension when facing the unknown. The legal system Josef K. faces in *The Trial* is not merely a legal institution but a mysterious and complex force that profoundly impacts his character. Josef K. feels that this system strips him of any hope for justice or even understanding the reason for his trial. This system, which appears to have complete authority over him, reflects Nietzsche's ideas about power and authority. In his works, Nietzsche discusses how social and political forces dominate and influence individuals. In *The Trial*, Josef K. finds himself in constant conflict with these forces, unable to escape or understand their mechanisms. Through this interaction with the legal system, Kafka mirrors Nietzsche's idea of the individual confronting overwhelming, inescapable power. Nietzsche believes that social systems and authority can erase individual identity, contributing to the formation of Josef K.'s character (1887).

(Blanchot, 1955) posits that Josef K.'s internal conflict greatly impacts his personal relationships in *The Trial*. As the trial progresses, he becomes unable to communicate with others and loses trust in everyone. This mirrors the existential isolation explored in Kafka's works, where individuals are alienated from society due to incomprehensible systems. Josef K.'s social life becomes empty, and his relationships are distorted due to his internal struggle. Blanchot, in *The Space of Literature*, explains how isolation in Kafka's narratives reflects a deeper psychological and existential decline, evident in Josef K.'s experience.

Josef K.'s character in Franz Kafka's *The Trial* represents existential absurdity in a complex, incomprehensible world. At the beginning of the novel, Josef K. is arrested without knowing the reason or charges, reflecting a sense of meaninglessness that dominates his life. The ambiguity of his legal situation and his inability to understand the charges or confront the judge reflects his helplessness in the face of an incomprehensible legal system (Kafka, 1925). This absurdity deepens when K. cannot find an explanation for his situation (Freud, 1914).

Existentialism is clearly demonstrated in Josef K.'s ongoing search for meaning in a world filled with absence and ambiguity. As events unfold, Josef K. becomes more aware of his helplessness within this complex system. Instead, of accepting this situation, he continues his attempts to understand the case he faces, but to no avail. His efforts are met with the impenetrable walls of legal institutions that offer him no answers. This search for meaning in a world that provides no convincing explanations is a key feature of existentialism, which emphasizes that individuals cannot attain fixed meaning in life without facing barriers and obscure challenges (Heidegger, 1953).

“Freedom and choice” are central themes in *The novel*, where Josef K. appears to lack both in the face of the mysterious authority imposing an incomprehensible trial upon him. Throughout the novel, we witness Josef K. attempting to make decisions that shape his life, but he quickly encounters obstacles that limit his choices, governed by forces beyond his control. He finds himself trapped in a loop of illusory choices that lead to no resolution (Kafka 1925). This experience aligns with existential thought, which asserts that individuals often feel unable to make real decisions that affect their destiny, constrained by external forces (Sartre, 1943).

The mysterious nature of authority in *The Trial* cannot be ignored. This authority, embodied in the judicial system, provides no clear explanation regarding the charges or legal procedures it follows. Josef K. faces a trial lacking transparency or justice, with everyone in the system seemingly operating under incomprehensible rules, reflecting a loss of control over the situation. This element of ambiguity mirrors the existential anxiety of individuals in a world dominated by social systems and unjust authorities (Kafka, 1925). In this context, Josef K.'s trial symbolizes the ambiguity that governs human experience in the modern world (Foucault, 1975).

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(Deleuze & Guattari, 1975) maintain that Josef K.'s trial represents the existential struggle between “the individual and the system”, where the individual clearly loses the ability to comprehend the unfolding events. Through his interactions with the lawyers and court officials, we witness his increasing isolation and inner conflict. He cannot understand what is happening, nor can he influence the course of the trial or alter its outcome. This type of conflict between the individual and the system reflects the “existential tension” between the ordinary person and the harsh, incomprehensible reality of life. In *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, Deleuze and Guattari highlight how Kafka's works explore the individual's helplessness in the face of oppressive systems.

