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**An Existential Theoretical Approach to
*Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse-Five***

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Dedication

From my heart to you my PARENTS

CHEBLI MABROUK and KHIKHI ZOUBIDA

*I would like to thank my **FATHER** and my **MOTHER** for being supporting to me and for being patient with me. I want to tell that you daughter reached her aim and you finally see your dream to have a daughter with a master degree became true. Special thanks for you my eyes and my love.*

*Special thanks to my friends **Messouda, Fatima, Hayat, Laila and Yacine** and thanks to my brothers **Abdou, Midou, Ali and Mahmoud** and to you my sisters **Imane and Saadia** for being supporting for me . Thanks to all my friends and everyone care about me*

Chebli

Aicha

To my Father BABI BOUTKHIL and my Mother BOUBLAL KHADRA and my Husband RACHID BENSEGHIER to my soul my Son ISLAM.

My deepest thanks to **My Family; My brothers and My sisters** Last but not least I would like to thank **My friends** for their supports.

Nour

Imane Babi

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims to analyze Kurt Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse-Five from an existential perspective in order to show the impact of Existentialism on literature. It aims also to feature the role of repetition as a literary device in demonstrating themes of existentialism in Slaughterhouse-Five. This study is based on the analysis of the major themes of the novel, the absurd, death and time. Slaughterhouse-Five is challengeable novel for students because of the use of multiple existential views by the writer. In order to analyze the corpus under the study we have adopted the philosophy of Albert Camus to analyze the theme of the absurd and the philosophy of Heidegger to analyze the theme of death and A-B theories of time to analyze theme of time. This paper is divided into three chapters. The first one is allotted to existentialism philosophy, the second one is devoted to the contextual view and criticism of the novel Slaughterhouse-Five, the third one is specified to the investigation of the themes of existentialism in the corpus under the study.

Keywords: *Existentialism, death, the absurd, time*

List of Abbreviations

SF : Slaughterhouse-Five

POW: Prisoner of war

List of tables

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Five.....page 40*

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General Introduction

1-Background of the study

By the end of WWII people in America thought that was the end of the sufferance and the beginning of new era. Nonetheless, its painful result started to appear on the individuals. They became anxious, alienated, paranoid and schizophrenic. In addition, America witnessed what is the so-called the lost of identity. A lot of questions about the existence have been raised during this period but no satisfactory answers found until the translation of Kierkegaard's works into English.

The Americans start to know the philosophy that cares about human conditions and the existence of the individual; they became more interested about it but the great interest was when Sartre named it Existentialism. Actually, its influence was not only on people but on their culture and their beliefs.

The reception of Existentialism in America is demonstrated in the literary productions; many writers produced literary works that reflect their attitudes toward existentialism and defend their issues. Ralf Ellison is a good example about what is discussed so far; his novel The Invisible Man is an existential work that holds the issue of racism and Saul Bellow's Dangling Man also is an existential novel in which the writer tackles the issue of the Jewish man in America. Both novels depict the theme of alienation which is an existential theme but the subjects are different.

Kurt Vonnegut's Slaughterhouse-Five is an existential work holds more than one issue. It is an anti war book; nevertheless, it tackles religious issues and the negatives of technology. The genre of Slaughterhouse-Five is science fiction. Furthermore, the writer used satire in order to express his view toward these issues. This novel is controversial; a lot of critics confessed of its complexity as they shed the light on the creativity of the writer in depicting various crucial issues differently from other writer. Nonetheless, Slaughterhouse-Five is an existential work but there is no particular existential philosophical school that show is so.

2- The aims of the study

The current study tackles the issue of multiple existential views in the postmodern novel Slaughter house-Five. This study aims to show the impact of existentialism on the novel. It aims also to feature the role of repetition as a literary device in demonstrating themes of existentialism in Slaughterhouse-Five.

3-The significance of the study

This study is important for students of literature because, it helps them to recognize the style of the writer. In addition, it is significant for students to show them how particular movement can affect literature particularly the style of the writer.

4-Research problem

Kurt Vonnegut has a special touch in tackling the themes of existentialism. He has the ability to collect different philosophical views in this work as he added his own view toward the subject of existence. This issue made the application of existentialism philosophy on the corpus Slaughter house-Five challengeable for students of literature. This paper tends to feature the different philosophical views that Vonnegut used in his novel Slaughter house-Five. In order to prove that the novel contains more than one existential philosophy the following questions are raised:

-How does Vonnegut depict the themes of existentialism in the novel Slaughterhouse-Five?

-Which literary device did he use to deal with the themes of existentialism in the novel?

5-Hypotheses

In order to conduct this paper the following hypotheses are formulated:

-Kurt Vonnegut used multiple existential points of view in this novel.

-The author relied on repetition to represent the themes of existentialism in his novel Slaughter house-Five

6- Research Methodology

This study is based on the deep analysis of the dominant themes related to existentialism philosophy precisely the philosophy of Heidegger and Camus in addition to A and B theories of time. Hence, we adopt descriptive analytical study which is a qualitative method.

7-The Structure of the Dissertation

This paper is divided into three chapters. The first one is allotted to existentialism philosophy; it provides a brief history of existentialism philosophy and the main existentialists philosophers also, the first chapter signifies the impact of this philosophy on literature. The second one is devoted to the contextual view and criticism of the novel Slaughterhouse-Five; the second chapter is a presentation of the main characteristics of the novel. In addition, it presents detailed information about the style of the writer and the main themes in the novel with illustrations. The third one is specified to the investigation of the themes of existentialism in the corpus under the study. Then, we analyze and interpret the representative instances from the novel in accordance to the philosophies that we adopted to conduct the research and we investigate repetition in the entire corpus in order to prove our hypotheses.

*Chapter One: Historical Background of
Existentialism Philosophy*

Introduction

This chapter provides a deep explanation about Existentialism philosophy and its main ideas; and gives a glance about the central leaders of Existentialism. Furthermore, it discusses the essential existential themes with examples; then it gives a brief analysis to the essential works in the existential literature and in existential American literature. Also this chapter explains the impact of existentialism in American society and in American literature. In general this chapter emphasise more on the history of existentialism on literature.

1-Definition of Existentialism

It is defined by the French philosopher and the writer Jean-Paul Sartre as [...] a doctrine which makes human life possible and, in addition, declares that every truth and every action implies a human subjectivity. (Sartre32)

It is also the most controversial philosophy in the twenties century. Existentialism is a philosophy of contemplation in human being; his actions, his feelings and decisions. In other word, it is concerned with human being as a whole. The existentialists dealt with the existence of man in a way no body did before them through a series of themes that highlight different sides of human life.

Existentialism is a philosophical approach that rejects the idea that the universe offers any clues about how humanity should live. A simplified understanding of this thought system can be found in Jean-Paul Sartre's often-repeated dictum "Existence precedes essence." What this means is that the identity of any one person— their essence—cannot be found by examining what other people are like, but only in what that particular person has done. Because no one can claim that his or her actions are "caused" by anyone else. (Milne222)

1.2- Themes of Existentialism

The Existentialism philosophy tackles various themes related to the existence anthology and the individual these are the main themes; Atheism, Alienation, Anxiety, The Absurd, Responsibility/ Freedom.

1.2.1- Atheism: *among the principles of existentialism the denial of God existence and the rejection of the idea of God determine human actions and his fate and his destiny, rather, the French philosopher Sartre assumed that man is responsible for his actions and controls his*

destiny; this idea can be understood from his dictum "Existence precedes the essence". Fredric Nietzsche is another existentialist who denied the existence of God when he said his famous phrase "God is dead". The sense of atheism could be touched in some literary works such as *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett.

1.2.2-Alienation: Alienation was considered by many intellectuals throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century to increasingly be the condition of civilized humans. It is the feeling of isolation, of not belonging, of standing alone. Since the advent of the Industrial Age, social philosophers such as Karl Marx have shown how people are alienated from the work that they do, with the connection severed by the economic and industrial system. Psychologists have shown alienation as a rift between the conscious and unconscious aspects of self. Theologians have shown humanity as becoming increasingly alienated from reality as the importance of God diminished. (Milne230)

Though the intellectuals and specialists did not agree upon one meaning of alienation but it remains a feeling related to the individual in his society. Writers on the other hand dealt with the subject of alienation in their fictions. They diverse in the way they represent this theme for instance, Franz Kafka in his famous work *The metamorphosis* represents the theme of alienation in imaginative way when the hero in the story Gregor Samsa transformed into a giant insect and he became isolated by his family in his room until he died. Salinger also dealt with the theme of alienation in his novel *The Catcher in the Rye*. Ralfe Ellison is another writer who has depicted the theme of alienation in his novel *The Invisible Man* the hero in the novel *The Invisible Man* narrates his experience as an alienated black man faces the problem of racism in the American society.

1.2.3-Anxiety: man has been created anxious and something belongs to his nature as a conscious human responsible for what he is doing. Anxiety is a natural feeling but, after World War I and II this feeling grew to the worst because the horrific incidence at that time which is something pushed the intellectuals to think and debate about it as a serious subject. The existentialists have their own opinion about anxiety in human life. Sartre claimed that "The man who involves himself and who realizes that he is not only the person he chooses to be , but a lawmaker who is, at the time, choosing all mankind as well as himself, cannot help escape the feeling of his total and deep responsibility"(Sartre38)

1.2.4-The absurd: *it is the act of questioning whether life is worth to be lived and it means that life is meaningless. Death is the main source of the absurd therefore people keep thinking that life is not valuable since it will end with death. This state is related to the modern and postmodern individual, whereby, he was living a confused life full of paradoxes. In addition, the feeling of estrangement and the detachment from life increased in the psychology of this individual which is something lead him to commit suicide according to Camus's philosophy. Albert Camus said "Living naturally is never easy" but he suggested that the man should never stop at this stage of life. Again, he spotted the light on the issue of suicide by questioning whether suicide is the best solution for the absurd situations. In his opinion man should resist for his existence in order to make life meaningful.*

You continue making the gestures commanded by existence for many reasons, the first of which is habit. Dying voluntarily implies you have recognized even instinctively, the ridiculous character of that habit. The absence of any profound reason of living (Camus 5.6)

In 1950, Martin Esslin coined a new term in literature which is "The Theatre of the Absurd", this term came after a series of theatrical works by eastern and western writers. The theatre of the absurd is a new style of writing in postmodern period and it is the result of the influence of existentialism in literature. The absurd play is totally different from the ordinary play writes in term of characters, actions, the dialogue and setting. The characters are bizarre and nameless the actions and conversation are senseless. For the time and place are unknown. This type of plays breaks all the norms and conventions of the ordinary one. As a matter of fact the theatre of the absurd reflects the reality of the individual at that time; it shows how life is meaningless and how the human being became isolated and lonely.

