



## Intertextuality in Albert Camus's philosophy: "Let us imagine Sisyphus happy"

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### Abstract

Intertextuality, the term defining the relationship and the similarity of a newly-produced text with previous ones, has provided a broad array of subjects to be studied especially in social sciences. Firstly, literary works have been analyzed within the framework of intertextuality, and striking similarities have been found among literary texts. Nevertheless, the world cannot be limited to the literature since there are numerous ways and possibilities for human beings to express themselves. Philosophy, for instance, is the deepest version of humans' self-expressions and understandings; therefore, it has been inevitably influenced by external sources such as myths, literature, politics, economics or society. Although the intertextuality in philosophy has been mostly analyzed through the written philosophical works, there is a more basic and evident relationship in philosophers' perspectives: the intertextuality in the philosophy itself. Accordingly, this study aims to illustrate the role of the intertextual references in the formation of philosophical approaches. For this purpose, the study will focus on Albert Camus's "absurd" philosophy, and the intertextual relationship between Camus's philosophy and the myth of Sisyphus will be examined from a comparative perspective. By this way, it is aimed to demonstrate how our happiness is dependent on our desire to "imagine Sisyphus happy".

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## 1. Introduction

The history of human beings is a kind of sequence since some people are born while some others are dead. This continuous flow results in ceaseless interactions and changes in societies, cultures and people's ways of thinking. The innovations, beliefs and ideologies of the people living in a specific period of time constitute a basis for the development or reformation of new ideas and technologies by the next generations, which leads to "an accumulation" of information. This continuing process is the cornerstone of the bridge between previous and following societies. Each society from a time period does its share for the construction and the reinforcement of the bridge, and each person using the bridge is inevitably influenced by the former values, ideologies and beliefs blended in its mortar. In other words, people's personalities are shaped by means of the existing system of the period, and then certain changes might be introduced and experienced since the accumulation of information also paves the way for the innovations and the creation of new perspectives.

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People are eager to see themselves as unique creatures having distinctive features separating them from any other person, but there is an undeniable fact that their alleged uniqueness is in fact under the influence of the pre-existing norms whether explicitly or implicitly. Although this influence has been disregarded for a long time, the development of poststructuralist views has enabled to analyze the human mind and thought outside of the structural borders. In the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, a new approach called “intertextuality” was introduced in order to question the unique nature of human perspectives. As it can be understood from its name, this approach mostly focused on “literary texts” and their ideological, generic or structural similarities. “Intertextuality”, a term firstly introduced by Julia Kristeva (1989), has taken its roots from Saussure’s views on linguistics and Bakhtin’s *dialogism* and *heteroglossia* (Allen, 2000, p. 22), and it has centered upon the intentional or unintentional connections among literary texts and the meanings assigned to them within linguistic and social borders. Even though the word “text” used in the term “intertextuality” was limited to the literary ones at the beginning, the scope of intertextual analyses has been broadened through time. It has been understood that any action of human beings can be perceived as a text regardless of their structures or forms. Accordingly, the social studies have started to examine daily language, gestures, behaviors and other similar human acts within the framework of intertextuality.

Thought, on the other hand, is another feature of human beings which is shaped under the influence of numerous factors and which bears their traces. As the main feature distinguishing human beings from other species, thought enables humans to interpret the events occurring around them and to find their way to survive. The methods used for survival may be different, but there are certain connections among them. People might take lessons from previous mistakes whether they are experienced by themselves or others, or they might imitate the behaviors of others as good examples. In any case, human thought is interrelated to previous ideas, behaviors, expressions, or texts. At this point, philosophy is an effective representation of this interrelation since it refers to numerous sources or ideas in order to understand the meaning of life. Although philosophical approaches mostly deal with the outcomes rather than the sources, the relationship between philosophical views and any form of text cannot be denied. This interrelation is quite obvious in Albert Camus’s Absurd philosophy since the absurdity analyzes the human desires and expectations and the inadequacy of the world in meeting those demands by referring to previous experiences and narrations. *The Greek myth of Sisyphus* is Camus’s most famous metaphor for explaining the main tenets of the absurd philosophy. Camus accepts Sisyphus as an absurd hero, and he evaluates the torment given by the Gods to Sisyphus from a different perspective. Through this analogy, Camus constructs his philosophical views on the basis of the Greek mythology. By this way, he establishes an intertextual relationship between the absurd philosophy and a Greek myth.

