

‘LA MÉDITERRANÉE’ IN ALBERT CAMUS’S EARLY WRITINGS

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is centred on Camus's early writings in relation to the development of the writer's reflections on 'La Méditerranée'. Its aim is to analyse how the concept of 'La Méditerranée' evolves in Camus's early works, whether they are intellectual or creative. Analysis is conducted via three phases of Camus's early writings: (1) from 1933 to August 1936, three preliminary key ideas regarding 'La Méditerranée' – 'A Greco-Roman world', 'Le Midi et la mesure', and 'Embracing this-worldly life' – are drawn; (2) following Nietzsche's identification of two Ancient Greeces – pre-Socratic and post-Socratic, Camus systematically defines 'La Méditerranée' as a region full of the sunshine and the sea and as a culture which implies the sense of life, internationalism, a recognition of 'la mesure et la limite', instead of Christianity, nationalism and excessive military might based on the post-Socratics' excessive rationality; (3) the literary text of *L'Étranger* is shown as closely connected with the key ideas concerning the Mediterranean elucidated in the previous two phases. This study challenges the tendency to view 'La Méditerranée' as an invariable concept in Camus's works but focuses on the evolution of the concept in the writer's early writings. As such, it contributes to showing the complexity with which the concept is developed and provides the basis for new insights into Camus's early writings concerning 'La Méditerranée'.

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INTRODUCTION

Aims and key terms

The central question of this thesis is to investigate the notion, the importance and also the problematics of 'La Méditerranée' in Albert Camus's early writings.¹ I firstly explore what 'La Méditerranée' is with reference to works in the following periods: 1. from 1933 to August 1936; 2. mainly from September 1936 to 1937, but also with a reference to Camus's one essay in 1932, in Chapters Two and Three respectively. The reason for the division takes account of Camus's thought development: I argue that while in the first period, Camus did not clarify what was meant by 'La Méditerranée' but equated it with a 'Greco-Roman' world, with a value on 'le midi et la mesure' and a devotion to 'this-worldly life'²; in the second period, with his refusal of excessive reason, he defined it both as a geographical region linked with the sun and the sea, and as a cultural value associated with pre-Socratics who were concerned with immediate life and man's physical senses. In Chapter Four, I will give a detailed analysis of the literary text of *L'Étranger* (1942)³ examining

¹ All quotations from Camus's works are taken from the Pléiade edition of the *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Gallimard, Vol. I (2006), Vol. II (2006), Vol. III, (2008), Vol. IV (2008)). The names of the specific pieces of works will be given, with all page references to this Pléiade edition, using I, II, III or IV to indicate the volume referred to. To avoid repetition, if quotations in one paragraph or in adjacent sections come from the same piece of work, only the first quote will indicate from which piece it is taken and its publication year. Titles and dates will not be repeated unless there is a risk of ambiguity or confusion.

² This notion will be discussed on pp. 44-50.

³ This novel was first published in May 1942 by Gallimard. See Pierre-Louis Rey, 'Chronologie', in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. LXIX – XCVIII (p. LXXX). In fact, a fragment written in May 1938 of 'Cahier II (septembre 1937 - avril 1939)': 'La vieille femme à l'asile de vieillards, qui meurt' (*Carnets 1935-1948*, 1962: II, 852) announced the starting point of *L'Étranger*. After two years' long gestation, Camus completed it in May 1940: '*L'Étranger* est terminé' (*ibid.*, 914). Thus the examination of these fragments in *Carnets 1935-1948* means that Camus's writing of *L'Étranger* closely followed his works of 1937.

the importance of ‘La Méditerranée’ throughout this twentieth-century classic novel. Although Camus is widely considered as an atheistic existentialist, it should be emphasised at the outset that ‘La Méditerranée’ is the key term in my thesis. Thus in Chapter One, a brief chapter, I will explore the field of atheistic existentialism with the aim to argue why an existentialist approach will not be adopted to analyse Camus’s early works, and also why the perspective of ‘La Méditerranée’ is an effective research approach.

Above all, given the enormous amount of secondary literature on Camus⁴ and various theoretical approaches which have been taken in studies of the works of Camus, it is useful to keep the concept of ‘La Méditerranée’ as the basic and central point throughout my thesis. In attempting to deal with different ways to define what the Mediterranean means to Camus – which is further to be discussed in Chapter One, it should first be clarified that the guiding principle in my investigation of the concept has been to construe the notion from the texts of Camus’s early works, rather than to work from any pre-established concept.

At this point, it is necessary to mention that my analysis of Camus’s early writings is based on a wide variety of genres – lyrical poems, biographical essays and

⁴ See Raymond Gay-Crosier, *Bibliographie sélective et cumulative des travaux récents consacrés à Albert Camus* [online]. Available from: <http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/gaycros/bibliog.htm> (Latest Update: 11 April 2012) [Accessed 18 September 2014], and Otto Klapp, *Bibliographie d’histoire littéraire française* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, Vol. XLIX (2011)), pp. 628-633. The list (from the item of 9152 to 9251) on these pages only reviews the secondary literature on Camus which was published in the year of 2011. It goes without saying that there are a vast number of documents in the previous volumes.

notebooks, lectures, an academic dissertation and eventually the text of a fiction. This wide range of genres has firstly demonstrated that Camus, even at a young age, had attempted to express what he was thinking during that period using different writing styles, whether they are intellectual or creative, and more importantly, has provided the opportunity for glances at the different possibilities of understanding 'La Méditerranée' offered by these genres. However, rather than exploring different ways of understanding the Mediterranean concept among these differing genres, my reading method pays more attention to common points shared by diverse genres at certain times of Camus's writing, which makes it easier for us to sense the development of a young writer's thought.

Critical Views of Albert Camus and his Works

Broadly speaking, there appear to be a wide range of theoretical approaches adopted to interpret Camus and his works, for instance, existentialist, political, religious, ideological, colonial and post-colonial, post-structural, Freudian, cultural, feminist and Marxist. Of course, none of these ways is absolutely independent of the others, when each reasonably emphasises a different aspect of Camus himself and his works. In addition, it would be too exhaustive to develop a complete and detailed analysis of all the perspectives mentioned above. Regarding the central concept in my thesis, it will suffice to select several typical areas which are most relevant to my

research.

Existentialism is without question one of the most prominent of these areas concerned with Camus. Sartre's description of Camus, in *Explication de L'Étranger*, as 'un classique, un méditerranéen [sic]' (Sartre 1947, 94), partly justifies my choice of establishing the concept of 'La Méditerranée' in my thesis. Given my later detailed discussion of the existentialist approach in Chapter One, here ample space will be given to other methods. Referring to biographical contexts,⁵ other than existentialism, there are two approaches to be reviewed: religious and post-colonial. My reason for examining the religious approach, specifically Camus's relation to Christianity, lies in the fact that early Christianity, as Camus suggests in his diploma dissertation entitled *Métaphysique chrétienne et néoplatonisme* (1936) and a lecture he gave in 1937 named 'La Culture indigène. La Nouvelle Culture méditerranéenne',⁶ developed in the Mediterranean basin. Similarly, Esalter (2000, 3) admits that early Christianity,⁷ especially during its first four centuries (30 – 430

⁵ In line with my intention to research Camus's early writings, biographical contexts here include not only his life experiences, but also his thinking and writing.

⁶ In Camus's 1936 dissertation, which was written to acquire his 'Diplôme d'études supérieures' from the University of Algiers in 1936, his plan is to research the process through which Christianity developed in the Hellenic Mediterranean. For example, in the first chapter 'Le Christianisme évangélique', Camus argues that Christianity's break with Judaism and its entry into the Mediterranean creates for it some obligations ('La rupture avec le judaïsme et l'entrée dans l'esprit méditerranéen créaient à la pensée chrétienne des obligations...') (*Premiers écrits (1932-1936)*, 1973: I, 1018). As to Camus's 1937 lecture, in the section 'Évidences', he also reviews how Christianity entered the Mediterranean region (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1937)*, 1965: I, 567-568).

⁷ According to Esalter (2000, 22, note 1), the term 'Christian' and 'Christianity' are anachronistic at least until the end of the first century C.E. and even for some time beyond. His reasons rest with two aspects: first, the word 'Christianos' (which appears only three times in the New Testament) was not used by followers of Christ until later; second, 'Christian' mainly demonstrates the later course of the movement of Christianity but ignores its fluid identity during the early development.

C.E.),⁸ was closely connected with the Mediterranean region. Thus any consideration of the concept of 'La Méditerranée' in Camus's early writings cannot ignore this historical background. Camus's life experiences from 1933 to 1942 shed light on my treatment of post-colonial studies. According to Pierre-Louis Rey,⁹ Camus had been living in Algeria until his departure for Paris in 1940, which means that the writer spent seven out of the nine years between 1933 and 1942 in Algeria, a French province at that time.¹⁰ For Camus who was a French citizen born and raised in Algeria and who developed his thinking of the Mediterranean in Algeria, it is unavoidable to be aware of post-colonial studies when researching the concept of 'La Méditerranée'. As I have not attempted to provide anything like a comprehensive bibliography of Camus, so here I will not attempt to do justice to all those who have contributed to the two approaches adopted to Camus and his works.

Besides existentialism, the next area of the research on Camus I would like to discuss here is his relation to Christianity. When we have drawn attention to the connections between existentialism and Camus, the recognition that Camus is an atheistic existentialist is identified as the prevailing critical approach. Macquarrie

⁸ In order to keep with the preferred method of dating for modern historical works, the dating style throughout the thesis will adopt the system of dates according to B.C.E. (before the common era) and C.E. (of the common era), instead of the system according to B.C. (before Christ) and A.D. (*anno Domini*, 'in the year of the Lord'), which means that changes have been made when referring to the books adopting the dating style of B.C. and A.D.

⁹ See Pierre-Louis Rey, 'Chronologie', in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. LXIX – XCVIII (p. LXX- LXXVIII). Camus was born on November 7, 1913 and left for Paris on March 14, 1940.

¹⁰ According to Dunwoodie (1998, 1), the history of French Algeria began from the invasion of France in 1830 to the withdrawal in 1962. In the 1920s and early 1930s, Algerianists made efforts to locate Algeria as a French province (*ibid.*, 3).

(1973, 7), for example, has no hesitation in declaring that Camus is an ‘avowedly atheistic existentialist’. To illustrate the meaning of ‘atheistic existentialist’, Chapter One will be devoted to analysing it more specifically. Here, in short, it denotes an existentialist who does not believe in God and rejects the Judeo-Christian tradition (Westphal et al. 2006, 4). However, those who have read the works of Camus will be astounded by the elements of Christianity that appear frequently in the works written by a so-called atheistic existentialist. There is now much evidence to support Camus’s links with Christianity. Camus’s dissertation *Métaphysique chrétienne et néoplatonisme* (1936)¹¹ obviously shows Camus’s interest in early Christian thought. Given that this dissertation will form part of the first period I research (1933 to August 1936) where Camus’s complicated connections to Christianity and Ancient Greece first appear, review of the literature here will be focused on his thesis. One point that needs to be mentioned here is that my investigation will be limited to Camus’s early interest in Christian ideas and their development. Even in the later analysis of *L’Étranger*, it will be outside the scope of this thesis to examine other Christian literary motifs.

¹¹ There is some dispute about the title of the dissertation. Lottman (1979, 109) refers to it as *Neoplatonisme* [sic] *et pensée chrétienne*, while according to Srigley, there is an extant typescript of the work, formerly possessed by Mme. Camus but now in the Camus archive, that bears the title: *Hellenism and Christianity: Plotinus and St. Augustine* (cited in Srigley 2007, 7). In the ‘Chronologie’ of Pléiade edition of Camus’s collected works, Rey suggests that the title, according to a memoir, is *Métaphysique chrétienne et néoplatonisme. Plotin et saint Augustin*, though he does not mention the name of the memoirs. See Pierre-Louis Rey, ‘Chronologie’, in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. LXIX – XCVIII (p. LXXV). However, in the main body of the thesis in this volume, the title is *Métaphysique chrétienne et néoplatonisme*. Considering all of my quotations are from this volume, my examination of the text of Camus’s thesis will adopt the latter title.

Scattered research on Camus's thesis in regard to his relation to Christianity can be traced back to the 1960s when Hardré (1967) provided a summary of Camus's dissertation, including the background of Camus's research, and the principal themes in each chapter, and also commented on the content of Camus's dissertation. More importantly, in contrast with critics who just claimed that Camus was definitely not linked with Christianity, Hardré stated that Camus showed interests in Christianity and his interests were based on the writer's real research on Christian metaphysics. In *Camus' Hellenic Sources*, Archambault (1972) examines Camus's thesis in far more depth than Hardré. He carefully tracks down Camus's references in the thesis and clarifies the real sources of Camus's references. However, in opposition to Hardré, Archambault concludes that Camus's research is not rigorous and always leads to contradiction because Camus depends too much on secondary literature and confuses Christianity with Gnosticism. Walker's (1982) paper also paid attention to Camus's thesis, but was more concerned with the relationship between Plotinus, a great master of late Greek philosophy, and Camus, as well as the influence of one of Plotinus's concepts '*Patrie*' on Camus and his writing. A systematic study of the thesis commenced in the 1990s, for example, with McBride's (1992) first complete English-language translation of it as a chapter of his own study of Camus's philosophy, and his claim that it is crucial for understanding the early Camus. After McBride, Srigley has recently made an important contribution to the study of

Camus's scholarship. Not only has he published the English translation of Camus's dissertation from French (Srigley, 2007) in a separate book with a meaningful introduction that aimed at underlining Camus's countless ties with late antiquity and the development from the period of late Greek philosophy to Christianity, but he has also linked Camus's critique of modernity to his attitudes towards Christianity and Ancient Greece (Srigley, 2011).

With the thriving development of post-colonial studies and the questioning of the concept of cultural identity, post-colonial perspectives are frequently adopted nowadays in analysing Camus and his works. In this field, Camus has been criticised for unconsciously displaying and virtually supporting French imperialism. It is in this regard that his works are closely associated with the region of 'La Méditerranée' and this serves as the reason to devote more space to a discussion of the post-colonial approach. The most famous challenge comes from Said (1978) who reminds the West that their ideas about the Orient are not real and that their writing of the Orient is usually filled with their own imagination and stereotypes. Said (1994, 184) defines Camus's novels and stories as a 'metropolitan transfiguration of the colonial dilemma', which represents the 'colon' for a French audience. Similarly, as far back as the beginning of the 1970s, O'Brien (1970, 25) pointed out that the Arabs in *L'Étranger* are not given names by Camus, criticizing the fact that the author indeed showed no concern towards native Algerians but was a representative of French

colonialism. As to *La Peste*, O'Brien (ibid., 46-47) suggested that the fiction, unlike *L'Étranger* in which there are still nameless Arabs,¹² even erases Arab population in the city of Oran, which can be explained by the fact that Oran, for Camus, does not represent Algeria but metropolitan France. However, Foley (2007, 1-2) points out that when O'Brien criticised Camus as being in support of French colonialism, he should have paid more attention to Camus's journalism, especially journalism devoted to Algeria. The value of these discussions conducted by post-colonial critics is that they bring to light new insights into Camus and his works. Despite some of the differences between their respective interpretations of French colonialism implied in Camus's works, it seems that they always have their reservations about Camus's real concern for Algeria and native Algerians. Recently, however, Carroll (2007) has set out to delineate a new portrait of Camus by reminding post-colonial critics that they should not ignore Camus's constant condemnation of colonialism and his passion for requesting equal rights for all Algerians. Indeed, Camus's denunciation of colonialism in Algeria is apparent throughout his works, especially journalism articles, the famous essays which are collected as *Actuelles III. Chroniques Algériennes 1939-1958*.¹³ In 'Avant-propos' of this collection, Camus makes it clear

¹² In a 1951 letter to the Algerian Kabyle writer Mouloud Feraoun, Camus once explained the reason for the absence of Arabs in *La Peste*: 'Don't think that if I didn't speak of the Arabs of Oran, it is because I feel separate from them. It's because, in order to present them, you have to speak of the problem that is poisoning the lives of all of us in Algeria: you would have had to write a different book from the one that I wanted to write' (cited in Foxlee, 2010, p.52, note 2).

¹³ The collection *Actuelles III. Chroniques Algériennes 1939-1958* was first published by Éditions Gallimard in 1958, which was included in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. IV, 1957-1959. (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2008), pp. 293-394. All quotations from the collection are from this volume, though the date refers to its first

that the possible solution to Algerian problems lies in ‘la fin du colonialisme’ (*Actuelles III. Chroniques Algériennes 1939-1958*, 1958: IV, 304). In ‘Misère de la Kabylie’ (IV, 324-328) written in 1939, ‘Crise en Algérie’ (IV, 344-347) written in 1945, Camus proposes to escalate Algerians’ and Arabs’ democratic rights. This, of course, does not mean that these articles are Camus’s entire works expressing his criticisms of colonialism in Algeria. Between May 1955 and February 1956, Camus published several articles dealing with Algerian problems in *L’Express*, for example, ‘Terrorisme et répression’ (1955), ‘L’Avenir algérien’ (1955),¹⁴ in which he also criticises colonialism. This is the reason why Foley (2007, 1-2), in a similar way to Carroll, when indicating O’Brien’s scant attention paid to Camus’s journalism, confirms the fact that in Camus’s journalism articles, he consistently calls for an end to colonialism in Algeria and asks for equal rights for all inhabitants.

Highlighting the three areas of the research on Camus and his works is not intended to cover all the documents on Camus, but to provide the research contexts in which my exploration of ‘La Méditerranée’ can be situated. I suggest that adopting the perspective of ‘La Méditerranée’ not only concerns some aspects of the three fields mentioned above, but indeed overlaps with all of them. In so doing, this study will focus on the way different types of ideas interrelate within Camus’s works.

publication by Gallimard.

¹⁴ These articles are collected as *Articles publiés dans «L’Express» (1955-1956)* in Albert Camus, *Articles, préfaces, conférences (1949-1956)*, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. III, 1949-1956, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2008), pp. 1015-1081.

Objectives

The first chapter is intended to serve as an introduction to the principal argument of my research. Given that Camus is generally accepted as an atheistic existentialist, I will firstly attempt to briefly analyse the main differences between Camus and the atheistic existentialist Jean-Paul Sartre. These different points support my argument for not adopting an existentialist approach to interpret Camus's early texts in my thesis. It will be followed by a detailed analysis, elaborated in engagement with other critical views, of why the notion of 'La Méditerranée' is so important in Camus's early works.

Chapter Two will consist of a close reading of Camus's early works from 1933 to August 1936, including his longest poem 'Méditerranée' (1933), his Master's thesis *Métaphysique chrétienne et néoplatonisme* (1936) and *L'Envers et l'endroit* (1937)¹⁵ in which 'La Mort dans l'âme' and 'Amour de vivre' will be mainly referred to. The two texts will be used because they are abundant in description of the Mediterranean region. In this chapter, I will argue that Camus did not clearly define the concept of 'La Méditerranée' during this period but just loosely established a Greco-Roman world as the Mediterranean, in which he considered 'le midi et la mesure' and embracing 'this-worldly life' as its values. The investigation of 'La

¹⁵ Although *L'Envers et l'endroit* was first published in 1937, Camus made it clear in the preface of this volume that he worked on these essays from 1935 to 1936. The main essays in this volume I will analyse in my thesis are 'La Mort dans l'âme' and 'Amour de vivre', which separately drew inspiration from Camus's journey to the European continent from July to August 1936 and his voyage to the Balearic Islands of Spain in September 1935. Considering this, I classify *L'Envers et l'endroit* into the period from 1933 to August 1936.

Méditerranée' in this chapter will engage with the writer's different genres of texts in two directions – discursive and creative. In addition, considering Camus was still a young writer from 1933 to August 1936, another important aspect that needs to be examined is the influence of some predecessors, such as his mentor and supervisor Grenier, and the major writer Valéry, whose works he had read at that time.

Chapter Three will analyse how the concept of 'La Méditerranée' becomes a more precise one in Camus's works, especially when Nietzsche's influence on him is taken into account. Focusing on the essay 'Sur la musique' (1932), the text of the lecture 'La Culture indigène. La Nouvelle Culture méditerranéenne' (1937), and some paragraphs from his Master's dissertation and his biographical essays, this chapter will put more emphasis on the writer's intellectual thinking instead of the two aspects analysed in Chapter Two. I will firstly provide a critique of Nietzsche's influence on Camus by analysing the essay 'Sur la musique'. Then I will examine the impact of Nietzsche's identification of two Ancient Greeces on the attitudes Camus expressed in the lecture, specifically his rejection of excessive reason. Having shown what he rejects, the establishment of the concept of 'La Méditerranée': as a region and as a culture, in relation to what Camus believes, will be investigated. As to the Mediterranean as a region, his view of it rests on an abundance of sunshine and sea. Additionally, it is a culture represented by pre-Socratics with their fullness of life and emphasis on man's senses.

In Chapter Four, *L'Étranger* will be taken as a literary text to sustain my analysis of the concept of 'La Méditerranée' both as a region and as a culture in Camus's early works. The reasons for choosing this novel not only lie in the fact that it was written directly after the works discussed in the previous chapters, but also in that it is a creative fiction, different from any genres of his works analysed. Thus it will be interesting to investigate whether the key ideas of the concept are still relevant in a different genre. The analysis of the text will be divided into two parts. Firstly, how 'La Méditerranée' appears as a region in *L'Étranger*. Secondly, an analysis of the protagonist Meursault will allow me to examine to what extent Meursault can be seen as a Mediterranean man, for example, whether he incarnates essential features of Camus's Mediterranean culture. In so doing, a suggestion can be provided that *L'Étranger* is not created out of nothing, but connects with Camus's establishment of 'La Méditerranée' in his early writings, though the text may not totally match the key ideas of the concept.

CHAPTER ONE: THE CHOICE OF A METHODOLOGY

This chapter endeavours to explain the importance of the concept of ‘La Méditerranée’ in Camus’s writing. It will firstly clarify why I have not adopted an existentialist approach. The first part is intended to serve as an introductory definition of atheistic existentialism with the aim of arguing that an existentialist approach for reading Camus and his works¹ is disputable. I will then review the history of critical readings of ‘La Méditerranée’ by focusing in some depth on major studies, the hope of which is that it will serve to underscore the importance of this concept for understanding the early Camus.

Camus and Atheistic Existentialism

It is a generally held view that Albert Camus was a French existentialist.²

According to Malpas (2012, 304), for example, *L’Étranger* and *Le Mythe de Sisyphe*

¹ The materials used in this part are not all from Camus’s early writings but are partly from his later works, from which we can see that an existentialist approach for understanding Camus is not only limited to Camus’s early writings but extends to all of his works, though my thesis only focuses on his early writings.

² To classify existentialism according to country is difficult to some degree. The reason is that as even a set of leading doctrines shared by so-called ‘existentialists’ is hard to specify, so is, needless to say, working out a distinctive philosophical perspective shared by a school of ‘existentialists’ in a given country. Paul Ricoeur (1998, 10) repudiates Søren Kierkegaard as ‘the father of existentialism’ because ‘the supposed family of ‘existentialist’ philosophies never really existed’. Thus it seems impossible to conclude what Danish existentialism is. As for German and French existentialism, Sartre (1996, 26), in the lecture ‘L’Existentialisme est un humanisme’ divides them into two categories: theistic existentialism with Jaspers and Gabriel Marcel; atheistic existentialism with Heidegger and French existentialists including Sartre. The problem of this categorization is that if Marcel can be seen as a French existentialist, he must be an atheistic existentialist whereas Sartre has already grouped him with Jaspers as a theistic existentialist. More importantly, except Sartre himself, the ‘existentialists’ described thus by Sartre refused the label. What is to be said, for instance, of Marcel’s preference for being called a neo-Socratic, of Jaspers’s emphasis on his commitment to classical philosophy (Ricoeur 1998, 10). Concerning Heidegger, he also felt discomfort at being labelled as an ‘atheistic existentialist’ because of his relationship to Christianity (O’Meara, 1986). The fact that German thinkers, such as Jaspers and Heidegger, refused the label ‘existentialist’, leads to my suggestion that ‘German existentialism’ is a term in doubt. Considering these difficulties, my analysis will only discuss French existentialism popularised by Sartre.

are probably the best-known and most widely read works within the existentialist canon. More specifically, and in an attempt to understand differences within the broad spectrum of ideas which can be brought under the heading of existentialist, some have described Camus as an atheistic existentialist. Macquarrie (1973, 7), for example, has no hesitation in declaring that both Camus and Sartre are ‘avowedly atheistic existentialists’, a view shared by Flynn (2006, 27) when he contrasts their position with the religious tones to be found in the philosophy of Kierkegaard.

Generally speaking, an atheistic existentialist is one who does not believe in God (Westphal et al., 2006, 4). Sartre himself drew a distinction between two kinds of existentialism in a lecture ‘L’Existentialisme est un humanisme’, which was later published as an essay:

les premiers, qui sont chrétiens, et parmi lesquels je rangerai Jaspers et Gabriel Marcel, de confession catholique; et, d’autre part, les existentialistes athées parmi lesquels il faut ranger Heidegger, et aussi les existentialistes français et moi-même (Sartre 1996, 26).

In an interview given after Sartre’s lecture and published in the journal *Servir*³ on December 20, 1945, Camus offered a similar assessment:

L’existentialisme a deux formes: l’une avec Kierkegaard et Jaspers débouche dans la divinité par la critique de la raison, l’autre, que j’appellerai l’existentialisme athée, avec Husserl, Heidegger et bientôt Sartre, se termine aussi par une divinisation, mais qui est simplement celle de l’histoire, considérée comme le seul absolu. On ne croit plus en Dieu, mais on croit à

³ The text of ‘Interview à « Servir »’ was included in *Articles, préfaces, conférences (1945-1948)* which was first published by Éditions Gallimard in 1965, whilst the second publication was by the same publisher in 2006. *Articles, préfaces, conférences (1945-1948)* and *Articles publiés dans « Combat »* were included, under the title *Articles, préfaces, conférences (1944-1948)*, in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. II, 1944-1948, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. 639-727. All quotations from ‘Interview à « Servir »’ are from this volume, though the date refers to its first publication in *Articles, préfaces, conférences (1945-1948)* by Gallimard.

l'histoire (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1945-1948)*, 1965: II, 659).

Interestingly, neither Sartre nor Camus spoke of the latter in these terms. Indeed, Sartre never included Camus in the group of existentialists to which he belonged, as is clear in his *Explication de 'L'Étranger'* (Sartre 1947, 102) and Camus himself claimed in his interview with *Servir* that he was not an existentialist at all. According to Sartre, atheistic existentialism required a belief in the non-existence of God,⁴ and while he proclaimed unswervingly that God is dead, Camus appeared more neutral and vacillating in that he never acknowledged the death of God; rather, in an interview published in *Le Monde* on August 31, 1956,⁵ he stated that he simply did not believe in God and that he was not an atheist because he found in irreligion something vulgar:

Je ne crois pas en Dieu, c'est vrai. Mais je ne suis pas athée pour autant. Je serais même d'accord avec Benjamin Constant pour trouver à l'irréligion quelque chose de vulgaire et de...oui, d'usé (*Extraits d'interviews*, 1962: III, 846).

This equivocal declaration stems from the complex relationship which exists between Camus's thought and Christianity, as I have already alluded to in my introduction, and has led to critics trying to decipher the relationship between Camus's thought and

⁴ By citing, in his lecture, Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*: 'Dostoïevski avait écrit: «Si Dieu n'existait pas, tout serait permis.»' (Sartre 1996, 39) (In fact, it was not Dostoyevsky who said that, but Ivan Karamazov, one of his characters), Sartre did not really try to prove the non-existence of God, because he firstly 'presupposes it and moves immediately to reflect on its significance' (Westphal 2012, 334, my italics).

⁵ The full name of this interview is 'La Rencontre d'Albert Camus et de William Faulkner: Nous vaudra-t-elle une première tragédie moderne?' The interview was about Camus's adaptation of Faulkner's drama *Requiem pour une nonne*. The text of this interview was included in *Extraits d'interviews*, which was first published by Éditions Gallimard in 1962, whilst the second publication was by the same publisher in 2008. With other texts concerned with *Requiem pour une nonne*, *Extraits d'interviews* was included in *Appendices de « Requiem pour une nonne »* in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. III, 1949-1956, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2008), pp. 845-850. All quotations from this interview are from this volume, though the date refers to its first publication in *Extraits d'interviews* by Gallimard.

Christianity from different perspectives.⁶ Camus's position, that not believing in God does not mean one has to be an atheist, distances him both from Sartre's unequivocal belief that God is dead or that God no longer exists and from the kind of Christian existentialism associated with Kierkegaard. In order to better understand Camus's thought, therefore, it is necessary to move beyond such classifications as Christian or atheistic existentialist and to reconsider the connections between his world view and the history of Christianity. For Camus, to be an existentialist, whether Christian or atheistic, was to embrace divinity or to deify historicism, neither of which he was prepared to accept, as is clear from his interview in *Servir*:

Pour ma part, je comprends bien l'intérêt de la solution religieuse, et je perçois très particulièrement l'importance de l'histoire. Mais je ne crois ni à l'une ni à l'autre, au sens absolu. Je m'interroge et cela m'ennuierait beaucoup que l'on me force à choisir absolument entre saint Augustin et Hegel. J'ai l'impression qu'il doit y avoir une vérité supportable entre les deux (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1945-1948)*: II, 659).

Camus believed in some intermediate position, one which is not bound by a belief in absolutes and is closely related to the value of 'la mesure et la limite' – a balancing force that Camus praises highly when discussing 'La Méditerranée'.

One of the features which Camus's thought shares with existentialism's fundamental belief in the primacy of existence⁷ is a refusal to believe in the

⁶ Catholic critics, for example, stunned by Christian implications in *La Chute*, believed firmly in Camus's impending conversion to Christianity (Bronner 1999, 127). From the writings of Howard Mumma (2000, 98), a guest minister and preacher at the American Church in Paris during the 1950s, we get to know that Camus had even desired to be re-baptised but this plan was never realised because of his early death. Owing to Camus's continuously intertwined relationship to Christianity during his whole life, he was even invited to present a report titled *L'Incroyant et les chrétiens* at a Dominican conference in 1946.

⁷ French existentialism insists that 'l'existence précède l'essence' (Sartre 1996, 29), which indicates that French existentialism is a philosophy of existence (Macquarrie 1973, 2).

essentialism of any world view based on abstract notions. However, this belief in the primacy of existence over essence is not enough to understand fully Camus's attitude towards God and Christianity. One way of bridging the gap is to examine Camus's thought in the light of the concept of 'La Méditerranée', an approach which is now well accepted by other critics but not fully developed.

The Context of 'La Méditerranée' Approach

The first serious consideration of the importance of the concept of 'La Méditerranée' in Camus's thought dates back as far as 1983 and the creation of 'L'Association rencontres méditerranéennes Albert Camus' in Lourmarin.⁸ However, the presence of 'La Méditerranée' in Camus's works has been given more attention by scholars since 1995 (Rufat 2011, 200), and, more specifically, since the colloquium 'Albert Camus: parcours méditerranéens' held in Jerusalem in 1997.⁹ Since then, 'La Méditerranée' for Camus studies has gained in popularity, as is shown by the fact that six conferences were held between 1997 and 2008 with titles which included the key term 'méditerranée'.¹⁰ Needless to say there have been

⁸ When it was founded in spring 1983, its original name was 'L'Association Tipasa, Rencontres méditerranéennes Albert Camus'. See <http://ramses.pharaons.fr/genesites/Mairie/lourmarin/DepCamusRMAC.pdf> [Accessed 18 September 2014].