2. Power, System, and the Individual: Josef K.'s Struggles

“Power” in *The Trial* is a central theme, manifesting as an incomprehensible and oppressive judicial system. This power is embodied by the bureaucratic apparatus, which operates without clear rules or rational explanations. Josef K. is unable to make sense of the charges against him or the proceedings, leading to constant confusion and disorientation. Throughout the novel, the judicial system remains enigmatic, functioning like an invisible force governed by absurd and arbitrary laws. This unpredictable system enforces a form of authority that is inescapable and irrational, trapping Josef K. in a cycle of ambiguity and helplessness (Foucault, 1975).

Throughout the novel, the judicial “system” emerges as an illogical and incomprehensible entity, devoid of clear rules or predictable standards. This is evident in the procedures Josef K. faces during his trial, where he encounters a series of absurd and inexplicable situations that offer no clarity or resolution. The chaos of the system extends beyond the courtroom, infiltrating every aspect of Josef K.'s life and rendering him powerless against an authority he cannot understand or confront. This reflects the broader existential theme in *The Trial*, where the judicial system symbolizes the absurdity and irrationality that govern human existence (Camus, 1942).

One of the key characteristics of the system in *The Trial* is its absolute ambiguity, which manifests in Josef K.'s inability to comprehend the

forces acting against him. This ambiguity permeates every aspect of the judicial system, from its obscure procedures to the arbitrary decisions made against him. Despite his efforts to understand the system, every attempt proves futile. The characters Josef K. interacts with—lawyers, judges, and court officials—provide no logical explanations or clarity, instead deepening his confusion. This amplifies Josef K.'s sense of helplessness and alienation (Blanchot, 1955).

The key elements highlighted in *The Trial* is Josef K.'s continuous rejection of the system pursuing him. This rejection is evident in his repeated attempts to find a way out, whether by accepting reality or by challenging the system. However, this challenge only deepens his isolation and the anxiety he experiences. Kafka illustrates that this constant rejection does not change the status quo, but rather intensifies Josef K.'s internal conflict as he desperately seeks justice, yet remains trapped in an absurd system that offers no clear answers (Camus 1942).

The relationship between “power and system” in *The Trial* reflects the existential dimensions embodied in the inescapable absurdity. Josef K. represents the individual suffering from the absence of meaning in a world filled with systems that offer no explanation for existence. The authority in the novel is not merely a social force, but a manifestation of absurdity and the illogical in human life. The novel shows how, even when facing the most powerful systems, the individual remains unable to comprehend the reason behind such treatment, reinforcing the idea of existential impotence, characterized by the rejection of the system and the individual’s inability to influence it (Sartre, 1943).

Through the novel, Josef K. is portrayed as a character marked by rebellion and rejection of the judicial system he faces. From the moment he discovers he is accused, he embarks on continuous attempts to understand the issues surrounding him. These attempts are not limited to searching for evidence or logical explanations, but also include his complete refusal to cooperate with the judicial institutions. Despite his repeated efforts to comprehend the charges against him, Josef K. fails to receive any acceptable explanation for what is happening to him. This rejection is not merely intellectual but extends to a psychological resistance against the idea of submitting to a system that lacks clear legitimacy. This defiance symbolizes Josef K.’s challenge against a system that seeks to keep him trapped in an invisible web of laws and procedures (Deleuze, 1992).

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Josef K.'s psychological conflict stems from his feeling of helplessness in the face of a power he cannot change or escape. Whenever he attempts to act against the system or search for an explanation for his case, he encounters a wall of ambiguity and chaos. This creates a constant internal tension that Josef K. experiences throughout the novel. The character undergoes an internal struggle between his desire to understand the situation and his complete inability to influence the course of the trial. This tension reflects humanity's conflict with larger forces, which cannot be shattered or controlled, deepening his psychological state of wavering between hope and despair (Sartre, 1956).

