

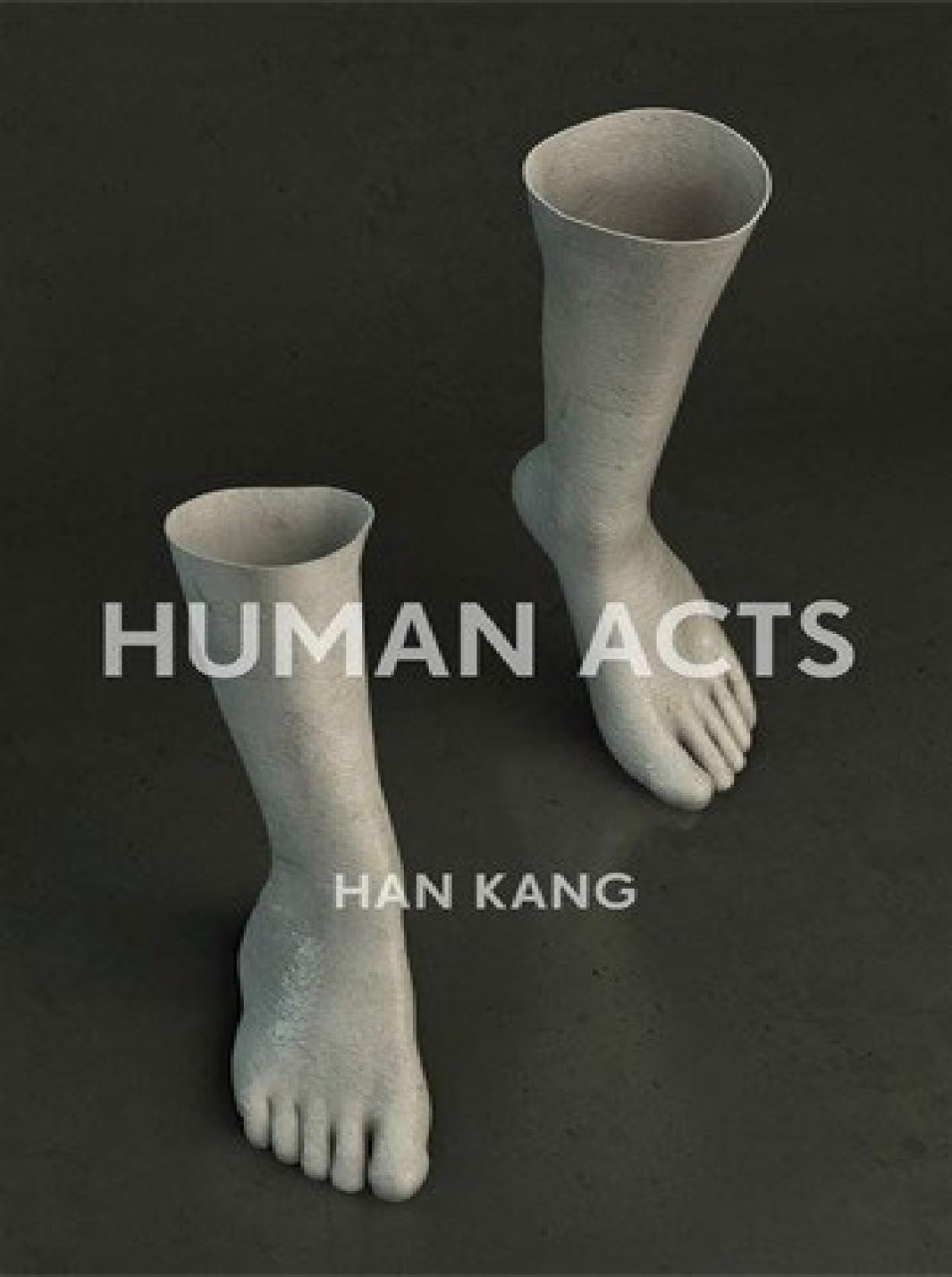
**‘Human Acts’ by
Han Kang
(Biblical & Existential
Allusions)**