⁹ See <http://webcamus.free.fr/conferences.html> [Accessed 18 September 2014]. The proceedings of this conference were published in *Perspectives: revue de l'Université hébraïque de Jérusalem* 5 (1998).

¹⁰ See <http://webcamus.free.fr/conferences.html> [Accessed 18 September 2014]. In chronological order, the conferences were: 'Rencontres méditerranéennes: Audisio, Camus, Roblè, frères de soleil: leurs combats' (Lourmarin, 2002), the proceedings of which were published as a monograph *Audisio, Camus, Roblè, frères de soleil* (Aix en Provence: Edisud, 2003); 'Camus et le rêve méditerranéen: de l'Algérie à la Grèce' (Marseille, 2003); 'Les valeurs méditerranéennes dans l'œuvre d'Albert Camus' (Algiers, 2003); 'Albert Camus: Oran, l'Algérie, la Méditerranée' (Oran, 2005) and 'Albert Camus, précurseur: Méditerranée d'hier et d'aujourd'hui'

various other symposiums associated with this theme, for example, on 'l'Algérie', on 'la pensée de Midi', and on other regions related to the Mediterranean.¹¹ Discussion of Camus's work in this field roughly focuses on two major aspects: on the one hand, the relationship between 'La Méditerranée' and Ancient Greece, and, on the other, the degree to which the author's writing expresses a Eurocentric, colonialist perspective.

Discussion of Camus's work in relation to Ancient Greece does not constitute an entirely new approach as commentators have long pointed out such links. Critics' interests in this area may be partly because Camus had declared that he had 'un cœur grec' in an interview published in *La Revue du Caire* in 1948 (*Actuelles: chroniques 1944-1948*, 1950: II, 476). Even though there is a long list of monographs and essays in this regard, examples can be given.¹² Modler (2002) discusses Camus's links with Ancient Greek thought through a discussion of 'la mesure' although he goes on to point out that, in Camus's writing, this is accompanied by notions of 'la démesure', shown particularly in the author's regular use of the words 'sans cesse', 'sans arrêt', 'démesuré'.¹³ Modler also speaks of the influence of Plato's cave theory on Camus's

(University of Madison-Wisconsin, 2006), the proceedings of which were published as *Albert Camus, précurseur. Méditerranée d'hier et d'aujourd'hui*, (Alek Baylee Toumi [ed.]. Préface de Gilles Bousquet, Francophone Cultures and Literatures, Vol. 55. New York: Peter Lang, 2009. See Otto Klapp, *Bibliographie d'histoire littéraire française*, (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, Vol. XLIX (2011)), p. 41).

¹¹ See <http://webcamus.free.fr/conferences.html> [Accessed 18 September 2014]. As an example in each respect, the conferences were: 'Camus et l'Algérie' (Aix en Provence: 2002); 'Albert Camus: la pensée de Midi' (Aix en Provence: 2003); 'Albert Camus et la Grèce' (Lourmarin, 2006).

¹² To be brief, good explorations can be found in Jacques Hardré, 'Camus' Thoughts on Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism', (*Studies in Philology*, Vol. 64, No. 1 (Jan., 1967): pp. 97-108); Paul Archambault, *Camus' Hellenic Sources*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972); I. H. Walker, 'Camus, Plotinus, and "Patrie": The Remaking of a Myth', (*The Modern Language Review*, Vol. 77, No. 4 (Oct., 1982): pp. 829-839); Robert Champigny, *Sur un héros païen*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1959).

¹³ Modler lists numerous examples of Camus's use of these words, for example, in the last part 'La Conquête' of Chapter Two in *Le Mythe de Sisyphe*, 'Mais il n'y a qu'une victoire et elle est *éternelle*. C'est celle que je n'aurai

‘pensée de midi’ (also known as ‘pensée solaire’). Baishanski (2002), on the other hand, mainly analyses the influence of the East on the young Camus and his works, especially *L’Étranger*. While her main interest is in Buddhism and Taoism, she mentions that there are common points of contact between ancient Greek philosophy and Eastern thought, for instance, their preferences for moderation and a rejection of excess. Srigley (2011) links Camus’s critique of modernity to his attitudes towards Christianity and Ancient Greece and argues that a longing for a homeland, as in Homer’s *Odyssey*, is the foundation of Camus’s texts. There is therefore a tradition of reading Camus through references to Ancient Greece. The new elements in the works of other critics, however, are the attempts to discuss Camus’s spiritual affiliation with Ancient Greece in the context of the concept of ‘La Méditerranée’.

The second approach to ‘La Méditerranée’ in Camus’s works is consistent with the post-colonial reading made fashionable by Said. According to Said (1994), Camus could not show any real consideration to Algerian natives even though he was born in Algeria, because he was, as a matter of fact, a French citizen and not an indigenous Muslim. Thus, in Said’s eyes, Camus actually depicts Algeria from the position of a colonialist. More recent criticism, however, has been more temperate. As early as 1998, Dunwoodie referred to Camus in his long discussion of European discourse on French Algeria between the conquest of 1830 and the outbreak of the Algerian War in 1954.

jamais. [...] ma révolte et ma passion se rejoignent alors dans cette tension, cette clairvoyance et cette répétition démesurée’ (*Le Mythe de Sisyphe*, 1942: I, 279, Modler’s emphasis).

He (1998, 185) claimed that when Camus presents 'La Méditerranée', the writer attempts to shift the focus from Algeria as a region of France to the Mediterranean as a region where both French and Algerians can construct a collective identity. More recently, and in a similar vein, David Carroll (2007) has also attempted to liberate Camus from the colonialist image offered by Said. Carroll's (2007, 9) basic point is that Algeria is a Mediterranean region, neither totally belonging to France nor Algeria, neither to Europe nor Africa. He tries to illustrate Camus's concept of 'La Méditerranée' as a distinctive area closely related to France and Algeria but also not the equivalent of either. In a much more complicated and exhaustive way than Carroll, Foxlee (2010) examines how Camus's lecture, 'La Culture indigène. La Nouvelle Culture méditerranéenne', plays a particularly important role in his writings. As the subtitle of Foxlee's book suggests, *A Text and its Contexts*, he attempts to interpret this seemingly slight text by Camus by setting it within a range of contexts: French discourses on the Mediterranean; the interwar French intellectual debate on 'culture', 'intelligence' and Western civilizations; the interwar debate on East-West relations, such as on the relationship between India and the West; and, finally, the Algerian political context. 'La Méditerranée' in Camus's works, is therefore, according to Foxlee, a multi-faceted concept / notion which was shaped by the very complex social reality of Algeria in the first half of the twentieth century.

'La Méditerranée' is therefore a recurrent theme in Camus's works grounded in

the author's reception of the ancient world (to be more specific, Ancient Greece) and in the historical and political reality of his time. Commentators have offered various interpretations of the connections between 'La Méditerranée' and Ancient Greece or the realities at that time, but little attention has yet been paid to Camus's changing understanding of 'La Méditerranée' in his early works from 1933 to 1937, especially his attitudes towards Rome / Latinity, which he excludes from, and also counterposes to, 'La Méditerranée' from about the end of 1936. Luke Richardson (2012) has recently done much to clarify the problem. He discusses the importance, and the opposition, of Greece and Rome in Camus's works of the 'absurd cycle', especially the essay *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* (1942) and the play *Caligula* (1944). More importantly, he suggests that Camus's vision of the ancient world was situated within the political and literary contexts of the colonised Algeria where the Roman history was identified as a justification for the presence and dominance of Europeans. However, he does not examine in detail what 'La Méditerranée' means to Camus nor the complex relationship between 'La Méditerranée', Greece and Rome in Camus's early works. In Chapters 2 and 3, I will discuss Camus's changing understanding of 'La Méditerranée' as expressed in his early writings from 1933 to 1937. This will shed light on the complicated relation Camus establishes between 'La Méditerranée', Greece and Rome and explore the decreasing importance of Rome / Latinity in his writing in response to the political realities of the time. The final chapter will offer a reading of *L'Étranger* as

a literary expression of Camus's concept of 'La Méditerranée'.

CHAPTER TWO: ‘LA MÉDITERRANÉE’ IN CAMUS’S EARLY WRITINGS FROM 1933 TO 1936

In Chapter One, I discussed in broad terms why an existentialist approach is not adopted in the present thesis and provided a long analysis of critical views of ‘La Méditerranée’ in Camus’s works in order to suggest that this perspective is well grounded and a fruitful one for understanding Camus. In the present chapter, I will explore the notion of ‘La Méditerranée’ in Camus’s early works from 1933 to August 1936. The three years cover the period when Camus had been doing his studies in *La Faculté des lettres* at the University of Algiers.¹ The program at the University comprised two parts: completion of the first two years led to the *Licence de philosophie* and the writing of a dissertation in the third year earned the students their *Diplôme d’études supérieures de philosophie* (Lottman 1979, 65). During the university years, Jean Grenier, Camus’s lycée teacher who was also appointed to the University, continued to be an important intellectual influence on the young writer. Not only did Grenier guide Camus to read authors like Plato and Kierkegaard, but as the assistant of Poirier, Camus’s supervisor, he had a major influence on the student’s dissertation writing (ibid., 66). Camus, on the one hand, pursued his degree in the university, and, on the other, engaged with creative writing, for example, with his poem and some biographical essays (Rey 2006, LXXII – LXXV).

Given the brief history of Camus’s education and his life at this time, my

¹ The following biographical materials are gathered mainly from Herbert R. Lottman, *Albert Camus: A Biography*, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1979), pp. 47–136; Olivier Todd, *Albert Camus: une vie*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1996), pp. 44–120; Roger Grenier, *Albert Camus: soleil et ombre: une biographie intellectuelle*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1987), pp. 13–46; Pierre-Louis Rey, ‘Chronologie’, in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931–1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. LXXII – LXXV.

argument in this chapter, is that Camus did not specifically define the concept of ‘La Méditerranée’ during this period; rather, he simply equated the Greco-Roman world to the Mediterranean which was characteristic of ‘le midi et la mesure’ and ‘an embrace of this-worldly life’, two important ideas emerging from his works. The difficulty of capturing what ‘La Méditerranée’ represented for Camus during this period does not prevent us from exploring the notion and the important ideas behind it. In this chapter, my discussion of the ideas will be based on an analysis of Camus’s longest poem ‘Méditerranée’ (1933), his Master’s thesis *Métaphysique chrétienne et néoplatonisme* (1936) and the biographical essays such as ‘La Mort dans l’âme’ (1936) in *L’Envers et l’endroit*. The three different texts can be seen as the young writer’s two kinds of attempt to understand ‘La Méditerranée’: the dissertation indicates his intellectual and discursive interrogation of the notion of the Mediterranean; the poem and the biographical essays demonstrate his creative approach which is more lyrical and imaginative, and show, in addition, Camus’s close relationship to the physical world of the Mediterranean. The two different manners in which Camus engaged with his thinking and writing of the Mediterranean virtually run through his career right from the start, thus it is not too early to mention that Chapter Three and Chapter Four will deal with his lecture ‘La Culture indigène. La Nouvelle Culture méditerranéenne’ as an intellectual text and his famous novel *L’Étranger* as a creative text respectively. Finally, in the context of Camus’s education and his life from 1933 to August 1936, another important aspect, as is always to be expected when discussing a young writer, is that he was much influenced by his mentor and supervisor Grenier, and the major writer Valéry. This is

the reason why looking at important influences on the writer occupies a large part of my account.

A Greco-Roman World

Camus's admiration for the Mediterranean was not conjured up out of nothing but developed in a concrete historical and cultural context, one in which the topic of 'La Méditerranée' was fashionable amongst Camus and his contemporaries in France. French writers including Pierre Louys, Henry de Montherlant, André Gide and Paul Valéry, had attempted to delineate local landscapes and customs special to the Mediterranean region (Lottman 1979, 69). For example, in *Amyntas* (1906), Gide (1925)² records his travels in North Africa in the years 1893 and 1894, especially in Algeria, to places such as Biskra and Touggourt. It is worth noting that of the writers mentioned above, Valéry was probably the most influential on Camus's poem 'Méditerranée' (1933). As early as 1931 when Camus lived with his uncle Gustave Acault,³ Camus read Valéry's works (Todd 1996, 48). In Camus's early writings, the poem 'Méditerranée' which will remain the longest poem of his career, can be seen as the first homage paid to the Mediterranean region and also to Valéry (Foxlee 2010, 99). The influences from Valéry that I will be looking at draw on two aspects: his lectures on the Mediterranean and the poem 'Le Cimetière marin'. While I will discuss the latter in the next section, my analysis here focuses on the influence of

² According to the publication information on the title page of André Gide, *Amyntas*, (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1925), *Amyntas* was first published in 1906, though the four separate fragments of it were written between 1899 and 1904: 'Mopsus' (April 1899), 'Feuilles de route' (March-April, 1899), 'De Biskra à Touggourt' (December 1900), 'Le Renoncement au voyage' (1903-1904).

³ See Pierre-Louis Rey, 'Chronologie', in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. LXIX – XCVIII (p. LXXII).

Valéry's lectures. Just a few months before Camus wrote 'Méditerranée', in October 1933,⁴ Valéry had given two lectures on the Mediterranean: the first, 'Inspiration méditerranéenne' (ibid., 99), was delivered in Paris in February 1933,⁵ the second on 21 July in Nice, at the inauguration of the new 'Centre Universitaire Méditerranéen',⁶ to which he was appointed administrator in 1933. Valéry's lectures, especially the latter which was reported by *Les Cahiers du Sud*,⁷ a magazine oriented towards the Mediterranean (ibid., 97), sounded enthusiastic calls for the Mediterranean and its intellectual potential:

L'Europe et la Méditerranée devenues, par les effets mêmes des *qualités intellectuelles* qui s'y sont développées, des éléments de deuxième grandeur de l'univers humain: [...] (*Regards sur le monde actuel et autres essais*, 1960: II, 1141, my italics).⁸

Les Cahiers du Sud which regularly reported the activities of the Centre and to which Valéry was a main contributor,⁹ was at that time influential in North African cities like Tunis and Algiers (Hewitt 2011, 102-103), where the magazine had permanent correspondents. Moreover, Camus and his tutor, Jean Grenier, were both contributors

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. LXXXIII.

⁵ Jean Grenier, Camus's tutor, successfully asked Valéry for permission to use a similar title 'Inspirations méditerranéennes' for his collection of articles on the Mediterranean published in 1940. See Neil Foxlee, *Albert Camus's 'The New Mediterranean Culture': A Text and its Contexts*, (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010), p. 99; and also J. S. T. Garfitt, *The Work and Thought of Jean Grenier*, (London: The Modern Humanities Research Association, 1983), p. 104.

⁶ See Agathe Rouart-Valéry, 'Introduction biographique', in Paul Valéry, *Œuvres* Vol. I, (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1957), pp. 11–71 (p. 58).

⁷ *Les Cahiers du Sud*, a French literary magazine based in Marseilles, had been directed by Jean Ballard since 1925 for about forty years and appeared until 1966. In fact, the magazine began its life as *Fortunio* founded by Marcel Pagnol and his friends from the Lycée de Marseille in 1913, while the first number of the magazine appeared in 1914. For further details, see Alain Paire, *Chronique des Cahiers du Sud: 1914-1966 / préface de Jean Duvignaud*, (Paris: IMEC Éditions, 1993); Nicholas Hewitt, 'The Midi, Marseille and the Mediterranean: the Case of Les Cahiers du Sud', *Nottingham French Studies*, Vol. 50, No.1 (Spring 2011): pp. 95-104.

⁸ The text of the lecture 'Le Centre universitaire méditerranéen' was included in *Regards sur le monde actuel et autres essais*, first published in 1945. Then it was included in Paul Valéry, *Regards sur le monde actuel et autres essais* in *Œuvres II*. (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1960), pp. 1128-1144. All quotations from the lecture are from this volume, and the date refers to its publication.

⁹ According to Foxlee (2006, 84), main contributors to the magazine included Paul Valéry, Gabriel Audisio, and of course, the director Jean Ballard.

to the magazine,¹⁰ which suggests that there existed regular contact between Camus and the magazine.

The influence of Valéry's lectures on Camus can be seen in the way in which they both incorporate references to Ancient Greece and Rome into their account of the Mediterranean. According to Valéry, the Mediterranean is not merely a symbol of the Greco-Roman glory, but may also be a fusion of other different kinds of cultures. In the lecture 'Le Centre universitaire méditerranéen', Valéry makes his view clear:

Mais il est arrivé que certaines des valeurs méditerranéennes en ont offusqué d'autres: par exemple, la grande gloire de la Grèce et la bien aussi grande gloire de Rome ont fait oublier ou négliger bien d'autres sources de civilisation. Une exploration systématique trouvera certainement qu'il y eut en Méditerranée bien plus de choses dont il faut tenir compte, que nos habitudes ne nous le laissent penser (1140-1141).

Regardless of Valéry's inclusion in the Mediterranean of cultures other than the Greco-Roman, it seems highly possible that his description of the great glory of Greece and Rome had left a deep impact on the young Camus. In the second section of 'Méditerranée', we can see that Camus equates a Greco-Roman world with the Mediterranean when he portrays 'le midi' of the day:

Midi sur la mer immobile et chaleureuse:
M'accepte sans cris: un silence et un sourire,
Esprit latin, Antiquité, un voile de pudeur sur le cri torturé!
Vie latine qui connaît ses limites,
Rassurant passé, oh! Méditerranée! (*Premiers écrits (1932-1936)*, 1973: I, 976).¹¹

¹⁰ For example, 'Sagesse de Lourmarin' by Grenier was published in the May 1936 issue, and lengthy extracts from Camus's lecture 'La Culture indigène. La Nouvelle Culture méditerranéenne' were in the August 1937 issue.

¹¹ Although the poem 'Méditerranée' was written in 1933, it was first published in *Premiers écrits (1932-1936)* by Éditions Gallimard in 1973. It was included as part of *Premiers écrits (1932-1936)*, in *Écrits posthumes (1932-1944)*, in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944. (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. 976-978. All quotations from the poem are from this volume, though the date refers to its first publication in *Premiers écrits (1932-1936)* by Gallimard.

‘Antiquité’ in capital letters here specifically refers to ‘the period before the middle ages, the time of the ancient Greeks and Romans’ (Simpson and Weiner (eds.), 1989: I, 533). The clear references to Virgil, Mélibée¹² in the poem: ‘Virgile enlace l’arbre, Mélibée mène paître’ (I, 977) need to be seen as Camus’s equation of the Mediterranean with a Greco-Roman world, because it is well-known that Virgil, the famous Latin poet, imitated or even sometimes actually translated Greek models of pastoral poetry¹³ in his own poems (Gould 1983, xiii). It is also in these lines that Camus already regards Latinity as a culture which knows its limits, a particular characteristic of the Mediterranean in his heart to be analysed in my next section.

It should be noted that there is a sensuous feeling running through ‘Méditerranée’. The poem comprises four sections, each depicting the landscape and scenes of daily life in the Mediterranean at a time of the day, from ‘le matin’, ‘le midi’, and ‘le soir’ of the first day to ‘le matin’ again of the second day. At the beginning of the first section, the poet captures the vision of various colours when the sun shines on balconies in the morning. Some young women, with bare arms, hang up clothes. The clear morning is enamelled by the sea. In the second section, at noon, the day is at its hottest and brightest, when Camus describes the Mediterranean as a luminous phoenix flying up from its ashes. When the night has come, though there is no sunshine, the flashes of the flame still lick. The man who enjoys the sight of the Mediterranean in the morning (‘Un homme; sur une fenêtre, la lunette à la main’

¹² Mélibée is a shepherd in the *Bucoliques* by the Roman poet Virgil. See Virgil, *Bucoliques / Texte établi et traduit par E. de Saint-Denis*, (Paris: Société d’édition « Les Belles lettres », 1967), pp. 38-41, 79-82.

¹³ ‘Pastoral’, as a genre of poetry, was invented by the Greek poet, Theocritus (c. B.C.E. 270). See H.E.Gould, ‘Introduction’, in Virgil, *Eclogues*, (Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1983), pp. ix-x; see also Robert Coleman, ‘Virgil’s Pastoral Modes’, in Boyle, A. J. (ed.) *Ancient Pastoral: Ramus Essays on Greek and Roman Pastoral Poetry*, (Berwick: Aureal Publications, 1975), pp. 58-80.

(976)) 'se dissout dans l'ombre' of the flame (977). It is through this quiet night that from the graveyards by the sea arises eternity and the land becomes tranquil. At this moment, for the sons belonging to this land, 'cette terre ouvre les bras et fait sa chair de leur chair' (977). It is the first time in the poem that Camus links the Mediterranean with man's flesh and more importantly, creates a sense of immersion in the world, which continues in the fourth section when the sun comes out. The poet develops the sense of immersion connected with the death of man's flesh, which finally merges into the Mediterranean. Then he exclaims:

Méditerranée, oh! mer Méditerranée!
Seuls, nus, sans secrets, tes fils attendent la mort.
La mort te les rendra, purs, enfin purs (978).

Two points need to be addressed here: firstly, the immersion is through one's sensuous feeling of the Mediterranean, for example, through one's vision of the various colours, but not a rational one; secondly, the link of man's flesh and its death with the Mediterranean world already seems to anticipate a well-known passage which recounts Meursault's last moment before his sentence. This passage on the last page of *L'Étranger* not only deals with man's death, an important theme in all of Camus's works,¹⁴ but reveals the moment when Meursault merges with the Mediterranean.¹⁵

As we have seen, Camus refers to Valéry by including the Greco-Roman world into the Mediterranean. Apart from this intellectual understanding, there exists a

¹⁴ Berthold (2013, 141-142) suggests that all of Camus's works are about death and lists some important ones to support his idea. Examples can be given, such as the fact that *L'Étranger* starts with the death of Meursault's mother and ends with a death sentence; *La Peste* relates that the Algerian city of Oran is swept by a plague and is filled with diseased corpses; *The Myth of Sisyphus* explores the question of suicide, the only 'problème philosophique vraiment sérieux' (*Le Mythe de Sisyphe*, 1942: I, 221).

¹⁵ This passage will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

strong physical awareness of the sensuous qualities of the Mediterranean in Camus's poem. Right from the start of his writing career, then the two different kinds of understanding of the Mediterranean run through Camus's works.

The inclusion of the Greco-Roman world into the Mediterranean continues in Camus's other type of text – the dissertation *Métaphysique chrétienne et néoplatonisme* (1936).¹⁶ In this dissertation completed in May 1936, Camus attempts to illustrate critical stages of history when Christianity entered the Mediterranean region. The dissertation consists of four chapters, each one dealing with a crucial stage or movement during the evolution of Christianity. The first chapter, 'Le Christianisme évangélique', examines the works of several early church fathers – for example, Ignatius of Antioch (c. 35 – c. 107 C.E.), Justin Martyr (c. 100 – c. 165 C.E.), Clement of Alexandria (c.150 – 215 C.E.), Tertullian (c. 160 – c. 225 C.E.).¹⁷ Though Camus does not clarify the definite period he discusses in this chapter, it can be inferred from the biography of the early church fathers that his analysis focuses on the first to the third centuries. Camus begins with the favoured themes he summarised concerning Evangelical Christianity: the Incarnation of Jesus Christ, the idea of an imminent death linked with the Second Advent of Christ,¹⁸ the hope in God, especially the reward in the Kingdom of God (*Premiers écrits (1932-1936)*),

¹⁶ The thesis was first published in *Premiers écrits (1932-1936)* by Éditions Gallimard in 1965. In *Premiers écrits (1932-1936)*, only 'Note à Max-Pol Fouchet sur « Bériha »' and *Métaphysique chrétienne et néoplatonisme* were published in 1965, while other texts were published in 1973. The thesis was included as part of *Premiers écrits (1932-1936)*, in *Écrits posthumes (1932-1944)*, in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. 999-1081. All quotations from the thesis are from this volume, though the date refers to its first publication in *Premiers écrits (1932-1936)* by Gallimard.

¹⁷ Regarding the years of birth and death of Ignatius, Justin, Clement and Tertullian, see Lavinia Cohn-Sherbok, *Who's who in Christianity*, (London: Routledge, 1998), pp. 140, 163, 58, 288, respectively.

¹⁸ In Christianity, the Second Coming of Christ, or the Second Advent, is the anticipated return of Jesus to Earth. For the early church fathers, Jesus, with his return, would judge the world and rescue God's people from hardship, then establish the kingdom of God (Lea 1986, 163).

1965: I, 1005-1012). The idea of the Incarnation, which is to say the meeting of the divine and the flesh in the person of Jesus Christ, for Camus, is at the centre of Christian thought at that time (1005). The Incarnation not only bridges the great distance between man and God, but signifies redemption at the same time, because Jesus in the flesh who represents man, died for man's sins (1011). Regarding the approaching death, Evangelical Christianity emphasises the ultimate support and hope in God for man in fear of death (1009). In Chapter Two, 'La Gnose', Camus argues that Gnosticism, from the beginning of the second century to the end of the third,¹⁹ was the first attempt at Greco-Christian collaboration, which had played an important role in the Christianization of the Hellenic Mediterranean: 'Si on accepte comme un fait établi cette christianisation de la Méditerranée hellénique, on doit considérer l'hérésie gnostique comme un des premiers essais de collaboration gréco-chrétienne' (1022). To be more specific, the Greco-Christian collaboration attempted by Gnosticism aims to reconcile knowledge, which is a Greek notion, and salvation, a Christian theme (1024-1025). For Gnostics, the route to salvation is only by gnosis²⁰ or knowledge of God, thus the spiritual²¹ can be finally saved by God

¹⁹ See Albert Camus, 'Note B', in *Métaphysique chrétienne et néoplatonisme, Premiers écrits (1932-1936)*, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1965), p.1023.

²⁰ Camus never defines what exactly the word 'gnosis' means in his dissertation, and it seems that he confuses 'gnosis' with 'Gnosticism', which can be inferred from his remarks: 'C'est à bon droit, on le voit, que nous pouvons considérer le Gnosticisme comme une des solutions, une des étapes chrétiennes dans le problème que nous décelions: la gnose est une tentative de conciliation entre connaissance et salut' (*Premiers écrits (1932-1936)*, 1965: I, 1024-1025). It is commonly agreed that 'gnosis' is derived from the Greek word for 'knowledge'. See for example, Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), p. xix; Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1967), p. 35. But 'gnosis' is not rational knowledge, because the Greek language distinguishes between scientific or rational knowledge ('He knows mathematics') and knowing through personal observation or experience ('He knows me'), which is *gnosis* (Pagels 1989, xix). From the early second century C.E. onwards, 'gnosis' was used to indicate, largely in Christian texts, certain persons or groups who claimed to have special knowledge of the transcendent world and its mysteries (Schröter 2012, 10). In addition, it is no wonder that Camus confuses 'gnosis' with 'Gnosticism', because as late as in 1966, at the Messina conference, scholars made a widely discussed proposal to distinguish between 'gnosis' and 'Gnosticism'. Since then, 'gnosis' in the context of Christianity, is regarded as 'knowledge

(1024). In the third chapter 'La Raison mystique', Camus provides a detailed analysis of Plotinus's *Enneads* which he regards as similar to Gnosticism in its attempt at Greco-Christian reconciliation. The solution Plotinus (c. 205 – 270 C.E.)²² tries to attain is to incorporate rational knowledge with the destiny of the soul, or to express the destiny of the soul within intellectual forms (1040-1041). Plotinus explains rationally that a procession of the three hypostases – 'l'Un', 'l'Intelligence' and 'l'Âme du monde' exists in the world (1043). The One, perfect and timeless, generates the Intelligence, and from Intelligence arises the World Soul (1043). In addition, there are two movements in Plotinus's universe, one of outgoing from the perfect One, the principle of unity, to an ever-increasing multiplicity and the other of return to unity (1043). Camus concludes in this chapter that what Plotinus provides for Christianity, is a metaphysical doctrine on a religious form of thought (1061). The dissertation's final chapter 'Le Verbe et la chair'²³ is devoted entirely to Augustinianism which harmonises Hellenism and Christianity. Camus's central claim here is that, for Saint Augustine (354 – 430 C.E.)²⁴ who first attempted to find a rational way of understanding God but soon found himself unpersuaded, he converted to Christianity because he suggested there is a limit to the flexibility of intelligence, thus not rational knowledge but faith can be the solution (1073-1074).

of the divine mysteries', whereas 'Gnosticism' is used to identify 'a certain group of systems of the Second Century C.E.', namely, 'Gnostic movement' (ibid.).

²¹ Camus here adopts the idea of the three types of humanity classified by a Gnostic thinker, Valentinus (second century). The three types are: materialists, who are tied to the secular world; psychics, balanced between God and this world; and the spiritual, who live in God and know him (*Premiers écrits (1932-1936)*, 1965: I, 1024).

²² In terms of the years of birth and death of Plotinus, see Lavinia Cohn-Sherbok, *Who's who in Christianity*, (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 249.

²³ The English translation of the title of this chapter is 'Augustine'. See Albert Camus, *Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism* / translated with an introduction by Ronald D. Srigley, (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2007), p. 115.

²⁴ For the years of birth and death of Augustine, see Lavinia Cohn-Sherbok, *Who's who in Christianity*, (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 16.

As Quilliot (1965, 1221) comments, if Plotin in Camus's dissertation desires to comprehend with his reason, Augustine humiliates the rational and does not think it is adequate to understand being. In the concluding part, Camus surveys the whole process of the evolution of Christianity, which, according to the author, starts with 'la rupture avec le Judaïsme'²⁵ (I, 1018) and its entrance into the Greco-Roman world, then gains in popularity in the Mediterranean world at the time when it took shape as a religion influenced by Greek philosophy. Through this summary of Camus's dissertation there are two points we should notice: firstly, according to Camus, the Mediterranean is equivalent to the Greco-Roman world; secondly, when discussing the Greek philosophy Christianity encountered in the Mediterranean, Camus in fact discusses philosophy as it existed during Roman times, that is a philosophy influenced by the Greeks, but does not discuss Greek philosophy directly through Greek texts.

With regard to the first point, though Camus does not specifically make an equation between the Mediterranean and the Greco-Roman world, he implies it throughout the thesis by alternating between the two words 'gréco-romain' and 'méditerranéen' when he discusses the evolution of Christianity in the Mediterranean world. In the introduction, for example, when he acquaints readers with the historical

²⁵ In describing the relationship between Judaism and Christianity in his dissertation, Camus unwittingly assumes that they are two distinct religions without any relations after their split at the end of the first century (*Premiers écrits (1932-1936)*, 1965: I, 1003-1004), which is the reason why Camus uses the words 'la rupture' (1018, 1074), 'se séparer' (1004), 's'éloigner' (1020), 'définitivement détaché' (1022), etc.. In fact, according to Goodman (2003, 119), there exists much disagreement about whether, when, how and why Judaism and Christianity parted in antiquity. For scholars who claim that the two religions parted and never converged again, it is generally agreed that there was a turning point in the first or early second century, and then no relations between the two (Reed and Becker 2003, 1). However, literary and archaeological discoveries attest that there exist more interwoven relations, for instance, both religions continued to be influenced by their shared cultural contexts after the agreed splitting time (ibid., 2). If the two religions did not separate totally, it seems that Camus's view of the relationship between Judaism and Christianity is at least simplified.

background in which his research is grounded, he states that ‘La pensée chrétienne se sépare alors de ses origines et se déverse tout entière dans le monde *gréco-romain*. Celui-ci, préparé par ses inquiétudes et les religions de mystère, finit par l’accepter’ (ibid., 1004, my italics). We find a similar comment when Camus describes how Christianity entered the Mediterranean world in Chapter One: ‘La rupture avec le Judaïsme et l’entrée dans l’esprit *méditerranéen* créaient à la pensée chrétienne des obligations: [...]’ (1018, my italics). Other similar uses of ‘gréco-romain’ and ‘méditerranée’ can be found in other chapters. For example, when Camus reviews Gnosticism in the evolution of Christianity in Chapter Two, he comments that ‘il [Le Gnosticisme] montre au Christianisme la voie à ne pas suivre. C’est à cause de ses excès que Tertullien et Tatien freinent le Christianisme dans sa marche vers la *Méditerranée*’ (1039, my italics). In Chapter Four, under the title ‘La Pensée chrétienne au seuil du moyen âge’, Camus repeats himself by emphasising that ‘Le fait capital de cette évolution [du Christianisme], c’est la rupture avec le Judaïsme et l’entrée dans le monde *gréco-romain*’ (1074, my italics).