1.2.5-Responsibility/ Freedom: *responsibility is theme coined by Jean-Paul Sartre; he sees that since the man is free then he is responsible for his actions. Sartre assumed that "Responsibility is not resignation; it is simply the logical requirement of the consequence of our freedom" in addition he said that man holds the responsibility of the whole human being and the while world as he condemned to be free and he should not complain even if he is suffering a lot.*

1.3- The Main Figures of Existentialism

There are more over than ten philosophers of existentialism who contribute to make the philosophy of existentialism universal but the main philosopher who set up the foundation of this philosophy; Soren Kierkegaard, Jean Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, Martin Heidegger.

1.3.1-Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1855):*he is the founder of existentialism philosophy, Kierkegaard extrapolated the philosophy of the existence from his personal life. His father's life influenced a lot on him and on his philosophy, whereby, his father was suffering from deep melancholy and the feeling of guilt as he was known by his intelligence and piety. The reflection of Kierkegaard's life on his philosophy and works could be seen in the themes that are coined by him such as theme of guilt, remorse, pain, and anguish.*

Kierkegaard took his melancholy and anguish and started a path of self-discovery. What he

Discovered was truth not only about him, but also about the human condition. He was one of the first to develop in an extended way (if not quite in a systematic way) central existential themes, such as the absurdity and forlornness of life, the importance and weight of choices, and the need to live passionately and authentically. He developed all these themes in a radically new kind of Christian context. He rejected the traditional pieties and systematic answers of both philosophy and the orthodox Christianity of his time. Instead, he embraced a vision of faith in which belief is considered to be a real choice and one that absolutely can't be validated or justified by reason. (Panza and Gale 16)

1.3.2-Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980): *is the most important philosopher in existentialism, he is a French intellectual known for his fair attitudes toward the independence of the colonial nations such as the Algerian case. He is an atheist; he added a lot to the philosophy of existence. Sartre highlighted the human being situation in life mainly his existence and this is notably seen in his book Being and Nothingness. His attitudes are controversial as Nietzsche's attitudes, for instance, his attitude toward the existence of God when he said 'We confess the existence of God but it is not valuable whether he exists or not it is the same thing' (Sartre 62)*

1.3.3-Albert Camus (1913-1960): *Although Albert Camus was not fond of being called an existentialist; the writings that made him the 1957 Nobel laureate in literature did much to popularize that philosophical movement. Novelist, playwright, and essayist, Camus was born*

and educated in Algeria, where he founded a theatre group for which he wrote and produced plays. In 1940, he moved to Paris, became active in the French Resistance against the Nazi occupation, and later practiced journalism. He was friendly with Jean-Paul Sartre but the two had a falling out and became philosophical rivals, even though many of their views were similar. (Roth 1)

*Camus was not an academic philosopher. Living in difficult times when life could not be taken for granted, he set aside the technicalities of philosophical theory to appraise life's meaning. It seemed to Camus that traditional values and ways of life had collapsed. He dramatized that situation in plays and novels such as *The Stranger* (1942) and *The Plague* (1947) and reflected on it philosophically in essays that asked, "Does life make sense?" His *Demise* leaves the answer in suspense, for Camus died suddenly. A lover of fast cars, he lost his life in a crash. (ibid)*

1.3.4-Martin Heidegger (1889-1976): *is a German philosopher who influenced a lot in the domain of philosophy; he dealt with the subject of the existence. He spotted the light on various themes that are considered by many as very important in existentialism philosophy such as the death, time and identity. He pioneered himself in existentialism philosophy by his crucial opinions toward human being's situation in life and the reality of death and the importance of time. His views influenced a lot on science and literature. Vonnegut for example tackled both themes of time and death in his novels.*

*Heidegger wrote a series of books that reflect his philosophical views his major ones are *Being and Time* (1927), *Kant and the problem of Metaphysics* (1929) *On the Essence of Truth* (1931), *The Origin of the Work of Art* (1935), *Introduction to Metaphysics* (1935), *Letter on Humanism* (1947) *What is Called Thinking?* (1954), *The Question of Technology* (1954), *Identity and Difference* (1957), *On the way to Language* (1959) and *On time and Being* (1961) and the most important one is *Being and Time*.*

1. 4- The Existential Literature

Critics have disagreed about the term "Existential literature" because they see that there are no specific criteria to classify it as an existential literature. Nevertheless, there are potentials to know the existential literature. The first one is, if the literary text is written an

existentialist, then the content contains existential views such as works written by Sartre, Camus, Nietzsche and other existentialists “Another possible way to recognize existential

“literature would be to limit the phrase to works produced by the members of the French intellectual movement—primarily, Sartre, Beauvoir and Camus—who named this philosophy during the 1940s” (qtd in *literary movements for students* p273) in addition, the writers who followed these existentialists such as Franz Kafka, Dostoevsky and Hemingway have wrote works that are considered as existential literature.

The second one is to investigate the principles of existentialism and its mood in the literary texts, but this is problematic a little bit because there are works that involves aspect and themes of existentialism though it was written before the existentialism philosophy sees the light. The case of Shakespeare’s work Hamlet which manifests many themes of existentialism such as death the existence and the self; this means that the themes of existentialism is not related to a specific period, rather, it is concerned with human being which is something belongs to the creation of Adam and Eve. The subject of existence is not exclusive on the existentialists; rather, there are other intellectuals who tackled this subject such as romantic poetics who are concerned with the nature and gothic novelists who wrote about fear and death.

It is an axiom that human being writes about himself, his existence, his feelings, his desire and everything concerns him in order to reflect his awareness of everything surround him. The fact that human being write about his existence makes the one believe that every piece of literature involves themes of existentialism in a way or another, but the difference lays in the way that every one express these themes in term of style and language. The Greek literature for instance, involves themes of existentialism starting from Homer’s work The Iliad which is an epic about war and struggle on authority. In this poem, the theme of death is dominant powerfully; the warriors accepted death because it is their fat they prefer to die as heroes in the battle.

In addition the epic shows that everyone will die even the kings and their sons; and Homer manifests this idea in the death of the prince “Hector”.

“[...] there is no altering the given conditions of the world. There is no safe haven they can retreat to, because conflict exists everywhere, a final death is inevitable, and warfare has been established by the divine will. Since they have no option, they accept their condition with a grim candour” (Johnston 1)

*Oh Father Zeus, people say for wisdom
you exceed all others, men and gods alike.
Yet all this comes from you. . . . (13.744) [13.631]*

*Zeus sees to it that from our youthful days
to our old age we must grind away at wretched
war, till, one by one, we die. (14.104) [14.631]*

There is no doubt that there are an existential moments the whole life and each time man write about it which something make existential views exist in every literary text.

1.4.1-Themes of Existential Literature

Literature has a message to convey through the book and this message differs from writer to another in addition to the literary period and the literary genre. Existentialism is one of the literary movements that underlie themes that are manifested in various literary works. The basic themes in the existential literature are: death, personal responsibility, freedom, the self and identity and the absurd. These themes hold hidden messages for human being because they are concern him and his life.

*The self and identity is a theme of supreme importance for many psychologists, sociologists and philosophers. It is the whole of human being it reflects the consciousness of the individual and his thoughts. There are many writers depicted this theme in their literary works such as Ralf Ellison in his work *The Invisible Man* In fact this theme is debatable because it is a combination between thoughts, actions and feelings; each time specialist gives a new concept to the self and identity. The one may ask what the self is and what identity is.*

The self in common discourse, the term self often refers to a warm feeling that something “about me” or “about us”. Reflecting on oneself is both a common activity and mental feat. It requires that there is an ‘I’ that can consider an object

that is ‘me’. The term *self* includes both the actor who thinks (‘I am thinking’) and the object of thinking (‘about me’). Moreover, the actor both is able to think and is aware of doing so. As the philosopher John Locke famously asserted ‘I think, therefore I am’ Awareness of having thoughts matters. (Leary and Tangney71)

Identity is the answer of the question ‘who I am?’ this concept is very complex because there is no specific definition for it. For Sartre can be defined after the behaviours of man (qtd in literary movements for students 230) this view is totally the contrast of the other systems. As the scientists disagreed about its definition the writers also depicted the theme of identity in different ways. Each writer presents this theme in accordance to the context that he lives in a good example is the novel of The Invisible Man which is about racism so the writer depicted the theme of identity in relation to racism.

The death is a central theme in the existential literature and it has been depicted in many literary works because it raises a lot of questions about the value of life on its presence and it is considered as a negative existential given. The theme of death exists almost in all literary works for instance The Sound and the Fury by William Faulkner and Slaughterhouse-Five by Vonnegut and all the works of William Shakespeare and the gothic novels.

Personal responsibility and freedom are not less important than the other themes but the writers express it indirectly in their works. These themes can be understood from the language that the writers use to address the reader. The actions of the character also show the personal responsibility and this is the case of the characters of the novel of Huckleberry Finn.

1.4.2- The Main Works in Existential Literature

There are always works that represents certain literary periods or literary movements. The existential literature is series of works that represent and reflect existentialism philosophy. There are works written by existential philosophers and other works written by their followers.

La Nausée (Nausea) by Jean-Paul Sartre is considered the most representative novel of existential views. This novel is the first one in Sartre career of writing; it manifests his philosophical views toward the existence and the situation of human being in life. Sartre said that Nausea is his best work, because it is well crafted especially the protagonist Antione

Requentin who is the best example about how the individual faces negative existential givens in his life because Requentin experienced anxiety, the absurd and nothingness.

Antoine Requentin, a historian living in Bouville, France, begins a diary to help him explain the strange and sickening sensations that have been bothering him for the previous few days. He was suffering from anxiety and pointlessness of everything surrounds him; he was looking for justification to his existence but at the end and after a long journey in his research lasted ten years he realized that life is meaningless and the existence precedes the essence. Roquentin did not committed suicide after his discovering to the fact of the existence; rather, he decided to create meaning to his life and existence.

No Exit is another important work by Sartre. This novel holds a lot of existential philosophical perspectives as it manifest some existential themes. In this play the author spots the light on the importance of the self and the other and how people live and face their problems though they divers in their views.

What makes No Exit a masterpiece is the way it takes grand psychological and existential themes and has them play out in a way that, despite the Eccentric storyline is essentially familiar. The intimacy of the characters' Conversations at times seems strange for characters who have just met, but the emotions they express are thoroughly familiar. You can feel for these Characters because you understand their needs and disappointments. Sartre May be wrong, and there may indeed be a way to bridge the gap between two Consciousnesses each trying to define it. But it's certainly not easy, and No Exit is a brilliant explication of the perils you face when trying. (Gale and Panza 348)

Albert Camus also contributes by his works in explaining the philosophy of life and he coined concepts that may help the individual in the contemporary life to understand what is surround him and he should act. Camus did not rely only on essays to demonstrate his philosophical, rather, he wrote novels that are classified as existential novels. The Stranger is his famous work in which he transformed the themes of existentialism to plots and characters and events. This novel is about alienation and absurdity of life and meaninglessness.