Accordingly, this study aims to demonstrate the role of intertextuality on people’s ways of thinking and their methods used for the meaning of life by analyzing Camus’s absurd philosophy within the scope of intertextuality. For this purpose, the research will elaborate *the Greek myth of Sisyphus* and Camus’s *Myth of Sisyphus* by focusing on the differences in interpretation of the torment; thus the similarities and differences between two versions will be seen. Then the relationship between the Sisyphus and the absurd philosophy will be evaluated from an intertextual perspective, and it will be demonstrated how intertextuality becomes an inevitable reality in every part of our life.

## 2. Greek Myth of Sisyphus

*The myth of Sisyphus* is a famous tale in Greek mythology narrating the life of a notorious king named Sisyphus and his punishment by the Gods because of his sins and deceits. Sisyphus is known to

be one of the most cunning figures in Greek mythology since he even manages to deceive the Death. He is the son of Aelous, the king of Thessaly; he founds his own empire named Ephyra (also known as Corinth), and he rules his kingdom by committing unforgiveable sins (Sisyphus, n.d.). He kills his mortal enemies, rapes beautiful women, and makes numerous deals with different powerful characters in the mythology in order to protect his kingdom and to take his revenge. Although Sisyphus is a sinful king from the very beginning, his real sufferance comes from his faults against the Gods.

At a period when Sisyphus rules his kingdom through deceits, Asopus, the son of Poseidon, loses his daughter, Aegina, and he desperately looks for her (The Myth of Sisyphus, 2017). Sisyphus realizes that he can use this situation as an advantage for himself, and he says that he will find Aegina if Asopus creates an eternal river for his kingdom. Asopus accepts the deal and creates the river. Then Sisyphus tells him that Aegina has been kidnapped by Zeus, the father of gods. A war breaks out between Asopus and Zeus, and Asopus chases Zeus until the latter defeats Asopus with his thunders. When Zeus learns that Sisyphus is the one giving information to Asopus, the God decides to punish him severely, and he sends Thanatos (the Death) (in different resources it is said that Hades is sent to catch Sisyphus by Zeus) to take Sisyphus to the Underworld. Thanatos tries to lock Sisyphus with special handcuffs, but Sisyphus wants Thanatos to show how the handcuffs are locked. By this way, Sisyphus locks them on Thanatos and he takes the Death hostage. As a result, no one in the world can die although they are critically ill or wounded. Ares, the god of war, finds this situation boring since he cannot kill anyone in his wars; therefore, he saves the Death, and he delivers the cunning king to Thanatos.

Before going to the Underworld, Sisyphus instructs his wife not to bury him but to leave him in the middle of a street. Then he goes to the Underworld, and he pleads with Persephone, the Queen of the Underworld, to send him back to the world just for three days so that he can punish his wife for not burying him and that he can arrange his own funeral. Persephone sends him back, but Sisyphus does not return after three days, and he continues to live there until he dies because of the old age. When he arrives in the Underworld, the Gods punish him with the most painful torment: doing a fruitless task in an endless cycle. As a result, Sisyphus is condemned to roll up a huge rock to the top of hill forever. When he is about to reach the top, the rock falls back down, and he has to return and do the same thing over and over again.