When Josef K. faces the judicial system, he begins to rebel against it in ways that are clearly reflected in his behavior and decisions. Despite realizing that the system offers him no support or real hope, Josef K. refuses to accept reality and strives to challenge this authority. His rebellion is shown in his refusal to interpret the complex legal procedures being applied to him, and his attempt to act as though the system does not truly exist. This rebellion, although seeming futile, signifies Josef K.'s effort to resist the sense of utter helplessness in the face of an unexplainable power (Derrida, 1976).

As Josef K.'s refusal to accept reality continues, his psychological tension increases significantly. This tension arises from his deep sense of misunderstanding and helplessness in front of an enigmatic authority. The more Josef K. rejects coexisting with this authority, the greater his inner suffering becomes, and his thoughts and emotions become more confused. The ultimate result of this conflict is the intensification of Josef K.'s isolation from the world around him, which further strengthens his feeling of helplessness in finding an escape from his situation. This constant tension reflects the existential condition that an individual experiences when facing an authority that cannot be understood or changed (Heidegger, 1927).

Ultimately, Josef K.'s refusal to accept reality and his rejection of cooperation with authority lead to a constant state of psychological isolation. This isolation deepens with each encounter with the judicial system, as Josef K. finds himself alone in his struggle against these

forces. The psychological isolation he experiences makes it difficult for him to connect with others, which intensifies his feelings of helplessness and alienation. This isolation is not limited to social aspects but also extends to the internal conflict that Josef K. faces in his futile attempts to escape the system that controls him (Camus, 1942).

(Kafka, 1998) depicts the ongoing struggle with authority in *The Trial*, which profoundly impacts Josef K.'s character, leading to significant psychological transformations. Initially, Josef K. appears confident and self-assured, but the mysterious trial subjects him to intense psychological pressure. Over time, his confidence erodes, giving way to confusion and anxiety, which manifest in his behavior. His interactions with others become increasingly marked by irritability and anger, reflecting his growing frustration and inability to comprehend the system pursuing him. This gradual evolution of his character underscores the profound influence of authority on his psyche and inner development, illustrating how oppressive systems can distort an individual's sense of self and reality (Blanchot, 1955).

(Sartre, 1943) suggests that Josef K.'s feelings of helplessness intensify as his trial progresses. He becomes increasingly powerless to influence the course of events or even comprehend the reasons behind his trial. These feelings grow steadily, contributing to the deterioration of his mental state. His inability to find any logical explanation for his predicament—whether from lawyers, judges, or court officials—deepens his confusion and alienation. This psychological turmoil leaves him feeling helpless not only in the face of the judicial system but also in his ability to control his personal life or alter his fate. As a result, the confidence he once possessed erodes, highlighting the existential struggle against an irrational and oppressive system (Michel, 1975)

“The authority and judicial system” in *The Trial* contribute significantly to Josef K.'s isolation from society. Over time, the communication gaps between him and others widen due to his ongoing struggle with the judicial system. His isolation deepens every time he rejects the reality or refuses to submit to the authority pursuing him. This psychological isolation begins to affect his relationships with those around him, making his connections with friends and family more strained and fragile. Josef K. feels alienated from everyone, including those who were once part of his daily life. This alienation reflects not only social detachment but also a profound sense of internal isolation that influences his existential experience (Derrida, 1976).

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Compared to the beginning of the novel, there is a continuous development in Josef K.'s psychological state due to the powers of the judicial system that overwhelm him. From being active and engaged with his surroundings, Josef K. gradually transforms into a character living in a deep psychological isolation. This isolation manifests in his ongoing inner struggles, where he feels unable to communicate with others or influence the course of events. The psychological isolation he suffers from becomes more evident as he sinks deeper into his absurd trial. Ultimately, Josef K.'s isolation reaches its peak, where he becomes unable to understand or interact with people who were once part of his life (Benjamin, 1999).