The Stranger is a short but rich novel. Among other things [...] it's about

How most of the time people wander through life without really recognizing its meaninglessness or absurdity. As the deadpan Meursault illustrates, this isn't necessarily a good thing. Only when something dramatic happens do people start to reevaluate things and see them in a different way. Meursault's transformation after killing the Arab and being sentenced to death is largely one of perception. Being in prison, he doesn't have the freedom to change the way he lives his life. (Gale and Panza 347)

*Samuel Beckett also wrote a play that is classified as an existential work. *Waiting for Godot* is a play about the absurd; it is characterized by its bizarre characters and lack of conversation between characters, in addition, the action is senseless and the detachment from time. This work is considered as a masterpiece because it is the best depiction of the absurd. The critics agreed that *Waiting for Godot* is the most important work that Beckett ever did because it influenced a lot on the theatre of the absurd and on literature.*

The Little Prince, written and illustrated by the French author Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, is often categorized with children's books, perhaps because it has cartoon illustrations or because it rejects the arbitrary rules that adults enforce. It is this last element, however, that qualifies it as a work of existential literature. The story is a fantasy about an airplane pilot who crashes in the Sahara Desert, where a little prince who lives on an asteroid with a single flower approaches him. He explains his travels to different asteroids and the people whom he has met on each. The book offers a satire of serious adults, including a judge, an alcoholic, and a businessman. Its affirmation of childlike innocence has made it a perennial favourite since it was first published in 1943, but the issues that it raises about the superficiality of social structure and the purity of freedom make it one of the more uplifting examples of existential thought." (Milne 227)

It was a geniality on part of the writer to write such type of novels which is written for the children whereas the main intention of the writer is to convey a message of great importance and issues of adults. This trick can protect the writer from any charges that may be raised against him because his message is hidden.

The Trial by Franz Kafka also is a valuable work in existentialism. The story concerns Joseph K., a government bureaucrat who is awakened in his bed one morning and taken off to jail. He is released soon after but is told to report back to court regularly. Throughout the whole experience, no one—not the officers who arrest him, the judge, or his own lawyer—tells

Joseph what crime he is accused of. As with all of Kafka's works, this absurd situation is used to explore deeper philosophical truths about the nature of society and of the individual, showing how the political system can isolate a person from the basic truths that he once took for granted." (Milne 228)

1.5-Existentialism in American Literature

The reception of existentialism in America was different from any other country; it through stages whereat translation had a crucial role in transshipping existentialism to America. The starting point was the translation of Kierkegaard's works by David Swcnson and Walter Lowrie in 1945. This philosopher was not known in America but when his works have been translated to English he got great popularity especially his themes guilt and death. After him directly the books of Nietzsche became available in English and from this point the Americans became closer to the existential philosophical thinking.

Moreover, Karl Jasper and Heidegger and other philosophers showed an interest to the philosophy of existence and they wrote books that have a great importance in American society. But the great impact of existentialism was by Sartre because he is the first who give a name to his philosophy which is "Existentialism" and after publishing his essay Existentialism is Humanism in which Sartre gives a detailed explanation to his philosophical views and to answer the charges against this philosophy as he said in his introductory sentence "I should LIKE on this occasion to defend existentialism against some charges which have been brought against it" (Sartre I).

In fact the philosophy of Camus and Sartre are the most influential in American society because they touch the fact of human being and the fact of his life. Therefore art and literature reflect the themes of Albert Camus such as the absurd and guilt and themes of Jean-Paul Sartre such as meaningless of life, nothingness and responsibility. The question that may be asked is why those themes specifically? The answer is bigger than to be answered in one sentence or a paragraph or even an essay but it can be abridged in one important idea which is the modern era was the era of the individual and his responsibility.

The existential American literature passed through stages each stage has its own characteristics but the content of the literary texts shares the same themes but different issues. That is to say that each writer has an issue to write about as a commitment but the themes of existentialism are there. For instance, there are Jewish literature and literature of Black Americans and the literature of the other ethnic groups all these kind of literature share the same existential themes such as alienation, nothingness, the absurd, suicide, guilt and responsibility. Many American writers adopted these themes in their literary works which is something reflects the reception of American consciousness to the existentialism philosophy and the extent that the existentialism philosophy influenced on the American literature.

After World War II many anti war books have been written to show the result of the disaster on the world and America. And a lot of changes happened because of the effect of the cold war between America and the Soviet Union and the fear of the nuclear bombs among these changes the existential question “Who I am” comes to appear again and the lost of identity this issues are related to the psychological state of the individual. The authors in this period emphasized on the individual and his state of mind. Peter B High in his book said “American authors in the fifties show that they are very uncomfortable in the post-war world. The new political fears (of Communism and the Bombs) are less important to them than their own psychological problems in the new American society” (High 176)

1.5.1-The Main Writers in Existential American Literature

Most of the writers of the existential American literature are the writers of “The Lost Generation” and the Jewish American writers and some Black American writers; these writers witnessed all the historical events that happened in America for instance, World War I and the Civil War and the World War II. These deeds produced a lot of literary works that manifest the intellectual reaction of the writers toward the issues of their society and their country and the world as a whole.

1.5.1.1-Ernest Hemingway (1898-1961)

He is an American writer who wrote about the lost generation. He is known for his masterpieces in literature such as The Old Man and the Sea and The Garden of Eden as he is known by his simple style of writing. Hemingway uses the nature in order to tackle themes that are related to human being and life. He wrote a novel about World War I The Sun Also Rise

and the state of the individuals in that era. Hemingway tackled the themes of existentialism in his writing for instance, nothingness “Nada” which is recurrent in most of his novels and the death. In addition, he wrote novels that resemble his life especially the heroes for instance, the hero of his novel *Across the River and into the Trees* and *The Old Man and the Sea*. At the end of his life, Hemingway was not satisfied about his life therefore he decided to end it with a hunting gun.

1.5.1.2-William Faulkner (1897-1962)

Similarly to Hemingway, Faulkner spoke about the lost generation. He tackled the existential themes in his novels but he made it differently from other writers “In his novels, short stories, and plays, Faulkner examines the dichotomy between humanization and alienation, man being estranged from nature by industrial progress, and he does so with an “alternation of alienated and humanized sensitivities” (qtd in *E C USA* 52). His style of writing is unique which is something makes his novels a masterpieces at the same time they are challengeable for the readers to read them.

In almost all of Faulkner’s stories, time is treated in a special way. He Uses the “continuous present” style of writing, which was invented by Gertrude Stein. Past, present and future events are mixed: “Yesterday And tomorrow are Is: Indivisible: One. “Everything_ including events From a century before_ seems to happen at the same time. Everything Is part of the “now” of the novel because of these technique is Usually hard work to read a Faulkner novel. (High 154)

Furthermore, many critics spot the light on his technique of narration which breaks the traditional way of narration whereat the reader feels that he is despair in the story “Faulkner way of narration is another feature. The reader is put into the centre of the story without any preparation. We must put together the facts of the story by ourselves, since the author does not help us” (*ibid*). *The Sound and the Fury*, *Light in August*, *Absalom Absalom*, *Mansion*, *The Hamlet* and *The Town* are Faulkner famous works.

1.5.1.3-Saul Bellow (1915)

He is a great Jewish American novelist he won the Noble Prize for literature in 1976. He wrote about the Jewish case as he tackled themes of existentialism in his writing. The main existential themes that Bellow tackled are: alienation, nothingness, meaningless of life and the existence of God. His heroes are known for their power they sustain the hard circumstances in life they are the model of "tough-guy". He has a good reputation in the field of literature his best-known works are Dangling Man (1944) and Herzog (1964) and Mr. Sammler's Planet (1982)

1.5.1.4-J.D.Salinger (1919)

Salinger is a skilful Jewish American writer he wrote one great novel which made him famous at early age in the fiftieth and early sixties. The Catcher in the Rye is an existential novel in which Salinger tackled the theme of alienation and the absurd world. Though he is a successful writer Salinger stopped to write novel but he has a series of short stories (Franny and Zooey,1961; Raise High the Roofbeam, Carpenters, 1963; and Seymour,1963)

1.5.1.5-Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

"I greet you at the beginning of a great career" this was Emerson's reply to Walt Whitman after he sent to him his small book of poems Leaves of Grass. Whitman is an American poet, he added a lot of to the area of literature by his works. He made a kind of revolution in poetry in term of form and in term of content. At the level of form he rejected the traditional form of poem therefore he keep invent new forms such as free verse to suit his message and to be available to all people to read them. At the level of content he has been criticized by many critics for being vulgar because at a certain time he tackled the subject of sex without any reservation. His famous poem Song of Myself involves many important existential themes as it celebrates the important of human being.

1.5.2-The Main Works in Existential American Literature

The following pages manifest the great existential American literary works that are considered as great achievements in American literature and they changed the view of human being toward the fact of the existence and the self.

5.2.1-The Sun Also Rises (1926): *It is a novel written by the American writer Ernest Hemingway. It is about young adult in post-war era; the characters are migrant American live in Paris some of them were soldiers in the War but when it ended they recognized that they are not happy though they are in peace time. The book is an anti-war because it shows the bad result of war on people. Hemingway characters faced the feeling of the absurd and emptiness in their life because they became useless and hopeless after the experience of war. This novel is the starting point of Hemingway's existential literary works because he developed the feeling of emptiness to the theme of nothingness in his later works.*

1.5.2.2-Dangling Man (1944): *By the Jewish American writer Saul Bellow. The events of the story are about the protagonist who a man is waiting to be called into army during the World War II. He lives in isolation in his home; he was a Communist before the war but after that he become confused which is something push him to ask questions about his existence and the purpose of living this life. He was enthusiastic to army because he felt that it a key answer to his question but he failed in finding the answer which is a negative existential given. In fact he sees that his freedom is indignation because he is not happy without someone controls him "According to the philosophy of existentialism, man is completely alone in a meaningless world without God or absolute moral laws. We are completely free. But this is not always a happy freedom" (High181)*

1.5.2.3-The Invisible Man (1952): *By the Black American writer Ralf Ellison, the novel depicts the sufferance of the Blacks in the American society because of racism. The main character is nameless and lives in a hole under the ground in New York City. The Invisible Man is a metaphorical title because the character is invisible because the white people refuse to confess that he is a human being and to deal with him on that basis, rather, they believe their fallacies about the Black individual. Though he has good qualities as a Black boy, he knows what he says and he behaves in a good way but since the president of the college is a white man he consider him a nothing man in his view he still that Black man. Finally, he recognized that he is living in an absurd society full of lies which is the cause that made him live in a hole under the ground.*

1.5.2.4-Moby-Dick (1851): *It is Herman Melville's most important work in his career of writing and the greatest work in American literature. In this novel, the author gives an insight about human nature and the role of fate in human life.*

From the beginning, it is clear that the voyage of the waling ship Pequod will be symbolic voyage. It is also clear that Moby-Dick, the great white whale, represent God or fate, although Melville gives the reader a great deal of factual information about whale-hunting in order to make the world of Moby-Dick seem real. (High 53)

Conclusion

The impact of Existentialism is still continuous because the existential moments never end as long as the human being is alive. Therefore each time new art and literature borne to tell a story of a man struggles in the life and how he faces the negative existential givens. But what makes the difference between existential works that each writer treys to be creative in depicting themes of existentialism and this explains the existence of all these masterpieces in existential literature.