This myth gives numerous messages about moral values, sins of human beings and inevitable punishment of the sinner no matter how smart and cunning he or she is. As it can be inferred from this tale, it is expected in Greek mythology and many other ideologies that sins and mistakes should be paid back through severe punishment. Another significant point in this myth is the torment chosen by the Gods. Although physical torture is generally believed to be one of the most dreadful penalties, the mythical Gods decide to make Sisyphus suffer from a mental breakdown by doing a fruitless task forever without any purpose and any result. By this way, Sisyphus's passion to live and to gain power will be eliminated since he has no reason to live or to fight for. As a result, he will be trapped in despair because he can do nothing except rolling up the rock, and he cannot wait for the death to end this torment because he is already dead, and there is no end of this suffering. In this myth, the ultimate victory of the Gods was acknowledged for centuries without any need to question the authority of the Gods, the correctness of their decision and the enormous suffering of Sisyphus. Nevertheless, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Albert Camus introduced a new perspective for the interpretation of Sisyphus's mental breakdown. Camus took the myth of Sisyphus as a basis for his philosophy, and he reinterpreted the events narrated in the myth. By this way, he established a connection between a tale in the Greek mythology and his own worldview. Accordingly, the following section will elaborate Albert Camus's absurd philosophy in order to understand the correlation between Greek myth of Sisyphus and Camus's version.

### 3. Camus's Absurd Philosophy and His *Myth of Sisyphus*

Albert Camus, born in 1913 in French Algeria, is one of the most famous philosophers and writers of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Albert Camus Biography, 2014). As a French-Algerian writer living in Algeria, he mostly depicted the political and social conflicts in the country through his novels. Camus received education in the field of philosophy, and he published his collection of essays entitled *the Myth of Sisyphus* in 1942 (Albert Camus Biographical, n.d.). In this collection, Camus explained the main tenets of his absurd philosophy, and his views gained great popularity in the field. In the same year, he also wrote his most well-known novel entitled *The Stranger* (*L'Étranger* in French) in which he illustrated the absurd philosophy quite vividly, and he was awarded Nobel Prize in 1957 (Albert Camus Biography, 2014). Camus died in 1960 in France.

Just like other philosophers, Albert Camus strived to find the meaning of life. Nevertheless, his perspective proved to be more distinctive than others since he did not come up with a desirable answer in quest of a purpose for living. According to Camus, people have endless desires and wishes, and they always want the world to meet their excessive demands. The world, on the other hand, is indifferent to the expectations of people, and human needs are never satisfied despite their struggles. At this point, Camus states that “the absurd is born of this confrontation between the human need and the unreasonable silence of the world” (Camus, 1955, p. 20). Caraway explains this paradoxical relation between people and the world through the metaphor of marriage:

“... If the relation between man and the world were reasonable, then the world in which man has to live would fulfill his fundamental needs. On the other hand, however, the world does not fulfill his basic needs. Hence, he is divorced from the world to which by ontological necessity he is wed. It certainly makes sense to be wed to someone, and it makes sense to be divorced from someone. But to be both wed and divorced to the same person simultaneously is patently absurd. This is the situation in which man finds himself in relation to the world.” (Caraway, 1992, p. 126).

As it can be understood from this statement, the absurdity is the lack of rational relationship between the human and the world. Nevertheless, the main point which Camus wants to emphasize is not the absurdity in life, but the reactions of people to it. In *the Myth of Sisyphus*, he remarks that there are two reactions most commonly observed in the world: hope and suicide. Camus suggests that suicide is the most significant question in philosophy (Camus, 1955, p. 4), and that it seems to be a preferable option when the indifference of the world towards human beings is taken into account. According to the absurd philosophy, when a person realizes that his/her efforts for finding the meaning of life and living better are fruitless initiatives which will not serve him/her in any condition, he/she either prefers to believe in the existence of a superior power such as religious faith and ideological beliefs, or he/she chooses to commit suicide due to the despair of not having a purpose to live and being a “stranger” in the world (Camus, 1955, p. 6). Albert Camus is not in favor of the hope as a philosopher under the influence of existentialism but he does not prefer the suicide, as well. Camus regards the death as one of the absurd phenomena in the world since a person wishing to end the absurdity through death accepts the superiority of the absurdity and his own defeat (Camus, 1955, p. 8). At this point, he suggests another option for the people who are eager to challenge the absurdity through their conscious acts, which is “the revolt”. According to him, the enlightenment of people about the absurdity does not dictate men to abandon their desires and passion to live; in fact, people’s awareness on the absurd life leads them to resist the pressure of the indifferent world and to live their lives fully not with the absurdity but in spite of it. In other words, the awareness on the absurdity sets men free from the overwhelming impositions of the pre-existing structural norms, and it enables them to take pleasure in continuing to exist in the world by keeping their passion to stay alive and to live in