More importantly, we need to examine which period of philosophy Camus actually focuses on when he discusses the Greek philosophy Christianity encountered in the Mediterranean world during its evolution. At the beginning of this introduction, Camus poses the question of what is ‘l’originalité du Christianisme par rapport à l’Hellénisme’ (ibid., 999), which is the major question Camus attempts to answer throughout the dissertation. This allows Camus to conclude that the dissertation has solved the problem of ‘les rapports du Christianisme et de l’Hellénisme’ (1075). What leads Camus astray, however, is his failure to determine the exact time when

Hellenism emerged. Thus the Greek philosophy in Hellenistic times he intends to focus on is in fact Roman philosophy. Although the Roman Empire extended over some 1500 years (27 B.C.E. – 1453 C.E.), the Roman philosophy discussed here emerges in the second or first century B.C.E. and lasts until the sixth century C.E. (Sedley 2003, 9),²⁶ which mainly covers the philosophy in the Western Roman Empire (27 B.C.E. – 476 C.E.).²⁷ The Hellenistic period, according to Price (1991, 364), refers only to the Greek civilization between the reigns of Alexander the Great (336 – 323 B.C.E.) and Augustus (31 B.C.E. – 14 C.E.).²⁸ To be more specific, the Hellenistic age is a politically defined one which begins from the demise of Alexander the Great's empire (on his death in 323 B.C.E.) and ends at Augustus's inauguration of the Roman empire (in 27 B.C.E.) (Brunschwig and Sedley 2003, 151). However, the four stages of 'une commune évolution gréco-chrétienne' that Camus analyses in the thesis cover 'Évangile, Gnose, Néoplatonisme, Augustinisme', all of which were in Roman times (1005). 'Les Hommes du Christianisme évangélique' and their works Camus discusses in the first chapter are the early Christian church fathers – for example, Ignatius of Antioch (c.35 – c.107 C.E.), Clement (c.150 – 215 C.E.), Saint Barnabas (first century C.E.), who all lived in

²⁶ Whether Roman philosophy indeed exists is in dispute. Compared with home-grown Greek philosophy, philosophy entered Rome as a Greek importation. In addition, there were no exclusively Roman schools of philosophy, like the Greek Peripatetics, Epicureans and Stoics (Long 2003, 184). Thus it can be said that there is no Roman philosophy as such. Yet, some Roman thinkers, such as Cicero and Seneca, influenced later generations in the west. For example, according to Long (ibid.), Locke (1632-1704) drew inspiration from Cicero's *On Duties (De officiis)* for his political thought; Montaigne's essays reflect his reading of Seneca's *Moral Letters to Lucilius*. The starting point of Roman philosophy is said to be in 155 B.C.E., when the Academic Carneades visited Rome as an ambassador and caused a sensation with his public lectures on natural justice (ibid., 186).

²⁷ Concerning the chronology of the Roman Empire, see Matthew Bunson, 'Chronology of Major Events', in *Encyclopedia of the Roman Empire*, (New York: Facts On File, Inc., 2003. Revised Edition), pp. xv-xviii.

²⁸ Regarding the years of birth and death of Alexander the Great and Augustus, see Simon Price, 'The History of the Hellenistic Period' in John Boardman, Jasper Griffin and Oswyn Murray (eds.), *The Oxford History of Greece and the Hellenistic World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 364.

Roman times.²⁹ At the beginning of Chapter Two, Camus makes it clear in a note that the Gnosticism he explores was from the beginning of the second century to the end of the third (1023). In Chapters Three and Four, Camus provides a detailed analysis of Plotinus (c.205 – 270 C.E.) and Augustine (354 – 430 C.E.)³⁰ respectively, who were both influential Roman philosophers (Long 2003, 207-210). This proves that in Camus's intellectual exploration of 'La Méditerranée', even though he equates the Mediterranean with the Greco-Roman world and attempts to concentrate on the encounter between Greek philosophy and the Mediterranean, he in fact pays more attention to philosophy as it existed during Roman times, but avoids discussing Greek philosophy directly through Greek texts.

In Camus's autobiographical essay 'La Mort dans l'âme' in *L'Envers et l'endroit*, a lyrical text written later than the academic dissertation, not only does he still include Ancient Greece and Rome as part of the Mediterranean, but the physical awareness of the Mediterranean, similar to what Camus describes in his poem, can be intensely felt. 'La Mort dans l'âme' is based on Camus's own experiences during his summer travel in Europe in the year 1936.³¹ The inclusion of Ancient Greece and Rome is specifically shown in the narrator's different feelings when he travelled in Prague and Italy. After some solitary and gloomy days in Prague, Camus feels reborn once he enters Italy, the representative country of Ancient Rome. More importantly,

²⁹ Concerning the years of birth and death of Ignatius, Clement, see note 17 on page 31. As for Barnabas, see Lavinia Cohn-Sherbok, *Who's who in Christianity*, (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 22. The definite years of birth and death of Barnabas are unknown. According to Cohn-Sherbok (1998, 22), one legend recorded his death as a martyr in Salamis in c.61 C.E..

³⁰ See note 22 and note 24 on page 33 respectively.

³¹ See Pierre-Louis Rey, 'Chronologie', in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. LXIX – XCVIII (p. LXXV). According to Pierre-Louis Rey, Camus travelled in Europe in July and August, and returned to Algiers on September 6, 1936. However, Lottman (1979, 119) says that the return time to Algiers is September 9.

Italy is not merely the place where Ancient Rome was located, but is also a symbol of ‘Mediterraneity’ (Dunwoodie 1998, 177). When in Prague, the narrator recounts how he feels desperate for the city ‘au bord de la Méditerranée, aux soirs d’été [...], très doux dans la lumière verte et pleins de femmes jeunes et belles’ (*L’Envers et l’endroit*, 1958: I, 59-60).³² This longing is in sharp contrast to the author’s constrained feelings in Prague:

Depuis des jours, je n’avais pas prononcé une seule parole et mon cœur éclatait de cris et de révoltes contenus. J’aurais pleuré comme un enfant si quelqu’un m’avait ouvert ses bras. Vers la fin de l’après-midi, brisé de fatigue, je fixais éperdument le loquet de ma porte, la tête creuse et ressassant un air populaire d’accordéon. À ce moment, je ne pouvais aller plus loin (60).

However, once he sets foot in Italy, the writer awakens:

J’entre en Italie. Terre faite à mon âme, je reconnais un à un les signes de son approche. [...] Et le premier cyprès (si grêle et pourtant si droit), le premier olivier, le figuier poussiéreux. Places pleines d’ombres des petites villes italiennes, heures de *midi* où les pigeons cherchent un abri, lenteur et paresse, l’âme y use ses révoltes. La passion chemine par degrés vers les larmes. Et puis, voici Vicence. Ici, les journées tournent sur elles-mêmes, depuis l’éveil du jour gonflé du cri des poules jusqu’à ce soir sans égal, doucereux et tendre, soyeux derrière les cyprès et *mesuré* longuement par le chant des cigales. Ce silence intérieur qui m’accompagne, il naît de la course lente qui mène la journée à cette autre journée (60-61, my italics).

Between the lines, the sense of ease and alleviation of the constrained feelings experienced in Prague arise through his tour of Italian cities. With the images of the cypress, the olive tree, the fig tree and the mild summer evening in Vicence, this paragraph reminds us of ‘la lumière verte’ and ‘soirs d’été’ of the imaginary Mediterranean city the narrator yearns for in Prague (60). All these feelings, similar

³² According to the preface of *L’Envers et l’endroit*, a small number of essays from *L’Envers et l’endroit* were published in Algeria in the year 1937. See Albert Camus, ‘Préface’ in *L’Envers et l’endroit*, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944. (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. 31-38. The first edition of *L’Envers et l’endroit* by Éditions Gallimard was in 1958. This collection of articles was included in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944. (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. 29-98. All quotations from *L’Envers et l’endroit* are from this volume, though the date refers to its first publication by Gallimard.

to what Camus expresses in the poem, are not initially intellectual ones but first and foremost experienced through one's senses. It is through one's vision that one can enjoy the view when 'Le soleil était presque au zénith, le ciel d'un bleu intense et aéré. Toute la lumière qui en tombait dévalait la pente des collines, habillait les cyprès et les oliviers, les maisons blanches et les toits rouges, de la plus chaleureuse des robes, puis allait se perdre dans la plaine qui fumait au soleil' (62). In this land, one can hear 'gonflé du cri des poules' from the early morning, 'la trompette des marchands de glaces' on the street, 'la flûte aigre et tendre des cigales' in the course of one's walk – 'À mesure que j'avance, une à une, elles mettent leur chant en veilleuse, puis se taisent. J'avance d'un pas lent, oppressé par tant d'ardente beauté. Une à une, derrière moi, les cigales enflent leur voix puis chantent: [...]', and finally 'un murmure et une brise dans les buissons' after the night falls (61-62). No one can be more aware of the sensuous feelings of the Mediterranean world than Camus himself who is asking a rhetorical question: 'Que me faisait de revivre en mon âme, et sans *yeux* pour *voir* Vicence, sans *mains* pour *toucher* les raisins de Vicence, sans *peau* pour *sentir* la caresse de la nuit sur la route du Monte Berico à la villa Valmarana?'(62, my italics). The different kinds of sensuous feelings through the writer's vision, hearing and sense of smell intermingle and create one universal impact, penetrating him: 'Oui, tout ceci était vrai. Mais, en même temps, entraînait en moi avec le soleil quelque chose que je saurais mal dire. À cette extrême pointe de l'extrême conscience, tout se rejoignait [...]'(62-63).

Besides the sensuous feelings of the Mediterranean, it can be productive to read the paragraph narrating Camus's awakening in Italy, if we refer to the words I

have italicised and relate them to ‘le midi’ and ‘Vie latine qui connaît ses limites’ in Camus’s poem (*Premiers écrits (1932-1936)*: I, 976). It seems that ‘le midi’ is indeed a time slot that the writer prefers to portray and to link with a balanced culture which knows its limits. This salient feature, ‘le midi et la mesure’ of the Mediterranean privileged by Camus, will be discussed in the next section.

Le Midi et la mesure

The idea of ‘Le Midi et la mesure’ is most famously expressed in ‘La Pensée de midi’, the concluding section of Camus’s essay *L’Homme révolté* (1951), in which he counterposes ‘l’esprit méditerranéen’ with both German ideology and Christianity as ‘Mesure et démesure’ (*L’Homme révolté*, 1951: III, 317-318).³³ ‘La Pensée de midi’ is also named by Camus as ‘La Pensée solaire’ which keeps the Mediterranean world balanced: ‘Ce contrepoids, cet esprit qui mesure la vie, est celui-là même qui anime la longue tradition de ce qu’on peut appeler la pensée solaire et où, depuis les Grecs, la nature a toujours été équilibrée au devenir’ (317). ‘La Mesure’ is the force which signifies a balancing act. However, Camus’s thinking behind ‘La Pensée de midi’ can be traced back to the poem ‘Méditerranée’, which as we have already seen,

³³ These comparisons can be found throughout *L’Homme révolté*, and some can be given as examples: ‘Ce contrepoids, cet esprit qui mesure la vie, est celui-là même qui anime la longue tradition de ce qu’on peut appeler la pensée solaire et où, depuis les Grecs, la nature a toujours été équilibrée au devenir. [...] l’histoire des luttes entre l’idéologie allemande et l’esprit méditerranéen’ (*L’Homme révolté*, 1951: III, 317); ‘Le conflit profond de ce siècle ne s’établit peut-être pas tant entre les idéologies allemandes de l’histoire et la politique chrétienne, qui d’une certaine manière sont complices, qu’entre les rêves allemands et la tradition méditerranéenne, [...]’ (317-318); ‘Mais lorsque l’Église a dissipé son héritage méditerranéen, elle a mis l’accent sur l’histoire au détriment de la nature, [...] détruisant une limite en elle-même’ (318). *L’Homme révolté* was first published in 1951 by Éditions Gallimard and was included in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. III, 1949-1956, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2008), pp. 61-378. All quotations from *L’Homme révolté* are from this volume, though the date indicates its first publication by Gallimard.

in turn makes reference to Valéry's famous poem 'Le Cimetière marin' (1920).³⁴ Foxlee (2010, 99) views Camus's poem as an obvious homage to 'Le Cimetière marin'. Not only do the two poets employ the same literary images – 'la mer', 'la lumière', 'le cimetière marin',³⁵ – but both poems also convey to readers, at a profound level, a sense of the sacred in relation to man's death. In addition, the Mediterranean is portrayed by both poets at a particular time of the day: 'le midi'. Valéry exclaims 'Midi là-haut, Midi sans mouvement / En soi se pense et convient à soi-même [...]' in 'Le Cimetière marin' (*Poésie*, 1957: I, 149),³⁶ while in 'Méditerranée' Camus writes 'Midi sur la mer immobile et chaleureuse: M'accepte sans cris: un silence et un sourire' (*Premiers écrits (1932-1936)*: I, 976). But why is 'Le Midi' the most crucial moment of the day? Camus never explicitly answers this question. Abel (2002, 48) provides an answer by viewing 'Le Midi' as a time when the sun reaches its extreme heat and shines at its maximum. At this moment, everything exposed to the sun cannot do anything to reduce the heat and light but can only accept it by dispersing the excess of the sunshine and by keeping themselves in

³⁴ See Agathe Rouart-Valéry, 'Introduction biographique', in Paul Valéry, *Œuvres* Vol. I, (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1957), pp. 11–71 (p. 43). According to this biography, 'Le Cimetière marin' appeared on June 1 in *La Nouvelle Revue Française*.

³⁵ 'Le Cimetière marin' is not only the image appearing in Camus's poem 'Méditerranée', but it recurs in the final lines of 'La Mort dans l'âme': 'Dans la banlieue d'Alger, il y a un petit cimetière aux portes de fer noir. Si l'on va jusqu'au bout, c'est la vallée que l'on découvre avec la baie au fond. On peut longtemps rêver devant cette offrande qui soupire avec la mer. Mais quand on revient sur ses pas, on trouve une plaque « Regrets éternels », dans une tombe abandonnée' (*L'Envers et l'endroit*, 1958: I, 63). This might be to say that Valéry's influence on Camus is more than what I have suggested. In terms of the notion of 'La Méditerranée', for example, it seems that Valéry's influence on Camus is preliminary but of high importance. As we have seen, through Valéry's lectures and the poem on the Mediterranean, he indeed introduced the young Camus to 'le midi', which is probably the most important aspect of the Mediterranean concept; and led Camus to locate the notion of 'La Méditerranée' in ancient times, though Camus himself later developed his own comprehension of Mediterranean culture.

³⁶ 'Le Cimetière marin' was included in *Charmes* published in 1922. See Agathe Rouart-Valéry, 'Introduction biographique', in Paul Valéry, *Œuvres* Vol. I, (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1957), pp. 11–71 (p. 45). 'Le Cimetière marin', as one of the pieces in *Charmes*, was included in Paul Valéry, *Poésie* in *Œuvres I*, (Paris: Librairie Gallimard, 1957), pp. 147-151. All quotations from 'Le Cimetière marin' are from this volume, and the date refers to its publication.

a balanced way. Thus Abel (2002, 48) suggests that different forms of Mediterranean thought are diverse interpretations of ways to explore the limits of the sunshine, which is also the case with Camus. He even develops 'le midi' into a sense of moderation combined with a reference to ancient civilization:

Esprit latin, Antiquité, un voile de pudeur sur le cri torturé!
Vie latine qui connaît ses limites,
Rassurant passé, oh! Méditerranée!
Encore sur tes bords des voix triomphent qui se sont tues,
Mais qui affirment parce qu'elles t'ont nié (976).

In the second line, Camus pronounces that an important aspect of Latin life is that it can recognise its limits. A few lines below, the sense of limits reveals the Mediterranean as a world 'à notre mesure' (977). The last sentence also communicates the basic idea Camus would declare at the outset of *L'Homme révolté* (1951) years later: 'Qu'est-ce qu'un homme révolté? Un homme qui dit non. Mais s'il refuse, il ne renonce pas: c'est aussi un homme qui dit oui, dès son premier mouvement' (*L'Homme révolté*: III, 71). Camus goes on to say that it is 'ce non [qui] affirme l'existence d'une frontière' (71). Subsequently in *L'Homme révolté*, because Camus believes that 'le oui s'équilibre au non' (84), he develops this thought in the last chapter titled 'La Pensée de midi' (300) which deals with 'la mesure et la limite' as its kernel.

So, although 'la mesure et la limite' becomes the core value of 'la pensée de midi' in *L'Homme révolté* published in 1951, Camus's thinking behind all of this can be traced back to 'Méditerranée'. The narratives of 'oui' and 'non' become a main thread running through *L'Homme révolté*, though the writer's combination of the two

words can be traced back to the title of ‘Entre oui et non’,³⁷ an essay in *L’Envers et l’endroit*. In the later works such as ‘La Mort dans l’âme’ and ‘Amour de vivre’ in *L’Envers et l’endroit*, Camus continues to portray ‘le midi’ of the Mediterranean world. In the passage quoted above from *L’Envers et l’endroit*, we read of ‘le midi’ of Italian cities. In ‘Amour de vivre’,³⁸ the essay following ‘La Mort dans l’âme’, there is evidence for considering that ‘le midi’ begins to be associated with ‘la mesure’ through the use of the word ‘équilibre’:

Mais à *midi*, au contraire, dans le quartier désert de la cathédrale, parmi les vieux palais aux cours fraîches, dans les rues aux odeurs d’ombre, c’est l’idée d’une certaine « lenteur » qui me frappait. [...] Dans une heure, une minute, une seconde, maintenant peut-être, tout pouvait crouler. Et pourtant le miracle se poursuivait. [...] Un *équilibre* se poursuivait, coloré pourtant par toute l’appréhension de sa propre fin.

Là était tout mon amour de vivre: une passion silencieuse pour ce qui allait peut-être m’échapper, une amertume sous une flamme (*L’Envers et l’endroit*: I, 66-67, my italics).

Two points need to be stressed here: firstly, the close relation between ‘le midi’ of the

³⁷ The specific time when Camus wrote this essay is unknown, but we can deduce that it is after his writing of the poem ‘Méditerranée’. Concerning the writing time of ‘Méditerranée’ and *L’Envers et l’endroit*, see note 11 on page 28 and note 14 on page 11 respectively. The exact writing order of the essays in *L’Envers et l’endroit* is unclear. However, referring to the first note in *Cahier I (mai 1935 - septembre 1937)*, there is a sentence: ‘Dans ce cas particulier, le sentiment bizarre que le fils porte à sa mère constitue toute sa sensibilité’ (*Carnets 1935-1948*, 1962: II, 795) recorded in May 1935, which is claimed to be Camus’s first mention of the theme of his mother. According to the commentator, this theme recurs in Camus’s following works, ‘Entre oui et non’ in *L’Envers et l’endroit*, *L’Étranger*, *Le Malentendu*, *La Peste* and *Le Premier homme*. See ‘Notices, notes et variantes’ in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. II, 1944-1948, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), p. 1385. It can be deduced that Camus’s writing of ‘Entre oui et non’ might be as early as May 1935, earlier than ‘La Mort dans l’âme’ and ‘Amour de vivre’. Concerning the time of composition of the latter two, see note 14 on page 11. In addition, the sequence of the five essays (excluding the ‘préface’ preceding the essays) in *L’Envers et l’endroit* is ‘L’Ironie’, ‘Entre oui et non’, ‘La Mort dans l’âme’, ‘Amour de vivre’ and ‘L’Envers et l’endroit’ (*L’Envers et l’endroit*, 1958: I, 29-72). Thus I view the time of composition of ‘Entre oui et non’ as situated before ‘La Mort dans l’âme’ and ‘Amour de vivre’.

³⁸ In fact, the writer’s experiences described in ‘Amour de vivre’ were almost one year earlier than what Camus recorded in ‘La Mort dans l’âme’. Camus’s voyage to the Balearics Islands of Spain with his first wife at the beginning of September in 1935 inspired his writing of ‘Amour de vivre’ in the following year. Obvious evidence can be found in *Cahier I (mai 1935 - septembre 1937)*, and see also Pierre-Louis Rey, ‘Chronologie’, in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. LXIX – XCVIII (p. LXXIV). In January 1936, Camus (*Carnets 1935-1948*, 1962: II, 801) listed the impressions in connection with his voyage to the Balearics in *Cahier I*, among which he chose the ones fit for the essay ‘Amour de vivre’. However, the real finish time of the two essays is vague, thus we cannot know the definite time of each piece. Considering the sequence of the two essays in *L’Envers et l’endroit*, I still view the essay ‘Amour de vivre’ as written after ‘La Mort dans l’âme’.

Mediterranean region and the author's emphasis on 'la mesure' can be detected between the lines; secondly, through references to the time 'une heure, une minute, une seconde, maintenant' and the context of the paragraph, the sense of transience arises from the use of the word 'crouler'. This is then followed by Camus's proclamation of his love of life in the first sentence of the second paragraph above. If everything may perish just in one moment, even in a shorter time than a second, why not enjoy life and be present in the moment? Rather than mere love of life, it is better to say that Camus feels intense passion for life even to a degree of bitterness. Here again, in a similar way to what Camus expresses at the end of the poem 'Méditerranée', he captures the sense of immersion in this world: 'Chaque jour, je quittais ce cloître comme enlevé à moi-même, inscrit pour un court instant dans la durée du monde' (67). Camus's tone in such passages implies that his passion for life only resides in this world right here and now. Thus we can see that preference for 'this-worldly life' is another aspect of Camus's interpretation of 'La Méditerranée'.

Embracing This-worldly Life

The phrase 'this-worldly life' obviously has a spatial connotation, which denotes the life in the world right here, in opposition to the one in the 'other-worlds' religions search after.³⁹ In addition, the word also possesses a temporal connotation, for the world is right here and now, but not the 'other-worlds' to be reached in the

³⁹ Different religions vary in their expression of the 'other-world'. For example, Christians appeal to 'heaven' as the 'other-world' which is the believers' true home, while in Hinduism 'moksa' is ultimately sought. For more information, see Arvind Sharma, 'This-worldly and Other-worldly Religions'. (*Sophia*, July 1981 Vol. 20, Iss. 2): pp. 36-38; Anne Elvey, 'Beyond Culture? Nature / Culture Dualism and the Christian Otherworldly'. (*Ethics and the Environment*, 2006, Vol. 11, No. 2): pp. 63-84.

future, especially after man's death. Thus for Camus, 'embracing this-worldly life' means to love one's life in the world right here and now. With regard to this concept, Jean Grenier, Camus's tutor, is a significant influence on the young writer. Grenier's influence on Camus's understanding of 'La Méditerranée' came not only through his main teaching on the Mediterranean, when he was a professor of philosophy in Algiers from 1930 to 1934, and his collection of articles which has a similar title to Valéry's lecture 'Inspiration méditerranéenne', but also through a book of capital importance named *Les Îles* (1933).⁴⁰ The importance of *Les Îles* to Camus is clear and was acknowledged by its author and Camus himself. Baishanski (2002, 78) points out that Grenier had admitted that his three works, *Les Îles* (1933), *Inspirations méditerranéennes* (1940)⁴¹ and *L'Esprit d'orthodoxie* (1938)⁴² all profoundly influenced Camus. She even describes the relationship between Grenier and Camus as not dissimilar to that between Socrates and Plato (2002, 76). For Camus's part, he wrote a preface for *Les Îles* in 1959, in which he confirms Grenier's influence and says that he had read *Les Îles* at the age of twenty (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1957-1959)*, 1965: IV, 621),⁴³ which is to say in 1933, the same year he composed his poem 'Méditerranée'.

In his 'Préface aux « Îles » de Jean Grenier', Camus says with appreciation and

⁴⁰ Concerning the publication of *Les Îles*, see J. S. T. Garfitt, *The Work and Thought of Jean Grenier*, (London: The Modern Humanities Research Association, 1983), p. 2.

⁴¹ See note 5 on page 27.

⁴² According to Garfitt (1983), the title of this book is *Essai sur l'esprit d'orthodoxie*, see J. S. T. Garfitt, *The Work and Thought of Jean Grenier*, (London: The Modern Humanities Research Association, 1983), p. 112.

⁴³ 'Préface aux « Îles » de Jean Grenier' was in *Articles, préfaces, conférences (1957-1959)* first published in 1965 by Éditions Gallimard, whilst the second publication was in 2008. This collection of articles and prefaces was included in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. IV, 1957-1959, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2008), pp. 553-624. All quotations from 'Préface aux « Îles » de Jean Grenier' are from this volume, though the date indicates its first publication by Gallimard.

admiration, that it is through ‘la mer, la lumière, les visages’ (ibid., 621) in *Les Îles* that ‘nous avons découvert la culture’ (ibid., 622). We may recall the images of ‘la mer’ in Camus’s poem ‘Méditerranée’ and ‘la lumière verte’ in the essay ‘La Mort dans l’âme’, which are both signs of the Mediterranean region. However, the influence of *Les Îles* lies deeper than these images. The key lies in part in the notion of ‘this-worldly life’ which Camus imported from Grenier into his notion of the Mediterranean and which is encapsulated in his discussion of ‘[le] goût impérissable et [la] fugacité’ (ibid.) of natural surroundings. Camus recalled in the preface, that in 1933 when he was only 20 years old, he was accompanied by ‘le soleil, la nuit, la mer [...] Mais ce sont des dieux de jouissance; ils remplissent, puis ils vident’ (ibid.). From this, Camus learned that everything in the world is transient, including joy, of course. Thus, what Grenier taught Camus – that ‘ces apparences étaient belles, mais [qu’] elles devaient périr’ (621) – is to cherish what he owns in the present moment and to enjoy life in this world.

Grenier’s influence on Camus in this respect is far-reaching. There exist close links between ‘Amour de vivre’, one essay in the collection *L’Envers et l’endroit*, and Grenier’s ‘De Vérone à Séville’. No wonder the collection, in which Camus claims that the source of all his creation lies, is dedicated to Grenier (*L’Envers et l’endroit*, I, 32). On May 1st 1935, ‘De Vérone à Séville’ appeared in *La Nouvelle Revue Française*, shortly before Camus made a voyage to the Balearic Islands of Spain with his first wife at the beginning of September,⁴⁴ a trip which inspired the writing of

⁴⁴ See Pierre-Louis Rey, ‘Chronologie’, in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. LXIX – XCVIII (p. LXXIV).

‘Amour de vivre’ in the following year. In January 1936, Camus listed his impressions of his voyage to the Balearics in *Cahier I (mai 1935 - septembre 1937)*. His long list notes elements of the landscape (the bay, the coast, the beach), rich and poor districts, names of places and specific buildings (Bellver, the cloister in San Francisco), festivals,⁴⁵ among which he chose the ones fit for the essay ‘Amour de vivre’ (*Carnets 1935 - 1948*, 1962: II, 801).⁴⁶ From the list and from the essay ‘Amour de vivre’, it can be seen that Camus finds inspiration in ‘le petit cloître gothique de San Francisco’ (*L’Envers et l’endroit*: I, 66). Such voices remind us of Grenier’s (1935, 727) accounts of the cloisters in Saint-François in ‘De Vérone à Séville’. More importantly, both Grenier and Camus learned in the cloisters the

⁴⁵ To be more specific, the list is as follows:

Baléares.

La baie.

San Francisco – Cloître.

Bellver.

Quartier riche (l’ombre et les vieilles femmes).

Quartier pauvre (la fenêtre).

Cathédrale (mauvais goût et chef-d’œuvre).

Café chantant.

Côte de Miramar.

Valldemosa et les terrasses.

Soller et le midi.

San Antonio (couvent). Felanitx.

Pollensa: ville. Couvent. Pension.

Ibiza: baie.

La Peña: fortifications.

San Eulalia: La plage. La fête.

Les cafés sur le port.

Les murs de pierre et les moulins dans la campagne (*Carnets 1935-1948*, 1962: II, 801).

In the essay ‘Amour de vivre’, mentions of ‘San Francisco – Cloître’, ‘l’ombre et les vieilles femmes’, ‘Cathédrale’, ‘Café chantant’, ‘le midi’, ‘Ibiza: baie’, ‘Les cafés sur le port’, ‘Les murs de pierre et les moulins dans la campagne’ can be found. There is no possibility of listing every sentence or paragraph with these mentions, yet some examples can be given, for instance, ‘La nuit à Palma, la vie reflue lentement vers le quartier des *cafés chantants*, [...]’ (*L’Envers et l’endroit*, 1958: I, 64, my italics), ‘Mais à *midi*, au contraire, dans le *quartier* désert de la *cathédrale*, parmi les vieux palais aux cours fraîches, dans les rues aux odeurs d’*ombre*, c’est l’idée d’une certaine « *lenteur* » qui me frappait. Personne dans ces rues. Aux miradors, de *vieilles femmes* figées’ (ibid., my italics).

⁴⁶ *Carnets: Mai 1935-décembre 1948* was first published in 1962 by Éditions Gallimard, whilst the second and third publications were in 1964 and 1978 separately. *Carnets 1935-1948* includes six volumes of *Cahiers*, all of which were in *Écrits posthumes (1944-1948)* in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. II, 1944-1948, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. 793-1125. All quotations from *Carnets 1935-1948* are from this volume, though the date indicates its first publication by Gallimard.

fragility of beauty and happiness, hence that everything will become nothing in this world. In ‘De Vérone à Séville’, Grenier would like to embrace the beautiful scenery of convents but this scenic world has soon vanished: ‘Et après quelques heures de contemplation et d’amour, les traits s’effacent, la lumière faiblit, la brume monte jusqu’à moi. Rien n’est plus’ (ibid.). Camus’s reflection on the cloister is close to Grenier’s: ‘Dans une heure, une minute, une seconde, maintenant peut-être, tout pouvait crouler’ (I, 67). A further similarity between the two writers is revealed by the same use of the word ‘Nada’ when they describe their visits to Spain.⁴⁷ ‘Nada’, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary* (Simpson and Weiner (eds.), 1989: X, 188), is a Spanish word which means ‘Nothing; nothingness, non-existence; a state or condition as of non-existence’. Grenier adopts the word ‘Nada’ to state that everything is ephemeral and will become nothing: ‘Tous mes bonheurs ne sont que des grains dont je n’arrive pas à faire un chapelet. Je puis posséder tout, un instant après il ne me reste rien. Todo, pues *nada*’ (Grenier 1935, 727, my italics).⁴⁸ For Camus, it is ‘Nada’, which represents the idea that things are fleeting, that brings him the passion to live:

Là était tout mon amour de vivre: une passion silencieuse pour ce qui allait peut-être m’échapper, une amertume sous une flamme. [...] Ce n’était pas des actions de grâces qui pouvaient me monter aux lèvres, mais ce *Nada* qui n’a pu naître que devant des paysages écrasés de soleil. Il n’y a pas d’amour de vivre sans désespoir de vivre (I, 67, my italics).