*Chapter Two: Contextual View and
Criticism of Slaughterhouse-Five*

Introduction

In this chapter, we are going to expose the corpus of our dissertation Slaughterhouse-Five by Kurt Vonnegut; this chapter provides a background of the novel in order to give the reader an overview about the most important aspects that qualify the novel. The present chapter involves the plot summary of the novel, the dominant themes in the novel, the style of the writer and the review of the novel. We have selected some examples from the novel for further comprehension of the whole novel.

2.1- The corpus

2.1.1-Plot summary

Slaughterhouse-Five is plotless novel; it means that there is no beginning, no middle (or climax), resolution and no end. It is an anti-war novel and science fiction story is about the life of a man who has experiences on war as prisoner of war his name Billy Pilgrim. He was living an ordinary life in Illium, New York. He studied there and he married the daughter of his school owner and he got children. The turning point of Billy's life is when he went to war and he has been kidnapped by the German lines. Billy becomes unstuck in time and travels back and forth through his life visiting his childhood, his experience in the World War two and his death. The novel written in ten chapters without a chronological order of events or a true narrative line, it is based on the important events of Billy's life in an unusual structure, but to make it little bit clear for readers we have to make Billy's life and events in a chronological order.

Billy Pilgrim born in 1922 in Illium, New York, he gets his study in Illium school of optometry before he finish his study, he went to Europe in the middle of the battle of Bulge, he gets unstuck in time the first time after he captured behind German Lines. Billy and the other American prisoners of war "POWs" are sent to Dresden. One night in February of 1945, Dresden is bombed many people died and nothing is left. Billy and the other POWs were in a meat cellar to come out next day at noon, they find a landscape that looks like a surface of the moon with no food or water. In May, Russians took the area and Billy is repatriated.

Billy goes back to Illium to finish his study in optometry school, he married Valencia the daughter of the school's owner, he has a mental breakdown and he got treated with shock

treatments in a veteran's hospital. Valencia's father is a wealthy man; he helped Billy to become rich. Billy and Valencia have two children, his daughter married and his son joined the Green Berets. Billy is the only survivor of a plane crash, his wife died of carbon monoxide poisoning in her way to hospital to visit her husband.

On the night of his daughter wedding, Billy claimed that he was kidnapped by aliens from the planet tralfamadore and the aliens took Billy to their world and put him in a zoo. The tralfamadorians exist in fourth dimension for them all moments happen simultaneously and always, they returned him after he met with Montana a movie star, no one notices that he has been missing for months.

After the death of his wife he goes to New York to radio talk show and tells about his experience in tralfamadore and how he became unstuck in time and about the tralfamadorian's concept of time, when Barbara his daughter hears her father on radio, she becomes afraid of her father sanity because he appears and acts as he is mentally unbalanced.

Billy travels in time he goes and back through the story remembering what happen in the war with Ronald Weary and Paul Lazarro and the other POWs. The novel ends when the war ends; Billy and the other POWs are waiting in a stable the war in Europe ends, when it ends the door of the stable opens outside the stable there are sounds of birds poo-tee-weet?

2.1.2-Characters

As it known there are no novels without characters and these are the main characters in Slaughterhouse-Five.

Billy Pilgrim: *he is the protagonist and the main character of Slaughterhouse-Five. Although he is the protagonist he is a flat character; he is childish and he does not change he stayed the same character from the beginning of the story until the end. Billy is an absurd character.*

The narrator: *unnamed character who narrates the events of the story; some critics said that the narrator may be Kurt Vonnegut himself because he appears from time to time to narrate the story from the first person point of view "I".*

Chapter one consists of Vonnegut speaking in his own voice about the difficulties of writing Slaughterhouse-Five. Beginning with his 1966 introduction to the reissued Mother Night, Vonnegut had begun to speak more openly about himself and about the autobiographical connections underlying his writing. In the opening and closing chapters of Slaughterhouse-Five, however, he takes that process much further. By making the autobiographical “frame” of the novel part of the novel itself (rather than setting those sections apart as a preface and an afterward) (Rodney Allan 3)

Bernard.V O’Hare: *the narrator’s old war buddy he captured with the narrator and held as prisoners of war in Dresden, he is looking for Bernard in order to remember their expenses together.*

Mary O’Hare: *Bernard’s wife, she is a very anti war character*

Barbara: *Billy pilgrim’s daughter; she takes care of her father after the death of her mother Valencia and his injuries of a nervous collapse*

Valencia: *she is the daughter of the owner of Billy’s optometry school and Billy’s wife died of Carbon monoxide poisoning on her way to the hospital when her husband got wounded in a plane crash.*

Roland weary: *a soldier who get captured with Billy pilgrim, he blames Billy for their captured, he imagines war stories full of adventure.*

Edgar Derby: *old soldier, he is a high school teacher he died after the Dresden bombing for stealing a teapot. His death supposed to be the climax of the story but it was not.*

Paul Lazzaro: *he is a sadist soldier who is characterized by cruelty and violence.*

The tralfamadorians: *they are the aliens who bring Billy to their planet tralfamadore to exhibit him in a zoo, they are like a teachers to Billy; they taught him a lot of thing about life as he said such as the illusion of the free will and the importance of time and happiness. They made Billy happy for the first time in his life.*

Howard W. Campbell: *an American who had become a Nazi. Campbell was the one who had written the monograph about the shabby behaviour of American prisoners of war.*

2.1.3-The Settings

Since the plot of the novel is not linear, the settings in which the events of the story happened are not introduced in an organized way-that is to say there is no exposition where the settings of the story should be introduced- rather, they are mentioned in accordance to the events that are narrated by the narrator. For instance, the narrator is narrating an event happened in Dresden in 1946 suddenly he come back to tell a story happened in the hospital in 1945. The settings in *Slaughterhouse-Five* are introduced randomly because of the technique of narration "dislocation". These are the essential settings in the novel:

Illium: it is a fictional home town as the critic said "It is here, in this fictional home town that Vonnegut has created, that Billy leads a normal life" (Cooper1). Billy Pilgrim spent all his life in this place he studied there and he worked and married and got children there also. Generally, the events that happened there are ordinary.

Dresden: the central place where the most important events happened there which is the firebombing and the historical massacres. Billy narrated his painful experience of war; he witnessed violence, inhuman scenes and torture. In this place the reader notice the turning point of Billy's life when he become unstuck to time and escapes the real world.

Tralfamador: it is an imaginary plant of the aliens that Billy travel to it only in his mind in order to detaches himself from the horror of war and anxiety. In this place Billy discovered the reality of time and death. In addition, he realized the differences between the world of Tralfamadorians and his world which is the earth such as the vision of Tralfamadorians is four dimensions and the vision of the Earthlings is three dimensions.

The hospital: this place is in Germany, Billy was there as a prisoner of war. He met Killgor Trout there who is the first man who introduced science fiction to Billy.

2.1.4- Style

Slaughterhouse-Five is qualified by a specific style of writing starting from the structure of themes and the structure of sentences moving to the language and the choice of diction. This novel was and still an important subject of study by the critics. Many things seem bizarre

about this novel such as the choice of science fiction as a plot device to narrate a real painful experience of war.

The first noticeable thing about Vonnegut's style of writing is the use of simple sentences, this choice does not mean that the writer is not skillful in shifting from simple sentence to compound sentence or even the complex sentence; but our assumption is the writer choice is done on purpose. The use of simple sentences in this novel makes it accessible for all people to read. Vonnegut answered the critics about the over use of simple sentences in his work Slaughterhouse-Five

Confronted with the question of "Surface simplicity" in his books; he answers: they have a real simplicity, I think, because I have always been aware of the reader and his difficulties /.../ I avoid sentences where the reader could get lost. /.../ I have made my books easy to read punctuated carefully, with lots of white space. /.../ I don't think that /.../ I have skimmed on /my/ language /.../ what I have done is write shorter sentences and I could easily mask what /I've done and substitute semi-colons and dashes for periods and get wonderfully intricate sentences and also pages that would be much more tiring to the eyes. (qtd in K V SF F G P)

The second thing is the use of jargon which is words related to military field and war for instance, "57 millimetre antitank gun" (Vonnegut 19), "Hungarian colonel on the Russian front" (Vonnegut 27). The third thing is the use of repetition all long the novel. The author uses repetition in order to emphasize his ideas on one hand and to create a stylistic effect on the other hand; repetition became the idiosyncratic of Vonnegut's style.

In addition, he used vulgar words such as "Not with me. You son of a bitch" (Vonnegut 38), "Son of a bitch bit me" (Vonnegut 64). "[...] and a woman he was going to fuck him" (Vonnegut 67)" he also used immoral scenes like the porn picture that Roland Weary was hold " He had a prophylactic kit containing two tough condoms 'For the Prevention of Disease Only' He had a whistle he wasn't going to show anybody until he got promoted to corporal. He had a dirty picture of a woman attempting sexual intercourse with a Shetland pony" (Vonnegut 21.22). Moreover, he described a man and his wife in a sexual relationship "Now he was in bed with Valencia [...] Belly wan on top of Valencia, making love to her." (Vonnegut 56)

Furthermore, Vonnegut used words and scenes of torture and killing; the aim behind using these words is to describe the cruelty of war and the sufferance of human beings and to build the thematic meaning of the text. This is an instance from the novel:

*The real Iron Maiden was a medieval **torture instrument** a sort of boiler which was shaped like a woman on the outside and lined with spikes. The front of the woman was composed of two hinged doors. The idea was **to put a criminal inside and then close the doors slowly. There were two special spikes where his eyes would be.** There was a drain in the bottom to **let out all the blood.** (Vonnegut 20)*

2.1.5-Genre

The genre of the novel Slaughterhouse-Five is science fiction and it is almost the genre of all the novels written by the American writer Kurt Vonnegut. The aspects of this genre are the use of imaginary settings and characters like Tralfamador and the aliens Tralfamadorians. Its themes are about space and time and technology; in Slaughterhouse-Five Kurt Vonnegut tackled the subject of travelling in time which is related to science. The use of four dimensions also is one aspect.