the present moment. Camus remarks that the people who succeed in living like this will finally become absurd heroes finding happiness in their lives despite all irrationalities.

Camus's most famous absurd hero is Sisyphus, who is known to have an enormous passion to live. Although Sisyphus is seen as a notorious sinner punished by the Gods due to his excessive desires and faults in the Greek mythology, Albert Camus elaborates the inner world of Sisyphus from a different point of view. In the Greek myth, a moral message is given to the sinners through the emphasis on the severe punishment of Sisyphus. Contrary to the general perception about the effectiveness of the penalty, Camus announces Sisyphus as an absurd hero symbolizing the absurdity of life, and he claims that Sisyphus is in fact happy while doing his vain task. He is interested in the Sisyphus's psychological and mental state while climbing down from the mountain to repeat his task once again. In this process, Sisyphus gains awareness on his condition and the nature of his punishment. He knows that he will do the same thing over and over again just like "the workmen of today" (Camus, 1955, p. 77), and he accepts this absurdity wholeheartedly. By this way, he finds a way to be happy in spite of his endless torment. The happiness coming from awareness is reflected by Camus himself in the following quotation:

"I leave Sisyphus at the foot of the mountain! One always finds one's burden again. But Sisyphus teaches the higher fidelity that negates the gods and raises rocks. He too concludes that all is well. This universe henceforth without a master seems to him neither sterile nor futile. Each atom of that stone, each mineral flake of that night-filled mountain, in itself forms a world. The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy." (Camus, 1955, p. 78).

Although Sisyphus mentioned in Camus's book is the same sinful figure deserving to be punished due to his deceits, Camus transforms him into a different character representing the unconditional happiness coming from the existentialist awareness. In Camus' version of the myth, Sisyphus learns to live in the present moment and to revolt against the absurdity of his condition by "unconditionally accepting his situation and abandoning self-defeating thoughts of what *should* or *must* be" (Ward, 2012, p. 81). Consequently, he becomes one of the strongest absurd heroes, and he symbolizes the absurd philosophy. Although he is an imaginary and mythical character, in fact he represents the people of today's world striving to survive with an endless effort even when they cannot get what they want. Albert Camus's use of mythical elements for explaining his philosophy has established an undeniable connection between a mythical text and a different point of view. By this way, an intertextual relationship has been constructed between these two components by means of different interpretation of the same phenomenon. Accordingly, following section of this study will analyze the afore-said relationship within the scope of intertextuality so as to demonstrate the effectiveness of this approach even in the formation of philosophical views.

#### 4. Sisyphus and Intertextuality

The approach called "intertextuality" which was developed in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century firstly emerged as the analysis of the relations among literary texts within the framework of structure, genre, ideology or form. Although the term "intertextuality" was invented by Julia Kristeva in the 1960s, the idea of related texts dates back to the studies of Mikhail Bakhtin working on the multi-voiced structure of the novels (Allen, 2000, p. 11). In the early 1900s when stylistic analyses were prominent in the field of literature, Bakhtin asserted that novels could not be only limited to the style of the author, and he stated that they were written under the influence of numerous factors effecting the author's language and resulting in a "polyphony" in the novels. Accordingly, Bakhtin has become