The two poles of emotions – ‘amour de vivre’ and ‘désespoir de vivre’ – also find

⁴⁷ Grenier’s use of some words and sentences in Spanish in the essay ‘De Vérone à Séville’ may be due to the fact that the essay is partly about his visit to the Spanish city Séville. Some other sentences in Spanish can be found in the section ‘La Nuit’ in this essay, for example, ‘En el silencio de la Noche’ (Grenier 1935, 727).

⁴⁸ ‘Todo, pues nada’ means ‘Everything, then nothing’ in English.

resonance in the last essay ‘L’Envers et l’endroit’⁴⁹ which has the same title as the collection: ‘Entre cet endroit et cet envers du monde, je ne veux pas choisir, je n’aime pas qu’on choisisse’ (I, 71). Rather than being embarrassed by the tension generated by the two opposite sides of the world, Camus does not feel uncomfortable with it, on the contrary, he stresses the need to live within it. The dialectical relationship between the two opposite forces is such a characteristic of Camus’s writing that he keeps it throughout his career right up to his later works, such as *L’Exil et le royaume* (1957),⁵⁰ at least literally, from the title of which the two opposites continue.

Besides the similar descriptions of ‘cloître’ and ‘Nada’, there is also the imaginary quality of *Les Îles*, which will have an impact on Camus’s account of ‘La Méditerranée’ in later years. Juka (1977, 529) recalls that during an interview on the radio in 1967, Grenier told Louis Foucher that he originally wanted to entitle *Les Îles* ‘*Un homme seul*’. Baishanski (2002, 81) suggests that Grenier’s hesitation over choosing a title connects with the fact that *Les Îles* indeed leaves its readers with a hint of doubt or uncertainty. This kind of uncertainty which leaves no answer is also detected by Camus in the preface:

L’animal jouit et meurt, l’homme s’émerveille et meurt, où est le port? Voilà la question qui résonne dans tout le livre. Elle n’y reçoit, à vrai dire, qu’une réponse indirecte. Grenier, comme Melville, termine en effet son voyage par une méditation sur l’absolu et le divin. À propos des Hindous il nous parle d’un port qu’on ne peut nommer, ni localiser, d’une autre île, mais à jamais

⁴⁹ The specific time when Camus wrote this essay is unknown, though the writer uses materials from January 1936 in *Cahier I* (mai 1935 - septembre 1937). Obvious evidence can be found through almost the same sentences in the note in *Cahier I* and in the essay. For example, the first paragraph in the note: ‘Ce jardin de l’autre côté de la fenêtre, [...] Il suffit: cette seule lueur naissante et me voici inondé d’une joie confuse et étourdissante’ (*Carnets 1935-1948*, 1962: II, 798) correspond to the fourth paragraph in the essay (L’Envers et l’endroit, 1958: I, 70). Concerning the writing order of the five essays in *L’Envers et l’endroit*, see note 37 on page 43.

⁵⁰ *L’Exil et le royaume* was published by Éditions Gallimard in March 1957. See Pierre-Louis Rey, ‘Repères Chronologie (1957-1960)’, in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. IV, 1957-1959, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. IX – XII (p. IX).

lointaine, et déserte à sa manière (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1957-1959)*: IV, 622).

More importantly, according to Camus, this uncertainty is connected with the imaginary journey experience that Grenier narrates in this book:

Celui qui, entre une terre ingrate et un ciel sombre, besogne durement, peut rêver d'une autre terre où le ciel et le pain seraient légers. Il espère [...]. Le voyage décrit par Grenier est un voyage dans l'imaginaire et l'invisible (ibid.).

This account roughly coincides with Grenier's life experience,⁵¹ an inhabitant of Northern France travelling to the Mediterranean, and more importantly, who created his own image of *Les Îles*. As for Camus, he does not reject the uncertainty and imaginary quality of *Les Îles* at all, but admits they are the very qualities that his inspiration was drawn from: 'Ainsi, je ne dois pas à Grenier des certitudes qu'il ne pouvait ni ne voulait donner. Mais je lui dois, au contraire, un doute, [...]' (ibid.). The relation of these experiences of 'cloître' as well as the special qualities of *Les Îles* show us how a young man learnt from his tutor and not just simply emulated him.

In this chapter, I have analysed Camus's understanding of 'La Méditerranée' in his early works from 1933 to August 1936, which allows us to see more clearly what this 'Méditerranée', that he always mentions, is. Although Camus pursues his understanding of 'La Méditerranée' in different genres of texts and in two directions – intellectual and creative – three key ideas can still be discerned. 'A Greco-Roman world' in Camus's creative writing not only includes the description of 'La

⁵¹ Grenier comes from Brittany, a place located in the northwest of France. In the context of Grenier's biography, some critics even doubt to what extent the courses on the Mediterranean, taught by Grenier when he was a professor of philosophy in Algiers from 1930 to 1934, were based on objective knowledge, or just a personal narrative of his understanding and imagination of the Mediterranean. For instance, it seems strange to Roger Grenier, a biographer of Camus, that Jean Grenier as a man who grew up and was mainly educated in the north of France, would teach courses on the Mediterranean to students who have been living in Algiers (Roger Grenier 1987, 18).

Méditerranée’ geographically, but culturally implies the writer’s strong physical awareness and a sense of immersion in the Mediterranean world. In addition, in the intellectual sense, Camus, who was in the early stages of his career, began to be interested in ideas such as man’s flesh and death, the notion of knowledge and the theme of salvation, with his study of the encounters between Greek philosophy and Christianity. ‘Le Midi et la mesure’ connects ‘le midi’, a particular moment of the day, with a balancing force ‘la mesure’. ‘Embracing this-worldly life’ expresses Camus’s passion for the life in this world right here and now. In addition, it should be also noted that Camus was only a young man in his twenties⁵² during this period of time, which may explain why he did not specifically define ‘La Méditerranée’, but largely depends on others’ accounts: for example, as shown in my analysis, Valéry’s lectures on the Mediterranean, his poem ‘Le Cimetière marin’ and Grenier’s *Les Îles*. Although the young writer’s reflection on ‘La Méditerranée’ during this period is preliminary, it is still far-reaching in the later stages of Camus’s development. In the following chapter, I will demonstrate that the presentation of ‘La Méditerranée’ in Camus’s works becomes more precise, more sophisticated, and connects with a more complex set of issues.

⁵² Camus was born 7 November 1913, and died in a car accident on 4 January 1960. See Pierre-Louis Rey, ‘Chronologie’, in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. LXIX – XCVIII (p. LXX)

CHAPTER THREE: ‘ANCIENT GREECE’ AND CAMUS’S CONCEPT OF ‘LA MÉDITERRANÉE’

Chapter Two has shown that in Camus’s works from 1933 to August 1936, his account of ‘La Méditerranée’ – which drew inspiration from the intellectual context at that time – is yet underdeveloped and shrouded in others’ views of the Mediterranean. During this period, Camus connects ‘La Méditerranée’ with a Greco-Roman world, which is characterised with ‘le midi et la mesure’ and ‘this-worldliness’. In this chapter, I will discuss how Camus gradually develops his own concept of ‘La Méditerranée’. Whereas Camus was much influenced by his mentor Grenier and the poet writer Valéry in the previous phase, he now seems to be following Nietzsche’s identification of two Ancient Greeces: one Ancient Greece represented by pre-Socratics with their vitalism, and the other by post-Socratics with rationalism, of which he shows a preference for the former and blames the latter. I argue that Camus’s distinction between the two Ancient Greeces, and especially his rejection of rationalism led to his rejection of Christianity, nationalism and military force, which were associated with Ancient Rome and were all based too heavily on rational thought. A direct connection with Camus’s construction of the concept of ‘La Méditerranée’ is rightly established at this point. When explaining his understanding of ‘La Méditerranée’, in his 1937 lecture titled ‘La Culture indigène. La Nouvelle Culture méditerranéenne’, besides the description of a geographical Mediterranean,

Camus expounds on the notion of the Mediterranean as a culture which values life and man's senses, advocates internationalism and knows its limits.

In this chapter, my discussion of Camus's development of 'La Méditerranée' will be based on an analysis of Camus's essay 'Sur la musique' (1932) and the text of the lecture 'La Culture indigène. La Nouvelle Culture méditerranéenne' (1937), combined with some comments recalling his Master's dissertation and his biographical essays. Compared with the two different manners – discursive and creative – in which Camus engaged with his thinking and writing of the Mediterranean, discussed in Chapter Two, this chapter will put more emphasis on his intellectual efforts to construct the concept of 'La Méditerranée'.

Nietzsche and Two Ancient Greeces

At least as early as 1932, Camus had read Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872),¹ which can be inferred from Camus's essay 'Sur la musique',² published in the journal *Sud* in June 1932.³ Camus claims at the beginning that the aim of the essay is to show that music, because it is 'le plus complet des arts, doit être sentie

¹ Concerning the publication date of *The Birth of Tragedy*, see Raymond Geuss and Ronald Speirs, 'Chronology', in Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp. XXXI–XXXIII (p. XXXI).

² 'Sur la musique' was in *Textes publiés dans « Sud »* first published in 1965 by Éditions Gallimard, while the second and third publications were in 1973 and 2006 respectively. With some other texts, *Textes publiés dans « Sud »* was included in *Articles, préfaces, conférences (1931-1944)* in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. 522-542. All quotations from 'Sur la musique' are from this volume, though the date indicates the first publication of *Textes publiés dans « Sud »* by Gallimard.

³ Concerning the publication of this essay, see Pierre-Louis Rey, 'Chronologie', in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. LXIX – XCVIII (p. LXXII).

plutôt que comprise' (*Textes publiés dans « Sud »*, 1965: I, 522). This saying is somewhat similar to Nietzsche's remarks on music in *The Birth of Tragedy*: '[...] the spirit of music, music itself, in its absolute sovereignty, has no *need* at all of images and concepts [...]' (1999, 36). More than that, the second part of Camus's essay 'Nietzsche et la musique' is devoted to discussing *The Birth of Tragedy*, especially Nietzsche's differentiation between the Apollonian and the Dionysian. According to Nietzsche (*ibid.*, 14), Greek tragedies were born from two coexisting but also conflicting impulses – the Apollonian and the Dionysian, while the former directs toward individuality and limits and the latter embodies the dissolution of individuality and boundaries. However, Camus chooses to interpret the Apollonian as 'le besoin d'oublier notre individualité et de nous identifier à l'humanité tout entière' (I, 529). On the other hand, in presenting the Dionysian, Camus is correct to repeat Nietzsche's saying that the Dionysian instinct 'nous plonge dans une véritable ivresse et a pour effet de nous faire oublier notre individualité propre' (529-530). He agrees with Nietzsche that Greek tragedies derived from the combination of the two instincts and that Euripides's (c. 485-406 B.C.E.) tragedies marked the decline of Greek tragedy.⁴ In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche (1999, 4) criticises Socrates

⁴ For the years of birth and death of Socrates and Euripides, see Christian Wildberg, 'Socrates and Euripides', in Sara Ahbel-Rappe and Rachana Kamtekar (eds.), *A Companion to Socrates*, (Malden, Oxford, Carlton: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2006), p: 21. Nietzsche's esteem for Aeschylus and criticism of Euripides is displayed throughout *The Birth of Tragedy*. We may get a clue from the starting point of his analysis of Euripides: '[...] of something dichotomous and incommensurable in the essence of Aeschylean tragedy itself. Let us think of our own puzzlement about the *chorus* and the *tragic hero* of that tragedy, both of which we were unable to reconcile either with our habits or with the historical tradition - until, that is, we rediscovered this very same doubleness in the origin and essence of Greek tragedy, as the expression of two interwoven artistic drives, *the*

(469-399 B.C.E.) who began the creation of abstract generalizations and who believed that one could be led to happiness through attainment of theoretical knowledge by means of one's reason. Thus, he continues to claim, it was Socratism that led to the death of tragedy and was a sign of the decline of Ancient Greece.⁵

Camus, like Nietzsche, blames Socrates for this decline:

C'est parce qu'à l'enthousiasme les Grecs ont voulu substituer le raisonnement. Socrate avec son « Connais-toi toi-même » a détruit le Beau. Il a tué un beau rêve avec son besoin maladif d'argumentation. Socrate devait être condamné. [...] Et par le même coup, Nietzsche attaque le rationalisme de son temps (I, 531).

In the lecture 'La Culture indigène. La Nouvelle Culture méditerranéenne', given in 1937, Camus still bases his arguments on Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* and more or less repeats what he has said in 'Sur la musique'. This lecture, which was published in *Jeune Méditerranée* N° 1 in April, 1937, was given at the inauguration of 'La Maison de la culture' in Algiers on February 8th, 1937.⁶ In the lecture, Camus declares:

Ce n'est pas le goût du raisonnement et de l'abstraction que nous revendiquons dans la Méditerranée, mais c'est sa vie – les cours, les cyprès, les chapelets de piments – *Eschyle et non Euripide* – les Apollons doriques et non les copies du

Apolline and the Dionysiac.

What we now see revealed, indeed brilliantly illuminated, is the tendency of Euripides, which was to expel the original and all-powerful Dionysiac element from tragedy and to re-build tragedy in a new and pure form on the foundations of a non-Dionysiac art, morality, and view of the world' (Nietzsche 1999, 59. Nietzsche's italics).

⁵ Nietzsche's criticism of Socratism and praise of ancient Greek tragedies before Socrates show that he views Socrates as a watershed in the history of philosophy. The classification of pre-Socratics, according to Graham (1999, 733), dates back to Aristotle, who saw that Socrates was influential upon later philosophy with his emphasis on ethics. However, philosophers prior to Socrates paid much more attention to cosmologies and natural science. With regard to the term 'pre-Socratics', Hussey (1972, 1) makes it clear in his introduction that the word signifies a group of Greek thinkers 'who lived not later than the time of Socrates and were not decisively influenced by him.'

⁶ See Pierre-Louis Rey, 'Chronologie', in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. LXIX – XCVIII (p. LXXV).

Vatican' (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1937)*, 1965: I, 569, my italics).⁷

At this point, Camus's remarks on Aeschylus and Euripides remind us of Nietzsche's similar argument in *The Birth of Tragedy*, in which he (1999) praises Aeschylean tragedy highly but regards Euripides's tragedies as a manifestation of Socratism. Aeschylean tragedy is a fusion of the two impulses. However, Socrates broke the balance between the Apollonian impulses and the Dionysian impulses with his emphasis on ethics and metaphysical knowledge which he believed was a way to attain one's happiness (Nietzsche 1999, 4). In Nietzsche's eyes, Euripides's tragedies implement 'aesthetic Socratism' (ibid., 62) because the supreme law running through these tragedies is: 'in order to be beautiful, everything must be reasonable'⁸ – a sentence Nietzsche suggests is equal to Socrates's dictum that 'only he who knows is virtuous'.⁹ Although Nietzsche does not provide the detailed evidence to support his suggestions on the close relationship between Euripides and Socrates, and there are also facts to attest that Euripides was an independent artist rather than one who was following Socrates's ideas (Wildberg 2006, 21-33),¹⁰ it seems that Camus still

⁷ The text of 'La Culture indigène. La Nouvelle Culture méditerranéenne' was in *Articles, préfaces, conférences (1937)* first published in 1965 by Éditions Gallimard. It should be noted that the text of this lecture only provides the outline of Camus's lecture, which is made clearly at the start of the text: 'Cadres de la conférence inaugurale faite à la Maison de la culture le 8 février 1937' (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1937)*, 1965: I, 565). With some other texts, *Articles, préfaces, conférences (1937)* was included in *Articles, préfaces, conférences (1931-1944)* in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. 565-573. All quotations from 'La Culture indigène. La Nouvelle Culture méditerranéenne' are from this volume, though the date indicates the first publication of *Articles, préfaces, conférences (1937)* by Gallimard.

⁸ Cited in Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p.62).

⁹ Ibid.. This sentence, according to note 94 on page 62 of *The Birth of Tragedy*, is from Aristode, *Eudemian Ethics* 1216c.

¹⁰ For the details of Nietzsche's portrayal of Socrates in his complete works, see James I. Porter, 'Nietzsche and "The Problem of Socrates"', in Sara Ahbel-Rappe and Rachana Kamtekar (eds.), *A Companion to Socrates*, (Malden, Oxford, Carlton: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2006), pp: 406-425; concerning the historical facts about

depends too much on Nietzsche's remarks on the birth of tragedy and his criticisms of Socrates. Nietzsche's influence on Camus's views toward ancient Greek tragedies and Socratism is so far-reaching that even in the lecture *Sur l'avenir de la tragédie*¹¹ in 1955, Camus repeats Nietzsche's condemnation of Euripides's tragedy: 'Euripide déséquilibrera au contraire la balance tragique dans le sens de l'individu et de la psychologie. Il annonce ainsi le drame individualiste, c'est-à-dire la décadence de la tragédie' (*Textes épars (1949-1956)*, 1965: III, 1123). Thus we could say that Ancient Greece for Camus, as for Nietzsche, was not a homogeneous entity but should be seen as dividing into two parts – one Ancient Greece represented by the pre-Socratics and the other by post-Socratics. The main cleavage between the two Ancient Greces is the placement of rational thought at the centre of man's being by Socrates, and the inflation of Socratic reason by Plato, who developed a realm of Ideas constituted of absolute realities beyond time and place (Barrett 1990, 103). For Socrates, man's reason must be used to ensure that one lives an examined life which is worth living (Cottingham 1997, 3). After Socrates, Plato's (427–347 B.C.E.)¹² account of

the relationship between Euripides and Socrates, see Christian Wildberg, 'Socrates and Euripides', in Sara Ahbel-Rappe and Rachana Kamtekar (eds.), *A Companion to Socrates*, (Malden, Oxford, Carlton: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2006), pp: 21-35.

¹¹ This lecture was given at the conference on the theme of tragedy in Athens. Camus made a voyage to Greece on April 26, 1955, and spoke on tragedy on April 29. See Pierre-Louis Rey, 'Chronologie', in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. LXIX – XCVIII (p. XCII). The text of this lecture was first published in *Textes épars(1949-1956)* by Éditions Gallimard in 1965, whilst the second publication was in 2008. This lecture was included in *Textes épars(1949-1956)*, in *Œuvres complètes (1949-1956)*, in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. III, 1949-1956, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2008), pp. 1117-1127. All quotations from the lecture are from this volume, though the date indicates its first publication in *Textes épars(1949-1956)* by Gallimard.

¹² Concerning the years of birth and death of Plato and Aristotle, see Richard Kraut, 'Introduction to the Study of Plato' in *The Cambridge Companion to Plato*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 1-50; Georgios Anagnostopoulos, 'Aristotle's Life' in *A Companion to Aristotle*, (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009),

knowledge establishes more links with man's reason. In the dialogue *Theaetetus*, Plato contends that knowledge is a true belief in *logos*, while in the *Meno* knowledge must be consistent with *logismos* which means *reasoning* (ibid., 14). The close relationship between the Platonic account of knowledge and man's reason can be seen more clearly if the multi-meaning Greek word 'logos' is comprehended. 'Logos', on the one hand, suggests notions such as 'word' and 'language', and on the other, it rightly means 'reason' and 'rationality' (ibid.). Later on, Aristotle (384–322 B.C.E.) defines man as a 'rational animal', which makes rationality the distinctive feature of man. He even asserts in *Ethics* that man's supreme happiness lies in theoretical activities which are based heavily on man's reason (ibid, 3). What Socrates and his disciples had done is in fact to give reason precedence over other ways of acquiring knowledge, or even more strongly, to claim that reason is the unique path to knowledge, which can be defined as 'rationalism' (Garb 1999, 771). The thinking of Socrates and his disciples indeed marked a watershed in the history of Western culture. They were so influential that Western culture for about the next 2500 years would be built on an approach based on the thinking of Socrates and Plato. For example, Whitehead had even remarked that 'Twenty-five hundred years of Western philosophy is but a series of footnotes to Plato' (cited in Barrett 1960, 79). Camus, like Nietzsche, criticises Socratism, especially the rationalism privileged by Socrates

pp. 3-13, respectively.

as the decline of Ancient Greece, and shows a predilection for pre-Socratics as an era full of life. Differing from post-Socratics who emphasise man's reason, the Greece Nietzsche loves, as Rawson (1969, 330) writes representatively, is the Greece of the sixth and early fifth centuries, productive of lyric poets who were also the early philosophers. We will be exploring why Nietzsche describes pre-Socratic philosophers as advocating a fullness of life.

After the publication of *The Birth of Tragedy* in 1872, Nietzsche intended to complete a volume on Greek philosophy spanning the same period in which he had studied the birth and decline of Greek tragedy, which is to say, during the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.E.¹³ Although the book called *Philosophy during the Tragic Age of the Greeks* (1873)¹⁴ was unfinished, it presents us with Nietzsche's substantive discussion of early Greek thinkers, such as Thales (fl. c.585 B.C.E.), Anaximander (c.612 – 545 B.C.E.), Heraclitus (fl. c.500 B.C.E.), Anaxagoras (c.500 – 428 B.C.E.), Zeno (fifth century B.C.E.).¹⁵ Although the thought of these philosophers varies,

¹³ In a letter to his mother and sister of February 8, 1873, Nietzsche writes: 'Besides, I have been busy, and if health and the Easter vacation permit, then I will be finished with a new book before summer. The title will probably be *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*.' Nietzsche explicitly refers to this book as 'a companion piece to the *Birth [of Tragedy]*' in a letter to Carl von Gersdorf and indicates that the period of his discussion in this book is 'the tragic age of the Greeks [...] during the sixth and fifth centuries' in a letter to Malwida von Meysenbug. See Daniel Breazeale, 'Introduction', in Friedrich Nietzsche, *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's*, (New Jersey: Humanity Press, 1979), pp. xxii – xxvii.

¹⁴ There are also other considerations of different titles for this book, including 'The Last Philosopher', 'The Philosopher' and 'The Philosopher as Cultural Physician'. Concerning the time of composition and other titles of this book, see Daniel Breazeale, 'Introduction', in Friedrich Nietzsche, *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's*, (New Jersey: Humanity Press, 1979), pp. xxii – xxvii. This discussion of the early Greek philosophy was included in Nietzsche, F. W., *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche*, Vol. 2: Early Greek Philosophy & Other Essays, (London, Edinburgh: T.N. Foulis, 1911), pp. 71-170. All quotations from the lecture are from this volume.

¹⁵ Concerning the years of birth and death of the philosophers, see Robert Audi (ed.) *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*. 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 910, 28, 376, 28, 987.

Nietzsche (1911, 77) indicates that they were all admirable in keeping ‘a view to Life not to pedantic knowledge’. Here, he (ibid., 78) does not mean that pre-Socratic thinkers did not pursue knowledge, but that their aspiration for knowledge was guided by their concern for life: ‘the Greeks have subdued their inherently insatiable thirst for knowledge by their regard for Life, by an ideal need of Life, – since they wished to live immediately that which they learnt’. This implies that the thought of the philosophers was based more on intuition than on reflection, developing concepts obtained through their living in the moment of immediate contact with the world. For example, according to Nietzsche (ibid., 134-139), Anaxagoras, like Thales and Heraclitus – who each believe that one element, water or fire respectively, is the source of the world¹⁶ – also holds that the world is derived out of a primary substance. Unlike his predecessors, Anaxagoras posits an indefinite number of primary substances, leading him to claim that the ultimate realities are comprised of these elemental stuffs such as, but not limited to, water and earth. Every phenomenal substance has a portion of every elemental stuff, but only changes its appearance because of different forms such as positions or orders. Nietzsche (ibid., 135) draws an analogy between Anaxagoras’s thought and a game of dice: ‘[...] they [phenomenal substances] are ever the same dice; but falling sometimes thus, sometimes thus, they mean to us something different.’ Thus there is no ultimate gap

¹⁶ According to Nietzsche (1911, 86-92, 97-114), Thales believes that ‘everything is water’, while Heraclitus deems fire to be the primary substance of the world.

between appearance and reality: everything we perceive is real, which accredits one's senses. Zeno's idea of the Infinite is another example that Nietzsche (ibid., 129-132) takes to show that the evidence of our senses is against logic. The idea of Infinite is explicitly shown in the paradox of Achilles and the tortoise: Achilles can never catch up with the tortoise no matter how fast he runs and no matter how long the race goes on. The first thing Achilles has to do is to get to the place from which the tortoise began. Yet between the points where Achilles starts and where the tortoise began, there are innumerable and infinite points: for example, the first half of that space, then the fourth, the sixteenth and so on. The logical continuation of this is that Achilles will never reach the point where the tortoise began as he cannot have an infinite number of steps in a finite space. Zeno produced this example to show that, logically, Infinitude is impossible but our experience of the world which is based on our senses tells us that it takes place. This argument suggests that basing our knowledge of the world on our senses is more credible than on pure reason and logic. Generally speaking, for Nietzsche, pre-Socratics are a group of philosophers who were concerned with immediate life and senses rather than pedantic knowledge and pure reason.

However, even though Camus is influenced by Nietzsche's identification of two Ancient Greeces in *The Birth of Tragedy*, there is no evidence to show that he had read *Philosophy during the Tragic Age of the Greeks* to fully comprehend

Nietzsche's view of pre-Socratic philosophy. Neither does Camus specify clearly which period of Ancient Greece he refers to in the lecture, nor does he demonstrate any knowledge or opinion of pre-Socratics in his other works. This suggestion may seem confusing, because Camus had claimed that one of the tasks in his Master's dissertation was to explore what Greek philosophy provided for Christianity (*Premiers écrits (1932-1936)*: I, 1004). If we recall our analysis of his thesis in Chapter Two, the era that Camus discusses in the dissertation spans the time of the early church fathers, such as Clement, Tertullian and Saint Augustine, through which he in fact discusses philosophy influenced by the Greeks during Roman times, but does not discuss Greek philosophy directly through Greek texts, let alone pre-Socratic philosophy.¹⁷ Despite Camus's limited knowledge of pre-Socratic philosophy, it seems that the Nietzschean distinction of two Ancient Greeces, the criticism of post-Socratics as centring on man's reason, and the preference for pre-Socratics who value the senses, had played a major part in his early career. While it is tempting to ask to what degree these aspects influenced Camus's early writings, I would like to suggest that, on the one hand, he applies the rejection of excessive reason to the European context of the 1930s, by equating excessive reason with three ideological dimensions related to Ancient Rome: Christianity, fascism and military force. On the other hand, he views the pre-Socratic sense of life as an alternative to

¹⁷ This corresponds to what I am attempting to discuss.

the life dominated by reason, thus he establishes the concept of ‘La Méditerranée’ as his alternative in opposition to excessive reason. It is worth emphasising here that what Camus rejects is not reason itself, but excessive reason. Looking forward to the essay *Le Mythe de Sisyphe*, Camus is a consistent critic of excessive reason and suggests that reason is ‘efficace mais limitée’ (*Le Mythe de Sisyphe*, 1942: I, 244).¹⁸ For Camus, ‘il est vain de nier absolument la raison. Elle a son ordre dans lequel elle est efficace’ (ibid.). As regards ‘La Méditerranée’ that Camus attempts to construct, the concept is rightly the opposite of his rejection of excessive reason: fullness of life and valuing the senses instead of excessive reason; the internationalism he advocates as a substitute for nationalism to which fascism belongs; a balancing force signified by ‘le midi et la mesure’ instead of excessive military force. In the next two sections, I will examine first what Camus refuses and then the things that he believes in.

Camus’s Rejection of Excessive Reason

In Camus’s early writings, the 1937 lecture ‘La Culture indigène. La Nouvelle Culture méditerranéenne’, at the inauguration of La Maison de la culture, expounds his criticism of excessive reason in the European context of the 1930s. Camus claims in his lecture that the real Mediterranean is not the one represented by Ancient

¹⁸ *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* was first published in 1942 by Éditions Gallimard, and then was included in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol.I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2008), pp. 217-322. All quotations from *Le Mythe de Sisyphe* are from this volume, though the date indicates its first publication by Gallimard.

Rome's excessive rational abstraction, but by Ancient Greece, which was full of life.

Thus he makes explicit at the outset of the lecture that his aim is to clarify that the Mediterranean is not commensurate with Latinity:

Il y a là un malentendu perpétuel. Le but de cette conférence est d'essayer de l'éclaircir. Toute l'erreur vient de ce qu'on confond Méditerranée et Latinité et qu'on place à Rome ce qui commença dans Athènes (*Articles, préfaces, conférences* (1937): I, 565-566).

At this point, it can be seen that Camus makes an abrupt change in the 1937 lecture.

If we recall our discussion of Camus's essay 'La Mort dans l'âme' (the essay which was composed according to the author's travel experiences in July and August 1936),

we note that, then, Camus still viewed the Mediterranean as a Greco-Roman world.

However, in the lecture held in February 1937, what Camus lays claim to is not the Mediterranean represented by Ancient Rome and Romans (568). In addition, instead

of Camus's enthusiastic praise for Latin culture, for example, in the poem *Méditerranée*, as 'Perle latine aux liliales lueurs: Méditerranée' (*Premiers écrits* (1932-1936): I, 976), he criticises Latinity / Rome more than once in his lecture. This

kind of antithesis between 'La Méditerranée' and Latinity / Rome in Camus's lecture has been noticed by Dunwoodie (1998, 187). In addition, he has made a simple table

to show the differences, for example, between the Mediterranean's living reality and Latin order.¹⁹ However, Dunwoodie has neither analysed these different points in

¹⁹ Dunwoodie's (1998, 187) table is as follows:

<i>Latin</i>	vs.	<i>Mediterranean</i>
Latin order		living reality
strength		intelligence
fruits of decadence		essential spirit

detail, nor has he explained possible reasons which may lead to Camus's opposition between the Mediterranean and Rome. All this evidence has led me to suggest three points: firstly, for Camus, 'La Méditerranée' is no longer the Greco-Roman world; secondly, the writer modified his idea of Mediterranean culture from 1933 to 1937, especially during the period from September 1936 to February 1937; thirdly, the main reason for his criticisms of Ancient Rome lies in his rejection of excessive reason.

Regarding how Camus associates Ancient Rome with his rejection of excessive reason, he specifies:

Mais non. Ce n'est pas cette Méditerranée que notre Maison de la culture revendique. Car ce n'est pas la vraie. Celle-là, c'est la Méditerranée abstraite et conventionnelle que figurent Rome et les Romains. [...] Ce n'est pas la vie que Rome a prise à la Grèce, mais l'abstraction puérile et raisonnante. [...] Ce n'est pas le goût du raisonnement et de l'abstraction que nous revendiquons dans la Méditerranée, mais c'est sa vie [...] (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1937)*): I, 568-569).

It can be seen that Camus either describes Rome as 'abstraite' or as being exemplified by 'l'abstraction puérile et raisonnante' and 'le goût du raisonnement et de l'abstraction' (ibid.). It is necessary to consider two points: firstly, the implication of the words 'abstraite' and 'abstraction'; secondly, the reasons for Camus's description of Rome using these words. Concerning the first point, the adjective

prettiness and mannerisms
childish abstraction
Euripides
bluster (Rome)
theatre sets
lies (Ethiopia)

Greece strong and hard
life
Aeschylus
strength / pessimism (Spain)
countryside crushed by the sun
truth (Spain)

‘abstraite’ indicates that Rome is based on abstraction, as the later phrase ‘l’abstraction puérile et raisonnante’ shows. As to what sort of abstraction Rome is based on, while the modifier (‘puérile’) following the word ‘abstraction’ is too subjective to define, the word ‘raisonnante’ clarifies that Camus is referring here to a form of abstraction based too heavily on rationality. The reasons for Camus’s use of the phrase, I suggest, lie in three aspects: firstly, the principle of Rome, in Camus’s opinion, was spiritual and especially Christian, and it was this principle that formed ‘son unité spirituelle’ (566); secondly, the nationalism by which the rise of fascism was inspired in the 1930s, began when the Holy Roman Empire crumbled; thirdly, there existed an excess of military force – ‘le génie guerrier’ (568) when ancient Romans pursued a glorious Roman Empire.