2.1.6-The Review of the Novel

Slaughterhouse-Five is a semi-autobiographic novel which narrates the story of Dresden fire bombing. The story is the personnel experience of the American writer Kurt Vonnegut in the World War II as a soldier and as prisoner of war. In this novel, the writer represents the history of painful events that he witnessed in the past but he mixed it with imagination like the planet Tralfamador and the aliens. Vonnegut stated this in the first page of his novel:

A fourth-generation German-American now living in easy circumstances on Cape Cod [and smoking too much], who, as an American infantry scout hors de combat, as a prisoner of war, witnessed the fire-bombing of Dresden, Germany, 'The Florence of the Elbe,' a long time ago, and survived to tell the tale. This is a novel somewhat in the telegraphic schizophrenic manner of tales of the planet Tralfamadore, where the flying saucers come from. Peace. (Vonnegut)

The plot of the story is totally different from the traditional one because it lacks most of the element of the traditional plot such as the climax, the conflict and rising actions and falling actions. By contrary, the plot is random because the main character Billy is travel in time and each time tell a story related to the place that goes to it.

Listen: Billy Pilgrim has come unstuck in time. Billy has gone to sleep a senile widower and awakened on his wedding day. He has walked through a door in 1955 and come out another one in 1941. He has gone back through that door to find himself in 1963. He has seen his birth and death many times, he says, and pays random visits to all the events in between. (Vonnegut 14)

In addition, the novel is written from third person point of view but the open chapter is written from first person point of view which is something that indicates the presence of the author Kurt Vonnegut.

All this happened, more or less. The war parts, anyway, are pretty much true. One guy I knew really was shot in Dresden for taking a teapot that wasn't his. Another guy I knew really did threaten to have his personal enemies killed by hired gunmen after the war. And so on. I've changed all the names." (Vonnegut 5).

And the author also occurs in the last chapter of the novel. "Now Billy and the rest were being marched into the ruins by their guards. I was there. O'Hare was there" (Vonnegut 96)

Furthermore, the author tackled a series of issues concern human life like the negative side of technology and the result of war on human life in addition to sex and religion. "His experiences as a prisoner of war in Dresden, Germany, in the Battle of the Bulge in 1945 gave a different colouring to his early ideals as he saw scientific truth destroy art and architecture in Europe. In both his early novels, Vonnegut's humanistic concerns override his faith in science and he posits different kinds of man-centred institutions like religion and family life to counteract scientific progress." (qtd in Vonnegut Narrative Art 14)

As far as sex is concerned, the author raises the matter of homosexuality and pornography and this is obvious in several scenes in the novel; the author shows kind of vulgarity and immorality. But concerning religion he highlighted the issue of believes in God and the Jesses the Christ and atheism.

The variety of subjects that the author depicted in his novel made the reader eager to read Slaughterhouse-Five besides the simplicity of style. Vonnegut succeeded in managing all these subjects without showing randomness or disability of unites the whole text. Slaughterhouse-Five still classified among the complex literary work. The complexity of this novel lies on the mixture between reality and fantasy; the author represents real events which are cruel, inhuman and criminal but in science fiction mould. Kurt Vonnegut provided new way to tell reality and he changed totally the concept of realism.

2.2-Themes of the Novel

It is noticeable that the novel Slaughterhouse-Five is rich of crucial themes related to the postmodern era which are war, death, time, the existence, the absurd and the free will. This variety of themes shows the author awareness of sensitive issues in the world as it shows the author's skills in tackling different subjects to shape the thematic structure of the text.

2.2.1-The absurd: *It is a dominant theme in Slaughterhouse-Five. Although the story is about a massacre but the writer succeed in creating the absurd atmosphere in the novel. These are instances from the novel where the absurd appears.*

*This was **only the beginning of Billy's miseries in the metaphor**. He was also strapped to a steel lattice which was bolted to a flatcar on rails, and there was no way he could turn his head or touch the pipe. The far end of the pipe rested on a bi-pod which was also bolted to the flatcar. All Billy could see was the dot at the end of the pipe. **He didn't know he was on a flatcar, didn't even know there was anything peculiar about his situation.** (Vonnegut 54) (Highlight is mine)*

The narrator completes the idea above saying: "The flatcar sometimes crept, sometimes went extremely fast, often stopped-went uphill, downhill, around curves, along straightaways.

Whatever poor Billy saw through the pipe, he had no choice but to say to himself, 'That's life.' (Vonnegut54) (Highlight is mine)

This is an absurd situation where Billy seems despair and unable to grasp his situation. All what he could say is "This is life" also his long silence during this exhaustive journey denotes the absurd because he is contemplating his absurd life.

Another aspect of the absurd is questioning about the life and the self and the following example manifests this idea

Welcome aboard, Mr. Pilgrim,' said the loudspeaker. 'Any questions?'

Billy licked his lips, thought a while, inquired at last: 'Why me? '

That is a very Earthling question to ask, Mr. Pilgrim. Why you? Why us for that

matter? Why anything? Because this moment simply is. Have you ever seen bugs trapped in amber?'

'Yes.' Billy in fact, had a paperweight in his office which was a blob of polished amber With three ladybugs embedded in it.

'Well, here we are, Mr. Pilgrim, trapped in the amber of this moment. There is no why (Vonnegut 37) (Highlight is mine)

Billy is questioning about everything to understand his life and his conditions; he wants logical answers for his questions but the answer of the Tralfamadorian was: "Well, here we are, Mr. Pilgrim, trapped in the amber of this moment. There is no why" (Vonnegut 37) and this is the amount of the absurd.

2.2.2-Time: The use of this theme in the novel shows the intellectual dimension of the author toward the scientific and the philosophical issues. Yet, theme of time contributes in creating the absurd situations in the novel *Slaughterhouse-Five*. In order to clarify the idea, these are some examples from the novel.

The time would not pass. Somebody was playing with the clocks, and not only with the electric clocks, but the wind-up kind, too. The second hand on my watch would twitch once, and a year would pass, and then it would twitch again. There was nothing I could do about it. As an Earthling., I had to

believe whatever clocks said-and calendars.
13)(Highlight is mine)

(Vonnegut

The instance shows that the character is unable to understand whether the time changes or not and he is also unable to find a solution about his confusion and this is manifested in his saying "There was nothing I could do about it. As an Earthling". The ultimate result of this situation is the absurd. This is another excerpt clarify the concept of time in the novel

*It would take another Earthling to explain it to you. Earthlings are the great explainers, explaining **why this event is structured as it is, telling how other events may be achieved or avoided.** I am a Tralfamadorian, seeing all time as you might see a stretch of Rocky Mountains. All time is all time. It does not change. It does not lend itself to warnings or explanations. It simply is. Take it moment by moment, and you will find that we are all, as I've said before, bugs in amber. (Vonnegut 41) (Highlight is mine)*

The Tralfamadorians see that there is no need to explain each event alone because all events happen in one moment and the time is static. By contrary, the Earthlings see the time is dynamic and they classify the events according to the tense that happened in it past of present and they do expect what will happen in the future.

2.2.3-War: *It not only a theme in this novel but a whole story about a real war. The theme of war was central in many literary works after the WWII. Kurt Vonnegut was creative in expressing the theme of war in Slaughterhouse-Five because he uses science fiction as a tool to demonstrate his ideas about it. The following excerpt from the text Slaughterhouse-Five*

I said that to Harrison Starr, the movie-maker, one time, and he raised his eyebrows and inquired, 'Is it an anti-war book?'

'Yes,' I said. 'I guess.'

'You know what I say to people when I hear they're writing anti-war books?'

'No. What do you say, Harrison Starr?'

'I say, "Why don't you write an anti-glacier book instead?"'

What he meant, of course, was that there would always be wars, that they were as easy to stop as glaciers. I believe that too. (Vonnegut 6) (Highlight is mine)

2.2.4-Death: This theme overlaps with the theme of the absurd because death is considered the main cause of the absurd. In *Slaughterhouse-Five* theme of death is dominant; it is recurrent almost in every sentence all long the text. The theme of death created a special mood in the novel qualified by melancholy, sadness and the absurd. For instance,

Robert Kennedy, whose summer home is eight miles from the home I

*Live in year round, was shot two nights ago. **He died** last night. **So it goes.** Martin Luther King **was shot** a month ago. **He died, too. So it goes.** And evereday my Government **gives me a count of corpses created by military sciencein Vietnam. So it goes.** (Vonnegut 95) (Highlight is mine)*

2.5-The Free Will: Vonnegut tackled this theme in the novel by using the tralfamadorians views toward it. Actually, the writer choice of aliens to present morals is genius because this makes the novel unique. This is a conversation between the main character Billy and the Tralfamadorian in which the author express his perspective toward the free will.

*You sound to me as though **you don't believe in free will,**' said Billy Pilgrim. 'If I hadn't spent so much time studying Earthlings,' said the Tralfamadorian, '**I wouldn't have any idea what was meant by "free will."** I've visited thirty-one inhabited planets in the universe, and I have studied reports on one hundred more. **Only on Earth is there any talk of free will.** (Vonnegut 41) (Highlight is mine)*

The excerpt above means that man is determined by God because the Tralfamadorian said: "Only on Earth there any talk of free will" as if he saying that free will is an illusion.

2.6-The existence: In this novel, the existence is completely meaningless because people died for unknown causes; and the existence of human being is not valuable. The author assumed that the destiny of human beings is death which means again the existence is meaningless. This are some examples reflect the author's idea of existence.

*Rosewater was twice as smart as Billy, but he and Billy were dealing with similar crises in similar ways. **They had both found life meaningless,** partly because of **what they had seen in war.** Rosewater, for instance, had shot a fourteen-year-old fireman, mistaking him for a German soldier. **So it goes.** (Vonnegut 48) (Highlight is mine)*

*But the subject of war never came up until Billy brought it up himself. Somebody in the zoo crowd asked him through the lecturer **what the most valuable thing he had learned on Tralfamadore was so far**, and Billy replied, '**How the inhabitants of a whole planet can live in peace** I As you know, **I am from a planet that has been engaged in senseless slaughter since the beginning of time.** (Vonnegut 55) (Highlight is mine)*

2.3-Symbolism in the Novel Slaughterhouse-Five

The author used symbolism to convey a hidden meaning; the use of symbols by the author is done by purpose because he wants to add an aesthetic effect to the novel. The symbols in Slaughterhouse-Five contribute to build up the thematic structure of the novel. These are the crucial symbols in Slaughterhouse-Five.

***Blue and Ivory:** This expression has been repeated in many situations in the novel. The colour blue and ivory normally is associated with death; when someone moribund his colour became blue and ivory which means he is between life and death. Vonnegut used this colour to demonstrate the state of dead body or the state of someone about to die. "Billy found the afternoon stingingly exciting. There was so much to see-dragon's teeth, killing machine, corpses with bare feet that were blue and ivory. So it goes." (Vonnegut 32) (Highlight is mine)*

*They came to the prison railroad yard again. They had arrived on only two cars. They would depart far more comfortably on four. They saw the dead hobo again. He was frozen stiff in the weeds beside the track. He was in a fetal position, trying even in death to nestle like a spoon with others. There were no others now. He was nestling within thin air and cinders. Somebody had taken his boots. **His bare feet were blue and ivory.** It was all right, somehow, **his being dead. So it goes.** (Vonnegut 68) (Highlight is mine)*

*Billy got out of bed in the moonlight. He felt spooky and luminous felt as though he were wrapped in cool fur that was full of static electricity. **He looked down at his bare feet. They were ivory and blue.** (Vonnegut 35) (Highlight is mine)*

In the three instances we notice that the writer did not say his face was blue and ivory or their hands were blue and ivory instead of that, he said "their bare feet were blue and ivory" or "his bare feet were blue and ivory". The choice of feet rather than another part of the body because when someone is dying his soul starts to get out from his feet; hence the feet became cold and their colour is blue and ivory. In the third instance Billy is between life and death because the colour of his feet is blue and ivory which means that his soul started to get out from his body but he is still alive and walking.