one of the first scholars pointing out the impacts of external forces on the style of novels, and he has emphasized the relationship between the author and his social environment influencing his narration. He regards the novel “as a phenomenon multiform in style and variform in speech and voice” (1981, p. 261). He concludes that this divergence is derived from the interaction of the writer with the outer world and his real life experiences. The writer is exposed to this interaction as a reader in the first place, then he uses the knowledge that he has acquired from his readings in the novels, which causes a relation between his newly-produced text and the previous ones that he has read beforehand. Since the author is not “Biblical Adam, dealing only with virgin and still unnamed objects, giving them names for the first time” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 93), an inevitable relationship is present between the author’s expressions and the previously-stated ideas. Bakhtin’s views on this relation have given Julia Kristeva a ground to develop her new approach known as “intertextuality”.

Just like Bakhtin, Kristeva suggests that each text is somehow related to another one since the writer referring to a resource as a reader uses the information that he or she obtains whether intentionally or unintentionally. As a result, literary texts become “a mosaic of quotations” (Kristeva, 1989, p. 37), and novels are written within the scope of a multilayered structure. Subsequent to Kristeva’s works on intertextuality, many other studies have been carried out on the relationship of specific texts with the previous ones. Bauman, for instance, remarks that literary texts are created by aligning them to the prior texts in order to “draw critical and ideological attention” (Bauman, 2004, p. 1). Miola suggests that there are different methods to establish an intertextual relationship among texts. These methods, namely “Revision, Translation, Quotation, Sources, Conventions and Configurations, Genres, and Paralogues” (2004), demonstrate that there is no style which can be considered unique since the use of the above-mentioned methods are inevitable. Harold Bloom, on the other hand, is interested in the reasons of establishing an intertextual relationship although “everything seems to have already been written and written in better ways” (Allen, 2000, p. 137), and he focuses on the act of misreading which leads to recreation of similar literary texts. Roland Barthes, analyzing the role of the author and the reader in intertextual works, states that there are two types of texts, namely readerly and writerly texts, and he underlines that readerly texts such as “cultural myths and ideologies” generally possess stable meanings which can be easily and passively conveyed to the readers (Allen, 2000, p. 79). In this text type, multi-voiced utilizations are observed at minimum level, and readers’ perceptions about the text are generally similar. Writerly texts, on the other hand, enable the readers to create new meanings in the process of reading; by this way, the readers assume a more active role in the formation of meaningful texts giving different messages to each person in line with his/her cultural, ideological and intertextual background information.

Although there are numerous studies on the intertextuality, it is obvious that they are most generally carried out on the relations among literary texts since it is easier to determine the similarities among written works. Nevertheless, as the scope of social studies have broadened through time, other text types such as daily language, non-literary writings, visual texts etc. have also started to be examined within the framework of intertextuality. Today, it is generally accepted that the approach “intertextuality” should not be limited to the written texts, and that it should take all human acts into consideration. Since the thought is one of the most significant human acts as stated before, it should not be excluded from the intertextual scope. There is an indisputable connection between language and thought even though there are certain speculations about their impacts on each other. Regardless of the disputes about which one influences the other, it can be stated that language exposes the thought to intertextuality because it paves the way for the acquisition of information through numerous ways.

This intertextual relationship between language and thought can be easily observed in the case of mythical Sisyphus. The Greek version of the myth dates back to the oral tradition of the ancient times, and it has been transferred into a written form in time. By this way, the tale of the notorious king has