Subject: English

Grade: IBDP-1

PGCITE Teacher-Student’s

Name: Fiza Pathan



HUMAN ACTS

HAN KANG



Winner
The
Man
Booker
International
Prize
2016



THE VEGETARIAN

HAN KANG

'An extraordinary experience'
Guardian

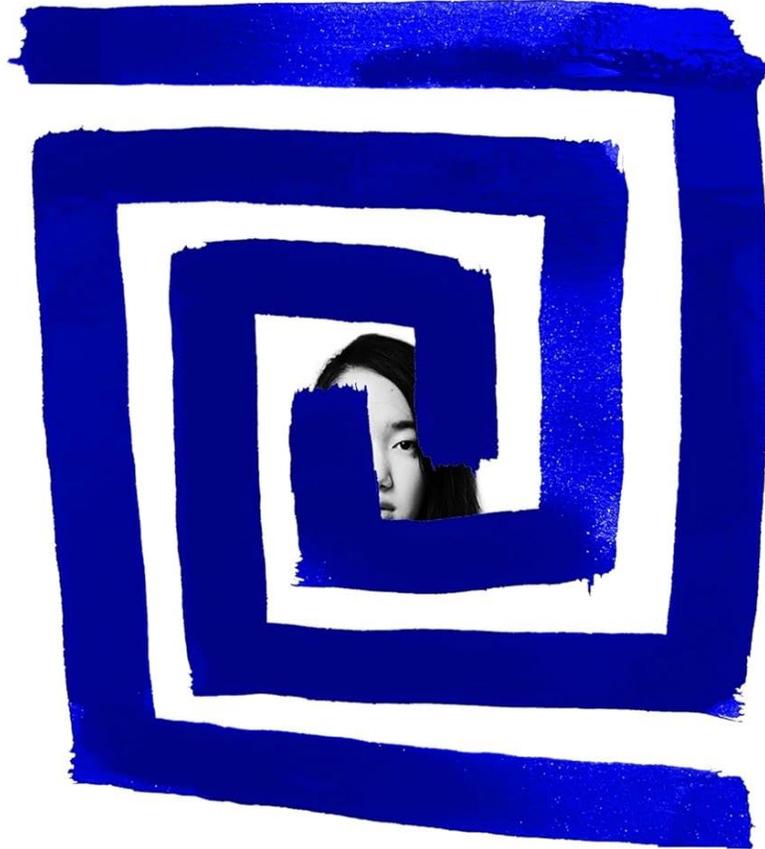
HAN KANG

흰

THE WHITE BOOK

HAN
KANG

AUTHOR OF *THE VEGETARIAN*



GREEK
LESSONS

TRANSLATED BY
DEBORAH SMITH
AND EMILY YAE WON

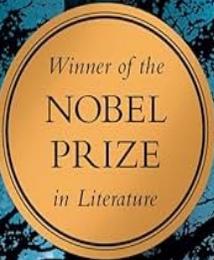
'Breathtaking'
Max Porter



"UNFORGETTABLE."—HERNAN DIAZ

WE DO
NOT PART

A Novel



AUTHOR OF *THE VEGETARIAN*
WINNER OF THE INTERNATIONAL BOOKER PRIZE

HAN KANG

TRANSLATED BY E. YAEWON AND PAIGE ANIYAH MORRIS

FRIEDRICH
DÜRRENMATT
**THE
VIST**

20TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION



THE GOD OF
SMALL THINGS

Arundhati Roy

'A novel of real ambition must invest in its own language,
and this one does . . .'—John Updike, *New Yorker*

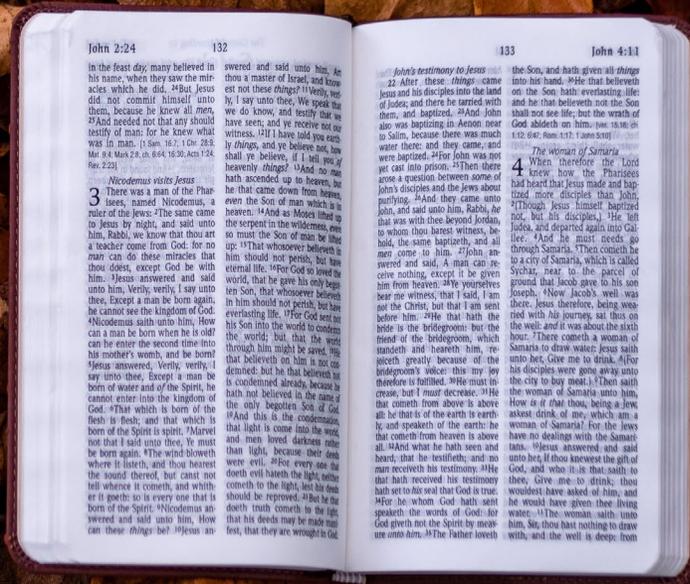
WINNER OF THE 1997 BOOKER PRIZE

Red Oleanders
Rabindranath Tagore

Chapter Guide for Human Acts

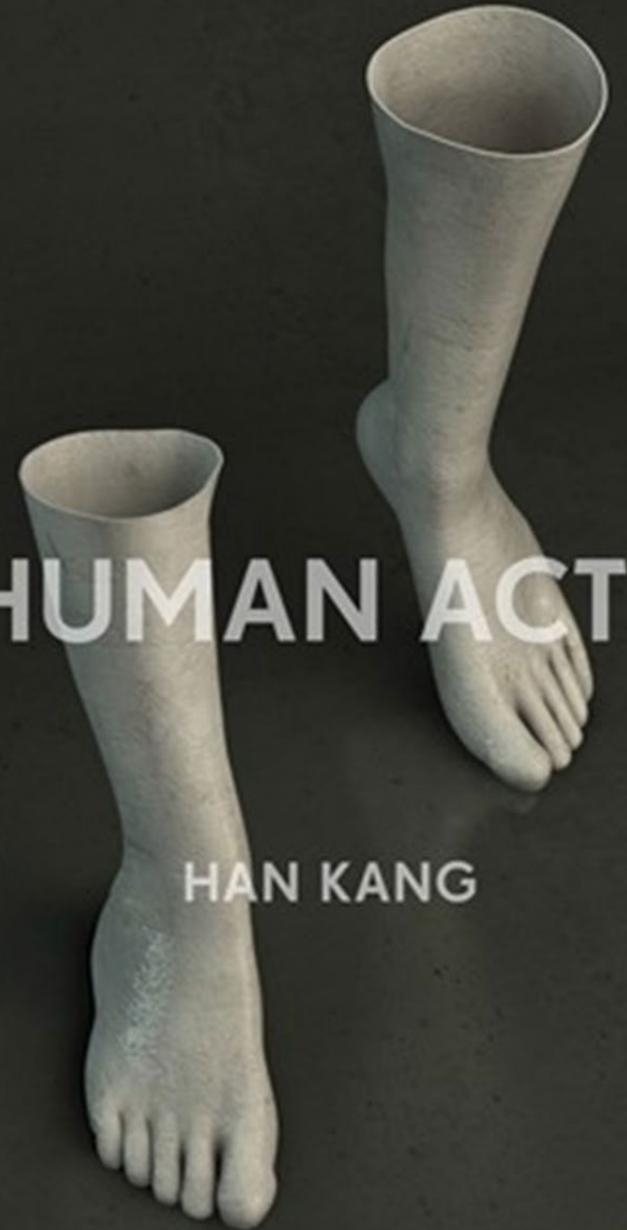
Chapter	Narrator	Year	Key Focus
1: The Boy	Dong-ho (2nd person)	1980	Working in mortuary during uprising
2: The Boy's Friend	Jeong-dae's ghost	1980	Experience of death/the soul
3: The Editor	Eun-sook	1985	Censorship & survivor trauma
4: The Prisoner	Anonymous survivor	1990	Torture & imprisonment
5: The Factory Girl	Seon-ju	2002	Gender-specific violence & long-term trauma
6: The Mother	Dong-ho's mother	2010	Long-term grief & loss
Epilogue: The Writer	Han Kang	2013	Ethics of representation

Biblical Allusions



HUMAN ACTS

HAN KANG





1. Resurrection & The afterlife
2. The Body As Sacred/Desecrated temple
3. Martyrdom & Sacrifice
4. Crucifixion Imagery & Suffering
5. Bearing Witness/ Testimony
6. The Question of Theodicy
7. Burial Rites & Respecting the Dead
8. Forgiveness & Justice
9. The Communion of Suffering
10. Apocalyptic Imagery

1. RESURRECTION & THE AFTERLIFE

The Ghost Chapter (Chapter 2): This entire chapter wrestles with questions central to Christianity - **what happens after death? Does the soul persist? Where does consciousness go?**

Jeong-dae's disembodied spirit asking "Where has my mind gone?" echoes Biblical questions about:

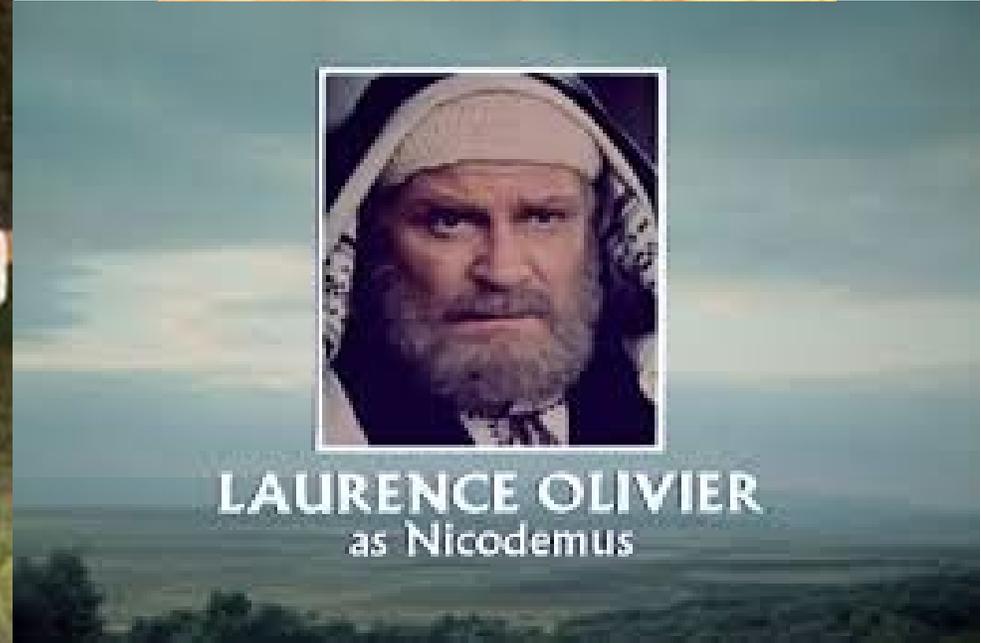
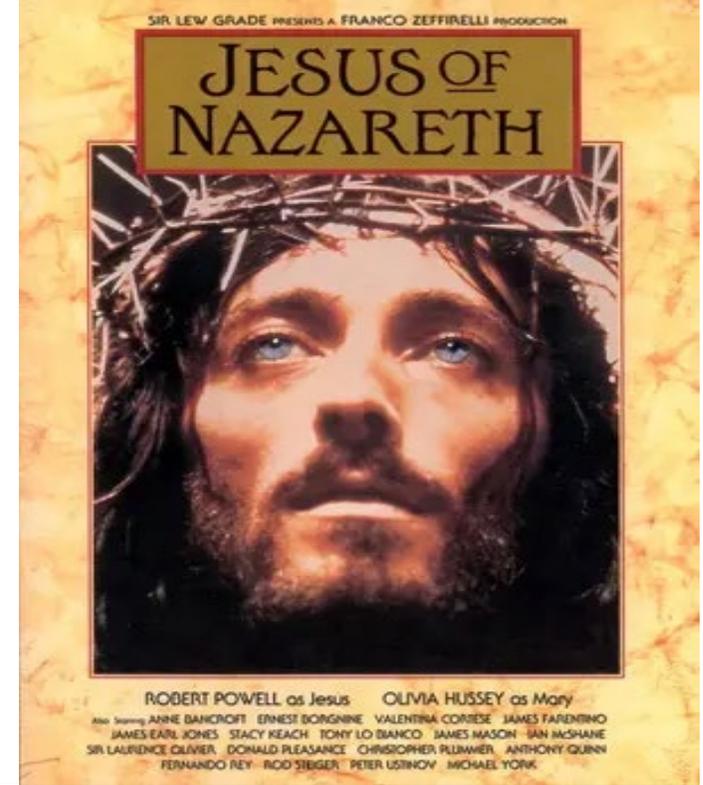
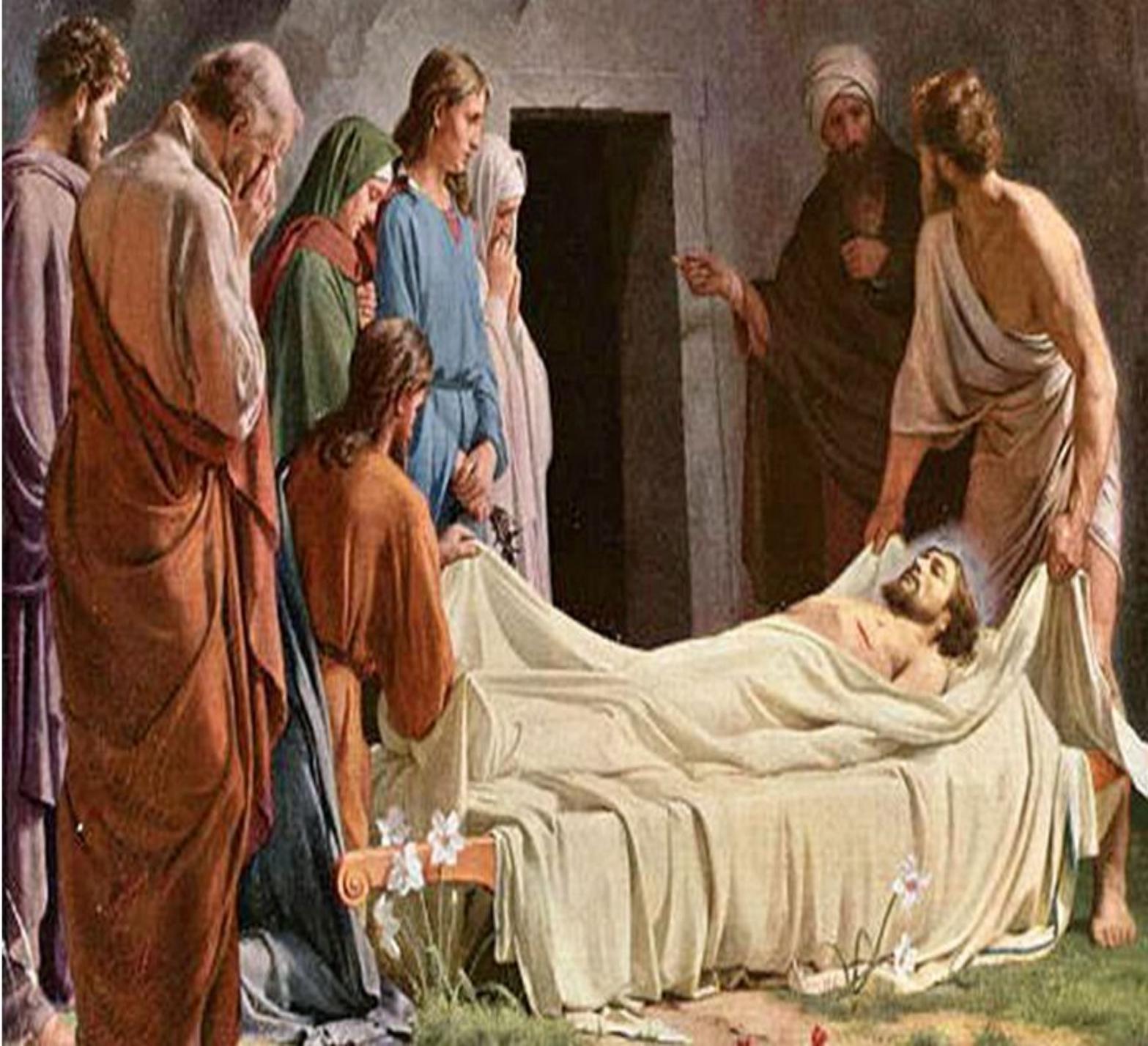
- The resurrection of the body (1 Corinthians 15)
- The soul's journey after death
- Whether we remain "ourselves" after dying