“Vonnegut uses this example to illustrate how easily life can be taken without notice or care. Although Vonnegut uses the colours to represent life dying, he also uses it to represent death”
(L Munoz 1)

Poo-tee-weet?: *there is a bird in the story asks Billy after the massacre “poo-tee-weet?” Vonnegut used it to tell the reader that the war has no meaning; it has no aims or benefit. And the bird ask Billy why this war? And the use of this bird and the question “poo-tee-weet?” show that the writer is against the war because of his awful experience in it. The this is an example from the opening chapter:*

It is so short and jumbled and jangled, Sam, because there is nothing intelligent to say about a massacre. Everybody is supposed to be dead, to never say anything or want anything ever again. Everything is supposed to be very quiet after a massacre, and it always is, except for the birds.

*And what do the birds say? **All there is to say about a massacre, things like 'Poo-teeweeet?'*** (Vonnegut 13) (Highlight is mine)

Another example from the same chapter where Vonnegut gave an insinuation about the story of Slaughterhouse-Five would start and how it would end.

I've finished my war book now. The next one I write is going to be fun.

This one is a failure, and had to be, since it was written by a pillar of salt. It begins like this:

Listen:

Billy Pilgrim has come unstuck in time.

It ends like this:

Poo-tee-weet? (Vonnegut 14) (Highlight is mine)

The author ended his novel by the following sentence which he already mentioned at the beginning of the first chapter

“One bird said to Billy Pilgrim, 'Poo-tee-weet?’” (Vonnegut 97) (Highlight is mine)

Vonnegut uses birds to show that animals cannot even make sense of the massacres and devastations of war. There are no human words or bird chirps that can describe the feelings and terrific events that happen during a war. Vonnegut leaves the reader with the idea that war is not necessary. [...] This is a question that Vonnegut asks his reader throughout the book to answer for themselves. Vonnegut uses his own experiences and memories to show that war isn't necessary. After providing his traumatic life experienced during the war that he has seen and been through, Vonnegut uses symbolism to leave the reader to decide whether a war is worth fighting for. (L Munoz 1)

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have given detailed presentation of the novel Slaughterhouse-Five; we have explored the dominant themes in the novel. And we have discussed the style of Kurt Vonnegut by highlighting the most important characteristics of his style in addition; we have discussed the use of symbols in the novel.

***Chapter Three: Investigating Themes of
Existentialism in Slaughterhouse-Five***

Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed analysis for the representative instances from the novel. It investigates the themes of Existentialism philosophy in Slaughterhouse-Five by using the philosophy of Heidegger and Camus in addition to theories of time. Further, we are using the Online Words Counter as a tool to investigate repetition in the text under the study.

3.1-The theme of Time in Slaughterhouse-Five

Vonnegut shed the light on the importance of time and the reality of time. Although he has no tendency toward physics but he tackled this theme in his novel.

3.1.1-Repetition of Theme of Time: *The author repeated the word “Time” in all chapters of the novel and only that but he also used words related to the word time such as “clock” and “watch”. Our assumption is that Kurt Vonnegut choice of repetition of these words is done on purpose. These are instances to clarify our idea:*

***The time** would not pass. Somebody was playing with the **clocks**, and not only with the electric **clocks**, but the wind-up kind, too. The second hand on my watch would twitch once, and a year would pass, and then it would twitch again. There was nothing I could do about it. As an Earthling., I had to believe whatever **clocks** said-and calendars. (Vonnegut 13) (Highlight is mine)*

Another instance from chapter four in which we find the word time as a key word in it:

*It would take another Earthling to explain it to you. Earthlings are the great explainers, explaining why this event is structured as it is, telling how other events may be achieved or avoided. I am a Tralfamadorian, seeing all **time** as you might see a stretch of Rocky Mountains. All **time** is all **time**. It does not change. It does not lend itself to warnings or explanations. It simply is. Take it moment by moment, and you will find that we are all, as I've said before, bugs in amber. (Vonnegut 41) (Highlight is mine)*

We notice that the word “Time” and the word “clock” are frequently used in these excerpts. According to table 3.1 the word “time” is repeated 136 times and the word “clock” repeated 21 times. This average is evidence about the use of repetition by the author to depict the theme of time. Halliday and Hasan said “When we talk about reiteration, therefore, we are

not including only the repetition of the same lexical item but also the occurrence of a related item, which may be anything from synonym or near synonym of the original to a general word dominating the entire class. (Halliday and Hasan147)

Table 1. Repetition of words in Slaughterhouse-Five

<i>Words</i> <i>Chapters</i>	<i>Death</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Clock</i>	<i>To kill</i>	<i>To die</i>	<i>Shot</i>
1	04	11	06	03	06	02
2	06	23	/	04	11	10
3	/	13	01	01	18	03
4	03	13	01	03	10	/
5	05	30	03	01	16	/
6	06	09	03	06	16	05
7	/	03	/	01	03	01
8	/	08	02	06	06	01
9	05	25	05	05	14	02
10	01	01	/	/	09	03
RESULTS	30	136	21	30	93	27

3.1.2-Statistic Study of Theme of Time

Table 3.1 shows the frequency of the word “time” and the word “clock” which is an item related to the word time. We notice that the word time is repeated in all the chapters whereas the word clock is repeated in some chapters. Also the number of repetition of these words differs from chapter to another for instance, the word time is repeated in chapter one 11 times and in chapter two 23 times and in chapter five 30 times whereas in chapter ten it is repeated only 1 time. The one may ask the question why this inequality of number of repetition of the word time in all the chapters.

Simply because the plot of story is not linear and it is not ordinary there is no particular event that may explain the cause of repetition of the word “time” 30 times in chapter five and 9 times in chapter six for instance. If the plot is linear, the analysis of the inequality of this repetition would be according the events that cause each number of repetitions in each chapter.

To give further explanation we provide this example: if the plot is linear, we analyse the repetition of the word time in chapter five 30 times because this chapter is narrating the climax of the story. But since the plot of *Slaughterhouse-Five* is random the repetition of the word time is random as well.

3.1.3-The Significance of Time in the Novel

Beside the repetition that we have noticed in the previous examples, there are other examples in which the theme of time is significant as they are of supreme importance.

*An idiotic Englishman, who had lost all his teeth somewhere, had his souvenir in a canvas bag. The bag was resting on my insteps. He would peek into the bag every now and then, and he would roll his eyes and swivel his scrawny neck,, trying to catch people looking covetously at his bag. And he would bounce the bag on my insteps. I thought this bouncing was accidental. But I was mistaken. He had to show somebody what was in the bag, and he had decided he could trust me. He caught my eye, winked, opened the bag. There was a plaster model of the Eiffel Tower in there. It was painted gold. It had a **clock** in it.” (Vonnegut7) (Highlight is mine)*

In this example, the author wants to convey the message of the importance of time. And this is clear in the behaviour of the idiot English man “He would peek into the bag every now and then, and he would roll his eyes and swivel his scrawny neck,, trying to catch people looking covetously at his bag.... He had to show somebody what was in the bag”. He wants all people see the great thing that he has than he trusted Billy and it was Eiffel Tower but with a clock which means time.

This instance from the first chapter, we consider it as a foreshadowing to what would happen in the next chapter about the reality of time and how Billy would discover it.

The time would not pass. Somebody was playing with the clocks, and not only with the electric clocks, but the wind-up kind, too. The second hand on my watch would twitch once, and a year would pass, and then it would twitch again. There was nothing I could do about it. As an Earthling., I had to believe whatever clocks said-and calendars. (Vonnegut 13) (Highlight is mine)

Billy is confused about the reality of time when he said “The time would not pass. Somebody was playing with the clocks” and this is creates an absurd mood because Billy keep

wondering about the phenomenon of time. Then he said “and a year would pass” which means that time is change which is the definition of A theory of time. “The A-series accounts for the notion of change by referring to the future, the present and the past (recall the definition of the A-series: An event moves through the past, to the present and into the future).” (Berg 14)

The following two examples chapter two, they are the events that the author insinuated to them in the previous example from page 13. In these instances Billy is in the planet Tralfamador and here the Tralfamadorians explain to him their concept of time and he discovers the reality of time.

“[...] they **had many wonderful things to teach Earthlings**, especially about **time**. Billy promised to tell what some of those wonderful things were in his next letter.” (Vonnegut 16)
(Highlight is mine)

*The most important thing I learned on Tralfamadore was that when a person dies he only appears to die. He is still very much alive in the past, so it is very silly for people to cry at his funeral. **All moments, past, present and future, always have existed, always will exist. The Tralfamadorians can look at all the different moments just that way we can look at a stretch of the Rocky Mountains, for instance. They can see how permanent all the moments are, and they can look at any moment that interests them. It is just an illusion we have here on Earth that one moment follows another one, like beads on a string, and that once a moment is gone it is gone forever.*** (Vonnegut 16)
(Highlight is mine)

From the instance above we understand that the time does not change because the Tralfamadorians see all events in one moment whether they are in the past or present or future. By opposite the Earthlings think that time is changeable when he said “It is just an illusion we have here on Earth that one moment follows another one, like beads on a string, and that once a moment is gone it is gone forever.