(Heidegger, 1927) suggests that the authority pursuing Josef K. gradually causes his social isolation, deepening his sense of alienation. With each stage of the trial and every encounter with the mysterious system, Josef K. becomes increasingly disconnected from those around him. Unable to comprehend the nature of his case or influence its outcome, he is left in a state of psychological helplessness. This isolation exacerbates his psychological distress, as he perceives his life as a series of incomprehensible events from which there is no escape. Ultimately, this isolation distorts his existential experience, intensifying his feelings of helplessness and alienation.

The conflict between Josef K. and the judicial system in the novel clearly reflects existential ideas related to absurdity. Josef K. represents the individual who lives in a world that he cannot understand or control. K.'s internal conflict arises from his continuous attempts to find meaning in his situation, which seems completely illogical. This existential interpretation suggests that humans are doomed to a constant struggle with forces greater than themselves, without being able to find any real meaning in this struggle. Additionally, Josef K. finds himself facing a judicial system that is unpredictable and incomprehensible, which mirrors the existential condition where the individual remains in a perpetual search for meaning that cannot be found (Barnes, 1996).

Under the weight of this incomprehensible system, Josef K. faces a significant problem regarding his ability to make choices. His repeated attempts to escape his trial are constrained within the framework of a system from which he cannot escape. While he initially believes that he

has the ability to make decisions that will affect the course of his trial, he quickly realizes that he is trapped in a closed loop of events that he cannot predict or influence. This sense of powerlessness drives him to continuously search for a way out of this predicament. This mirrors the existential idea that emphasizes the inability to escape preordained circumstances (Sartre, 1943).

Josef K. remains in a continuous struggle with the system until the very end of his life. *The Trial* concludes in a way that emphasizes the absurdity of existence, as Josef K. fails to change his reality or escape from the trial that haunts him. The idea of absurdity is embodied in Josef K.'s failure to find meaning or explanation for his trial, underscoring that humans cannot escape the laws that govern them. In the end, Josef K. is killed without ever understanding the reason behind his trial or his place within this mysterious judicial system. This conclusion reflects the existential notion that individuals remain victims of circumstances they cannot change or escape from (Heidegger, 1927).

Through Josef K.'s internal conflict with authority, existential ideas concerning absurdity and individuality emerge. Josef K. rejects the possibility that life might just be a series of random events without meaning. This refusal places him in a constant struggle, as he tries to find a logical explanation for what is happening to him, but that explanation remains elusive. The deeper he delves into the judicial system, the more he feels alienated from any true understanding of reality. This conflict with authority mirrors the existential struggle of the individual confronting meaninglessness and absurdity (Derrida, 1976).

(Beckett, 2006) explored that within the judicial system Josef K. faces, the tension between the ability to choose and the inevitability of absurdity becomes strikingly clear. Initially, Josef K. believes he can influence the course of his trial through his choices, but he soon realizes that these choices lead to no meaningful change. This tension between the illusion of agency and the inability to alter reality reflects a core existential dilemma: the individual's struggle against life's inherent absurdity, even as they cling to the hope of control. Josef K.'s futile efforts highlight the existential paradox of seeking meaning in a world that resists comprehension

3. Meaning and Justice: Josef K.'s Quest

(Nietzsche, 1886) conveyed that the search for meaning becomes a central driving force behind Josef K.'s character as he navigates his illogical and obscure trial. This search reflects the tension between the

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human desire to comprehend the world and the complexities of a system that offers no explanations, evidence, or reason. Josef K. strives to find a logical explanation for his predicament and attempts to uncover the reasons behind his unjust trial. This struggle highlights a profound philosophical dilemma: the loss of meaning in a world defined by ambiguity and irrationality. His relentless pursuit of answers places him in direct confrontation with existential absurdity, leaving him in a perpetual state of searching for meaning that remains eternally elusive (Camus, 1942).