gone beyond the borders of Ancient Greece, and it has gained popularity in different parts of the world as an effective example for the dreadful punishment of sinners. There are obviously numerous writings, books and essays on the Myth of Sisyphus, which demonstrates the intertextual role of the myth, but just as Roland Barthes has stated before (Allen, 2000, p. 79), the myth has been generally considered to have a stable meaning showing the ultimate misery of Sisyphus. Nevertheless, Camus has given the myth a different meaning which is not stable at all. By using this myth, he not only gives an intertextual role to the mythical text but also creates a different form of intertextuality by establishing an intertextual relation between a text and a philosophical idea instead of writing a new text under the influence of a previous one. In the case of Albert Camus's philosophy, it is not a text which has been intertextually influenced by the Greek myth of Sisyphus, but the absurd philosophy itself. Camus has chosen to find the happiness in Sisyphus' eyes by evaluating his torment from a positive point of view. Sisyphus, who was a king cursed by the Gods, becomes Camus's absurd hero since he is well-aware of the uselessness of this task. After this realization, his task is no longer fruitless because it is a part of Sisyphus himself, and he accepts it wholeheartedly. By this way, Albert Camus evaluates his own position within the borders of today's indifferent world, and he regards the people striving to stay alive with many efforts as the *Sisyphuses* of our time. So, in accordance with the absurd philosophy, the *Sisyphuses* of our time should also acknowledge the absurdity of their struggles; they should revolt against it by staying alive in any condition, and they should welcome the death when the time comes.

With this analogy, Albert Camus has constructed an intertextual bridge between the Greek myth of Sisyphus and his own worldview. Although his philosophical ideas on people's happiness and reason to live are not concrete texts that might be analyzed in written form, he has created a "mosaic of quotations" by using the myth of Sisyphus as a resource for reflecting his philosophical points of view. When Miola's seven methods of intertextuality are taken into consideration, it might be asserted that Albert Camus has used the method of referring to a text as a source, but he does not apply it for writing a similar text. Instead, he himself has played the role of Sisyphus in the real world, and he has tried to give a meaning to the life which is similar to Sisyphus torment. While Camus has referred to the Greek myth of Sisyphus in order to clarify his views, other researchers have used Camus' myth of Sisyphus so that they can demonstrate their own perspectives in pursuit of happiness. By this way, a sequence of intertextual relations has been formed among the philosophical and ideological views similar to Albert Camus's worldviews. Anné Verhoef, for instance, elaborates Sisyphus's happiness at the moment of realizing the absurdity by focusing on the psychological aspects of his status, and she states that the happiness experienced by Sisyphus might be the result of his physical activity which keeps him away from any kind of negative thoughts:

"Because flow often occurs 'during physical movement' (Haidt 2006, p. 95), the act of pushing a rock up a hill can constitute such a flow activity, as it is an intense physical activity that might demand a lot of skill and concentration. Thus, if Sisyphus can be imagined as experiencing flow, we can imagine that he may be happy in the psychological sense – he may have a 'happy brain' and a positive state of mind." (Verhoef, 2014, p. 540).

As it can be inferred from this passage, the myth used by Albert Camus in order to express his own perception of happiness might be differently interpreted in terms of the same issue of joy. Thus, the second interpretation has an intertextual connection both with the Greek myth of Sisyphus and Albert Camus's philosophical absurd hero named Sisyphus. Another similar connection is also present in a study carried out on the teachers working in the Bushwick School for Social Justice. In this study, the researchers have worked on the issue of curriculum, and they have analyzed the mental and psychological revolt of the teachers against the absurd demands in the afore-said curriculum. The

teachers have been perceived as absurd heroes realizing the irrationality in the school program and resisting the absurdity of the system. This conflict is illustrated in the afore-said study as follows:

“Recall that, according to Camus, the absurd is neither a quality of human beings as such nor an attribute of the world in itself. Rather, the absurd signifies an unresolvable conflict or tension between human beings and the world. In the Bushwick School for Social Justice, this conflict was manifest in the teachers’ aspirations to create an innovative social justice program that would meet the specific needs of their students versus the district’s insistence that they adopt the uniform curriculum favored by the mayor and the department of education.” (Gordon, 2016, p. 598).