B theorists of time have the same believe as the Tralfamadorias time is not changeable. “The B-theory or ‘tenseless’ theory says the opposite - that tenses have no mind-independent reality (though they might involve relations between times and, for instance, utterances) and that the apparent flow of time is merely psychological. (Prosser 1)

*After Billy's discovery of the reality of time he wants to tell it to all people in order to correct their view toward time and death as well. This instance clarifies this idea. "The cockles of Billy's heart, at any rate, were glowing coals. What made them so hot was Billy's believes that he was going to comfort so many people with **the truth about time.**" (Vonnegut16) (Highlight is mine)*

GOD GRANT ME

THE SERENITY TO ACCEPT

THE THINGS I CANNOT CHANGE

COURAGE

TO CHANGE THE THINGS I CAN,

AND WISDOM ALWAYS

TO TELL THE DIFFERENCE. (Vonnegut 30) (Highlight is mine)

***Among the things Billy Pilgrim could not change were the past, the present and the future.** (ibid30) (Highlight is mine)*

These examples show again the confusion of Billy about the reality of time as a result he pray to God to help him. In addition, the examples also indicate that time does not pass and it does not change which again the principle of B theory of time. The narrator said: "Among the things Billy Pilgrim could not change were the past, the present and the future. Not only that, the author use of B theory of time is vivid in the following example:

*It would take another Earthling to explain it to you. Earthlings are the great explainers, **explaining why this event is structured as it is, telling how other events may be achieved or avoided.** I am a Tralfamadorian, seeing all time as you might see a stretch of Rocky Mountains. **All time is all time. It does not change. It does not lend itself to warnings or explanations. It simply is. Take it moment by moment,** and you will find that we are all,as I've said before, bugs in amber. (ibid 41) (Highlight is mine)*

The Tralfamadorians are insisting on the time is unchangeable and all event happen in one moment. As a result they believe on the present and denied the past and the future or in

other word they completely deny the flow of time. We deduce from the instance above that the Earthlings think that time is pass and it is changeable and they have three tenses past, present and future which the principles of A theory of time. Whereas the Tralfamadorians think that time does not change and they believe only on the “Now” which the principle of B theory of time.

2-The absurd: the absurd in *Slaughterhouse-Five* is the most dominant theme because every single thing indicates absurdity the character, the events, and language. In the following sections we analyse all the textual evidences in detail to show the absurd in the novel.

2.1-The absurd characters: *Slaughterhouse-Five* is purely an absurd novel and the main reasons which made it so are the events and the language and the characters.

2.1.1-Billy Pilgrim: The main character in the novel, he is an absurd hero because of his personality. Though he is a protagonist but is a flat character in the novel because he did not develop he stayed the same character from the beginning until the end. Being a flat character adds the absurd flavour to the story. In addition he has a weak personality; he is an idiot as the writer has described him “And there in the doorway were Gluck and Derby and **Pilgrim-the childish soldier and the poor old high school teacher** and the clown in his toga and silver shoes-staring.” (Vonnegut 73)

According to Camus’s philosophy toward the absurd hero in his essay *The Myth of Sisyphus*, we can classify Billy as an absurd hero. For him the absurd hero sustains his sufferance and faces the absurd life. “Sisyphus, proletarian of the gods, powerless and rebellious, knows the whole extent of his wretched condition: it is what he thinks of during his descent. The lucidity that was to constitute his torture at the same time crowns his victory. There is no fate that cannot be surmounted by scorn.” (Camus 77)

Further, Billy Pilgrim is unhappy in his life; because in many situations in the novel shows that he refuses to live because of the absurd life. And these are instances from the novel to show Billy’s attitudes toward life. These are instances from the novel

“**Saved your life again, you dumb bastard,**’ Weary said to Billy in the ditch. **He had been saving Billy's life for days, cursing him, kicking him, slapping him, making him move. It was**

*absolutely necessary that cruelty be used, because **Billy wouldn't do anything to save himself. Billy wanted to quit.***” (Vonnegut 19) (Highlight is mine)

She upset Billy simply by being his mother. She made him feel embarrassed and ungrateful and weak because she had gone to so much trouble to give him life, and to keep that life going, and Billy didn't really like life at all.” (Vonnegut 48) (Highlight is mine) “Rosewater was twice as smart as Billy, but he and Billy were *dealing with similar crises in similar ways. They had both found life meaningless, partly because of what they had seen in war.* (Vonnegut 48) (Highlight is mine)

The three excerpts show that Billy found life is not worth to be lived and he wants to die but, he did not committed suicide. Again, this is Camus's philosophical view about facing the absurd life. He is against committing suicide as a solution to end the absurd feeling, his answer for the question does the absurd dictates death? Was as the following:

The real effort is to stay there, rather, in so far as that is possible, and to examine closely the odd vegetation of those distant regions. Tenacity and acumen are privileged spectators of this inhuman show in which absurdity, hope, and death carry on their dialogue. The mind can then analyze the figures of that elementary yet subtle dance before illustrating them and reliving them itself. (Camus 8)

*According to Camu's description of the absurd hero and his philosophy of the absurd and the way that the one should face the absurd life; we come to the result that Billy Pilgrim is an absurd character and more precisely an absurd hero. Moreover, Billy faced the absurd life as Camus suggested in his essay *Absurdity and Suicide*. Again, Vonnegut used the philosophy of Albert Camus in *Slaughterhouse-Five*.*

3.2.2-The absurd Situations in the Novel

Vonnegut expressed the absurd situations by using repetition. These are the representative instances from the novel in which the repetition occurs. Also we rely on the table 3.1 to show the number of words that add the absurd flavour.

*The real Iron Maiden was a medieval torture instrument, a sort of boiler which was shaped like a woman on the outside-and lined with spikes. The front of the woman was composed of two hinged doors. The idea was to put a criminal inside and then close the doors slowly. There were two special spikes where his eyes would be. There was a drain in the bottom to let out all the blood. **So it goes.** (Vonnegut 20) (Highlight is mine)*

We move to the second example from the same chapter and the same page which is a complement to the first one it is about torture and killing:

*Weary told Billy about neat tortures he'd read about or seen in the movies or heard on the radio-about other neat tortures he himself had invented. One of the inventions was sticking a dentist's drill into a guy's ear. He asked Billy what he thought **the worst form of execution** was. Billy had no opinion. The correct answer turned out to be this: 'You stake a guy out on an anthill in the desert-see? **He's face upward, and you put honey all over his balls and pecker, and you cut off his eyelids so he has to stare at the sun till he dies.'** **So it goes.** (Vonnegut 20) (Highlight is mine)*

The third example is of high importance because it holds a great message. The picture of Jesus the Christ indicates that even he did not survive from agony although he is a messenger. He experienced the absurdity of life and he died horribly. The main idea here is that Jesus the Christ died because death is inevitable and nobody will live forever.

*He was dimly tempted to say, though, that he knew a thing or two about gore. Billy, after all, **had contemplated torture and hideous wounds at the beginning and the end of nearly every day of his childhood.** Billy had an **extremely gruesome crucifix hanging** on the wall of his little bedroom in Ilium. A military surgeon would have admired the clinical fidelity of the artist's rendition of all **Christ's wounds-the spear wound, the thorn wounds, the holes that were made by the iron spikes.** Billy's Christ **died horribly.** He was pitiful. **So it goes."** (Vonnegut 21) (Highlight is mine)*

*We have three instances about the absurd situations, what is noticeable about theme is they are about torture, sufferance, cruelty and death. Another observation is the repetition of the phrase "So it goes" after each scene of torture and death. This indicates how life is meaningless and invaluable because man live to be treated badly and his end is death. Camus said in his essay *The Absurd Man* "In the absurd world the value of a notion or of a life is*

measured by its sterility.” (Camus 45) when we refer to the excerpts above we find no sterility of life as a result it has no value and this is the amount of absurdity.

Moreover, the phrase “So it goes” is a melancholic phrase which is repeated 105 times in the entire novel; almost it is repeated in each sentence in the text. In addition, it is associated by the words kill, dies, hanged, burned ect. This show the absurd life because “so it goes” means there is nothing to say and this life.

3.2.3-Cruelty and Violence

As long as suffering is one source of the absurd, it considered that cruelty and violence are aspects of the absurd life because they cause sufferance and melancholy. The scenes of cruelty and violence are dominant in Slaughterhouse-Five; these are some illustrations which show how these two aspects are source of the absurd.

*I threw him the steak. He swallowed it down in one big gulp. I waited around for ten minutes.' Now Lazzaro's eyes twinkled. **'Blood started coming out of his mouth. He started crying, and he rolled on the ground, as though the knives were on the outside ohim instead of on the inside of him. Then he tried to bite out his own insides. I laughed, and I said to him, "You got the right idea now. Tear your own guts out, boy. That's me in there with all those knives."** So it goes. (Vonnegut 65) (Highlight is mine)*

The first example shows Lazzaro violence toward the dog and how cruel the situation is. While the dog is suffering and dying Lazzaro laugh loudly which is sadism by part of Lazzaro.

*Only the candles and the soap were of German origin. They had a ghostly, opalescent similarity. The British had no way of knowing it, **but the candles and the soap were made from the fat of rendered Jews and Gypsies and fairies and communists, and other enemies of the State. So it goes.** (Vonnegut 46) (Highlight is mine)*

This is a real story of people tortured and killed by the Nazi power during the WWII; this is a reflection of the inhumanity and certainly the absurd conditions that are qualified by violence and cruelty.

*How the inhabitants of a whole planet can live in peace I As you know, I am from a planet that has been **engaged in senseless slaughter since the***

beginning of time. I myself have seen the bodies of schoolgirls who were boiled alive in a water tower by my own countrymen, who were proud of fighting pure evil at the time. 'This was true. Billy saw the boiled bodies in Dresden. 'And I have lit my way in a prison at night with candles from the fat of human beings who were butchered by the brothers and fathers of those school girls who were boiled. Earthlings must be the terrors of the Universe! If other planets aren't now in danger from Earth, they soon will be. (Vonnegut 55) (Highlight is mine)

We deduce from this example that the value of human being became too cheap because people are killing each other without mercy. It is cheap to the extent that they made candles from the remains of human being; such shenanigans toward the most important creature make the life meaningless.

“Beneath the nonsense and slapstick humour of Absurdism lurks an element of cruelty, often revealed in dialogue between characters but occasionally manifested in acts of violence.” (Milne 43)

3.3-The theme of death

Kurt Vonnegut is not the first writer who tackled this theme; nonetheless, he has his own way to express it and to give his view toward the death as an existential theme.

3.3.1-Theme of Death in Slaughterhouse-Five

It is true that the story is about war and it is an axiom that theme of death must be included but; the writer did not stop at that level, he demonstrated death in the everyday life. Kurt Vonnegut dealt with Heidegger concept of death and he relied on repetition to express this theme with reference to the philosophy of death particularly Heidegger. Theme of death overlaps with theme of the absurd in a way or another because death is the first source for the absurd. Vonnegut sought to tackle this theme in order to reflect the idea of destiny of human being and death is natural phenomenon that the one must accept it.

3.3.2-Repetition of Theme of Death: we begin with some representative instances from the novel then we provide a detailed analysis for theme relying on Heidegger philosophy of death and Halliday and Hasan's frame work of repetition.