(Kristeva, 1989) argues that Josef K. persists in his attempts to find a logical explanation for his predicament. He strives to connect the trial to his personal circumstances and seeks to uncover the reasons behind the accusations against him, despite the complete absence of evidence or clarity. Convinced that he will eventually understand the trial, he continues to search for individuals who might provide answers or help him achieve acquittal. These efforts to impose meaning on his situation reflect his deep commitment to seeking certainty, even though all his attempts prove futile. This relentless search underscores his psychological struggle, as he grapples with a world that offers no answers, amplifying his sense of alienation and despair.

Despite Josef K.'s attempts to find meaning, his sense of absurdity grows. His world embodies existential philosophy's view of absurdity, where individuals cannot find meaning or explanations for their experiences. Josef K.'s futile search demonstrates that, despite human efforts to impose meaning, reality often remains incomprehensible. This struggle reflects the absurdity of existence, where personal suffering intertwines with life's meaninglessness, leaving the individual in a perpetual search for unreachable answers (Camus, 1942).

Joseph K.'s relentless search for meaning in his trial within an incomprehensible world profoundly impacts his psyche. Despite his efforts to find explanations or solutions, each attempt only leads to more obstacles. This struggle reflects his psychological fragmentation, as the world becomes a place of doubt and uncertainty. Ultimately, Joseph K.'s futile search mirrors the existential view of humanity, trapped in an endless pursuit of meaning within an absurd reality (Heidegger, 1927).

In *The Trial*, the judicial system becomes a symbol of justice, yet it simultaneously distorts and obscures this concept. Franz Kafka portrays the judicial system as an incomprehensible force, where mystery and complexity dominate every aspect of the trial. Justice, which should be clear and direct, transforms into an elusive, unreachable concept. This ambiguity sparks an internal conflict in Joseph K., making it difficult for him to define what true justice is, reflecting the tension between the idealized notion of justice and the chaos surrounding him (Derrida, 1967).

Joseph K. begins his trial believing that justice is something attainable through laws and principles that he believes govern the world. However, over time, he realizes that this belief does not align with the reality he is experiencing. Justice, in his eyes, is supposed to be clear and systematic, but as his trial becomes more complex and the judicial system fails to offer any answers, justice becomes something distant, undefined, and even incomprehensible. This shift in his perception of justice reflects the existential struggle between an individual's ideal expectations and the harsh reality they confront (Sartre, 1943).

A clear gap emerges between Joseph K.'s personal understanding of justice and the practical application of the judicial system in *The Trial*. Initially, Joseph K. believes he can define justice clearly through his understanding of the laws that govern society. However, he finds that justice becomes increasingly complicated and ambiguous when faced with a judicial system that seeks to enforce laws that are incomprehensible and illogical. This disparity between personal understanding and the practical applications of justice reflects Joseph K.'s internal struggle between his beliefs and the reality he faces (Heidegger, 1927).

Joseph K.'s struggle with justice in *The Trial* illustrates how personal conceptions of justice can become a source of confusion and division when confronted with a system that follows no clear logic. He remains in a constant search for justice, but the deeper he delves into understanding the judicial system, the more powerless he feels. This conflict reflects the existential absurdity that suggests that a person may find themselves facing a reality that is mysterious and beyond comprehension, where justice becomes something unattainable or even unexplainable (Arendt, 1958).

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(Horkheimer, 1974) From the beginning of his trial, Joseph K. clings to the hope that justice will prevail and that he will be able to prove his innocence. This hope strengthens his desire to understand the trial he is undergoing. However, over time, the harsh reality unfolds: the judicial system he faces is not designed to deliver justice, but is instead a complex, enigmatic system that grows increasingly convoluted. This continuous failure to attain justice deeply affects his hope for life, as he begins to feel that nothing makes sense. His persistent rejection of justice manifests in a state of indifference that diminishes his desire to pursue hope (Sartre, 1943).