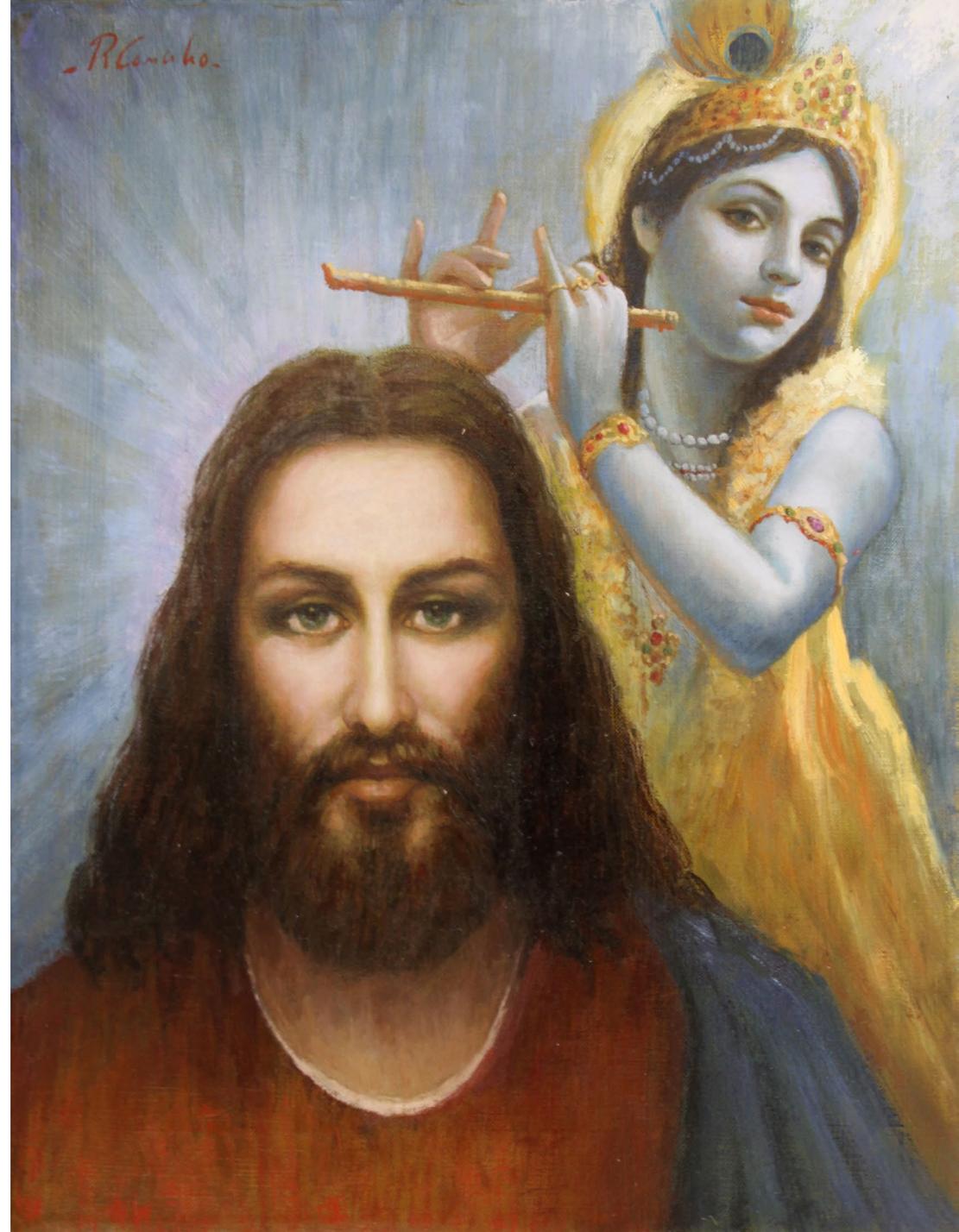
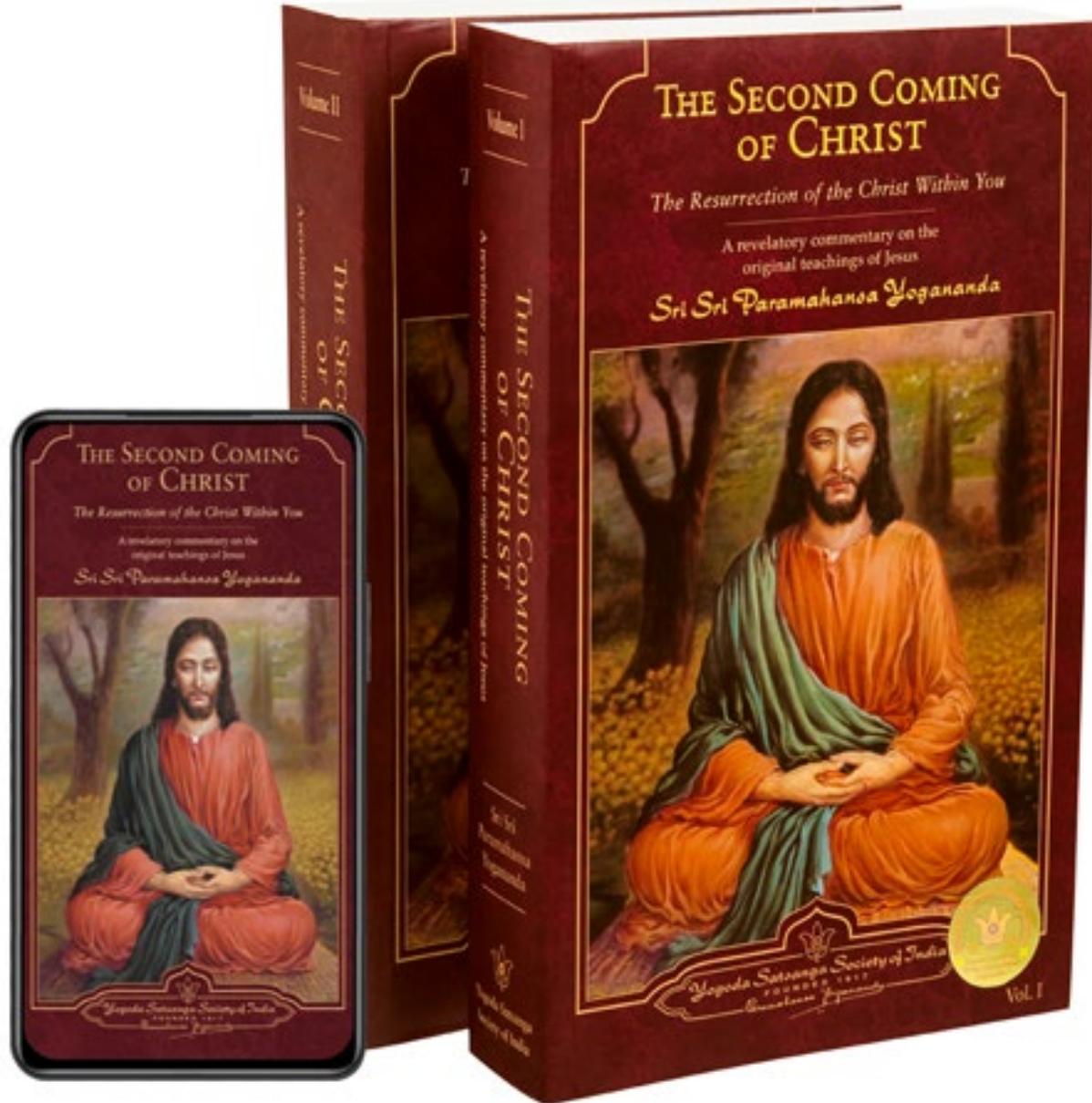
2. THE BODY AS SACRED / DESECRATED TEMPLE