As for the first point, Camus claimed in the lecture that the Mediterranean’s principle is man, thus Rome’s principle must be eliminated: ‘le principe n’est plus chrétien, ce n’est plus la Rome papale du Saint Empire. Le principe, c’est l’homme’ (ibid., 566). In order to demonstrate the advantage of ‘La Méditerranée’ which favours notions of life over Rome’s principle of Christianity, Camus writes that every time a doctrine reached the Mediterranean, it was always the latter that vanquished the doctrine (567). The narrator particularly reviews the history of Christianity which was originally ‘dure, exclusive’ but, when it came into contact with the Mediterranean, became more adapted to man because it gained ‘une doctrine

philosophique' (ibid.). It may surprise us here because Camus, on the one hand, draws contrasts between the Mediterranean and Rome's principle of Christianity and, on the other, he admits that the Mediterranean in fact provides a philosophical doctrine for Christianity. Even though Camus fails to specify what exact period of Mediterranean history he refers to in the lecture, two Ancient Greeces can be detected by examining his account of the Mediterranean here. 'La Méditerranée', the principle of which is 'l'homme', equates the Ancient Greece represented by pre-Socratics with its vitalism; whereas the Mediterranean which provides a philosophical doctrine for Christianity is the Ancient Greece represented by Socrates and his followers. The real Mediterranean culture Camus calls for should be the former one, which is in favour of life, but not the latter, favoured by the Romans, because 'ce n'est pas la vie que Rome a prise à la Grèce, mais l'abstraction puérile et raisonnée' (568). To better understand this, it is necessary to follow Camus's review of early Christianity in the lecture.

Camus suggests in the lecture that early Christianity was originally a closed doctrine but when it entered the Mediterranean, it gained a philosophical doctrine and became adapted to man:

Le christianisme était à l'origine une doctrine émouvante, mais fermée, judaïque avant tout, ignorant les concessions, dure, exclusive et admirable. De sa rencontre avec la Méditerranée, est sortie une doctrine nouvelle [...] À l'ensemble d'aspirations sentimentales du début s'est ajoutée une doctrine philosophique. Le mouvement s'est parachevé, enjolivé - s'est adapté à l'homme. Grâce à la Méditerranée, le christianisme a pu entrer dans le monde

pour y commencer la carrière miraculeuse qu'on lui connaît (ibid., 567).

It can be inferred that Camus uses the word 'christianisme' here to mean the beginning of it – Judaism. This suggestion corresponds to the writer's analysis of the development of Christianity in his dissertation, on which Camus's elaboration of Christianity in the lecture is based. Camus's discussion of Christianity in the dissertation accords with his criticism of the early stage of Christianity in the lecture. In the introduction of the dissertation, when he presents the position of his research problem and the plan of his work, Camus writes:

D'un point de vue historique la doctrine chrétienne est un mouvement religieux, né en Palestine, inscrit dans la pensée judaïque. À une époque qu'il est difficile de déterminer, mais certainement contemporaine du moment où Paul autorise en principe l'admission des gentils et les exempte de la circoncision, le Christianisme se sépare du Judaïsme. [...] Entre 117 et 130 l'épître de Barnabé est déjà résolument antijuive. C'est le point capital (*Premiers écrits (1932-1936)* I, 1003-1004).

As this suggests, the reason that Camus criticises early Christianity – in fact, Judaism – as 'dure, exclusive' (I, 567) is that it excluded Gentiles. He later repeats in the first chapter of the thesis, that 'le point capital' of Christianity started right from 'la rupture avec le Judaïsme' (I, 1018). In the lecture, he continues to claim that when early Christianity encountered the Mediterranean, it gained a philosophical doctrine and became humanised: 'À l'ensemble d'aspirations sentimentales du début s'est ajoutée une doctrine philosophique. Le mouvement [...] s'est adapté à l'homme' (I, 567). But we may wonder why early Christianity was humanised when a philosophical doctrine was added to it. The answer lies in Camus's suggestion in the

lecture that early Christianity was 'l'ensemble d'aspirations sentimentales' before its encounter with the Mediterranean (ibid.). This is an echo of the opening used to describe Christianity in the thesis:

le plan sentimental où se plaçaient les communautés évangéliques est étranger à l'aspect classique de la sensibilité grecque. C'est dans le plan affectif où les problèmes se posent et non dans le système qui tente d'y répondre, qu'il faut chercher ce qui fit la nouveauté du Christianisme. À ses débuts, celui-ci n'est pas une philosophie qui s'oppose à une philosophie, mais un ensemble d'aspirations (I, 999-1000).

So if early Christianity – Judaism – was just a collection of sentimental aspirations foreign to Greek philosophy, how could it become more universal to make the whole Mediterranean christianised? According to Camus, for ancient Greeks who lived on a philosophical terrain to accept early Christianity and its sentimental aspirations, the important thing was to present Christianity as in harmony with 'la Raison', to reassure the Greeks that faith accomplishes the findings of Reason (1019). Thus historically it became necessary for Christianity to create its metaphysics, because 'il n'est pas de métaphysique sans minimum de rationalisme' (1021). To understand what Camus means here, it is helpful if our previous analysis of the development of rational thought, from Socrates to Aristotle, and the contents of Camus's Master's dissertation in the previous chapter are combined. From the emphasis on rational thought as the centre of man's being asserted by Socrates, via Plato's establishment of the links between true knowledge and man's reason, to Aristotle's definition of man as a 'rational animal', Reason began to dominate the mainstream of Greek

philosophy and even European culture. Just as Dreyfus (2012, 97) suggests, the building of an abstract system of philosophy and metaphysics is a process which began during the period of Ancient Greece, from which European culture inherited an abstract way of understanding the self and its life, accompanied with the development of rationality. This is the reason why, in Camus's dissertation, from the second chapter on 'La Gnose' to the last devoted to Augustinianism, he in fact discusses how rational knowledge, a Greek notion, was involved in the development of early Christianity. In Chapter Two of the dissertation, Camus suggests that for the Gnostics, *gnosis* or knowledge of God is the route to salvation. In the third chapter, 'La Raison mystique', which discusses Plotinus and his *Enneads*, Camus claims that Plotinus's solution is to incorporate rational knowledge with the destiny of the soul, or to include the destiny of the soul within intellectual forms (I, 1040-1041). For Camus, Plotinus adds a metaphysical doctrine to a religious form of thought for Christianity (1061), until Saint Augustine, who also attempted to take a rational way to understand God but soon found himself unpersuaded, and therefore suggested that salvation lies in faith in God but not in rational knowledge (1073). Nevertheless, the evolution of Christianity from Gnosticism to Augustinianism was a process of combining Greek reason and Christian faith, which allowed Christianity to escape its Judaic origins and extend its influence in the Mediterranean. Taken all together, early Christianity, in need of christianising an area where people had become accustomed

to an abstract way of thinking, unavoidably used 'Raison' to create itself. Metaphysics, as a branch of philosophy, concerns rational insights into the world beyond appearance, which claims to uncover the ultimate reality (Hepburn 1969, 212-213). Hence, Christian metaphysics is a rational reflection on the divinity of God. It is helpful to consider another term which is considered equivalent to Christian metaphysics, namely 'natural theology', i.e. knowledge about God and the divine order which man's reason can acquire without the aid of revelation (Richardson 1969, 226). Considering Camus's objection to the emphasis on man's reason, it is comprehensible why he rejects Rome on account of the theological doctrines of Christianity.

Having discussed Camus's rejection of Rome because of 'son unité spirituelle' (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1937)*: I, 566) – Christianity – we have now come to his second point of refusing Rome's nationalism, both on the same grounds as his rejection of excessive reason: a refusal to accept all rigid systems, dogmas or doctrines. If Christianity can be described as a system of theological doctrines, nationalism is another sort of doctrine, not theological but political. In fact, in the same way as the supreme priority in Christianity is one's belief in God, so the core doctrine in nationalism is an individual's loyalty and devotion to one's nation. While the existence of heaven is commonly believed in by Christians, national flourishing is the goal of nationalists (Nathanson 1997, 178-179).

For Camus who lived in 1930s' Europe in the face of rising tensions, especially the expansion of the fascists, fascism is a sort of nationalism, which he criticises and repels wholeheartedly in the lecture (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1937)*: I, 565). He rejects what fascism called 'cet ordre latin' (568), an abstract idea based on man's rationality, for justifying what fascist regimes did at that time. Although Camus does not clearly indicate what he means by using the term 'ordre latin' but just says: 'cet ordre qu'on nous vante tant fut celui qu'impose la force' (568), it can be inferred from the text that it is referring to an ambitious devotion to found a community imposed by force on behalf of the glory of Latinity, of course in the name of completing what the Roman Empire dreamed of. Charles Maurras in particular is identified by Camus in his lecture as an advocate of this 'Latin order', which was later exploited by fascist propaganda. Charles Maurras was the principal ideologist of the Action Française movement which started at the beginning of the 20th century. The kernel of Maurras's philosophy and the movement he led, according to Cassels (1975, 234), was famously expressed in his saying about two Frances. Maurras put forward the idea that two Frances existed since 1789, one was a *pays légal* formed by the institutional state, and the other, a *pays réel* represented by organic communities rooted in French history (ibid.). He claimed that the French Right and the Action Française movement were representatives of these organic communities. In addition, Maurras advocated a return to the glory of a prerevolutionary France, in which he

constructed his antique utopia of a *pays réel* and endowed it with the supremacy of ‘Latin culture’, with France as its real heir. Foxlee (2007, 91) suggests that Maurras even drew the delimitation of a boundary between civilization and barbarism in the Mediterranean region, setting the West as a civilization against the barbaric Asia and Semites. In his lecture, Camus himself clearly identifies the Mediterranean as what he sees as a connection point between the West and the East to surpass nationalism. Maurras’s doctrine ran totally counter to what Camus believed in: ‘la Méditerranée est de tous les pays le seul peut-être qui rejoigne les grandes pensées orientales’ (I, 569). Thus, we can understand that Camus’s rejection of Maurras’s profession of Latin culture or Latinity is, in effect, a refusal of nationalism.

It is significant that Maurras’s theory nourished both Mussolini and Hitler, especially with the rise of fascism in Europe in the 1920s and 1930s. Nolte (1969) juxtaposes Action Française, Italian Fascism, German National Socialism as three faces of fascism. Generally speaking, whatever the kind of fascism, its culture and ideology depend heavily on the Holy Roman Empire. The very word ‘fascism’, in the etymological sense, is derived from the Latin word ‘fasces’. The ‘fasces’ is ‘the double-edged axe bound by rods’ (Stone 1999, 207), which was held by the lictors who stood behind the Roman magistrates, symbolizing a magistrate’s power over life and death. In parallel with Maurras’s account that France was the real heir of Rome, Fascist Italy also situated itself as the successor to the Roman Empire (ibid., 220).

Stone also points out that ‘Roman imperial motifs’ were of high importance in both Mussolini’s military and cultural self-justification which, especially in the conquest of Ethiopia in 1936, were used to create an illusion that Mussolini’s Italy was continuing the ‘civilizing mission’ not yet completed by Rome.²⁰ The Italian Fascist regime had strong interests in diffusing the cult of ‘romanità’, the term which was used to indicate, according to Wyke (1999, 189), an ‘invented tradition’ deployed to defend Italy’s legitimacy in the name of Ancient Rome.²¹ For these reasons, Camus shows obvious opposition to Italian fascism’s call for a new Rome, as Van Der Poel (2007, 15-16) confirms, which aimed for the reappearance of Roman imperial grandeur. As for Germany, Nolte (1969, 415) mentions that Hitler’s distant models for building a new empire were Rome and Sparta, especially Sparta for its ruling class with racial superiority, a concept which Hitler drew upon to devise his ethnic policies. The collapse of the Roman Empire was seen as due to ‘racial miscegenation’ (Edwards 1999, 14). In addition to Mussolini’s propaganda of ‘romanità’, Hitler was fascinated with Roman architecture because he firmly believed, as had Augustus, that architecture is an expression of the power, greatness, and fame of a great man or ruler

²⁰ Camus’s repulsion for nationalism and Latinity in his lecture shows especially in his repeated mention of the Ethiopian war, i.e. the Second Italo-Ethiopian War, which started in October 1935 and ended in May 1936. The war resulted from the invasion of Ethiopia by Italy. When Camus first mentions the Ethiopian war in his lecture, he criticises Italy’s invasion of Ethiopia in the name of Latin order: ‘C’est au nom de cet ordre latin que, dans l’affaire d’Éthiopie, vingt-quatre intellectuels d’Occident signèrent un manifeste dégradant qui exaltait l’oeuvre civilisatrice de l’Italie dans l’Éthiopie barbare’ (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1937)*, 1965: I, 568).

²¹ There are other examples to illustrate Mussolini’s advocacy of ‘romanità’. Mussolini’s government sponsored institutes such as ‘Istituto di Studi Romani’ (Institute for Roman Studies) (Stone 1999, 206), and the institute’s journal to advertise ‘romanità’.

(Scobie 1990, 39-40). Holding this belief, he appointed Albert Speer as the leading architect of Nazi Germany to transform Berlin into a world capital which would impress the world with its magnificence (ibid., 40-41). Albert Speer was said to have boasted once that he and his collaborators were better than the Romans at building in a Roman style (Edwards 1999, 14).

Whatever Maurras's 'two Frances', Mussolini's 'romanità' and Hitler's new Rome were, they all exploited appeals to Ancient Rome and Latin culture for nationalistic purposes. In Camus's lecture, as Dunwoodie (2007, 149) observes, he denounces Mussolini and Hitler as purveyors of the 'Latin order' and harshly criticises this 'Latin order' which Maurras, Mussolini and Hitler were keen to promote:

C'est cette latinité que Maurras et les siens essayent d'annexer. C'est au nom de cet ordre latin que, dans l'affaire d'Éthiopie, vingt-quatre intellectuels d'Occident signèrent un manifeste dégradant qui exaltait l'oeuvre civilisatrice de l'Italie dans l'Éthiopie barbare.

[...] Et on peut accorder volontiers à M. Mussolini qu'il est le digne continuateur des César et des Auguste antiques, si on entend par là qu'il sacrifie, comme eux, la vérité et la grandeur à la violence sans âme (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1937)*: I, 568).

Camus's criticism of fascism as a sort of nationalism is better examined in the light of historical events at the end of 1936 in Europe. On 25 and 26 October, 1936, Germany and Italy, the two countries which advocated nationalism and clamoured for a new Latin order, signed a protocol in Berlin and this formed the origin of the

Rome-Berlin Axis.²² Then on November 25, 1936, Germany and Japan signed the Anti-Comintern Pact, that was directed against the activities of the Communist International because, according to Fascist ideology, the ‘ethical state’ of fascism was the antidote to Marxism (Stone 1999, 207). Actually, this pact signified that the Triple Alliance was already in existence because, about one year later on November 6, 1937, Italy adhered to the Anti-Comintern Pact (Watt 1960, 533). Europe was on the threshold of a great change. Camus felt acutely the rising social tensions in Europe and wrote, in November 1936, in *Cahier I* that, ‘Nationalités apparaissent comme signes de désagrégation. Unité religieuse du Saint Empire romain germanique à peine rompue: les nationalités’ (*Carnets 1935-1948*, 1962: II, 812). It appears that a passage of the lecture on the Mediterranean is a direct echo of what he writes in the notebook:

Les nationalismes apparaissent toujours dans l’histoire comme des signes de décadence. Quand le vaste édifice de l’Empire romain s’écroule, quand son unité spirituelle, dont tant de régions différentes tiraient leur raison de vivre, se disloque, alors seulement, à l’heure de la décadence, apparaissent les nationalités (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1937)*: I, 566).

In consideration of the increasingly tense political situation, when construing the real Mediterranean culture in his lecture, Camus thus pays more attention to establishing

²² The protocol comprised of nine points. For the details of it, see D. C. Watt, ‘The Rome-Berlin Axis, 1936-1940. Myth and Reality’, *The Review of Politics*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (Oct., 1960): p. 531. The Rome-Berlin Axis was first proclaimed by Mussolini in a speech on November 1, 1936 following the signature of the protocol (Watt 1960, 530). In this speech, Mussolini (1936, 206-207) said: ‘verticale Berlino-Roma, non è un diaframma, è piuttosto un asse attorno al quale possono collaborare tutti gli Stati europei animati da volontà di collaborazione e di pace’. The English translation is: ‘this vertical line between Rome and Berlin is not a partition, but rather an *Axis* around which all the European states animated by the will to collaboration and peace can also collaborate’ (cited in Watt, 1960, pp. 532-533, my italics).

an international Mediterranean as resistance to nationalism and fascism.

With regard to the third point of explaining Camus's rejection of Ancient Rome, it is consistent with his refusal to accept excessive rationality. The exorbitant zeal of Ancient Rome with its excessive military might, was an ambition for a glorious Roman Empire: an abstract notion of the flourishing nation as the supreme pursuit.

Camus suggests in the lecture that what Rome imitated from Ancient Greece is not the essential genius of the great writers of tragedies and comedies in its strong period, but its decadence and errors in the last centuries (ibid., 568). He continues that it was not life that Rome took from Greece, but argumentative abstraction (ibid.). From the viewpoint of Camus's two Ancient Greeces, it is interesting to see the former Greece – which owns the essential genius, the sense of life – as the pre-Socratic one, while the latter indicates the post-Socratic, even though he does not clearly specify what periods of Greece he is referring to. Camus objects that Rome replaced 'le sens de la vie' with 'le génie guerrier', and Mussolini, following what Rome advocated, sacrifices 'la vérité et la grandeur à la violence sans âme' (568-569). On the one hand, Camus is right that Rome did not inherit the sense of life from pre-Socratic Greece but only the errors from decadent Greece, while on the other, he blames Rome for replacing the essential genius of pre-Socratic Greece with military excess. He seems to be ignoring the territorial expansion²³ by Alexander the Great

²³ When Alexander acceded to the kingdom of Macedon, he began his military expansion plan. Price (1991, 365-366) sketches the plan by Alexander, who first controlled some cities in western Turkey and then pushed

(356 – 323 B.C.E.) in the Hellenistic Period here.²⁴ However, in Camus's other writings, he still mentions Alexander's military expansion, which will be discussed later.

Camus's objection to Rome's military excess continues in the collection *Noces* which was written from the end of 1936 to 1937.²⁵ In 'Le Vent à Djémila', when Camus visited the Roman ruins at Djémila, he summed up as follows:

Des hommes et des sociétés se sont succédé [sic] là; des conquérants ont marqué ce pays avec leur civilisation de sous-officiers. Ils se faisaient une idée basse et ridicule de la grandeur et mesuraient celle de leur Empire à la surface qu'il couvrait. Le miracle, c'est que les ruines de leur civilisation soient la négation même de leur idéal (*Noces*, 1959: I, 115).²⁶

In his subsequent writings, for instance, in the famous essay 'L'Exil d'Hélène' in

east to Gordium. Having defeated Darius the Persian King at Issus (333 B.C.E.) (though Darius was defeated, he escaped this time), Alexander turned south and dominated Phoenicia and Egypt. Then he continued to march north and east into Mesopotamia, where at Gaugamela (331 B.C.E.) he finally vanquished Darius and took control of the Persian Empire. However, Alexander was not satisfied with the Persian Empire only and marched troops from Afghanistan to Punjab where he defeated the Indian King. If it had not been for the soldiers' weariness, Alexander would have gone further east. Besides military success, the dissemination of Greek culture is a co-product of their political power, because Greeks held a superior view of their culture towards other native cultures in the territory belonging to them. Price (*ibid.*, 364) suggests that the relationship between political power and cultural dominance in the Hellenistic period is similar to the expansion of European culture to their colonies, except that, in a post-colonial age, Europeans are more aware that culture is closely associated with political power (369).

²⁴ The Hellenistic Period indicates the 300 years between the reigns of Alexander the Great of Macedon (336 – 323 B.C.E.) and Augustus, the first Roman Emperor (31 B.C.E. – 14 C.E.). This period is right after the Classical Age: see Simon Price, 'The History of the Hellenistic Period', in John Boardman, Jasper Griffin and Oswyn Murray (eds.), *The Oxford History of Greece and the Hellenistic World*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991, p. 364). The 'Tables of Events' in this book delimit the start of the Hellenistic period at 336 B.C.E. when Alexander the Great took accession.

²⁵ We may infer from Camus's chronology and 'Note de l'éditeur' in *Noces* that all the essays in *Noces* were completed from the end of 1935 to the beginning of 1938. See Pierre-Louis Rey, 'Chronologie', in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. LXIX – XCVIII (p. LXXIV – LXXVI). According to Camus's chronology, the first essay 'Noces à Tipasa' in *Noces* was inspired by Camus's trip to Tipasa at the end of August in 1935. Nevertheless, we do not know the specific time when Camus completed 'Noces à Tipasa'. We learn from the timeline of 1938 that Camus completed *Noces* at the beginning of 1938. See also Albert Camus, 'Note de l'éditeur' in *Noces*, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006, Vol. I), p. 101. This note tells us that most of the texts in *Noces* were completed from 1936 to 1937.

²⁶ A small number of copies of *Noces* were first published in Alger in the year 1938. In 1959, *Noces* was reissued by Éditions Gallimard. After that, it seems that *Noces* has never been published separately. See Albert Camus, 'Note de l'éditeur' in *Noces*, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), p. 101. *Noces* was included in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944. (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. 99-137. All quotations from *Noces* are from this volume, though the date indicates its first publication by Gallimard.

L'Été (1954)²⁷, Camus's opposition to Rome as a symbol of force and excess is also evident:

Nous avons préféré la puissance qui singe la grandeur, Alexandre d'abord et puis les conquérants romains que nos auteurs de manuels, par une incomparable bassesse d'âme, nous apprennent à admirer. Nous avons conquis à notre tour, déplacé les bornes, maîtrisé le ciel et la terre. Notre raison a fait le vide. Enfin seuls, nous achevons notre empire sur un désert (*L'Été*, 1954: III, 598).

Noting that Camus criticises Alexander's military power here, it is worth pointing out the justification for this territorial expansion. Aristotle, as is well known, who was tutor to Alexander the Great of Macedon, developed a useful ideological tool based on the differences of nationalities for the ambitious imperialist. In *Politica*, Aristotle justifies the territorial expansion led by Alexander the Great because it was said that the Greeks were ideally capable of ruling others:

Those who live in a cold climate and in Europe are full of spirit, but wanting in intelligence and skill; and therefore they retain comparative freedom, but have no political organization, and are incapable of ruling over others. Whereas the natives of Asia are intelligent and inventive, but they are wanting in spirit, and therefore they are always in a state of subjection and slavery. But the Hellenic race, which is situated between them, is likewise intermediate in character, being high-spirited and also intelligent. Hence it continues free, and is the best-governed of any nation, and, if it could be formed into one state, would be able to rule the world (Aristotle 1921, 1327b).²⁸

²⁷ The writing of *L'Été* lasted a long time, as early as the appearance of 'Le Minotaure' in *L'Arche* N° 13 in February 1946, until the publication of 'La Mer au plus près' in *La Nouvelle Revue Française* in January 1954. These essays were finally included in the collection *L'Été*. See Pierre-Louis Rey, 'Chronologie', in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. LXIX – XCVIII (pp. LXXXIV-XCI). *L'Été* was first published by Éditions Gallimard in 1954. After that, it seems that *L'Été* has never been published separately. *L'Été* was included in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. III, 1949-1956, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2008), pp. 565-624. All quotations from *L'Été* are from this volume, though the date indicates its first publication by Gallimard.

²⁸ Scholars have always been working hard to understand the chronology of Aristotle's works. The difficulty lies in the facts that Aristotle did not date his works and no one else who might have known the date of his writing dated the works for him. In terms of *Politica*, according to Aristotle's reference to the assassination of King Philip of Macedonia in 336 B.C.E., Anagnostopoulos suggests that this book was written between 336 and 322

Aristotle's saying can be seen as a sort of nationalism that Camus objects to, as previously analysed, because it not only implies a sense of national superiority, but views the flourishing of the Hellenic nation and its ambition to even rule the world as the supreme pursuit. Through the excuse provided by Aristotle for the Hellenic expansion, it is furthermore tempting to link Camus's criticism of military excess, whether by Alexander the Great or the Romans, with his rejection of rationalism – anything systematic or dogmatic depends too heavily on rationality.

Based on the analysis of the reasons for Camus's rejection of Rome, it can be concluded that all aspects – Rome's spiritual principle, nationalism by which fascism was inspired and military excess – are built upon a refusal of excessive rationality. It is necessary to mention here that the Rome Camus rejects is not its entirety, but the part which is based heavily on rationality. For example, he is positive when he discusses the role of Latin in providing unity in the Mediterranean through Romance languages: 'Cette culture, cette vérité méditerranéenne existe et elle se manifeste sur tous les points: 1° unité linguistique – facilité d'apprendre une langue latine lorsqu'on en sait une autre' (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1937)*: I, 569). For Camus, the Mediterranean culture is viable through the fact that people in the Mediterranean region can grasp Romance languages easily. This raises the question

B.C.E. See Georgios Anagnostopoulos, 'Aristotle's Works and the Development of his Thought' in *A Companion to Aristotle*, (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), pp. 20-21. Considering the difficulty of dating *Politica*, the date of Aristotle's works in my thesis indicates the publication date.

of what Camus believes in when he attempts to evoke a real Mediterranean. In the next section, I will demonstrate Camus's delimitation of the Mediterranean as an international region with its sunshine and the sea, and more importantly as a culture which knows its limits and has a fullness of life.

Camus's Concept of 'La Méditerranée'

When constructing the concept of the Mediterranean in the lecture, Camus first describes 'La Méditerranée' as 'un pays vivant' (ibid., 566). He uses the term 'pays' to refer not to a national entity or nation state but to something akin to a region beyond national boundaries. In this international Mediterranean region, the similar geographical environment shared by diverse countries is that it is full of 'le soleil' and 'la mer', in addition to 'le midi' related to 'le soleil' as a symbol of limits and measure. Last but not the least, to express Camus's rejection of excessive reason, the Mediterranean is described, of course, as a culture swarming with life.

Drawing the Mediterranean as an international region for Camus is a negation of nationalism because the latter is a sign of decadence which has deprived the West of its unity and is also one type of excessive reason as previously analysed in the above section. For Camus, it is internationalism that will unite the West again:

La Méditerranée qui nous entoure est au contraire un pays vivant, plein de jeux et de sourires. [...] Les nationalismes apparaissent toujours dans l'histoire comme des signes de décadence. [...] à l'heure de la décadence, apparaissent les nationalités. Depuis, l'Occident n'a plus retrouvé son unité. À l'heure

actuelle l'internationalisme essaie de lui redonner son vrai sens et sa vocation (ibid.).

Camus had made similar comments about nationalism and internationalism in his *Cahier* in November 1936, just three months before his lecture on the Mediterranean.

In *Cahier I (mai 1935 - Septembre 1937)*, Camus links nationalities with signs of disintegration but deems internationalism to be that which gives the West its true meaning:

Nationalités apparaissent comme signes de désagrégation. Unité religieuse du Saint-Empire romain germanique à peine rompue: les nationalités. En Orient, le tout demeure.

Internationalisme essaie de rendre à l'Occident son vrai sens et sa vocation (*Carnets 1935-1948*: II, 812).

With regard to 'La Méditerranée' as a region, although he indicates that the Mediterranean is a living area, Camus fails to specify what exactly this region includes in detail but asserts that 'il y a une mer Méditerranée, un bassin qui relie une dizaine de pays' (I, 566). As to which regions in the Mediterranean basin he means, we may find a clue in his further reference to some cities, for instance, Genoa, Marseille, Provence, and the 'cafés chantants' (ibid.) of Spain, so it is clear that Italy, Spain, the south of France and certainly North Africa, where Camus grew up, are deemed to form part of the basin. It can be deduced that Camus gave vague boundaries to the Mediterranean region according to his own travel experiences at that time. Before the inauguration of 'La Maison de la culture', he had visited Spain in 1935, and Central Europe and Italy in 1936. Startled by the enormous differences

between Central Europe and the Mediterranean region, Camus counterposed his feelings of being relaxed in the Mediterranean region and awkward in Central Europe:

J'ai passé deux mois en Europe centrale, de l'Autriche à l'Allemagne, à me demander d'où venait cette gêne singulière qui pesait sur mes épaules, cette inquiétude sourde qui m'habitait. J'ai compris depuis peu. Ces gens étaient toujours boutonnés jusqu'au cou. Ils ne connaissaient pas de laisser-aller. Ils ne savaient pas ce qu'est la joie, si différente du rire. [...] on peut se sentir plus près d'un Génois ou d'un Majorquin que d'un Normand ou d'un Alsacien (567).

Seen from this brief biographical sketch, Camus's anti-Central Europe bias, compared with his favour of the Mediterranean region, is outright. For Camus, even fascism does not appear the same in a northern country compared with a southern country:

Pour ceux qui ont vécu à la fois en Allemagne et en Italie, c'est un fait évident que le fascisme n'a pas le même visage dans les deux pays. On le sent partout en Allemagne, sur les visages, dans les rues des villes. Dresde, ville militaire, étouffe sous un ennemi invisible. Ce qu'on sent d'abord en Italie, c'est le pays. [...] Dans un Italien, c'est l'homme affable et gai. Ici encore la doctrine semble avoir reculé devant le pays – et c'est un miracle de la Méditerranée de permettre à des hommes qui pensent humainement de vivre sans oppression dans un pays à la loi inhumaine (567-568).

Two points in particular from these passages should be borne in mind in what follows: firstly, the Mediterranean region that Camus advocates is international but also regional, which implies that the Mediterranean is not universal but only limited to the Mediterranean basin 'qui relie une dizaine de pays' (566); and secondly, the establishment of any identity is viable through one's attitudes (affirmative or adverse)

towards an Other or Others.

Concerning the first point, besides Camus's anti-Central Europe bias, another obvious example is that he emphasises the unity afforded to the Mediterranean by the Romance languages: 1. linguistic unity – when one already knows a Romance language, it is easier to learn another; 2. 'unité d'origine – collectivisme prodigieux du Moyen Âge – ordre des chevaliers, ordre des religieux, féodalité, etc' (ibid., 569). Whether 'unité d'origine' here means Roman origins is disputable. O'Brien (1970, 12) claims that 'ordre des chevaliers' is related to the Crusades, thus the 'unity of origin' belongs to Romans. In view of this, he (ibid., 14) offers the criticism that Camus's Mediterranean is the expression of a purely European imagination, because there were a large number of Arab-speaking people who have their own languages and cultures in North Africa. Foxlee (2010, 45) reminds us that the text of this lecture only provides the outline of what Camus said in the lecture, and thus we cannot be totally sure about what Camus really indicated when referring to 'unité d'origine' and 'ordre des chevaliers'. Nevertheless, this passage indeed contradicts Camus's own construction of the Mediterranean as an international region which includes North Africa, just as O'Brien suggests, where an Arab-speaking population lived. It seems that Camus at least neglects the existence of Arab-speaking people.