(Baudrillard 1993) With every new attempt to understand or influence the course of his trial, Joseph K.'s frustration increases, and he feels that his efforts yield no results. His attempts to comprehend justice become futile, as the trial continues to follow no clear or predictable logic. These failed attempts deepen his sense of helplessness, leading to an increasing feeling of despair. Each time he believes he has come closer to understanding or achieving justice, he discovers that it slips further beyond his grasp, intensifying his sense of being unable to affect his own fate (Camus 1942).

Justice for Joseph K. gradually shifts from a hopeful pursuit to a heavy burden that weighs him down throughout his trial. Initially, he perceives justice as a goal to be achieved, but he quickly discovers that this desired justice is nothing but an illusion. Instead of serving as a motivation to continue with his life, justice becomes a psychological burden that negatively impacts his ability to cope with his situation. His continuous struggle with this ambiguous concept of justice deepens his feelings of loneliness and helplessness, making him feel that everything around him is incomprehensible or inexplicable (Derrida, 1967).

(Nietzsche, 1886) proposed that in *The Trial*, justice transforms into a symbol of the existential absurdity governing Joseph K.'s life. His growing despair reflects the human struggle to find meaning in a world that defies comprehension. Joseph K. is trapped in a tension between his hope for justice and the despair of its unattainability, a conflict that exacerbates his deteriorating mental state. His relentless pursuit of justice only deepens his psychological confusion, embodying the

existential struggle between human will and the incomprehensible forces that obstruct it (Camus, 1942).

In *The Trial*, the story of Joseph K. ends tragically, reflecting a complete failure in his pursuit of justice. He is sentenced to death without ever knowing the charge against him, embodying the absurdity of searching for justice in a world that is incomprehensible. This failure to achieve justice shows that Joseph K. has wasted his life in a meaningless trial, trapped within an enigmatic judicial system he cannot interpret or engage with. The ending emphasizes the idea that justice may be nothing more than an unattainable concept in a world filled with complexity and injustice (Deleuze, 1992).

The novel concludes with Joseph K.'s failure to realize justice, demonstrating that justice in this context is nothing more than an impossible idea. Despite his continuous efforts to understand his trial or find a logical explanation, Joseph K. remains trapped in an impenetrable system. This failure reflects existential absurdity, where it is assumed that humans seek meaning or justice, but are imprisoned in a world that offers no true answers. This failure can be linked to the idea that justice in this world is impossible to achieve, highlighting the tension between human hope and the inability to change (Foucault, 1977).

The concept of existential absurdity is clearly highlighted in *The Trial*, where the pursuit of justice becomes an absurd search in a world that cannot be understood. Despite Joseph K.'s repeated attempts to rebel against the judicial system or at least comprehend it, his efforts remain futile. The failure to understand the meaning of justice not only reflects the absurdity of his personal search but also the absurdity of human existence in general. This continuous failure illustrates how the search for meaning or justice in an incomprehensible world leads to increased isolation and confusion (Levinas, 1969).

(Nietzsche, 1886) suggests that as *The Trial* progresses, Joseph K. grows increasingly despairing, ultimately surrendering to his fate. By the end, he accepts his execution with little resistance, symbolizing the collapse of his hope for justice. Joseph K. comes to realize that his efforts to seek justice were futile and that the system he faces is both incomprehensible and undefeatable. This transition from resistance to surrender embodies the pinnacle of existential absurdity, where the individual becomes powerless to influence the course of their own life.

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م.م. عمار حسن عبيس

In the context of existential philosophy, the search for meaning is essential, but in *The Trial*, Joseph K. demonstrates how this pursuit turns into absurdity. Despite knowing that the judicial system he faces provides no answers, Joseph K. continues to try to find meaning or an explanation for his situation. This internal struggle between hope for justice and the absurd reality of the system creates psychological tension, reflecting the core tension in existential philosophy between the search for meaning and the failure to find it (Sartre, 1943).