Biblical echo: "Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit?" (1 Corinthians 6:19)

The obsessive focus on **bodies** - washing them, caring for them, honoring them in the mortuary - can be read as treating bodies as sacred even in death. Dong-ho and the other volunteers perform almost **ritualistic acts of care** for the corpses.

- Corporal works of mercy
- Book of Tobit
- Joseph of Arimathea
- Nicodemus the Pharisee





3. MARTYRDOM & SACRIFICE

Biblical parallel: Christ's passion and the martyrdom of early Christians

In the novel:

- The citizens of Gwangju die for their beliefs (democracy, freedom, justice)
- They know they might die but continue to resist
- Their deaths are witnesses (the word "martyr" literally means "witness")
- The novel itself becomes a testimony to their sacrifice

(Q) "How is political martyrdom similar to or different from religious martyrdom? Can a secular death be 'sacred'?"

4. CRUCIFIXION IMAGERY & SUFFERING

The torture scenes (especially Chapter 4) **have uncomfortable parallels to Christ's passion:**

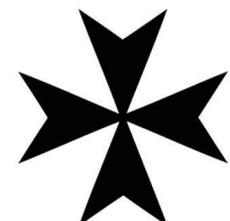
- Extreme physical suffering
- Humiliation and degradation
- Bodies broken by state/imperial power
- The question: "Why must the innocent suffer?"

Biblical echo: Christ's cry - "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"
(Matthew 27:46)

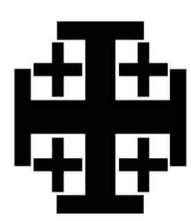
In the novel: Characters experience similar abandonment - where is God/justice/humanity when this violence occurs?



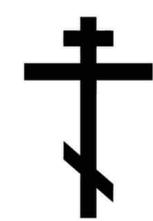
The Ankh



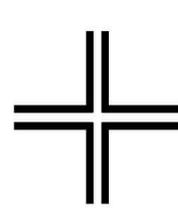
The Maltese Cross



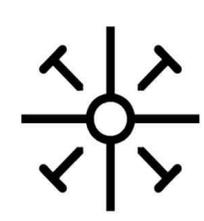
Jerusalem Cross



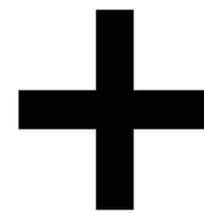
Orthodox Cross



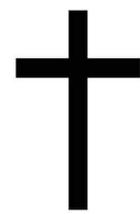
Gamma Cross



Coptic Cross



Greek Cross



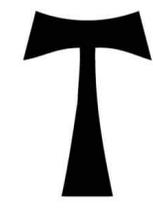
Latin Cross



Celtic Cross



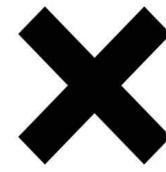
Golgotha Cross



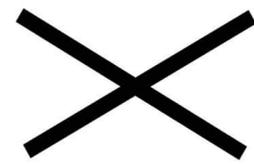
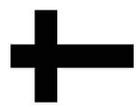
Tau Cross