As for the feasibility of constructing the Mediterranean identity through one's attitudes towards an Other or Others, Foxlee claims accusingly that Camus's

Mediterranean is based on his prejudicial ‘opposition’ to Central Europe (ibid., 56). Although Camus’s anti-Central Europe bias here provides a justification for critics’ objections, Foxlee’s use of ‘opposition’ seems somewhat overstated because Camus actually regards the Mediterranean as a region linked to the East and Eastern thought: ‘Bassin international traversé par tous les courants, la Méditerranée est de tous les pays le seul peut-être qui rejoigne les grandes pensées orientales’ (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1937)*: I, 569).²⁹ The East is, of course, a third region beyond Central Europe and the Mediterranean. Thus, Smith’s (1996, 119) suggestion that Camus’s Mediterranean only includes the European Mediterranean fails to consider Camus’s views towards the East. It can be said that Camus at least takes an Other or Others into account.

Besides an international region, referring to the similar geographical environment shared by diverse countries in the Mediterranean basin, Camus mentions sunlight and sea as natural characteristics of this region in his presentation: ‘La Méditerranée, qui nous entoure de sourires, de soleil et de mer, nous en donne la leçon’ (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1937)*: I, 571). The sunlight in the Mediterranean here reminds us of ‘le midi’ in Camus’s writings analysed in Chapter

²⁹ Camus’s interest in Eastern thought is a topic inadequately discussed. Lottman (1979, 111) mentions that Camus lent his friend, Yves Bourgeois, some books on China, one of which is *La Musique chinoise* written by the composer Louis Laloy. Jacqueline Baishanski (2002) has written a monograph to analyse the influence of Eastern thought, such as Buddhism and Taoism, on the young Camus and his works, especially on the novel *L’Étranger*. In addition, according to Baishanski, Vilas Sarang (1992) (cited in Baishanski, 2002, p.10) regards Meursault, the protagonist in the novel *L’Étranger*, as a Buddha; and Hiroshi Mino (1991) (cited in Baishanski, 2002, p.11) comments that *L’Étranger* in Japan gained an immediate success when it first appeared in June 1951, because it seems close to oriental philosophy.

Two, in which Camus deems 'le midi' of the Mediterranean to be an emblem of limits and measure. It can also be seen, by considering the sentence 'les places désertes à *midi* en Espagne, la sieste, voilà *la vraie méditerranée*' (569, my italics) in his lecture, that 'le midi' here corresponds to the use of the same word in his poem and is viewed as the most important moment signifying a balancing force connected with 'la mesure'.

In describing the Mediterranean as a culture which values balance in opposition to excessive reason, there is also a kind of significant excess we should mention when Camus talks about men in southern Europe in the lecture: '[...] on retrouve des hommes débraillés, cette vie forte et colorée que nous connaissons tous' (ibid., 567). Camus eulogises the men who are unrestrained for their 'goût de la vie', but is not satisfied with the men in Central Europe who 'étaient toujours boutonnés jusqu'au cou' and 'ne connaissaient pas de laisser-aller' (ibid.). Camus's advocacy of the excess of the sense of life corresponds with his identification of two Ancient Greeces: pre-Socratic Greece, with its vitalism, and post-Socratic Greece, with its emphasis on rationality. As Dunwoodie (2007, 150) notes, this form of excess indicates one's will to abandon oneself to 'Nature', which highlights the sense of immediacy. At this point, if our analysis of Meursault's last moment before sentence in Chapter Two is recalled, the hero's physical sense of immersion in the Mediterranean world can rightly be seen as his will to absorb himself in Nature and

also as his excessive devotion to life. The sense of immediacy that underlines this will to immerse himself in Nature, together with the protagonist's physical awareness and his passion for life, renders him a typical Mediterranean man, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

In this section, I have shown what the Mediterranean means to Camus as a geographical region abundant in 'le soleil, la mer et les sourires', also a region not limited by nationalism but with the aim to achieve internationalism. With 'le midi' as the most important moment of the Mediterranean region, Camus advocates a culture which knows its limits, in opposition to the excess of reason and military force. In fact, Camus's description of what the Mediterranean is accords with his explanation of what the Mediterranean is not. In contrast with Ancient Rome's spiritual doctrines, nationalism, as well as excessive military force, the Mediterranean is a culture which is international, full of life and knows its limits.

I have so far analysed in this chapter what 'La Méditerranée' exactly means to Camus. Mainly influenced by Nietzsche's identification of two Ancient Greeces, Camus, when establishing his own concept of 'La Méditerranée', suggests that the Mediterranean will not accept Roman theological doctrines, nationalism and excessive military might, all based on his rejection of the post-Socratics' excessive rationality. Compared with Camus's seemingly fragmentary account of 'La Méditerranée' analysed in Chapter Two, not only does he define 'La Méditerranée'

systematically as a region full of the sunshine and the sea and as a culture which indicates the sense of life, internationalism, a recognition of 'la mesure et la limite' as codes of conduct, but he also modifies his notion, partly influenced by the political situation at that time. When the situation in Europe was intense, what Camus attempted to do was to forge an international Mediterranean which knows its limits but is not filled with endless wars, which refuses doctrines but does not embark on a crusade for 'son unité spirituelle' (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1937)*: I, 566). Combining the analyses in Chapter Two and Chapter Three, four key ideas can be drawn out concerning the concept of 'La Méditerranée': a geographical delimitation of the Mediterranean region connected with the sun and the sea; a cultural value associated with the pre-Socratics who were concerned with immediate life and man's physical senses rather than pedantic knowledge and pure reason; a particular moment of the day, 'le midi', with a balancing force, 'la mesure et la limite'; a passion for 'this-worldly life' in the world, here and now. Up to now, only the poem, the thesis, essays and lectures have been covered in the discussion of 'La Méditerranée' in Camus's early writings. In the next chapter, *L'Étranger*, Camus's chef-d'œuvre, will be taken as a literary text, following the works discussed in this chapter, to sustain my analysis of the concept of 'La Méditerranée' in Camus's early writings.

CHAPTER FOUR: 'LA MÉDITERRANÉE' IN *L'ÉTRANGER*

My reasons for including an investigation of 'La Méditerranée' in *L'Étranger* are threefold. Firstly, as the fragments in Camus's Cahier show,¹ the writing of *L'Étranger* began in May 1938, which not only means that this fiction followed Camus's works in 1937 but coheres with my analyses above of Camus's early writings until 1937. Secondly, as mentioned in Chapters Two and Three, Camus engaged with his thinking and writing of the Mediterranean in two different manners: intellectual and creative, which virtually run through his career right from the start. A wide range of non-fictional texts, whether intellectual or fictional, have been discussed in the previous chapters to elucidate the concept of 'La Méditerranée' through Camus's early writings. *L'Étranger*, both as a fictional and a creative piece, needs to be explored as an imaginative work in which Camus does not employ the term 'La Méditerranée' as a concept, as he does in his reflective works, but instead uses it as a setting of the story. Finally, we need to situate *L'Étranger* in the context of the key ideas concerning the Mediterranean drawn out in the above two chapters for comparison and contrast. The key ideas elucidated do not play as magic codes for textual interpretation, but rather as a heuristic framework: the text may or may not be obviously relevant to the ideas, but will depend on detailed exploration.

¹ Concerning the time of composition of *L'Étranger*, see note 2 on page 1.

Published in 1942, *L'Étranger* is Camus's best-known fiction and retains a special status in his work, marking his initial and successful entrée into the French literary scene. 'Aujourd'hui, maman est morte. Ou peut-être hier, je ne sais pas' (*L'Étranger*, 1942: I, 141).² Thus begins the story of Meursault, the protagonist of Albert Camus's *L'Étranger*. In the eyes of ordinary readers, Meursault is a peculiar man who shows indifference to anyone or anything in his life. He reacts unsentimentally to his mother's death, not even crying at the funeral. He responds insensitively to his girlfriend's affection, even deeming marriage meaningless. He callously helps his neighbour Raymond lie to the latter's mistress and without forethought kills the mistress's brother, feeling no remorse or regret when confronted with the chaplain's moral didacticism. For Meursault, killing the mistress's brother is an inexplicable murder committed just because of 'le soleil' and 'la chaleur' (174). However, for the court, the jury and the prosecutor, it is a deliberate murder committed by a man who is also morally guilty of 'killing' his own mother. It is Meursault's indifference, not just his seaside murder of an Arab, that condemns him to execution.

Given that we are confronting the text of *L'Étranger* with Camus's

² *L'Étranger* was first published by Éditions Gallimard in May 1942. '*L'Étranger* est publié chez Gallimard (achevé d'imprimer le 21 avril)', see Pierre-Louis Rey, 'Chronologie', in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. LXIX – XCVIII (p. LXXX). This fiction was included in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. 139-216. All quotations from *L'Étranger* are from this volume, though the date indicates the time of its first publication by Gallimard.

interpretation of ‘La Méditerranée’ analysed in Chapters Two and Three, it is necessary, first, to review critical readings of *L’Étranger* in order to justify my choice of the methodology. This will be followed by a detailed analysis of ‘La Méditerranée’, as a region full of ‘le soleil’ and ‘la mer’. Finally, Meursault’s behaviour as a Mediterranean man will be examined.

Critical Views of *L’Étranger*

For critics who classify Camus in Sartre’s group as a French existentialist, *L’Étranger* can be seen as belonging to the existentialist canon.³ In terms of an existentialist approach adopted in reading *L’Étranger*, critics diverge in which aspects of the fiction are related to French existentialism. In the illuminating introduction to *The Existential Imagination*, a collection of seventeen fictions pronouncing thoughts on existentialism in broad terms,⁴ Karl and Hamalian (1973) classify Camus with seventeen other authors into a group of writers whose works express the ideas of existentialism, though the book itself does not include any work

³ See note 2 on page 14.

⁴ The book was introduced and edited by Frederick R. Karl and Leo Hamalian who were two American authorities on modern fictions. They introduce ‘existentialism’ in this book in broad terms. This is not only evident in their introduction where they claim existentialism ‘has been latent in the literature of the past 500 years’ (1973, 11), but also can be inferred from the time span of the fictions collected, which starts from the story ‘Dialogue Between a Priest and a Dying Man’ (1782) by Marquis de Sade (1740-1814) to ‘The Bound Man’ (1953) by Ilse Aichinger (1921-) (which should be ‘Ilse Aichinger’, it seems that Karl and Hamalian mistake Aichinger’s first name ‘Ilse’ for ‘Isle’). In addition, existentialism, according to Karl and Hamalian (*ibid.*), is ‘varied and many-sided’, thus the fictions collected are from the works of various writers, for instance, Dostoyevsky, Tolstoy, Proust and Kafka. Concerning the definite date of composition of the stories by Sade and by Aichinger, see ‘Chronological Table’ in Ronald Hayman, *De Sade: a Critical Biography*, (London: Constable and Company Limited, 1978), pp. XIII – XXIV; and Ilse Aichinger, *Der Gefesselte: Erzählungen*, (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1953), which was translated by Eric Mosbacher as *The Bound Man and Other Stories*, (London: Secker & Warburg, 1955).

by Camus. According to Karl and Hamalian (1973, 19), the protagonist of an existential fiction despises all types of morality, so Meursault in *L'Étranger* fits exactly this type of protagonist, as he shows his indifference to everything and refuses to confess to the chaplain in the prison. For Solomon (1981, VII), the emphasis of existentialism is on immediacy, which explains why Solomon views Meursault as a hero of existentialism, because Meursault in *L'Étranger* only knows how to live in the present, to enjoy the sun and to be happy, instead of feeling worried, guilty and regretful (ibid., 61). Golomb (1995, 1) gives precedence to 'authenticity'⁵ as the central feature of existentialism and suggests that the notion of 'authenticity' emerges when one is free from dogmas, ethical norms and ideologies, and tries to live for oneself. Considering this, Golomb (1995) groups Camus's Meursault with Kierkegaard's Abraham, Nietzsche's Zarathustra, Sartre's Mathieu and Orestes,⁶ together as 'heroes of authenticity' who aim to attain authenticity by being true to themselves. However, it is important to bear in mind that, even though there exists common ground shared by Meursault and other protagonists of

⁵ The term 'authenticity' is frequently used in everyday language to indicate the quality of 'being in accordance with fact', 'being genuine' and 'being real, actual' (Simpson and Weiner (eds.), 1989: I, 796-797), while Golomb (1995, 1) attempts to analyse it in its philosophical sense. However, it seems that this term will never be properly and objectively defined in language, because 'authenticity' in its philosophical meaning does not simply indicate that a person is endowed with qualities of sincerity and honesty. In addition, 'authenticity' is something, as Sartre points out in *Being and Nothingness*, we are conscious of when 'we flee it' (cited in Golomb, 1995, p.1). According to Golomb (ibid.), other existentialist writers, such as Nietzsche, Kierkegaard and Camus, all agree that it is 'self-nullifying' to give the term 'authenticity' a specific definition. Nevertheless, in Golomb's (ibid.) later analysis, we can see that he suggests that the notion of 'authenticity' emerges when one is free from dogmas, ethical norms and ideologies, then struggles to live for oneself.

⁶ See Jacob Golomb, 'Introduction' in *In Search of Authenticity: From Kierkegaard to Camus*, (London: Routledge, 1995). As for the characters mentioned above, Abraham is in Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling*, Zarathustra is in Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, while Mathieu and Orestes are in Sartre's *Les Chemins de la liberté* and *Les Mouches* respectively.

existentialist literature, we cannot conclude that Meursault *must* be a hero of existentialism. The reason is that, if existential literature or literature about human existence is conflated with existentialist literature, it threatens, as Malpas (2012, 292) points out, to make existentialist literature nearly ‘co-extensive’ with literature.

Within postcolonial perspectives we have seen in my Introduction that Camus has been criticised for unconsciously displaying and virtually supporting French imperialism, and *L'Étranger* is one of Camus's representative works seen as an expression of French imperialism. As far back as 1970, before postcolonial studies existed as ‘an institutionalized field of academic specialization’ in the late 1970s (Lazarus 2004, 1),⁷O'Brien had offered a postcolonial reading of *L'Étranger*, in which he not only pointed out that Camus lacks real concern for Algerians through the fact that Arabs in the novel are not even given names (1970, 25), but also clearly showed that what Camus narrates about Meursault's death sentence is not consistent with the historical facts at that time in Algeria, because French justice would almost certainly not condemn a European to death for killing an Arab who had once

⁷ See Neil Lazarus, ‘Introducing Postcolonial Studies’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Postcolonial Literary Studies*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 1-16. In terms of explaining the development of postcolonial studies, this goes quite a long way. For details, see Anthony D. King, ‘Writing Colonial Space. A Review Article’ *Comparative Study of Society and History*, Vol. 37, Iss. (03): pp. 541-554; Patricia Seed, ‘Colonial and Postcolonial Discourse’ *Latin American Research Review*, Vol. 26, No. 3: pp. 181-200. According to Lazarus's introduction, whatever differences of opinion critics may have, it seems reasonable to locate the beginning of postcolonial studies in the late 1970s. I suggest that Lazarus's reasons for delimiting the starting date are mainly on account of two aspects: firstly, there was no academic field under the name of ‘postcolonial studies’ until the late 1970s; secondly, influential works in this field, for instance, the works of Edward W. Said, Homi K. Bhabha, Benedict Anderson and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, emerged substantially since the late 1970s (Lazarus 2004, 1). However, as is demonstrated by Lazarus (ibid.), to locate the beginning of postcolonial studies in the late 1970s does not mean that there was no work being done on issues concerned with postcolonial cultures, and I suggest the study by O'Brien on Camus's works belongs to this kind of work.

threatened to stab the European (ibid., 22). The latter point of O'Brien's criticisms of Camus corresponds to what Said concludes in the chapter 'Camus and the French Imperial Experience'⁸, in *Culture and Imperialism*, namely that the French presence in Algeria is presented either as an unchangeable setting with time or as the only history worth narrating (1994, 179). It appears that O'Brien and Said both take a unilateral stance to emphasise, as Prochaska (1998, 673) points out, the historical or political context of Camus's fictions. Contrary to O'Brien and Said, Dunwoodie (1998, 196) who also attempts to explore *L'Étranger* in its historical and political context, argues that the descriptions of Arabs as unwelcome exactly represent a historical fact that indigenous people had been marginalised when Algeria was controlled by France at that time. Thus it seems that, for Dunwoodie, Camus's portrait of Arabs in *L'Étranger* does not bespeak French imperialism, but instead, simply reflects the inferior status of Arabs.

A narratological approach to *L'Étranger* can be traced back to Sartre's comments in his famous review 'Explication de *L'Étranger*' (1943).⁹ Sartre (1947, 105) argues that Camus's narrative style can be compared to that of the American writer Hemingway,¹⁰ because both of them are prone to use terse sentences. In

⁸ See Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, (New York: Vintage, 1994), pp. 169-185.

⁹ 'Explication de *L'Étranger*' was completed by Sartre in February 1943, which can be clearly seen from the date at the end of this essay. See Jean-Paul Sartre, *Situations I*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1947), p. 112. This article was first published, according to McCarthy (2004, 96), in *Les Cahiers du Sud* in February 1943. This review was included in Jean-Paul Sartre, *Situations I*, (Paris: Gallimard, 1947). All my quotations from this article are from this volume, thus the date of all quotations indicates the publication of this volume.

¹⁰ According to Miller (1971, 10), except for Sartre's admission that Camus owes his narrative style to Hemingway, there is a tendency to ignore the influence of Hemingway on Camus in the monographs by French

addition, Sartre contends that Camus's delicate use of French tenses, especially *le parfait composé*,¹¹ causes the whole novel to become a 'succession de présents' (ibid., 108), because – compared with *le passé simple*, which indicates 'le temps de la continuité' (ibid., 109) – *le parfait composé*, which renders the action for itself, leaves only 'les instants' (ibid., 110). Another contemporary who was struck by Camus's use of language in *L'Étranger* is Roland Barthes, who suggests, in *Le Degré zéro de l'écriture* (1953)¹², that *L'Étranger* represents the 'zero degree' of writing because this fiction creates a transparent style of speech which is based on the very tense of compound past¹³ and its oral style (Barthes 1972, 59-60). Similar to Sartre and Barthes in their concern for Camus's use of the perfect tense, Banks (1976, 10-11) indicates that, although it is a past tense, *le passé composé* gives readers a feeling of presentness because part of its grammatical structure is an auxiliary verb, 'être' or 'avoir', in the present tense. The two auxiliary verbs are used in everyday life, which can 'emotionally and psychologically' create an impression of the present (ibid., 10). In addition, Banks (ibid., 9-14) analyses the opening words in every chapter of the first part of *L'Étranger*: while the word 'aujourd'hui' appears immediately in the first

scholars.

¹¹ Normally in French grammar, one says 'le passé composé' or 'le parfait', while Sartre indeed uses 'le parfait composé': '...M. Camus a choisi de faire son récit au parfait composé' (1947, 108).

¹² *Le Degré zéro de l'écriture* was first published by Éditions du Seuil in 1953, while all my quotations from this book are from its second publication with some other essays as *Le Degré zéro de l'écriture: suivi de Nouveaux essais critiques*, (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1972), pp. 9-67. Thus the date of all quotations indicates the publication of this book.

¹³ According to Barthes (1972, 27-29), an obvious break with literary convention is the use of tenses in French: while *le passé simple* always signifies 'Belles Lettres', *le passé composé* is usually the tense of conversation. The tense of simple past constructs 'un continu crédible', whereas the perfect tense approaches closer to oral speech which makes the literature itself become the 'dépositaire de l'épaisseur de l'existence' (ibid., 29).

sentence in the first three chapters, other openings also convey a sense of immediacy in the following three chapters. These examples, although they adopt a narrative perspective to analyse the fiction, pay close attention to the relationship between Camus's use of tense and the presentness of *L'Étranger*, which indicates that *L'Étranger*, to some extent, is a fiction about human existence. Even so, Sartre – who had proved this presentness of *L'Étranger* – never attempted to interpret the fiction through an existentialist approach. Sartre claims that, in contrast to the existentialism developed by himself, *L'Étranger* announces Camus as ‘un méditerranéen’ (Sartre 1947, 94). Although he does not explain specific reasons to support his argument, he makes reference to ‘un certain genre de sinistre solaire’ (ibid.), in which the word ‘solaire’ reminds us of the beginning of his critique:

Au milieu de la production littéraire du temps, ce roman était lui-même un étranger. Il nous venait de l'autre côté de la ligne, de l'autre côté de *la mer*; il nous parlait *du soleil*, en cet aigre printemps sans charbon, non comme d'une merveille exotique mais avec la familiarité lassée de ceux qui en ont trop joui (ibid., 92, my italics).

In this paragraph, Sartre mentions at least two important aspects, ‘la mer’ and ‘le soleil’, which we have already analysed as signifiers of ‘La Méditerranée’ as a region in Chapter Three. Sartre's illuminating critique provides us with a good reason to adopt the perspective of ‘La Méditerranée’ to approach *L'Étranger*. Moreover, through the analysis of the above three methodologies taken for *L'Étranger*, it seems that each focuses on one dimension of this complex fiction, whereas my adoption of

‘La Méditerranée’ as a reading method implies attempting to present *L’Étranger* at least on two levels: spatial and cultural. Based on a critical synthesis of existing methodologies, my discussion will not only focus on the literary text itself but also, unlike other approaches which seem to take the writer’s works as an invariable whole, combine with my analysis of the early development of Camus’s ideas. Thus we can see to what extent the text of *L’Étranger* is linked with Camus’s ideas of the Mediterranean in his early writings.

‘La Méditerranée’ as a Region in *L’Étranger*

If we recall our analysis of the concept of ‘La Méditerranée’ in Chapter Three, for Camus it is a region called the Mediterranean basin ‘qui nous entoure de *sourires*, de *soleil* et de *mer*’ (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1937)*: I, 571, my italics). Configuring the Mediterranean as a region in its own right, Camus here points out three essentials forming ‘La Méditerranée’: ‘les sourires, le soleil et la mer’. From Sartre’s critique of *L’Étranger* mentioned above, we have seen that he is also keenly aware of two key factors in the text of the fiction: ‘le soleil et la mer’. It seems that Camus and Sartre at this point share a similar view of the Mediterranean environment as defined by the sunshine and the sea. Indeed, the text of *L’Étranger* is so overflowing with them that there is not sufficient space for a detailed analysis of every sentence or paragraph in which every aspect of the sunshine and the sea

appears.¹⁴ Nevertheless, the moments in the text where the presence and feel of the Mediterranean region are strong can be given as examples, such as at Meursault's mother's funeral, at the scene where Meursault swims with Marie, at the murder of the Arab, and at Meursault's meeting with the examining magistrate. The high frequency of mentions of 'le soleil' and 'la mer' in the fiction's text has already proved their importance, which has also been supported by many accounts, even from the mouth of the author himself. In the preface to the American version of *L'Étranger*, Camus makes it clear that, for him, Meursault is a man who is 'amoureux du soleil qui ne laisse pas d'ombres' (*L'Étranger*, 1962: I, 215, my italics).¹⁵ The view of the importance of 'le soleil' and 'la mer' in *L'Étranger* is also shared by some critics. Besides Sartre's 'Explication de *L'Étranger*', Quilliot (1956, 84) affirms that: 'Si Meursault aimait quelque chose, ce serait plutôt le soleil'.

¹⁴ According to my count, the elements related to the sunshine and the sea appear in the text 80 times in total. The statistics not only include occurrences of keywords such as 'le soleil', 'la mer' and 'l'océan' in the text, but involve any scenes, colours or feelings related to 'le soleil' and 'la mer'. Unlike the respective calculation of 'le soleil', 'la lumière' and 'le ciel' done by Andrienne (1972, 163), I have deliberately neglected the less important task of counting up these elements associated with 'le soleil' and 'la mer' respectively. My main concern is to provide evidence that the whole text of *L'Étranger* is indeed filled with 'le soleil' and 'la mer' which 'La Méditerranée' possesses, and more importantly, to support my argument that *L'Étranger* can be interpreted with the adoption of 'La Méditerranée' as a reading method. For the same reason, I have also ignored, in a number of instances, the seemingly unrewarding task of determining where one count stops and another begins. Numbers put before the quoted sentences or passages are there merely for convenience of reference and to improve readability. For the details of my count, see Appendix 1.

¹⁵ The full name of this preface is 'Préface à l'édition universitaire américaine', which was first published by Éditions Gallimard in 1962. This preface was listed as the *Appendice* of *L'Étranger* in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. 215-216. All quotations from this preface are from this volume, though the date indicates the time of its first publication by Gallimard. In fact, Camus wrote this preface on January 8th, 1955, which can be clearly seen from the signature at the end of the 'Avant-propos' in Albert Camus, *L'Étranger*, edited by Germaine Brée and Carlos Lynes, (London: Methuen Educational Ltd., 1958), p.2. However, the Pléiade edition of the *Œuvres complètes* does not indicate the precise date of the composition. Even in the complete 'Chronologie' put at the beginning of *Œuvres complètes* Vol. I, 1931-1944, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2006), pp. LXIX – XCVIII, the author, Pierre-Louis Rey, does not mention it in the chronological table of the year 1955. As for the Pléiade edition, according to the specific date when the preface was created, it should be included in Albert Camus, *Œuvres complètes* Vol. III, 1949-1956, (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2008).

Similarly, Barthes (1970, 60)¹⁶ sees *L'Étranger* as a 'roman solaire', and suggests that Meursault is 'un homme charnellement soumis au soleil' (ibid., 63).

In addition, very different reasons for explaining the importance of 'le soleil' and 'la mer' in *L'Étranger* have been discussed in the context of Camus's life and work as a whole. Firstly, from a biographical viewpoint, according to John (1955, 44), 'le soleil' and 'la mer' are obviously representative images of Algerian scenery in which Camus was born and spent his early years. Grenier (1987, 225) notes that if the high frequency of 'la mer' and indirectly 'le soleil' – the words Camus preferred¹⁷ – is not an expression of the writer's thought, at least it shows his sensibility. However, Grenier stops here and does not indicate specifically what kind of thought or feelings Camus demonstrates. Secondly, from a cultural viewpoint, Viggiani (1956, 877-878) establishes a link between Camus's use of 'le soleil' and 'la mer' and these two images as religious symbols of antiquity. He suggests that in most religious myths, 'la mer' possesses purifying powers which are associated with the mother whereas the sun is a symbol of the father, God, and can even cause death if

¹⁶ According to Lévi-Valensi (1970, 60), the editor of *Les Critiques de notre temps et Camus*, Barthes's 'L'Étranger, roman solaire' was originally published in *Bulletin du club du meilleur livre*, N° 12, avril 1954, pp. 6-7. However, all my quotations from this article are from its republication in Jacqueline Lévi-Valensi (ed.), *Les Critiques de notre temps et Camus*, (Paris: Éditions Garnier Frères, 1970), pp. 60-64.

¹⁷ Grenier (1987, 225) just quotes the words towards which Camus had shown preference, but without any references: 'Il faut citer une feuille sur laquelle Camus a noté ses mots préférés: « Le monde, la douleur, la terre, la mère, les hommes, le désert, l'honneur, la misère, l'été, la mer. » ... On peut prendre chacun de ces mots, et chercher à quelle œuvre de l'écrivain il s'applique. A vrai dire, chacun d'eux est présent, ou virtuellement présent, du premier en date au dernier de ses écrits. Ils résument tout à fait sinon sa pensée, du moins sa sensibilité.' According to Lebesque (1963, 165, note 1), these ten words are Camus's answer to the question: 'Quels sont vos dix mots préférés?' However, neither does Lebesque mention on which occasion Camus replies to this question. Obviously, 'le soleil' does not appear directly in the ten chosen words, but according to Andrienne (1972, 161, note 3), the word 'l'été' here can remind readers of 'le soleil'.

faced directly. However, Viggiani assumes that readers have prior knowledge of the ancient religion and does not explain what exactly the ancient religion he mentions is. Doubrovsky (1960, 92) is probably the first critic who mentions that there is a correspondence between Meursault who is a prisoner in Part 2 and the prisoner of the old Platonic cave, because there exists a similarity between 'le soleil' in *L'Étranger* and the light beyond the cave. The difference between the platonic myth and Camus's fiction is that, as Doubrovsky (ibid.) suggests, while the Platonic cave has the light for reflection from a higher reality, 'le soleil' for Meursault is the whole of reality itself.

As for the roles 'le soleil' and 'la mer' play in *L'Étranger*, although Viggiani's (1956, 877-878) discussion fails to explain what kind of symbols in the ancient religion are associated with the two words, his argument can be taken further if linked with the view adopted by psychoanalysis towards *L'Étranger*. Costes (1973, 46) accepts Viggiani's explanation of 'le soleil' and 'la mer' as symbols of the father and the mother, but goes beyond Viggiani and emphasises the link between the two words and the Oedipus complex,¹⁸ so he claims that there is a psychological structure in *L'Étranger*. Besides forming a psychological structure, other important roles that 'le soleil' plays in the text are to imply a tone of violence (John 1955, 44) and inhuman threat (Robbe-Grillet 2010, 30), because it is associated with the

¹⁸ The Oedipus complex, according to Neu (1999, 332), 'postulates sexual feelings toward the parent of the opposite sex and ambivalently hostile feelings toward the parent of the same sex'.

murder on the beach. In fact, 'le soleil' not only relates to the murder on the beach, but appears at all the important points of the whole novel. This is the reason why Barthes (1970, 63) and Andrienne (1972, 173) claim that 'le soleil' actually decides the rhythm of the whole story. Barthes (1970, 63-64) identifies 'le même soleil' that governs the three important moments for Meursault: the funeral, the murder and the trial, to which he refers as 'une fatalité'. Barthes's opinion is shared by Andrienne and Viggiani, while Andrienne (1972, 173) sees 'le soleil' as an obsessional rhythm, Viggiani (1956, 881) views 'le soleil' as 'Camus' equivalents of the Greek notion of doom'.

From the date of the literature analysed above, it can be seen that the study of 'le soleil' and 'la mer' in *L'Étranger* began soon after the novel was published and still arouses interest among critics today. Modler (2000, 217) suggests that 'le soleil' occupies the central place in Camus's works and, more importantly, that 'le soleil' itself is a producer of other images in Camus's writing. Recently, the discussion of 'le soleil' and 'la mer' in *L'Étranger* has no longer been limited to academic research, but has even changed the covers of Camus's works in the relaunch by Penguin for the centenary year of the author. Sinclair (2013b) reports that the photo used on the new edition of *The Outsider*¹⁹ depicts coastal scenery bathed in sunshine,²⁰ which aims

¹⁹ In the UK, *L'Étranger* is always translated as *The Outsider*. In 1946, London, Hamish Hamilton published the translation of *L'Étranger* by Stuart Gilbert, with an introduction by Cyril Connolly. This translation was published by Penguin Books in 1961, and was reprinted several times. In 1983, Penguin Books published another translation of *L'Étranger* by Joseph Laredo. Although it was a different edition by a different translator, it used the same title as the one by Stuart Gilbert. However, in the US, *L'Étranger* is always translated as *The*

to offer a new kind of iconography and to change the perception of Camus from a cold existentialist into an aesthetic sensualist.