Gordon’s study has illustrated another use of Camus’s myth of Sisyphus for examining the inner worlds of a specific group of people such as the teachers working in the Bushwick School for Social Justice, and philosophical intertextuality has become evident once again. There are many other examples in the literature showing the intertextual sequence in the psychological analyses on the Myth of Sisyphus, which indicates the significance of the intertextuality not only in the written texts but also in the formation and expression of human thought. As a result, it is seen that intertextuality is an inseparable part of our lives in any kind of human acts.

## **5. Conclusion**

Intertextuality, which was perceived as the connection of literary texts with the previous ones in the past, is now accepted as a vast field of research comprising any type of activities related to human beings. Although the studies on the intertextuality mostly elaborate the linguistic and thematic similarities or relations among literary texts which are defined as “the mosaic of quotations” by Kristeva, it cannot be denied that even the ideas are affected by the previous sources, experiences and observations. Camus’s absurd philosophy provides a good example for the intertextual influences on the development of an ideology since his philosophy is based on the direct quotation of a Greek myth and its reinterpretation for the elaboration of the issue of happiness in the real life. Camus’s intertextual interpretation of the myth of Sisyphus demonstrates that even our thoughts and views in pursuit of happiness are under the influence of beliefs, ideas and expressions which have been previously said or written. Even Camus’s version of the myth of Sisyphus has become a resource for the new ideas on the meaning and purpose of the life, and this situation illustrates that there is a continuous flow enabling the establishment of intertextual relationships in every stage of human life.

The intertextual connection between the Greek myth of Sisyphus and Camus’s version demonstrates another significant feature of human mind: people can see different images or landscapes even when they look out of the same window since their ways of thinking influence their perceptions. In conclusion, it might seem that intertextuality hinders the uniqueness in human actions, but even repeating an act may turn into a unique motion when the act is enriched with personal views. In other words, Sisyphus is the same Sisyphus depicted in the Greek myth even when you put him into another context; however, it is the person who creates a different character from this sinful king by imagining him happy. So, let’s imagine Sisyphus happy in our own way and find the gate opening to the real happiness.

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## Albert Camus'nün felsefesinde metinlerarasılık: "Sisifos'u mutlu hayal edelim"

### Öz

Yeni üretilen bir metnin daha önceki metinlerle arasındaki ilişkiyi ve benzerlikleri tanımlayan "metinlerarasılık" kavramı, özellikle sosyal bilimlerde önemli bir araştırma konusu teşkil etmektedir. İlk olarak, edebi eserler metinlerarasılık kapsamında incelenmiş ve edebi metinler arasında önemli benzerlikler olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Bununla birlikte, insanların kendilerini ifade edebilmeleri için birden fazla yöntem söz konusu olduğundan araştırma dünyasını edebiyatla kısıtlamak mümkün değildir. Örneğin felsefe, insanların kişiliklerini tanımlama

ve düşünce yapılarını açıklama bağlamında en derin ifade biçimlerinden bir tanesidir; dolayısıyla felsefi yaklaşımların, mit, edebiyat, politika, ekonomi ve toplum gibi dış kaynaklardan etkilenmesi kaçınılmazdır. Felsefedeki metinlerarasılık genellikle yazılı metinler üzerinden değerlendirilse de aslında filozofların bakış açılarında çok daha temel ve bariz bir metinlerarasılık durumu söz konusudur: felsefenin kendisi metinlerarasılık üzerine kurulabilmektedir. Bu çalışma, felsefi yaklaşımların oluşturulması aşamasında metinlerarası bağlantıların rolünü ortaya koymayı hedeflemektedir. Buna bağlı olarak, çalışma kapsamında Albert Camus'nün “absürt” felsefesi ele alınacak ve Camus'nün felsefesi ile Sisifos Miti arasındaki metinlerarası ilişki karşılaştırmalı olarak incelenecektir. Böylelikle, mutluluğumuzun “Sisifos'u mutlu hayal etme” yönündeki isteğimize ne denli bağlı olduğu gösterilecektir.

*Anahtar sözcükler:* Metinlerarasılık; felsefe; Albert Camus; absürtlük; Sisifos.

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