Papal Cross



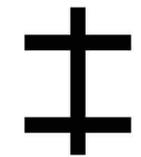
Scandinavian Cross



Saltire



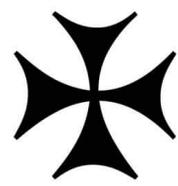
Sun Cross



Lithuanian Cross



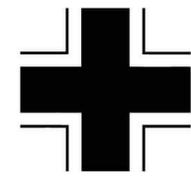
Byzantine Cross



Bolnisi Cross



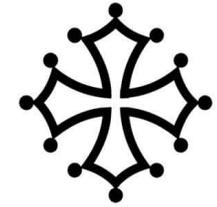
Schwarzkreuz



Balkenkreuz



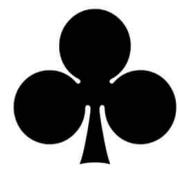
St. James Cross



Toulouse Cross



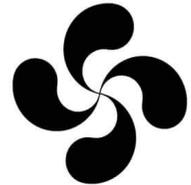
Order of Christ Cross



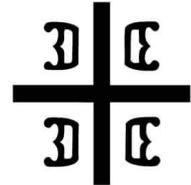
Clubs Cross



Grapevine Cross



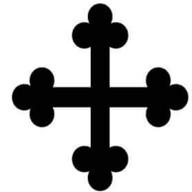
Basque cross



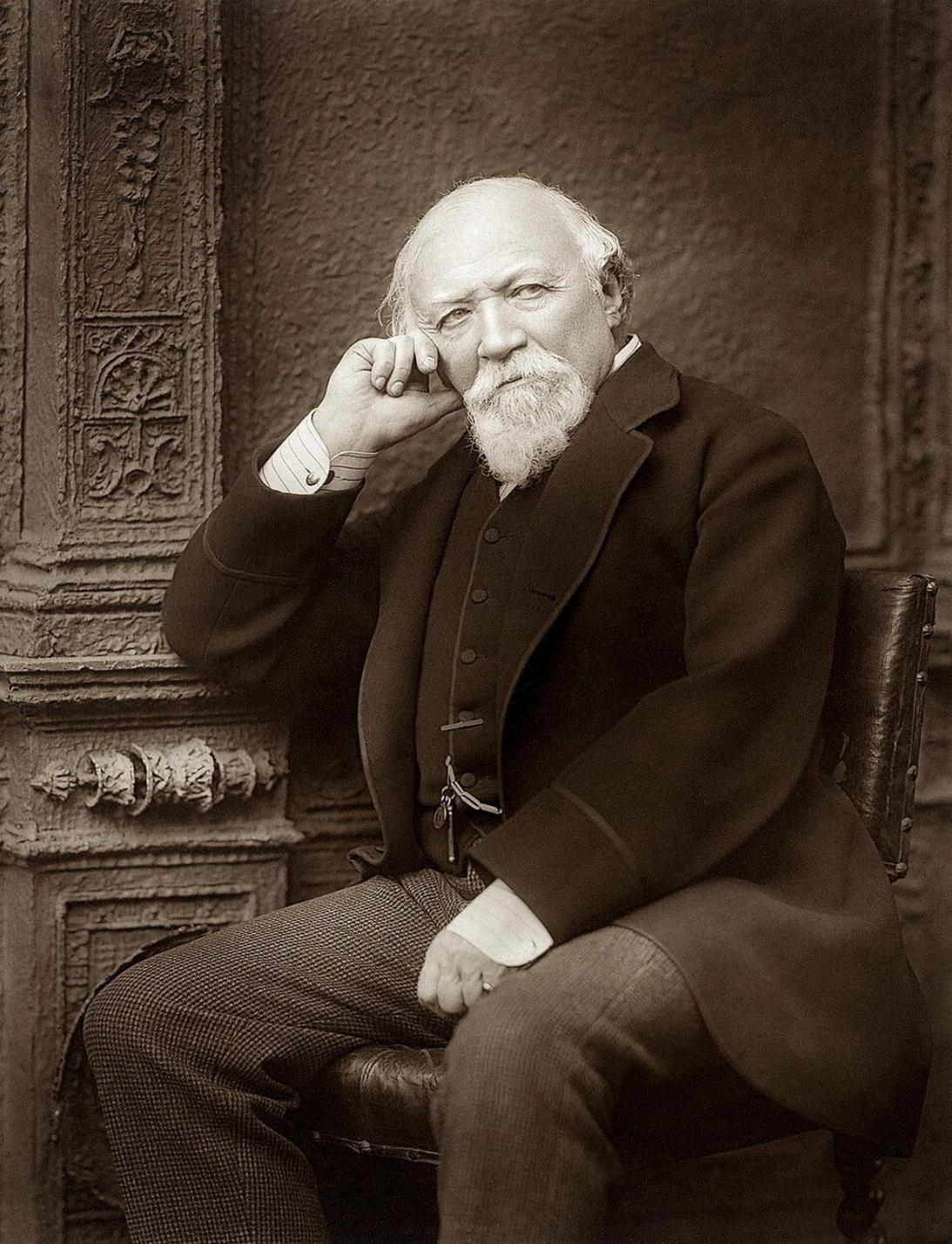
Serbian Cross



Novgorodsky Cross



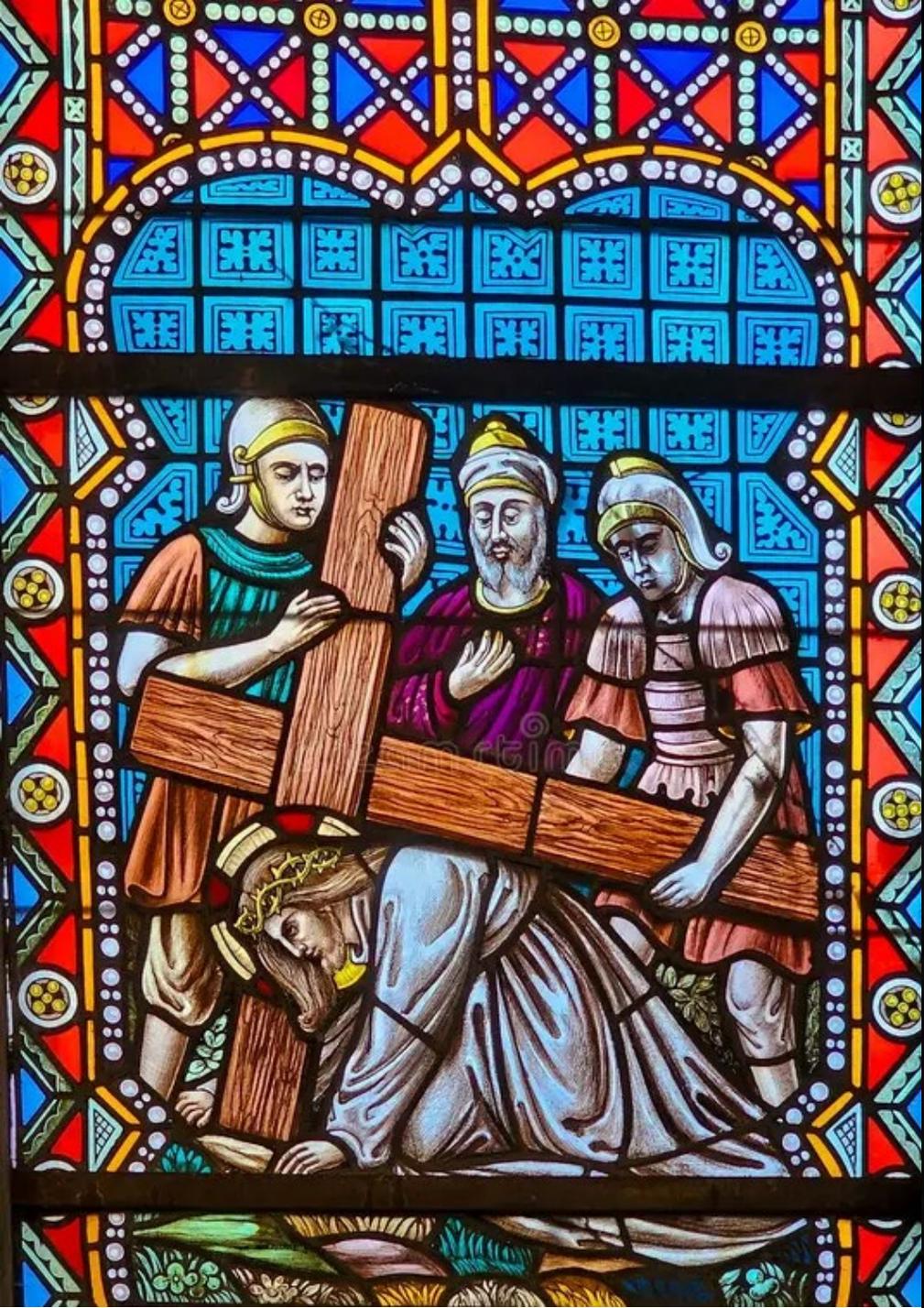
Bottoni Cross



Robert Browning

Poem: 'The Patriot'





5. BEARING WITNESS / TESTIMONY

Biblical tradition: The Gospels as testimony, apostles as witnesses to Christ's resurrection

In the novel:

- The entire structure is about **witnessing and testifying**
- Each chapter is a different witness account
- The reader becomes a witness to the witnesses
- Chapter 6 explicitly discusses the **ethics of testimony**

Key Biblical parallel: Just as the disciples were commanded to **"go and tell"** what they witnessed, Han Kang and her characters feel compelled to testify to what happened in Gwangju.

Memory as sacred duty: "Do this in remembrance of me" (**Luke 22:19**) - the novel insists we must remember the dead, never forget their sacrifice.

Important Funda for Human Acts

Justice = Forgiveness?!

Forgiveness = No Accountability

Don't 'Forgive'

Instead 'Remember' or 'Do Not Forget'

**Remember = Rebellion = Witness = Martyr =
Justice**



Disney

THE
LION
KING

6. THE QUESTION OF THEODICY

Theodicy: If God is good and all-powerful, why does evil/suffering exist?