As we have seen, a number of commentators have discussed the importance of ‘le soleil’ and ‘la mer’ in *L’Étranger*, as well as the reasons explaining the importance and the roles that they play in the text. However, except for Sartre – who mentions that *L’Étranger* proclaims Camus as ‘un méditerranéen’ (Sartre 1947, 94) – few critics interpret *L’Étranger* from the perspective of ‘la Méditerranée’. With this in mind, I shall now examine *L’Étranger* from this viewpoint. Firstly, the setting of the story in *L’Étranger* is in Algiers, a place belonging to the Mediterranean in Camus’s definition; and secondly, as I have already mentioned, the text of *L’Étranger* is overflowing with the elements of the sunshine and the sea, the natural features of the Mediterranean region.

As regards the setting of the story, it is not difficult to speculate that the geographical background of the first part is in or at least around Algiers, a city

Stranger. In 1954, Vintage Books published the translation of *L’Étranger* by Stuart Gilbert in New York. Even though the translation was the same as the one published in the UK, it was under a different title, *The Stranger*. In my own opinion, the British translation of the title is better than the American version. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, ‘stranger’ means ‘one who belongs to another country, a foreigner; or a person whom one is not yet well acquainted’ (Simpson and Weiner (eds.), 1989: XVI, 843-844), while ‘outsider’ refers to ‘one who is outside of or does not belong to a specified company, set, or party, a non-member’ (X, 1041). It seems that *The Outsider* is closer to what Camus means in *L’Étranger* - Meursault does not belong to the group of people who judge by excessive reason. This corresponds to what I will discuss in the following text.

²⁰ In fact, not only does the new cover of *The Outsider* depict coastal scenery bathed in sunshine, the covers used on the new edition of Camus’s other works are also associated with ‘le soleil’ and ‘la mer’. For the details about the cover used on the new edition of *The Outsider*, see Appendix 2. As my thesis concentrates on Camus’s early writing, Appendix 2 only deals with the works concerned with my discussion. For other photos used on other works by Camus in this relaunch by Penguin for the centenary year of the author, see Mark Sinclair, *Rankin Shines a Light on Camus* [online], (London: Creative Review, 2013), Available from: <http://www.creativereview.co.uk/cr-blog/2013/october/albert-camus-series-penguin> [Accessed 18 September 2014].

located in the North Africa where Camus grew up and which is deemed to form part of the Mediterranean basin. In the first part of *L'Étranger*, Meursault mentions the word 'Alger' five times. The first time is at the beginning of the text: when Meursault receives the telegram informing him of his mother's death in the asylum, he makes clear that 'L'asile de vieillards est à Marengo, à quatre-vingts kilomètres d'Alger' (*L'Étranger*: I, 141). Then Meursault tells readers that he takes the bus at two o'clock and travels to Marengo, a city which is near Algiers and where the whole process of Meursault's mother's funeral takes place. We can even be sure that Meursault lives in Algiers when he describes a rare moment of non-indifference once he returns to Algiers after his mother's funeral: 'ma joie quand l'autobus est entré dans le nid de lumières d'Alger et que j'ai pensé que j'allais me coucher et dormir pendant douze heures' (150). Referring to Meursault's accounts that he and Marie go to a beach several kilometres away from Algiers (160) in Chapter 4, as well as the bus journey made by Meursault, Marie and Raymond to the suburbs of Algiers in Chapter 6 (169), it is always possible to support the inference that the geographical background of the first part is in or around Algiers.

As for the setting of Part 2, in contrast with the fact that the word 'Alger' occurs five times in Part 1, we cannot find it even once in Part 2, which forces us to judge the text on how it corresponds to characteristics of the Mediterranean. First and foremost, the elements of the sunshine and the sea are still abundant in the text of

Part 2. According to my count,²¹ the elements related to ‘le soleil’ and ‘la mer’ arise in the text 15 times in total, compared with 65 times in Part 1, but are still coherent with the text in Part 1, depicting the setting of the story in the Mediterranean region. For example, at the beginning of Chapter 1 in both parts, passages concerning the weather at 2 o’clock can be found. At the opening of Chapter 1, Part 1, Meursault takes ‘l’autobus à 2 heures. *Il faisait très chaud*’ (I, 141, my italics), while at the beginning of Chapter 1, Part 2, when Meursault is taken to the examining magistrate’s office: ‘Il était 2 heures de l’après-midi et cette fois, son bureau était plein d’une lumière à peine tamisée par un rideau de voile. *Il faisait très chaud*’ (179, my italics). In addition, according to Meursault’s account in Chapter 2, Part 2, that most of the prisoners in the jail are Arabs (182-183), we assume that he was taken to the local North-African prison. There is another point to support my argument if Camus’s essay ‘L’Été à Alger’, in *Noces*, can be taken into account. In ‘L’Été à Alger’, Camus describes Algiers as a city surrounded by the sea and exposed to the sunshine, which is exactly the case of the setting of Part 2 in *L’Étranger*. More importantly, it can be found that some passages in *L’Étranger* obviously echo Camus’s description of Algiers in ‘L’Été à Alger’. For example, early in Chapter 3, Part 1, Meursault narrates that: ‘Le bureau donne *sur la mer* et nous avons perdu un moment à regarder *les cargos* dans le port brûlant de soleil’ (155, my italics), which

²¹ See Appendix 1.

corresponds to the beginning of 'L'Été à Alger', where Algiers is a city 'comme les villes *sur la mer*' (*Noces*: I, 117, my italics), and a place where, at the corner of every street, the sea can be viewed. Concerning the setting of Part 2, just as the narrator's office is facing the sea (155), so Meursault, although kept in jail, can still appreciate the sea-view, through a small window of his cell, because the prison stands high above the city (183). This point, as noted above, matches Camus's writing in 'L'Été à Alger' that Algiers is a place where, at the corner of every street, the sea can be viewed.

Besides the fact that the story happens in Algiers, the elements related to 'le soleil' and 'la mer', according to my count,²² amount to as many as 80 times in total in the text: in Part 1 they occur 65 times, while in Part 2 15 times, which indeed confirms that the geographical background of the story is a Mediterranean region with an abundance of sunshine and on the edge of the sea. Moreover, referring to the distribution of the elements in the text, it can be found that they are used most often at the murder of the Arab in Chapter 6 (42 times), then at Meursault's mother's funeral in Chapter 1 (11 times). If we add the two figures up, the number of occurrences in the two chapters is 53 in total, which accounts for more than half of 80 in the whole text.²³ The high frequency of these two elements in these two chapters is not coincidental. Firstly, to the protagonist, there exists a similarity of

²² See Appendix 1.

²³ The exact figure is 66.25%.

sunshine on the two different occasions: ‘C’était le même soleil que le jour où j’avais enterré maman’ (ibid., 175). Furthermore, to readers, if the plot of Part 1 is combined with what follows in Part 2, it is the indifference Meursault shows at his mother’s funeral and the murder of the Arab committed by Meursault that lead to the protagonist’s death penalty in Part 2. Both at his mother’s funeral and on the beach where Meursault commits the murder, from the hero’s perspective, ‘le soleil’ undoubtedly plays an indispensable part, because it is the sunshine that makes him dizzy and prompts him to shoot the Arab; this can be clearly seen from his speech in court to explain the reasons for the murder: ‘[...] c’était à cause du soleil’ (201). When Meursault blurts out the cause responsible for the murder of the Arab, ‘Il y a eu des rires dans la salle’ (ibid.). Unsurprisingly, this defence provokes a strong reaction in the crowd, because the reason seems inadequate. Yet I would like to suggest that Meursault’s account is justified, if he is seen as a Mediterranean man immersed in his physical awareness. Thus, a further detailed analysis of how the elements reflect Meursault’s physical awareness will be provided.

A Mediterranean Man Dominated by Physical Awareness

As previously analysed in Chapters Two and Three, the Mediterranean for Camus is not only a geographical region, but implies the writer’s strong physical awareness. As for *L’Étranger*, there are indeed quite a lot of moments, detailed

scenes, where we see Meursault subjected to his senses, not thinking but reacting. The most distinct case is when the protagonist is so dominated by his physical awareness, aroused by the sunshine and the sea, that he even commits a murder 'à cause du soleil' (ibid.). A more common situation is that Meursault does not plan for anything, whether for important life issues such as his career, the possibility of marriage, or for daily trifles, but his behaviour is based exclusively on his senses. For example, in Chapter 2, Part 1, on the day after Meursault's mother's funeral, he only decides to go for a swim while he is shaving (151). He does not think that it is not proper to see a Fernandel film, as the Prosecutor suggests, just after his mother's funeral, but accepts Marie's invitation (151, 196). He even forgets his dinner until he sees that the trams are infrequent and the street grows emptier (154). Meursault's state of being dominated by his physical awareness comes to be most obviously revealed in Chapter 1 and Chapter 6 in Part 1, where the elements of 'le soleil' and 'la mer' predominate.

In Chapter 1, Part 1 in which the elements of 'le soleil' and 'la mer' occur 11 times in total, Meursault recounts the process from the time when he receives the telegram, telling him of his mother's death, to his return to Algiers, after his attendance at her funeral. In what appears to be an explicit section related to Meursault's physical awareness, we need to consider the narrative of the procession from the Home for Aged Persons to the graveyard where his mother is buried. Once

the funeral procession sets out from the nursing home, Meursault begins to feel that the sun is unbearable. He first senses the effect of the heat on his body:

Le ciel était déjà plein de soleil. Il commençait à peser sur la terre et la chaleur augmentait rapidement. Je ne sais pas pourquoi nous avons attendu assez longtemps avant de nous mettre en marche. J'avais chaud sous mes vêtements sombres (ibid., 149).

When Meursault wonders how the sun climbs up so quickly in the sky, he is also dazzled visually by the sun and the surroundings in the sunlight, especially the black colour combined with both glossiness and dullness:

Autour de moi, c'était toujours la même campagne lumineuse gorgée de soleil. L'éclat du ciel était insoutenable. À un moment donné, nous sommes passés sur une partie de la route qui avait été récemment refaite. Le soleil avait fait éclater le goudron. Les pieds y enfonçaient et laissaient ouverte sa pulpe brillante. Au-dessus de la voiture, le chapeau du cocher, en cuir bouilli, semblait avoir été pétri dans cette boue noire. J'étais un peu perdu entre le ciel bleu et blanc et la monotonie de ces couleurs, noir gluant du goudron ouvert, noir terne des habits, noir laqué de la voiture (149-150).

At the same time, in addition to Meursault's sensory awareness of his body, he is confused by the strong smells aroused by the heat: 'Tout cela, le soleil, l'odeur de cuir et de crottin de la voiture, celle du vernis et celle de l'encens, la fatigue d'une nuit d'insomnie, me troublait le regard et les *idées*' (150, my italics). It seems that Camus intentionally uses the word '*idées*' here to imply that Meursault is not able to think, while he can still differentiate delicate nuances of the colour black and identify a variety of smells. The dizzying sun and all the physical senses stimulated by the sunshine, for Meursault, reappear when he murders the Arab: 'C'était le même soleil que le jour où j'avais enterré maman et, comme alors, le front surtout me faisait mal

et toutes ses veines battaient ensemble sous la peau' (175). Let us now consider to what degree Meursault's description of the weather and his feelings on the two days are similar.

In Chapter 6, Part 1 where the elements of 'le soleil' and 'la mer' occur most, the protagonist narrates the murder from the beginning to the end, from which readers know that the murder takes place on a sunny Sunday on the beach in the suburbs of Algiers. Before the murder happens, Meursault goes to the same beach three times: the first time, with Marie and Raymond's friend Masson when he arrives at Masson's cabin in the morning (this can be inferred from Marie's saying that 'il fallait déjeuner' (ibid., 171)); the second time, with Raymond and Masson after lunch; the third time, with Raymond after 1.30 in the afternoon.²⁴ There is a gradual progression leading to a watershed in Meursault's feelings when he goes to the beach at different times. When Meursault goes to the beach for the first time in the morning, he does not have any uncomfortable feelings but enjoys swimming with Marie in the sea. 'Le soleil', with the warmth of Marie's body, only makes Meursault feel 'un peu endormi' (ibid.). Rather than dazzling him, at this time, the sun, for Meursault, implies a hint of pleasantness when he basks in the sunlight on the beach (170). The gentleness of the sun is evoked by the image of its drawing the sea water: 'Au large,

²⁴ The third time must be after 1.30 in the afternoon, because when Masson takes the injured Raymond to the cabin after the second walk on the beach, it is 'Vers 1 heure et demie' (*L'Étranger*, 1942: I, 173). After then, Meursault no longer mentions the specific time when he goes to the beach the third and fourth time.

nous avons fait la planche et sur mon visage tourné vers le ciel le soleil écartait les derniers voiles d'eau qui me coulaient dans la bouche' (ibid.).

However, with the rising height and temperature of the sunshine, Meursault is in an increasingly uncomfortable state. When Meursault goes to the beach for the second time, the sunlight is almost vertical above the sea from which the glare sears Meursault's eyes: 'Le soleil tombait presque d'aplomb sur le sable et son éclat sur la mer était insoutenable' (ibid., 171). Judging from the sun's angle, the time should be just about '(le) midi'. At this moment, he begins to have difficulty in thinking: 'Je ne *pensais* à rien parce que j'étais à moitié endormi par ce soleil sur ma tête nue' (172, my italics). Then, when he accompanies Raymond to stroll on the beach for the third time, the sunshine is overwhelming for Meursault and thudding in his head (173-174). Not only can he not think properly, but he even makes a false assumption: 'J'ai eu l'impression que Raymond savait où il allait, mais c'était sans doute faux' (173). Seen against the background of these two occasions, the effects of the sun on his senses indeed resemble what Meursault felt on the day of his mother's funeral. A more important thing to bear in mind is Meursault's difficulty in processing thought because of the sun and the heat on the beach, as was also the case at his mother's funeral. It seems that the protagonist entrusts himself entirely to his body and his senses.

If Meursault imputes the murder to the sun, I would like to suggest that it is his

physical awareness dominated by the sun that drives him to shoot the Arab. When Meursault goes back to the cabin with Raymond after their walk on the beach, the vertical sunshine is getting so unbearable for him that to stay immobile on the stairs of the cabin or to make a move does not make any difference (ibid., 174). At this point, a common sense view would be that his best choice is to stay in the cabin where one can escape from the sunshine, whereas for Meursault, it is impossible because he cannot make the effort needed to go up the stairs of the cabin and deal with the women who have shown strong reactions on hearing the men's conflict with the Arabs on the beach (ibid.). This corresponds to Meursault's inability to think properly, as I mentioned above, and to react rationally to the situation. Camus's comment on Meursault as a man who is 'amoureux du soleil qui ne laisse pas d'ombres' (*L'Étranger*, 1962: I, 215) can helpfully be recalled here. For the writer, Meursault cannot voluntarily escape the sun because he loves the sunshine, especially the sunlight which does not leave any shadows at noon. Now that Meursault is longing to escape from the sunshine and excludes the possibility of staying in the cabin, the second choice for him is to look for other shade. However, the most puzzling point is that Meursault chooses to go alone to the beach, a place where the sunshine is undoubtedly vertical and more importantly, without any shade. If Meursault cannot choose whether or not to go to the beach the first three times, because of being in the company of others, it is right this time that he can decide on

his own. Nevertheless, as demonstrated before, Meursault, who is a man subject to his senses rather than making decisions rationally, is not able, at this time, with his 'tête retentissante de soleil' (I, 174), to reason. It is also this time that Meursault goes to the beach on the same day for the fourth time and commits the murder. Once Meursault steps on the beach, with his own increasing discomfort, things which follow are out of his control and dominated by 'le soleil'. It is also in the five paragraphs²⁵ that the elements related to 'le soleil' and 'la mer' show up more frequently than before.²⁶ In the course of Meursault's walk, the sun first appears as an obstruction to his progress (ibid.). Then when he sees that Raymond's attacker – the Arab – is lying in the shade behind a rock, he longs, on the one hand, for the shade because of his need to escape the sun, and on the other hand, must avoid approaching the shade and also the attacker. However, instead of hindering Meursault's mobility, the sun at this moment presses him toward the rock and, moreover, reminds the hero of the similar heat and feelings on the day of his mother's funeral (175). This leads him to experience similar sensations – submission to his senses and inability to think – as he underwent at his mother's funeral. Afterwards, with Meursault's advance towards the Arab urged by the sun, the Arab

²⁵ The beginning of the five paragraphs is 'C'était le même éclatement rouge' (*L'Étranger*, 1942: I, 174), while the end is 'Et c'était comme quatre coups brefs que je frappais sur la porte du malheur' (176), which also ends the first part of the novel.

²⁶ According to my count, the elements related to 'le soleil' and 'la mer' appear in the last five paragraphs concerning Meursault's fourth walk on the beach 15 times (from No.51 to No. 65 in Appendix 1), while the number of occurrences during the first three walks on the beach is 8 times (from No.30 to No. 37 in Appendix 1), 5 times (from No.38 to No. 42 in Appendix 1) and 6 times (from No.44 to No. 49 in Appendix 1) respectively. For the details, see Appendix 1.

draws the knife from whose blade the sunlight glares (ibid.). Next, the shaft of light, through beads of sweat, covers Meursault's eyelids and dims his vision; and then again, the reflection from the glare of the blade painfully probes Meursault's eyes, making him feel that everything around him is spinning and that fire seems to rain out of the sky:

Au même instant, la sueur amassée dans mes sourcils a coulé d'un coup sur les paupières et les a recouvertes d'un voile tiède et épais. Mes yeux étaient aveuglés derrière ce rideau de larmes et de sel. Je ne sentais plus que les cymbales du soleil sur mon front et, indistinctement, le glaive éclatant jailli du couteau toujours en face de moi. Cette épée brûlante rongait mes cils et fouillait mes yeux douloureux. C'est alors que tout a vacillé. La mer a charrié un souffle épais et ardent. Il m'a semblé que le ciel s'ouvrait sur toute son étendue pour laisser pleuvoir du feu. Tout mon être s'est tendu et j'ai crispé ma main sur le revolver. La gâchette a cédé, j'ai touché le ventre poli de la crosse et c'est là, dans le bruit à la fois sec et assourdissant que tout a commencé (175-176).

Finally, Meursault fires the four shots which are stimulated by the scorching hot and stabbing pains of his eyes. It is also at this time (in his narrative) that Meursault understands 'qu'[il avait] détruit l'équilibre du jour'(176). Even though he has destroyed the balance of the day, the protagonist's awareness of this disruption connects with the idea of a Mediterranean man's knowledge of his limits. Considering that Meursault is at the moment controlled by the excessive midday sun, its intensity is so great that he hardly has opportunity to pursue 'la mesure', after all he is a man acting upon his senses rather than his rational thinking. In addition, it can be seen that during the whole process of the murder, Meursault acts passively

whereas the sun and his physical awareness totally dominate him. He can neither decide rationally, nor can he think. The fact is – just as he admits to his lawyer when he is kept in the prison in Chapter 1, Part 2, that he is, by nature, always influenced by his physical condition (178). An important point that needs to be stressed here is that Meursault seems to have a new awareness of his way of living. For example, he is never as conscious of being easily controlled by his senses in Part 1 as he is in Part 2. This transition, from a state of innocence to a state of full awareness, takes place immediately after his first shot at the Arab: ‘J’ai *compris* que j’avais détruit l’équilibre du jour, le silence exceptionnel d’une plage où j’avais été heureux’ (176, my italics). The word ‘comprendre’ in French indicates a cognitive process, which means that Meursault here is no longer unconscious of his condition. Nevertheless, this change does not imply that Meursault undergoes transformation or sublimation in Part 2. He does not repudiate his former state of being at all. Meursault’s awareness of his senses even continues up to the last moment in the cell before his sentence is to be carried out:

[...] je me suis réveillé avec des étoiles sur le visage. Des bruits de campagne montaient jusqu’à moi. Des odeurs de nuit, de terre et de sel rafraîchissaient mes tempes. La merveilleuse paix de cet été endormi entrainait en moi comme une marée (212).

This passage connected with ‘la mer’, on the last page of *L’Étranger*, reveals to us the moment when Meursault smells the tide of summer odours blown towards him and feels his immersion in the Mediterranean through his sensuous feelings: the sight

of the stars, the smells of night, earth and sea water. This sense of immersion signifies that he can make the best of the joy of existence even until his last moment. The hero has now become fully aware of his state of being and feels vindicated: 'J'ai senti que j'avais été heureux, et que je l'étais encore' (213). This can be seen as an acknowledgement of his life, or, if our analysis of the key ideas of the Mediterranean is remembered, as his embracing of 'this-worldly life'. This is what we will bear in mind when examining the text further.

A Mediterranean Man Embracing 'This-worldly Life' and Refusing Doctrines

Here I examine to what extent Meursault can be seen as embodying Camus's idea of the Mediterranean man embracing 'this-worldly life'. The closely related idea of the refusal of excessive reason - or refusal of doctrines - and the way it is expressed in the novel will also be considered, first in Part 1 of the novel, then in Part 2.

Meursault is a character in a fiction, not a spokesman devised for a philosophical discussion, so we will need to discuss how what Meursault refuses can be understood in terms of doctrines, which are systems of beliefs or a body of instructions, or taught principles, based on man's ability to reason.

My analysis of Meursault as a man dominated by his senses in the previous

section already implied his love of ‘this-worldly life’ and his refusal of doctrines. In Part 1, this man reacts only to his senses, which tend to incapacitate him to think. The fact that his only concerns lie in the things he can feel attests to his love of ‘this-worldly life’, while his frequent difficulty in processing thought means that his ability to reason, and therefore to behave rationally, is impaired.

Varied examples can help us to demonstrate further these two dimensions. As Doubrovsky (1960, 91) comments, the hero is sensitive only to the present, thus he almost suddenly feels love for Marie when swimming with her in warm water. When they finish dressing after swimming, Meursault’s desire is aroused by Marie’s sparkling eyes. Thus he is almost impatient to hurry home with Marie: ‘Je l’ai tenue contre moi et nous avons été pressés de trouver un autobus, de rentrer, d’aller chez moi et de nous jeter sur mon lit’ (*L’Étranger*: I, 161). Subsequently, after the night Marie stays with him, when Marie wears one of his pyjama suits with the sleeves rolled up and is amused by being told Salamano’s story, Meursault once again surrenders to his senses at that time: ‘Quand elle a ri, j’ai eu encore envie d’elle’ (ibid.). This kind of sensitivity to the present itself highlights Meursault’s love of physical, immediate pleasures. Moreover, when asked by Marie whether he loves her, he replies that ‘cela ne voulait rien dire’ (ibid.). For Meursault, the only thing that matters and he cares about is the present, or to be more specific, his present sensations. Thus, the most important aspect between him and Marie is their

enjoyment of 'this-worldly life' at a specific moment, instead of some empty questions divorcing him from this context. For the same reason, the question of whether to marry Marie or not, for him, 'ne signifiait rien' (165). A similar answer can be also found in his talk with his employer on the possibility of being transferred to the Paris branch. Meursault answers with 'cela était sans importance réelle', which undoubtedly displeases his employer (ibid.). Whereas, on the one hand, questions regarding love, marriage and career - which are of great importance and are part of ordinary people's belief systems, but for Meursault, mean nothing - trifles, such as the wet roller towel in the office's bathroom, can bother him unduly. He even brings this to his employer's notice, though his boss deems it a mere detail of no importance (155). The explanation for the differences of attitude, between Meursault and ordinary people, such as his employer, is his sensitivity only to the present and his refusal even to consider the possibility of a meaning. That is also why Marie describes Meursault as 'bizarre' (165).

Concerning Meursault's refusal of doctrines, Hunwick (1993, 173) remarks that Meursault neither presents nor represents any doctrine. Hunwick is right that Meursault does not present any doctrine, whether in a state of being dominated by his senses, which incapacitates him to think, or in his daily life on a more ordinary occasion. Meursault's sensitivity to the present prevents him from considering choices or decisions he might make, as is demonstrated by his attitude towards

marriage and career. These can be considered as forms of doctrine that he rejects. More examples can be given, such as in the conversation between the hero and Raymond. When asked by Raymond to show his opinion of the story between the neighbour and the Arab woman, he replies that he '[ne] pensai[t] rien' (*L'Étranger*: I, 159). In addition, when Raymond wants to know whether he thinks that the Arab woman should be punished and what he would do if he were in such a situation, he also 'ne pouvait jamais savoir' (159). It appears that Camus deliberately uses the words 'penser', 'savoir' here to imply that Meursault is not able to think, let alone to follow any doctrines based on man's reason.

Moving from Meursault's account of his daily life in Part 1 to the preparation for his trial and his time in prison in Part 2, we can continue to consider whether Camus's two key Mediterranean ideas are still appropriate to describe the hero's behaviour when he becomes more reflective and articulate.

In Chapter 1, Part 2 when Meursault faces the examining magistrate, we can see that his refusal of doctrines is partly influenced by his physical condition. When the magistrate waves a silver crucifix before Meursault and asks him to believe in God, so that he could obtain forgiveness of Him, the narrator has great difficulty in following the magistrate's remarks because of his physical discomfort, caused by the stifling heat in the office where the interview is taking place, and some big flies buzzing around and settling on his cheeks (*ibid.*, 180). At this point, if we recall our

analysis of 'La Méditerranée' as a culture refusing excessive reason, we remember that Camus, in his lecture, opposes 'La Méditerranée' – which rejects doctrines – to the principle of Rome, and therefore Christianity, which formed 'son unité spirituelle' (*Articles, préfaces, conférences (1937)*: I, 568). We saw that Christianity, in order to evolve and adapt, developed its own metaphysics, which requires man's rational reflection on God and the divine order. Whether God or the divine order, it is clear that they are both beyond the range of Meursault's senses. Thus, Meursault's refusal to believe in God is in itself a denial of doctrines and a recognition of his present life.

A more telling example is in Chapter 5, Part 2 when Meursault receives the chaplain's visit in the prison. Meursault refuses many times to be visited by the chaplain, yet finally they meet. When being asked why he declines to see the chaplain, Meursault replies that he does not believe in God (*L'Étranger*: I, 209). The chaplain asks whether Meursault is really so sure of that, while for the hero questions of this sort – whether or not he believes in God, whether or not he is sure about his choice – are of little importance (*ibid.*). These questions are not only unimportant for Meursault, they absolutely do not interest him at all (*ibid.*). The chaplain even calls on him to see 'un visage divin' from the grey bricks of the prison wall, whereas for Meursault – who cares only about his physical awareness – the only face he could see is one which 'avait la couleur du soleil et la flamme du désir': the face of Marie,

his lover (210). The priest tries to make Meursault, like other Christians, address him as 'Father', which irritates the hero still more because 'Father' is a title used in Catholic protocol but with no biological foundation at all (ibid.).

It is also in the talk between Meursault and the priest that the protagonist's love of 'this-worldly life' can be seen. When asked by the chaplain whether he loves '*cette terre à ce point*' (ibid., 211, my italics), it seems that Meursault does not think it is necessary to answer this question. Then, when required to 'souhaiter une autre vie', Meursault replies to the priest that an afterlife²⁷ 'n'avait pas plus d'importance que de souhaiter d'être riche, de nager très vite ou d'avoir une bouche mieux faite' (ibid.). These are wishes rooted in this world and not in the world to come. Instead of wishing for an afterlife, a man embracing 'this-worldly life' is of course bound to have more practical wishes. Nevertheless, the priest continues to strive for Meursault's acknowledgement of God and interrupts Meursault's reply with another similar question, asking him how he pictures 'cette autre vie' (ibid.). Judging from this, the bone of contention in the talk between Meursault and the priest lies squarely in whether to embrace 'this-worldly life' or to wish for an afterlife – an outcome resulting from believing in a doctrine. At this point, Meursault is incensed and bawls out at the priest that the life he likes to picture is a life in which he can '[se] souvenir

²⁷ The equivalent of the English word 'afterlife' cannot be found in the original text, yet it can be inferred from the priest's speech. Before the priest desires Meursault to 'souhaiter une autre vie' (*L'Étranger*, 1942: I, 211), he has a question for the protagonist: 'Aimez-vous donc *cette terre* à ce point?' (ibid., my italics). Clearly, when the priest indicates 'une autre vie', he means a life contrary to '*cette terre*', thus an 'afterlife'.

de celle-ci' (ibid.). For Meursault, the priest's belief in a doctrine and his concern for an afterlife, but not for an immediate life in this world here and now, make him behave like a corpse because what he values 'ne valait un cheveu de femme' (ibid.). All the certainties the priest holds could not even make him be sure of being alive (ibid.). By contrast, for a man like Meursault, who only reacts to reality which for him means actuality and sensation, what he experiences is a life worth living because now, compared with his unawareness in Part 1, he is fully sure of himself, of his mode of living and even of his death. Even when he is confronted with attempts – first by the examining magistrate, then by the priest – to persuade him to adopt a Christian (doctrinal) view of the world and himself, he does not repudiate his former value of life at all, which can be seen from Meursault's statement:

Mais j'étais sûr de moi, sûr de tout, plus sûr que lui, sûr de ma vie et de cette mort qui allait venir. Oui, je n'avais que cela. Mais du moins, je tenais cette vérité autant qu'elle me tenait. J'avais eu raison, j'avais encore raison, j'avais toujours raison (211-212).

At this point, the true reason for Meursault's death sentence can be understood.

Meursault, a man of the present and of the senses, is judged by people – including the Prosecutor, the Judge and the Chaplain – who all believe in separate doctrines. As Hanna (1956, 231) observes, Meursault is undoubtedly guilty once he is put into the position of being judged by absolute values. If the Prosecutor and the Judge put Meursault on trial, according to Zaretsky (2010, 55), based on 'society's norms', then the Chaplain depends on his Christian doctrines to judge the protagonist. As for the

proceedings of the trial, the Prosecutor and the Judge have to be reminded by Meursault's defence lawyer that the murder of the Arab, and not his indifference to his mother's funeral, is the central part of Meursault's crime (*L'Étranger*: I, 197). In other words, Meursault is in danger of being judged for what he is according to society's norms, rather than for what he has done. This can be seen from the Prosecutor's speech that there exists 'une relation profonde, pathétique, *essentielle*' (ibid., my italics) between Meursault's behaviour at his mother's funeral and his murder of the Arab. As shown in the above section, there indeed exists a similarity – Meursault's submission to his senses and his trouble in thinking – between the two scenes. The similarity rests in the hero's physical condition, but not in some deep and essential connection, as the Prosecutor claims. It seems that Camus deliberately uses the word 'essentielle' here to imply that the Chaplain's belief in Christianity is the same as society's belief in essentialist norms: both are doctrines attempting to make people concerned with the essential things they believe to be the case, rather than with man's existence. In this respect, Meursault can be called an existentialist hero, if existentialism rests, as Sartre (1996, 29) insists, on the principle that 'l'existence précède l'essence'.

If we briefly return to Camus's own views rather than those of his character Meursault, we should add that what the writer rejects is not necessarily the whole of Christianity, as was shown by our discussion of his early interest in religion and his

choice of dissertation topic. Compared with atheistic existentialists, such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Camus appears more attracted to some aspects of Christianity. For example, he discusses the Incarnation of Jesus Christ as a topic concerning man's body in his dissertation. What he rejects – and Meursault rejects too – is the system of beliefs and instructions based too much on man's reason, which is to say, Christian doctrine.

In this chapter, I have analysed how 'La Méditerranée' appears as a region full of 'le soleil' and 'la mer', and also to what degree Meursault can be called a Mediterranean man in the text of *L'Étranger*. From the detailed analysis above, I argue that Meursault is a Mediterranean man acute in his physical senses, embracing 'this-worldly life' and refusing doctrines, all of which corresponds to Camus's key ideas forming his concept of 'La Méditerranée' as analysed in Chapters Two and Three. In addition, as the above analysis of the protagonist as a Mediterranean man suggests, it is the Mediterranean aspects in Meursault that drive him to appear as 'l'étranger' different from the people who judge others according to their doctrines, whether they are religious, social or legal.

