

Nausea, by Jean-Paul Sartre - A Short Psychological Review of the Book

1938. pp.253. Publisher: Gallimard Editions. ISBN: 9782070368051

Sibani Londa Zungu

<http://orcid.org/0009-0005-7917-6053>

Michaelhouse Senior Boys School,

Balgowan, South Africa

sibzun@michaelhouse.org

Nausea by Jean-Paul Sartre is a philosophical novel that explores daily life through the lens of existentialism. The story follows a broken man named Antoine Roquentin, a historian afraid of his existence living in a French seaport town, as he grapples with feelings of alienation and the meaninglessness of human existence.

“Existence is not necessity, to exist simply is to be there; what exists appears lets itself be encountered but you can deduce it.” (Sartre, 1938).

What does it mean to exist? What does it mean to perceive avid perception in the mind's eye? What is feeling? These are all perplexing questions abstract living failures perpetuate, and what does it mean to be a living failure? To understand such a vague and unapologetic phrase, it is most important to break down the essence of reality. In my previous essay, I discussed the main topic of what it means to be a living failure, which burns down to the idea of abstract thinking in its entirety. The universe, or reality, is a monotony as we are destined for procreation of whatever that monotony stems from political ideations, physical reproduction, thought and idea. In this essence, to possess abstract thinking where you begin to question the prospect of the reality you base upon, you have become a living failure as you have failed to conform to that reality. In other words, you think outside the basis of what is comprehensible and meditated, which should not be possible.

Or could it?

What if our entire premise of abstract thought is taken to an extent where we question our physical embodiment of ourselves? What if the mere thought of biological

UNISA 
University of South Africa

New Voices in Psychology
#15679 | 3 pages

<https://doi.org/10.25159/2958-3918/15679>
ISSN 2958-3918 (Online), ISSN 1812-6371 (Print)
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anatomical structure in all living things, including ourselves, is but a representation that we can comprehend? What if that mere representation is warped and twisted to become another solicitation horrid abstraction that goes beyond the monotony of the universe and reality?

This novel follows the premise of a man afraid of his existence. A fear so profound and peculiar that it sparks many questions in the eyes of the reader.

“What am I doing here? Why did I get mixed up in a discussion about humanism? What are these people here? Why are they eating? It true that they don’t know that they exist. I want to leave, to go somewhere where I should be really in my place where I would fit in, but my place is nowhere as I am unwanted.” (Sartre, 1938)

An unwanted being corresponds to an unwanted mind; we are destined for some form of acceptance that ranges through the people we interact with most. The mind tends to deviate from existentialist tendencies to complete nihilistic views and beliefs. As organisms and objects of will, we are prone to become the embodiment of our environment. The mind can often delve into abnormal patterns of thinking and abstract thought that develop onset mental conditions that usually occur in adults, but the results can vary. These are the onset developments of a living failure as their abstract thought delves deeper into questions that should not be a part of a young person’s mind.

What is outside this realm of representation?

What is my sole purpose in a purposeless existence?

This perpetual feeling stems much more profound than any systemic desolation. Your sense of self is stripped from the head down until there is nothing but a walking shell, walking along a sidewalk embodying the monotony of reality.

“I can no longer manage to feel myself. I am so forgotten only real thing left in me is some existence which can feel itself existing,” (Sartre, 1938)

This begs the question of what conformity of reality stands between feeling and non-feeling. Is it that one must embody oneself in a field of monotony to gain an epiphany of acceptance? Is the concept of a living failure factual? The possibilities are endless yet so limited that this world and universe revolve around a continuous cycle of perpetual tormenting and overlapping tedium. The novel also delves into the idea of existence from a third-person perspective, as if it possessed a physiological body of mind and state. This helps us, as the reader, understand the main character’s fear of his existence.

“Existence is not something which allows itself to be thought from a distance; it has to invade you suddenly, pounce upon you, weigh heavily on your heart like a huge motionless animal-or else there is nothing left at all,” (Sartre, 1938)

On the topic of the people that surround the main character:

The novel also perpetuates the premise of the characters surrounding the main character experiencing his existence, analysing every physical aspect of their being and within as if a narrator to an unprecedented novel that no one will bother to read. This again stems back to the premise of abstract thought and the questioning of representation that lies before our mind's eye.

“There are a lot of people, walking along the shore turning poetic, springtime faces towards the sea they're in holiday mood because of the sun. There are women in light-coloured dresses who have put on their outfits from last spring they pass by as long and white as kid-gloves there also big boys from the lycée and the commercial school and old men wearing decorations they don't know one another but they look at one another with a conspiratorial air because it's such a fine day and they are people” (Sartre, 1938)

Is this what lies before my eye, or is it some form of abstraction hindering something more profound and everlasting? Notice how abstract thought constantly raises questions that do not have an answer, not in the sense of a rhetorical question but in the sense that the question itself does not make sense. How can you question what lies before you? How can representation be warped if that is what it truly is that lays before my mind's eye? Is it not nonsensical to proclaim a being as a failure if they possess abstract thought? Surely, such abstract thought would lead to overwhelming benefactors.

Those counter-arguing questions prove the premise of what I have been trying to explain throughout this entire review and my theory on Abhorrent Living failures. It defeats the entire purpose of being to question what lies outside our abstract thought of representation because, as I have stated before, the entire universe/the entire premise of reality exists in monotony, to question and deviate from it into other spheres of representation a failure in conforming to what is destined to be for you are existence in an abstract thoughtless world.

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