In the novel: Han Kang doesn't explicitly discuss God, but the **entire novel wrestles with this question** in secular terms:

- If humans are capable of such goodness (the volunteers caring for bodies), why are we also capable of such evil?
- Where is justice when the innocent suffer?
- Can meaning be found in senseless violence?
- What is the source of human evil?

7. BURIAL RITES & RESPECTING THE DEAD

Biblical importance: Proper burial was sacred duty (think of Jesus' burial, or the importance placed on burying the dead in Jewish tradition)

In the novel: The mortuary volunteers' work is almost **priestly** - they:

- Wash and prepare bodies (like preparing Christ's body for burial)
- Record names (honoring individual identity)
- Reunite bodies with families
- Perform rituals of care and dignity

Dehumanize = give their humanity

Objective = subjective

8. FORGIVENESS VS. JUSTICE

Biblical tension: "Turn the other cheek" vs. righteous anger and justice

In the novel:

- . Should survivors forgive their torturers?**
- . Is reconciliation possible without justice?**
- . Can a nation "move on" without accountability?**

The mother's chapter especially wrestles with this - she cannot forgive, she cannot forget, she cannot "heal."

Han Kang seems to suggest: Some wounds don't heal, some sins are unforgivable, and that's okay. This is perhaps a **rejection of easy Christian forgiveness** without justice.

The Sermon on the Mount



9. THE COMMUNION OF SUFFERING

Biblical: The Body of Christ as collective, suffering together

In the novel:

- . Individual suffering becomes collective
- . The novel moves from individual victims to showing how trauma affects entire communities
- . "We are all connected in suffering"

The multiple perspectives create a kind of communion - we're all bound together by witness to this trauma.