CONCLUSION

The preceding analyses of 'La Méditerranée' in Camus's early writings have shown how the concept evolves in different stages of his early works which vary from lyrical poems, biographical essays, notebooks, lectures and an academic dissertation to, finally, the text of a novel. In Chapter One, I presented a critical account of my reading method and my decision to adopt 'La Méditerranée' as the central point of my research. As regards the fact that Camus is commonly read as a French atheistic existentialist, I firstly clarified why an existentialist approach is not used in my thesis by demonstrating the main differences between Camus and the allegedly atheistic existentialists, notably their respective attitudes towards Christianity. Nevertheless, this reading still confirmed that there exists common ground between Camus's refusal of any absolutes and French existentialists' emphasis on existence. Then a review of the history of critical readings relevant to 'La Méditerranée' served as an introduction to the context of this methodology. In particular, I discussed monographs and essays concerned with my approach in two major aspects: one is on the exact relation of 'La Méditerranée' to Ancient Greece; the other is based on a post-colonial context.

In Chapter Two, I gave a detailed analysis of 'La Méditerranée' in Camus's early works from 1933 to August 1936. Drawing on the analysis of his longest poem

'Méditerranée', his Master's thesis, *Métaphysique chrétienne et néoplatonisme*, and *L'Envers et l'endroit*, I argued, in particular, that Camus did not exactly define the concept of 'La Méditerranée' during this period but just equated the Greco-Roman world to the Mediterranean, and he considered 'le midi et la mesure', and the embracing of 'this-worldly life', as the motifs of the Mediterranean world. In addition, I presented a critique of how Camus, as a young man in his twenties during this period, partly relied on Valéry's lectures on the Mediterranean, the poem *Le Cimetière marin* and Grenier's *Les Îles* to give his account of 'La Méditerranée'. Having shown what 'La Méditerranée' meant to Camus at that time, by analysing different genres of his early texts, this chapter additionally assessed his early interests in the beginnings of Christianity and, more importantly, explored in depth the relationship between these interests and his thoughts on the Mediterranean.

Drawing on Camus's early essay 'Sur la musique', Chapter Three firstly explored Nietzsche's influence on Camus in relation to his identification of two Ancient Greeces – one represented by pre-Socratics with their vitalism and the other by post-Socratics with rationalism, based on which Camus defines 'La Méditerranée' more specifically. Camus's criticism of post-Socratics and rationalism led to his rejection of Christianity, fascism and military force in his 1937 lecture titled: 'La Culture indigène. La Nouvelle Culture méditerranéenne'. In opposition to the three cultural aspects which were linked with Ancient Rome and were all based too heavily

on rational thought, Camus expounds on the notion of the Mediterranean as a culture which values life and man's senses, advocates internationalism and knows its limits. Besides, 'La Méditerranée' is also a geographical region abundant in the sunshine and the sea. In this chapter, analysing Nietzsche's influence in detail has allowed us to explain the various strands of Camus's perception of Ancient Greece as it appears in his early works. Furthermore, the assessment of the philosophical intricacies of the relationship between Ancient Greece, early Christianity and rationalism connected with Ancient Rome, has helped to show their importance in the development of Camus's Mediterranean ideas.

Chapter Four went beyond the genres of Camus's early works already discussed in the previous chapters by providing a detailed analysis of Camus's best-known fiction, *L'Étranger*, from the perspective of 'La Méditerranée', both as a region and as a culture. I showed that the story is set in a region full of 'le soleil' and 'la mer'. Then I gave a comprehensive critique of the degree to which Meursault can be seen as a Mediterranean man by demonstrating his acute physical senses, his embracing of 'this-worldly life' as well as his refusal of doctrines, which corresponds to some of Camus's key ideas forming his concept of 'La Méditerranée', as analysed in Chapters Two and Three. Being fully aware that *L'Étranger* belongs to a different genre from the texts used in the previous chapters, the fourth chapter gives way to the text itself, selecting what matches best the Mediterranean ideas analysed so far. This

is the reason why 'le midi et la mesure' are rarely mentioned in my analysis of this text, except for the fact that the murder takes place around noon.

To summarise, this study can be regarded as contributing to knowledge in the field of Camus studies, especially in the studies of Camus's early writings, of course, it also relates to the field of Mediterranean studies, and touches on ancient Greek and Roman studies. As far as Camus studies are concerned, I have purposely avoided the widespread tendency to view Camus as an exemplary representative of French existentialists, yet adopted the perspective of 'La Méditerranée' – a concept developed gradually by the writer himself, but not a pre-established one, in analysing Camus and his early writings. One of the main conclusions to be drawn from this study is that Camus, partly influenced by intellectuals such as Valéry, Grenier and more importantly, Nietzsche, as well as by the rise of nationalism and fascism, develops his concept of 'La Méditerranée' from a primitive one to a more precise, sophisticated one connected with a complex set of issues in the early writings. The evolving concept of 'La Méditerranée' and the problematics presented by Camus's early works can be, in a more positive way, understood as part of a developing mind attuned to the reality of experience. In addition, compared with most studies which view Ancient Greece as a whole in Camus's writings, my investigation into Nietzsche's influence on Camus contributes to a differentiation of the writer's attitudes towards the two Ancient Greeces – pre-Socratic and post-Socratic – with

which the concept of 'La Méditerranée' evolves. I have also considered 'La Méditerranée' in relation to Ancient Rome, a topic which is often ignored by critics who pay more attention to Camus's links with Ancient Greece. Although concentrated on the analysis of 'La Méditerranée' in Camus's early works, this study has also laid the foundation for an examination of 'La Méditerranée' in Camus's later writings. Questions additionally arise here as to whether and how Camus's concept of 'La Méditerranée' – especially his preference for pre-Socratics, his refusal of excessive reason, his concern for man's physical awareness and his emphasis on 'le midi et la mesure' – will develop in the subsequent periods of his writing.

Concerning Mediterranean studies, further research is mainly required in the three overlapping fields of history, contemporary issues and religion, which are also the contexts for further investigation into Camus's works. Considering that the Mediterranean is a region where Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome existed, research in the historical field consists of an examination of questions such as: what kind of legacy the Mediterranean inherits from the two ancient cultures; how, and to what extent, the two cultures shape the region geographically, culturally and politically. Similar questions can also be investigated within the religious field, especially as the Mediterranean is a region where Christianity and Islam have co-existed over the centuries. Additionally, Christian influences on Camus could of course be investigated in a different perspective from that adopted in my thesis, for example

through an analysis of repeated images and motifs concerning Christianity in his work. Contemporary issues in the Mediterranean are involved with the East / West relationship, as Camus mentioned in his 1937 lecture. The question of the relationship between traditionally Christian Europe and the Arab/Muslim world, on a global scale, concerns not only politics but also religion.

At this point, readers are at least entitled to speculate how and to what extent the interpretation of 'La Méditerranée' in Camus's early writings, that has been offered in the present study, is related to his biography and, the European historical and cultural context, as well as to the political situation at that time. Our ambition has been to illuminate the particular contexts in which the writer's works can be situated and to specify what aspects of Camus's concept of 'La Méditerranée' should be taken into account, in order to better understand his other writings.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTION SECTIONS

APPENDIX FOREWORD: CONVENTIONS

In these transcription excerpts, the following conventions are employed:

- All quotations from the text of *L'Étranger* are taken from the Pléiade edition of the *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Gallimard, Vol. I (2006)). All pages references will be to this edition, using I to indicate the volume referred to. In order to keep the transcription excerpts simple and clear, to improve readability, only the details of the volume and the pages will be given in parentheses.
- All the transcription excerpts quoted are listed on the basis of the parts and the chapters of *L'Étranger*. According to the Pléiade edition of *L'Étranger*, the whole novel includes two parts: the first part is comprised of six chapters and the second part includes five chapters.
- The transcription excerpts here are divided into three categories: 1. sentences or paragraphs in which the keywords of 'soleil' and 'mer' can be directly found in my *italics*; 2. sentences or paragraphs describing any scenes, colours, feelings, sorts of light and kinds of smell concerning 'le soleil' and 'la mer'; 3. sentences or paragraphs combining the above two cases. In terms of the second category, the excerpts will be followed by square brackets with my commentary, for example:

J'ai pris l'autobus à deux heures. Il faisait très chaud (I, 141). [A feeling

caused by 'le soleil']

For the third category, the words of 'soleil' and 'mer' are in *italics* in the sentences or paragraphs followed by square brackets with my commentary, for example:

Quand je suis sorti, le jour était complètement levé. Au-dessus des collines qui séparent Marengo de la *mer*, le ciel était plein de rougeurs. Et le vent qui passait au-dessus d'elles apportait ici une odeur de sel (I, 147). [A colour caused by 'le soleil' and a smell brought by 'la mer']

VERBATIM TRANSCRIPTION SECTIONS
ELEMENTS RELATED TO ‘LE SOLEIL’ AND ‘LA MER’ IN
THE TEXT OF *L’ÉTRANGER*

Part One

Chapter One

1. J’ai pris l’autobus à 2 heures. Il faisait très chaud (I, 141). [A feeling caused by ‘le soleil’]
2. Cette hâte, cette course, c’est à cause de tout cela sans doute, ajouté aux cahots, à l’odeur d’essence, à la réverbération de la route et du ciel, que je me suis assoupi (I, 141-142). [A sort of light and a feeling caused by ‘le soleil’]
3. La pièce était pleine d’une belle lumière de fin d’après-midi (I, 144). [A sort of light caused by ‘le soleil’]
4. Quand je suis sorti, le jour était complètement levé. Au-dessus des collines qui séparent Marengo de la *mer*, le ciel était plein de rougeurs. Et le vent qui passait au-dessus d’elles apportait ici une odeur de sel (I, 147). [A colour of the sky caused by ‘le soleil’ and a smell brought by ‘la mer’]
5. Le *soleil* était monté un peu plus dans le ciel: il commençait à chauffer mes pieds (I, 147).
6. Le ciel était déjà plein de *soleil*. Il commençait à peser sur la terre et la chaleur augmentait rapidement. Je ne sais pas pourquoi nous avons attendu assez

- longtemps avant de nous mettre en marche. J'avais chaud sous mes vêtements sombres (I, 149). [A feeling caused by 'le soleil']
7. Aujourd'hui, le *soleil* débordant qui faisait tressaillir le paysage le rendait inhumain et déprimant (I, 149).
8. J'étais surpris de la rapidité avec laquelle le *soleil* montait dans le ciel (I, 149).
9. Autour de moi, c'était toujours la même campagne lumineuse gorgée de *soleil*. L'éclat du ciel était insoutenable (I, 149).
10. À un moment donné, nous sommes passés sur une partie de la route qui avait été récemment refaite. Le *soleil* avait fait éclater le goudron. Les pieds y enfonçaient et laissaient ouverte sa pulpe brillante. Au-dessus de la voiture, le chapeau du cocher, en cuir bouilli, semblait avoir été pétri dans cette boue noire. J'étais un peu perdu entre le ciel bleu et blanc et la monotonie de ces couleurs, noir gluant du goudron ouvert, noir terne des habits, noir laqué de la voiture (I, 149-150). [A visual sense caused by 'le soleil']
11. Tout cela, le *soleil*, l'odeur de cuir et de crottin de la voiture, celle du vernis et celle de l'encens, la fatigue d'une nuit d'insomnie, me troublait le regard et les idées (I, 150).

Chapter Two

12. J'ai pris le tram pour aller à l'établissement de bains du port (I, 151). [A scene set

up beside 'la mer']

13. Il faisait bon et, comme en plaisantant, j'ai laissé aller ma tête en arrière et je l'ai posée sur son ventre. Elle n'a rien dit et je suis resté ainsi. J'avais tout le ciel dans les yeux et il était bleu et doré (I, 151). [A colour of the sky caused by 'le soleil']
14. Quand le *soleil* est devenu trop fort, elle a plongé et je l'ai suivie (I, 151).
15. Alors, je me suis retourné dans mon lit, j'ai cherché dans le traversin l'odeur de sel que les cheveux de Marie y avaient laissée et j'ai dormi jusqu'à dix heures (I, 152). [A smell brought by 'la mer']
16. L'après-midi était beau (I, 152). [A fine weather brought by 'le soleil']

Chapter Three

17. Le bureau donne sur la *mer* et nous avons perdu un moment à regarder les cargos dans le port brûlant de *soleil* (I, 155).
18. Nous étions hors de souffle, le camion sautait sur les pavés inégaux du quai, au milieu de la poussière et du *soleil* (I, 155).

Chapter Four

19. On devinait ses seins durs et le brun du *soleil* lui faisait un visage de fleur (I, 160).
[A brown skin exposed to 'le soleil']

20. Nous avons pris un autobus et nous sommes allés à quelques kilomètres d'Alger, sur une plage resserrée entre des rochers et bordée de roseaux du côté de la terre (I, 160). [A scene set up beside 'la mer']
21. Le *soleil* de 4 heures n'était pas trop chaud, mais l'eau était tiède, avec de petites vagues longues et paresseuses (I, 160).
22. Mais au bout de quelque temps, j'avais la bouche brûlée par l'amertume du sel (I, 160). [A feeling caused by the water of 'la mer']

Chapter Five

23. Il m'a dit qu'un de ses amis (il lui avait parlé de moi) m'invitait à passer la journée de dimanche dans son cabanon, près d'Alger (I, 164). [A scene set up beside 'la mer']

Chapter Six

24. Dans la rue, à cause de ma fatigue et aussi parce que nous n'avions pas ouvert les persiennes, le jour, déjà tout plein de *soleil*, m'a frappé comme une gifle (I, 168).
[A feeling caused by 'le soleil']
25. La plage n'est pas loin de l'arrêt d'autobus. Mais il a fallu traverser un petit plateau qui domine la *mer* et qui dévale ensuite vers la plage (I, 169).
26. Avant d'arriver au bord du plateau, on pouvait voir déjà la *mer* immobile et plus

- loin un cap somnolent et massif dans l'eau claire (I, 169).
27. Et nous avons vu, très loin, un petit chalutier qui avançait, imperceptiblement, sur la *mer* éclatante (I, 169).
28. De la pente qui descendait vers la *mer* nous avons vu qu'il y avait déjà quelques baigneurs (I, 169).
29. L'ami de Raymond habitait un petit cabanon de bois à l'extrémité de la plage. La maison était adossée à des rochers et les pilotis qui la soutenaient sur le devant baignaient déjà dans l'eau (I, 169-170). [A scene set up beside 'la mer']
30. Nous sommes descendus tous les trois et Marie s'est immédiatement jetée dans l'eau (I, 170). [A scene set up beside 'la mer']
31. Puis je n'ai plus fait attention à ce tic parce que j'étais occupé à éprouver que le *soleil* me faisait du bien (I, 170).
32. J'ai retardé encore l'envie que j'avais de l'eau, mais j'ai fini par dire à Masson: « On y va? » J'ai plongé. Lui est entré dans l'eau doucement et s'est jeté quand il a perdu pied (I, 170). [A scene set up beside 'la mer']
33. L'eau était froide et j'étais content de nager (I, 170). [A feeling caused by the water of 'la mer']
34. Au large, nous avons fait la planche et sur mon visage tourné vers le ciel le *soleil* écartait les derniers voiles d'eau qui me coulaient dans la bouche (I, 170).
35. Nous avons vu que Masson regagnait la plage pour s'étendre au *soleil* (I, 170).

36. Elle s'est allongée flanc à flanc avec moi et les deux chaleurs de son corps et du *soleil* m'ont un peu endormi (I, 171). [A feeling partly caused by 'le soleil']
37. « Viens dans l'eau », m'a-t-elle dit. Nous avons couru pour nous étaler dans les premières petites vagues (I, 171). [A scene set up beside and in 'la mer']
38. Le *soleil* tombait presque d'aplomb sur le sable et son éclat sur la *mer* était insoutenable. Il n'y avait plus personne sur la plage (I, 171).
39. Dans les cabanons qui bordaient le plateau et qui surplombaient la *mer*, on entendait des bruits d'assiettes et de couverts (I, 171).
40. Nous nous sommes dirigés vers l'eau et nous avons longé la *mer* (I, 171).
41. Quelquefois, une petite vague plus longue que l'autre venait mouiller nos souliers de toile. Je ne pensais à rien parce que j'étais à moitié endormi par ce *soleil* sur ma tête nue (I, 172). [A feeling caused by 'le soleil']
42. Quand ils ont vu qu'ils avaient assez de champ, ils se sont enfuis très vite, pendant que nous restions cloués sous le *soleil* et que Raymond tenait serré son bras dégouttant de sang (I, 172).
43. J'ai fini par me taire et j'ai fumé en regardant la *mer* (I, 173).
44. Nous avons marché longtemps sur la plage. Le *soleil* était maintenant écrasant. Il se brisait en morceaux sur le sable et sur la *mer* (I, 173).
45. Tout au bout de la plage, nous sommes arrivés enfin à une petite source qui coulait dans le sable, derrière un gros rocher (I, 173). [A scene set up beside 'la

mer']

46. Pendant tout ce temps, il n'y a plus eu que le *soleil* et ce silence, avec le petit bruit de la source et les trois notes (I, 173).
47. On a encore entendu le petit bruit d'eau et de flûte au coeur du silence et de la chaleur (I, 173). [A feeling caused by 'le soleil']
48. Quand Raymond m'a donné son revolver, le *soleil* a glissé dessus (I, 174).
49. Nous nous regardions sans baisser les yeux et tout s'arrêtait ici entre la *mer*, le sable et le *soleil*, le double silence de la flûte et de l'eau (I, 174).
50. Je l'ai accompagné jusqu'au cabanon et, pendant qu'il gravissait l'escalier de bois, je suis resté devant la première marche, la tête retentissante de *soleil*, découragé devant l'effort qu'il fallait faire pour monter l'étage de bois et aborder encore les femmes. Mais la chaleur était telle qu'il m'était pénible aussi de rester immobile sous la pluie aveuglante qui tombait du ciel. Rester ici ou partir, cela revenait au même. Au bout d'un moment, je suis retourné vers la plage et je me suis mis à marcher (I, 174). [A scene set up beside 'la mer' and an action partly driven by 'le soleil']
51. C'était le même éclatement rouge. Sur le sable, la *mer* haletait de toute la respiration rapide et étouffée de ses petites vagues (I, 174). [A colour caused by 'le soleil']
52. Je marchais lentement vers les rochers et je sentais mon front se gonfler sous le

soleil. Toute cette chaleur s'appuyait sur moi et s'opposait à mon avance (I, 174).

[A feeling caused by 'le soleil']

53. Et chaque fois que je sentais son grand souffle chaud sur mon visage, je serrais les dents, je fermais les poings dans les poches de mon pantalon, je me tendais tout entier pour triompher du *soleil* et de cette ivresse opaque qu'il me déversait.

À chaque épée de lumière jaillie du sable, d'un coquillage blanchi ou d'un débris de verre, mes mâchoires se crispaient (I, 174). [A scene set up beside 'la mer', a feeling and a sort of light caused by 'le soleil']

54. Je voyais de loin la petite masse sombre du rocher entourée d'un halo aveuglant par la lumière et la poussière de *mer*. Je pensais à la source fraîche derrière le rocher. J'avais envie de retrouver le murmure de son eau, envie de fuir le *soleil*, l'effort et les pleurs de femme, envie enfin de retrouver l'ombre et son repos (I, 174-175). [A scene set up beside 'la mer' and a feeling caused by 'le soleil']

55. Il reposait sur le dos, les mains sous la nuque, le front dans les ombres du rocher, tout le corps au *soleil*. Son bleu de chauffe fumait dans la chaleur (I, 175).

56. Mais le plus souvent, son image dansait devant mes yeux, dans l'air enflammé. Le bruit des vagues était encore plus paresseux, plus étale qu'à midi. C'était le même *soleil*, la même lumière sur le même sable qui se prolongeait ici. Il y avait déjà deux heures que la journée n'avancait plus, deux heures qu'elle avait jeté l'ancre dans un *océan* de métal bouillant (I, 175). [A scene set up beside 'la mer',

a sort of light and a feeling caused by 'le soleil']

57. Mais toute une plage vibrante de *soleil* se pressait derrière moi (I, 175).
58. La brûlure du *soleil* gagnait mes joues et j'ai senti des gouttes de sueur s'amasser dans mes sourcils (I, 175).
59. C'était le même *soleil* que le jour où j'avais enterré maman et, comme alors, le front surtout me faisait mal et toutes ses veines battaient ensemble sous la peau (I, 175).
60. À cause de cette brûlure que je ne pouvais plus supporter, j'ai fait un mouvement en avant. Je savais que c'était stupide, que je ne me débarrasserais pas du *soleil* en me déplaçant d'un pas (I, 175). [An action driven by 'le soleil']
61. Et cette fois, sans se soulever, l'Arabe a tiré son couteau qu'il m'a présenté dans le *soleil*. La lumière a giclé sur l'acier et c'était comme une longue lame étincelante qui m'atteignait au front (I, 175). [A sort of light caused by 'le soleil']
62. Je ne sentais plus que les cymbales du *soleil* sur mon front et, indistinctement, le glaive éclatant jailli du couteau toujours en face de moi. Cette épée brûlante rongait mes cils et fouillait mes yeux douloureux. C'est alors que tout a vacillé (I, 175-176). [A scene set up beside 'la mer', a sort of light and a feeling caused by 'le soleil']
63. La *mer* a charrié un souffle épais et ardent. Il m'a semblé que le ciel s'ouvrait sur

toute son étendue pour laisser pleuvoir du feu (I, 176). [A scene set up beside 'la mer', a feeling caused by 'le soleil']

64. J'ai secoué la sueur et le *soleil* (I, 176).

65. J'ai compris que j'avais détruit l'équilibre du jour, le silence exceptionnel d'une plage où j'avais été heureux (I, 176). [A scene set up beside 'la mer']

Part Two

Chapter One

66. Il était 2 heures de l'après-midi et cette fois, son bureau était plein d'une lumière à peine tamisée par un rideau de voile. Il faisait très chaud (I, 179). [A sort of light and a feeling caused by 'le soleil']

67. Je lui ai retracé ce que déjà je lui avais raconté: Raymond, la plage, le bain, la querelle, encore la plage, la petite source, le *soleil* et les cinq coups de revolver (I, 179).

68. Une fois de plus, j'ai revu la plage rouge et j'ai senti sur mon front la brûlure du *soleil* (I, 180).

69. A vrai dire, je l'avais très mal suivi dans son raisonnement, d'abord parce que j'avais chaud et qu'il y avait dans son cabinet de grosses mouches qui se posaient sur ma figure, et aussi parce qu'il me faisait un peu peur (I, 180). [A feeling caused by 'le soleil']

Chapter Two

70. La prison était tout en haut de la ville et, par une petite fenêtre, je pouvais voir la *mer* (I, 183).
71. Je suis entré dans une très grande salle éclairée par une vaste baie (I, 183). [A sort of light caused by 'le soleil']
72. Quand je suis entré, le bruit des voix qui rebondissaient contre les grands murs nus de la salle, la lumière crue qui coulait du ciel sur les vitres et rejaillissait dans la salle, me causèrent une sorte d'étourdissement (I, 183). [A sort of light and a feeling caused by 'le soleil']
73. Dehors la lumière a semblé se gonfler contre la baie (I, 184). [A sort of light caused by 'le soleil']
74. Par exemple, l'envie me prenait d'être sur une plage et de descendre vers la *mer*.
À imaginer le bruit des premières vagues sous la plante de mes pieds, l'entrée du corps dans l'eau et la délivrance que j'y trouvais, je sentais tout d'un coup combien les murs de ma prison étaient rapprochés (I, 185). [A kind of imagination toward 'la mer']

Chapter Three

75. Les débats se sont ouverts avec, au-dehors, tout le plein du *soleil* (I, 188).
76. Malgré les stores, le *soleil* s'infiltrait par endroits et l'air était déjà étouffant (I,

189).

Chapter Four

77. Mais il a été beaucoup plus long que lorsqu’il parlait de mon crime, si long même que, finalement, je n’ai plus senti que la chaleur de cette matinée (I, 200). [A feeling caused by ‘le soleil’]

78. J’ai dit rapidement, en mêlant un peu les mots et en me rendant compte de mon ridicule, que c’était à cause du *soleil* (I, 201).

Chapter Five

79. Mais ce visage avait la couleur du *soleil* et la flamme du désir: c’était celui de Marie (I, 210).

80. Des odeurs de nuit, de terre et de sel rafraîchissaient mes tempes. La merveilleuse paix de cet été endormi entrainait en moi comme une marée (I, 212). [A smell brought by ‘la mer’]

**APPENDIX 2: THE COVERS USED FOR THE NEW
EDITION OF CAMUS'S WORKS BY PENGUIN BOOKS**

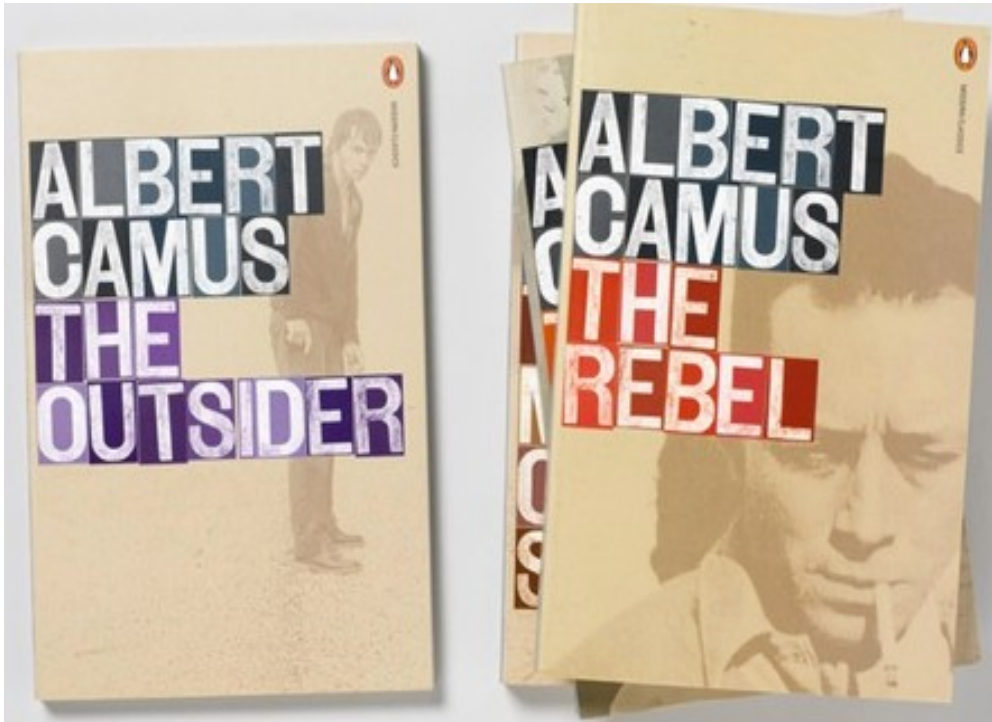


Figure 1: The covers of the most recent Penguin Camus series (Sinclair, 2013a). This series were published in 2000.

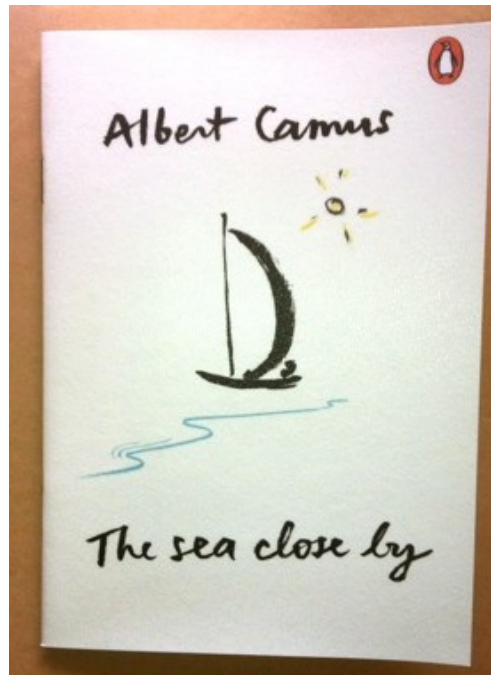


Figure 2: The cover of *The Sea Close By*. It is a booklet containing Camus's two essays: 'The Sea Close By'¹ and 'Summer in Algiers'² (Sinclair, 2013a). This book was published on August 1, 2013, and unofficially inaugurated Penguin Classics's relaunch of Camus's works for his centenary in 2013 (Sinclair, 2013a).

¹ 'The Sea Close By' ('La Mer au plus près (*Journal de bord*)' (*L'Été*, 1954: III, 616-623)) is an essay included in Camus's collection of essays *L'Été*.

² 'Summer in Algiers' ('L'Été à Alger' (*Noces*, 1959: I, 117-127)) is an essay included in Camus's collection of essays *Noces*. Actually, 'Summer in Algiers' was originally published earlier than 'The Sea Close By'.

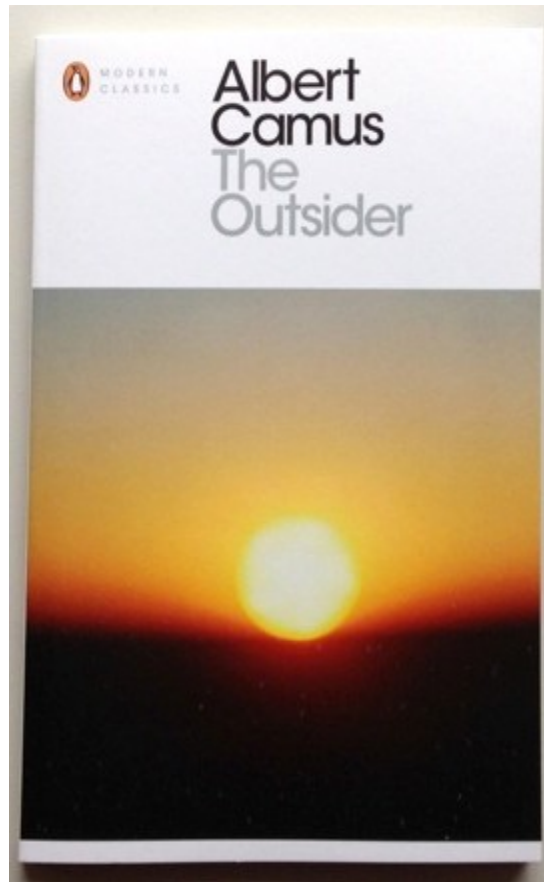


Figure 3: The new cover of *The Outsider* which was published on October 31, 2013 by Penguin Modern Classics. This cover is a photograph by Rankin (Sinclair, 2013b).³

³ According to my research, if I were Rankin, instead of choosing a photo of the sea in the early morning or at dusk, I would like to use a photo of the sea view in the midday sun for the cover of *The Outsider*. The reason is that at the scenes of Meursault's mother's funeral, of his murder of the Arab and of his meeting with the examining magistrate (No.1 and No. 66 in Appendix 1), the sunshine 'à 2 heures' can be found in the text. Though Camus does not specifically indicate the exact time when Meursault shoots the Arab, it is 'Vers 1 heure et demie' (*L'Étranger*, 1942: I, 173) when Masson takes Raymond back to the cabin from the doctor's after their fight with the Arabs. Although time passes when Meursault commits the murder, his feeling of the sunshine stays the same as what he senses during his walk with Raymond and Masson after their lunch because 'Il y avait déjà deux heures que la journée n'avancait plus' (I, 175).