*When a Tralfamadorian sees a corpse, all he thinks is that the **dead** person is in a bad condition in that particular moment, but that the same person is just fine in plenty of other moments. Now, when I myself hear that somebody is **dead**, I simply shrug and say what the Tralfamadorians say about **dead** people, which is "so it goes." (Vonnegut 16) (Highlight is mine)*

*Howard W. Campbell. Jr., remained standing, like the guards. He talked to the guards in excellent German. He had written many popular German plays and poems in his time, and had married a famous German actress named Resi North. She was **dead** now, had been **killed** while entertaining troops in the Crimea. **So it goes.** (Vonnegut 75) (Highlight is mine)*

*What the Englishman said about survival was this 'If you stop taking pride in your appearance, you will very soon **die.**' He said that he had seen several men **die** in the following way: They ceased to stand up straight, then ceased to shave or wash, then ceased to get out of bed, then ceased to talk, then **died.** There is this much to be said for it: it is evidently a very easy and painless way to go.' **So it goes.** (Vonnegut 67) (Highlight is mine)*

We have three instances from the novel that express scene of death; they are different situations of dead people and the way that their life ended. The first observation about these instances is the repetition of the words die, dead, death, hanged and so it goes. The second one is after each scene of death the author repeat the phrase "so it goes". It meant by so it goes that death is inevitable and it does not matter how (the cause) and when or where. The destiny of human being at the end is death, and this is Heidegger philosophy of death. Heidegger assumed that

Everyone knows that someday they are going to die. When we pass an elderly person on the street, we might think to ourselves that this person is going to die soon, and, depending on our age, we might satisfy ourselves with the idea that we have twenty or thirty years before we are going to die. Heidegger, however, would dismiss this thought as banal. Instead he wants to make "everyday man" realize that death is a possibility at any moment (Kilici 25)

Yet, "so it goes" has another meaning which is you are dead at that particular moment. Billy learned this in Tralfamador planet whereat, the Tralfamadorian believe that when someone died he only appears dead at that moment but he still alive in other moments as a result when they see someone dead they say "so it goes"

*The most important thing I learned on Tralfamadore was **that when a person dies he only appears to die. He is still very much alive in the past**, so it is very silly for people to cry at his funeral. All moments, past, present and future, always have existed, always will exist. The Tralfamadorians can look at all the different moments just that way we can look at a stretch of the Rocky Mountains, for instance. They can see how permanent all the moments are, and they can look at any moment that interests them. It is just an illusion we have here on Earth that one moment follows another one, like beads on a string, and that once a moment is gone it is gone forever. **'When a Tralfamadorian sees a corpse, all he thinks is that the dead person is in a bad condition in that particular moment, but that the same person is just fine in plenty of other moments. Now, when I myself hear that somebody is dead, I simply shrug and say what the Tralfamadorians say about dead people, which is "so it goes."**' (Vonnegut 16) (Highlight is mine)*

In fact, not only Tralfamadorians who think of death in this way but Heidegger philosophy also agrees upon the same idea; because he said in his book *Being and Time* that when someone dies does not mean that he passed away the world completely rather, he is dead in that moment and alive in another one. In addition, he said when someone dies only his body who is absent but the soul is still alive.

Even the Da-sein of others, when it reached its wholeness in death, is a no-longer-being-in-the-world. Does not dying mean going-out-of-the-world and losing being in the world? Yet, the no-longer-being-in-the-world of the deceased (understood in an extreme sense) is still a being in the sense of the mere objective presence of a corporeal thing encountered. In the dying of others that remarkable phenomenon of being can be experienced that can be defined as a transition of a being from the kind of being of Da-sein (or of life) to no-longer-being-there. The end of the being qua Da-sein is the beginning of this being qua something objectively present. (Heidegger 120)

3.3.3-The Statistic Study of Theme of Death

Kurt Vonnegut as we have hypothesized used repetition to demonstrate the themes of existentialism. Concerning the theme of death he provided a huge number of words about death; as it is show in the table 3.1. the word “death is repeated 30 times and the word “to die” is repeated 93 times and the word “dead” is recurrent 59 times and the word killed is recurrent 25 times and the word “shot” is recurrent 27 and finally the famous phrase “so it goes” occurred 105 times. This last is repeated after each words that are listed above; these numbers indicate that the author used this device which is repetition to highlight this crucial theme and to manifest the philosophy of Heidegger particularly.

The author use of repetition is done on purpose; because he is skilful in writing and this repetition is not considered as redundancy on part of the writer on the contrary it is creativity to present themes differently from the other writer and to be unique in his style of writing. Yet, Kurt wants to emphasize his ideas and express his tendencies through repetition.

3.3.4- Heidegger Concept of Death in the Novel

There are further examples about theme of death that are important to the reader to know about them and their interpretation in accordance to Heidegger philosophy of death.

*I, Billy Pilgrim, the tape begins, **will die, have died and always will die on February thirteenth, 1976.***

***At the time of his death,** he says, he is in Chicago to address a large crowd on the subject of flying saucers **and the true nature of time.** His home is still in Ilium. He has had to cross three international boundaries in order to reach Chicago. The United States of America has been Balkanized, has been divided into twenty petty nations so that it will never again be a threat to world peace. **Chicago has been hydrogen-bombed by Angry Chinamen. So it goes. It is all brand new.** (Vonnegut 66) (Highlight is mine)*

*In this excerpt Billy Pilgrim delivered the reality of time and death together because when he explains the nature of time which is there is only the present and all the event happens in one moment and you can see all your life at any moment you want; you understand the reality of death as well which is when someone dies he is dead only at that moment and he is alive in another one. Billy Pilgrim said in the tape of his death “I, Billy Pilgrim, the tape begins, **will***

die, have died and always will die on February thirteenth, 1976.” This means that he died on thirteenth 1976 but he is still alive and he will die in the same day. Heidegger said

It was an evident in our characterization of the transition from the Da-sein to no-longer-being-there as no-longer-being-in-the-world that the going-out-of-the-world of Da-sein in the sense of daying must be distinguished from a going-out-of-the-world of what is only alive. The ending of what is only alive we formulate terminologically as perishing. The distinction can become visible only by distinguishing the ending characteristic of Da-sein from the ending of a living thing. Daying can, of course, also be conceived physiologically and biologically. But the medical concept of “exitus” does not coincide with that of perishing. (Heidegger 122)

*Robert Kennedy, whose summer home is eight miles from the home I live in all year round, was shot two nights ago. He **died** last night. **So it goes.***

*Martin Luther King was shot a month ago. He **died**, too. **So it goes.***

*And every day my Government gives me a count of corpses created by military science in Vietnam. **So it goes.***

*My father **died** many years ago now-of natural causes. **So it goes.** He was a sweet man.*

(Vonnegut 95) (Highlight is mine)

Although Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King are famous figures they died because everybody will die even if he is an idol or important personality. As Heidegger said death is inevitable at any moment. But again they are dead only at that moment because after he mentioned their death, the writer said “so it goes”.

*'No, no,' says Billy serenely. 'It is time for you to go home to your wives and children, and **it is time for me to be dead for a little while-and then live again.**' At that moment, Billy's high forehead is in the cross hairs of a high-powered laser gun. It is aimed at him from the darkened press box. In*

*the next moment, **Billy Pilgrim is dead. So it goes. So Billy experiences death for a while. It is simply violet light and a hum. There isn'tn anybody else there. Not even Billy Pilgrim is there.** (Vonnegut 66)
(Highlight is mine)*

Since Billy knew the reality of time and death he realized that death is not something horrible; rather he laugh about it and he accepted as normal phenomenon. In addition he experienced his own death so he is not that hopeless man who does not want to live. Heidegger said that every human must accept the inevitability of death and should not be afraid of it; rather, he should live his death daily. In this excerpt we see a clear congruence between Billy's ideas about death and Heidegger philosophy of death.

Every Da-sein must itself take actually take daying upon itself. Insofar as it "is" death is always essentially my own. And indeed signifies a peculiar possibility of being in which is absolutely a matter of a being of my own Da-sein. In daying, it becomes evident that death is ontologically constituted by mines and existence. Daying is not an event, but a phenomenon to be understood existentially in an eminent sense still to be delineated more closely.
(Heidegger 121)*

*Heidegger insists on the necessity of experiencing death and to understand its reality but far from suicide because everyone will experience his own death at any moment; every one must accept it and live to die in each moment Billy has experienced his death and he recognized that it is a natural phenomenon because in the excerpt above he died many times and he come back as the following example shows "**Then he swings back into life again,** all the way back to an hour after his life was threatened by Lazzaro-in 1945" (Vonnegut 66)
(Highlight is mine)*

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have analyzed the themes of existentialism in Slaughterhouse-Five on the light of Existentialism philosophy. We have discussed the theme of time and how it adds an

existential meaning to the novel rather to be a scientific subject. We have also analyzed the theme of death whereby the writer focuses on the reality of death as phenomenological and existential phenomenon which is Heidegger concept of death. Furthermore, we have analyzed the theme of the absurd on the light of Camus's philosophy of the absurd; in this concern we have analyzed the character Billy as an absurd hero relying on the criteria of Camus of the absurd hero. All these themes overlap to build up the existential thematic unity and makes Slaughterhouse-Five an existential literary work.

General Conclusion

Through the analysis of the novel Slaughterhouse-Five we have dealt with the issue of the use of multiple existential views in the novel Slaughterhouse-Five by Kurt Vonnegut. We have reached our aims to show the impact of Existentialism philosophy on the novel and we have featured the role of repetition as literary device in demonstrating the theme of death, the theme of time and the absurd.

In the third chapter we have analysed the corpus from existential point of view; we have analyzed the theme of death by using Heidegger philosophy of death and the theme of the absurd by using Camus's philosophy of the absurd and the theme of time by using A and B theories of time. After the end of the analysis we have come to the ultimate result; we have confirmed that the writer used the principles and terminologies of these four approaches in his novel which is an evident about the multiplicity of existential views in Slaughterhouse-Five.

We have answered the research questions. We also aimed to show the impact of existentialism in the novel and to highlight the role of repetition to demonstrate the themes of existentialism; we have reached our aims by counting the words that are related to existentialism and by using Halliday and Hasan's framework of repetition and the results are satisfactory. We hypothesized that the writer Kurt Vonnegut used multiple existential view in the novel Slaughterhouse-Five and that he relied on repetition to deal with theme of existentialism. After the analysis the hypotheses are proved and the results are satisfactory.

For further studies, we recommend the future researchers to study the novel Slaughterhouse-Five from a psychoanalytical perspective in order to analyze the protagonist Billy. We recommend also studying the style of the writer because it is an issue of supreme importance.

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الملخص

تهدف الدراسة الحالية الى تحليل رواية المذبح الخامس للكاتب الامريكى كورت فونيكيت من منطلق فلسفي وجودي. وتعتمد هذه الدراسة على دراسة و تحليل اهم المواضيع الوجودية فيها و هي العبثية, الموت و الزمن. تخلق رواية المذبح الخامس تحدي للطلبة في فهمها و تحليلها هذا لان الكاتب استعمل اكثر من فلسفة وجودية واحدة فيها. ومن اجل تحليل و دراسة هذا العمل الادبي نعتمد فلسفة البرت كميو لتحليل موضوع العبثية كما نعتمد فلسفة مارتين هيدجر لتحليل موضوع الموت اما بالنسبة لتحليل موضوع الزمن فقد اخترنا نظريتي الزمن ا و ب.

الكلمات المفتاحية الفلسفة الوجودية, الموت, العبثية, الزمن