Existentialism deeply influences Joseph K.'s behavior in the novel, where he shows a clear rejection of social and legal institutions. This rejection stems from his belief that these institutions do not provide any true answers or justice, but are part of the system that makes him feel helpless. Existentialism here emphasizes that the individual, in their quest to find meaning, must deal with the world through their own freedom, which is reflected in Joseph K.'s behavior as he refuses to conform to a system he sees as false and ineffective (Camus, 1942). His defiance, however, does not lead to liberation but rather to further entrapment, as the system remains impervious to his resistance. This paradox highlights the existential struggle between individual agency and the overwhelming power of oppressive structures, leaving Joseph K. in a state of perpetual conflict and disillusionment.

His relationships with other characters in the novel also reveal the impact of existentialism on his perception of justice. Despite his attempts to seek answers through interaction with others, he remains ultimately isolated. His interactions with characters like the lawyer or the judge reflect how justice is not only an ambiguous concept within the judicial system but also within human relationships. This isolation is exacerbated by existentialism, as Joseph K. becomes unable to communicate meaningfully with any of the other characters in the novel. This breakdown in communication underscores the existential theme of alienation, where individuals are left to confront their struggles alone, without the possibility of genuine connection or understanding (Derrida, 1967).

His engagement with the judicial system in *The Trial* not only highlights Joseph K.'s personal anxiety about justice, but also the existential

anxiety he feels under the constraints of this system. Existentialism in the novel emphasizes that Joseph K. is not only facing the judicial system but is also confronted with a permanent constraint that prevents him from achieving meaning in his life. This constraint is evident in his dealings with justice, where the concept of justice becomes unattainable, deepening his existential anxiety (Nietzsche, 1886).

4. Conclusions:

Kafka's *The Trial* vividly illustrated the psychological and existential disintegration of Josef K. as he resists a cryptic and illogical judicial process. His decline from self-confidence to profound disillusionment mirrors the existential struggle of confronting an uncomprehending world. The novel encapsulated the struggle between the individual's need for justice and sense in a system that offers neither. Through Josef K.'s futile attempts to comprehend this nonsensical system, Kafka introduced the existence irony of humanity: trying to find meaning in an incomprehensible world. Josef K.'s death was finally a metaphor for the ultimate failure to achieve justice or comprehension in a world ruled by arbitrary and uncontrollable forces. Kafka's *The Trial* remains a rich examination of the human condition, laying bare the irreducible isolation and desperation of those stuck in an enormous, faceless bureaucracy, in which simplicity and justice are unimaginable. From this point of view, *The Trial* challenges our conception of power, justice, and the limits of human action in relation to an unknowable universe.

الخلاصة. ٤

رواية "المحاكمة" لكافكا تعرض بوضوح التفكك النفسي والوجودي لشخصية يوسف ك. وهو يقاوم عملية قضائية غامضة ولا منطقية. يتراجع يوسف ك. من الثقة بالنفس إلى خيبة الأمل العميقة، مما يعكس الصراع الوجودي في مواجهة عالم غير قابل للفهم. تجسد الرواية الصراع بين حاجة الفرد إلى العدالة والمعنى في نظام لا يقدم أيًا منهما. من خلال محاولات يوسف ك. الفاشلة لفهم هذا النظام العبثي، قدم كافكا السخرية الوجودية للإنسانية: السعي لإيجاد معنى في عالم غير قابل للفهم. كانت وفاة يوسف ك. في النهاية استعارة للفشل النهائي في تحقيق العدالة أو الفهم في عالم تحكمه قوى عشوائية وغير قابلة للسيطرة. تظل "المحاكمة" لكافكا دراسة غنية للحالة الإنسانية، حيث تكشف عن العزلة واليأس التي لا يمكن تقليصها لأولئك العالقين

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في بيروقراطية ضخمة وبدون وجه، حيث يصبح البساطة والعدالة أمرًا لا يمكن تصوره. من هذا المنظور، تتحدى "المحاكمة" تصوراتنا عن السلطة والعدالة وحدود الفعل البشري في علاقة مع عالم لا يمكن معرفته.

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