10. APOCALYPTIC IMAGERY

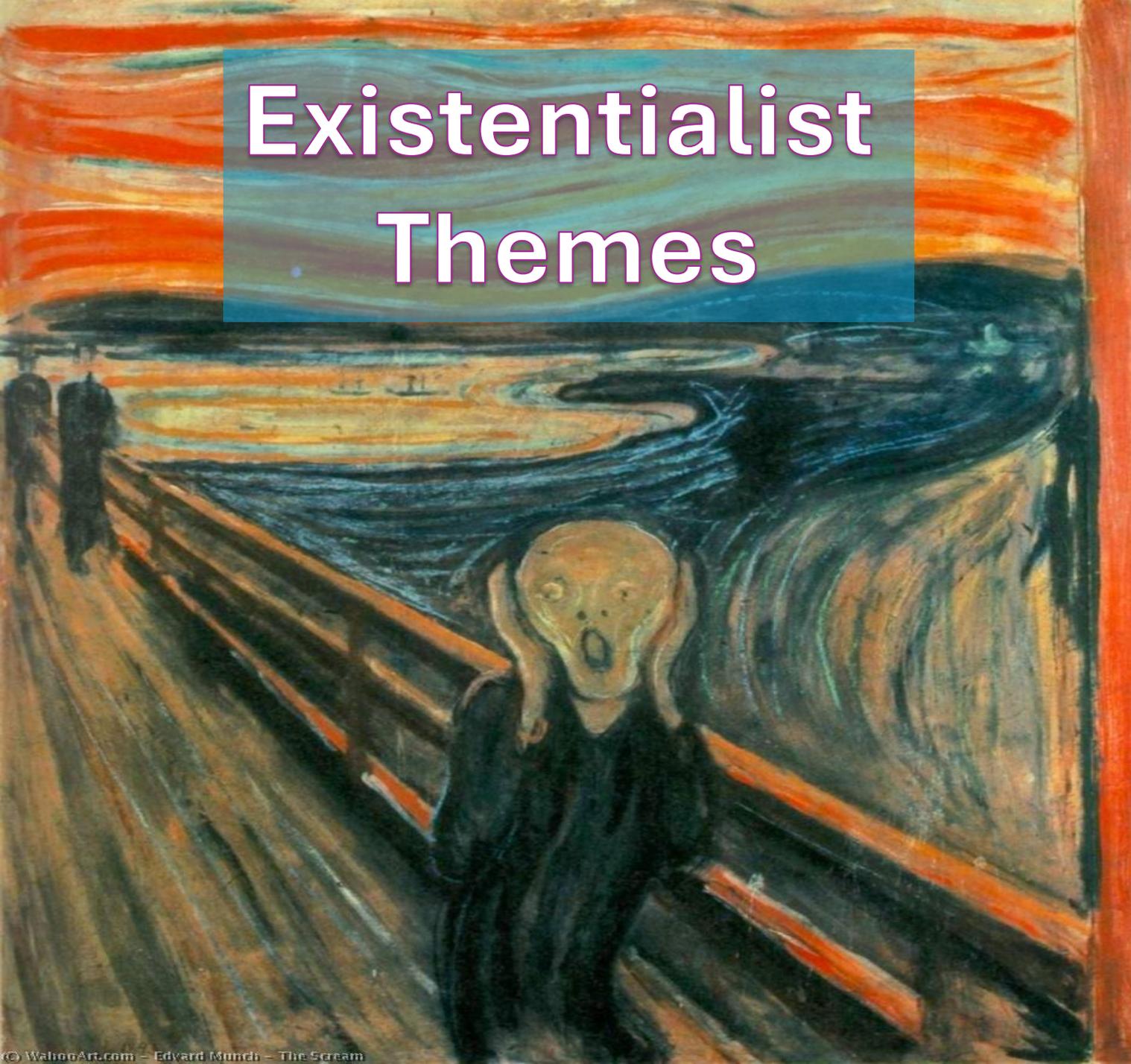
Biblical apocalypse: Revelation's visions of violence, destruction, judgment

In the novel:

- The descriptions of Gwangju during the uprising have apocalyptic quality
- Bodies everywhere, city under siege, normal order collapsed
- Questions of ultimate justice and judgment

The difference: No divine intervention, no second coming, no final judgment day - just human violence and human witness.

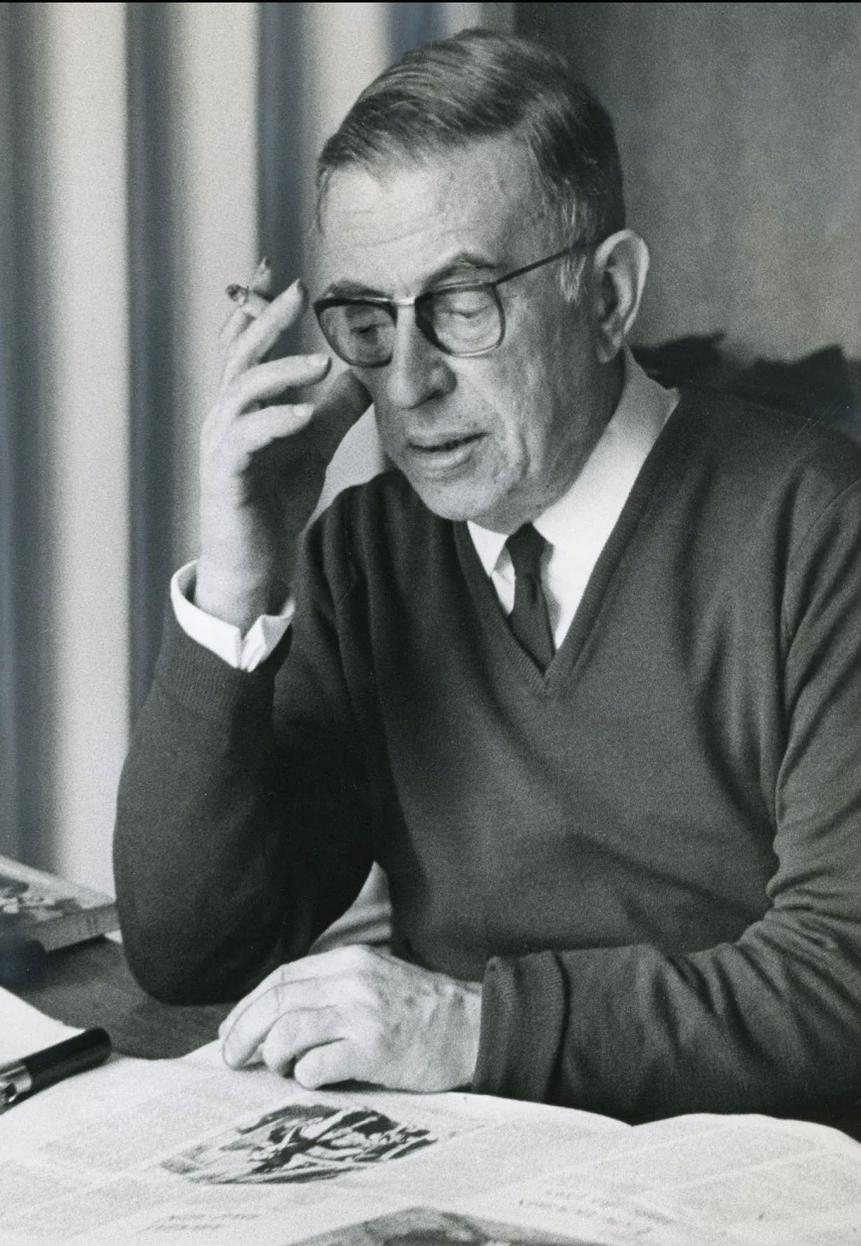
Existentialist Themes



HUMAN ACTS

HAN KANG

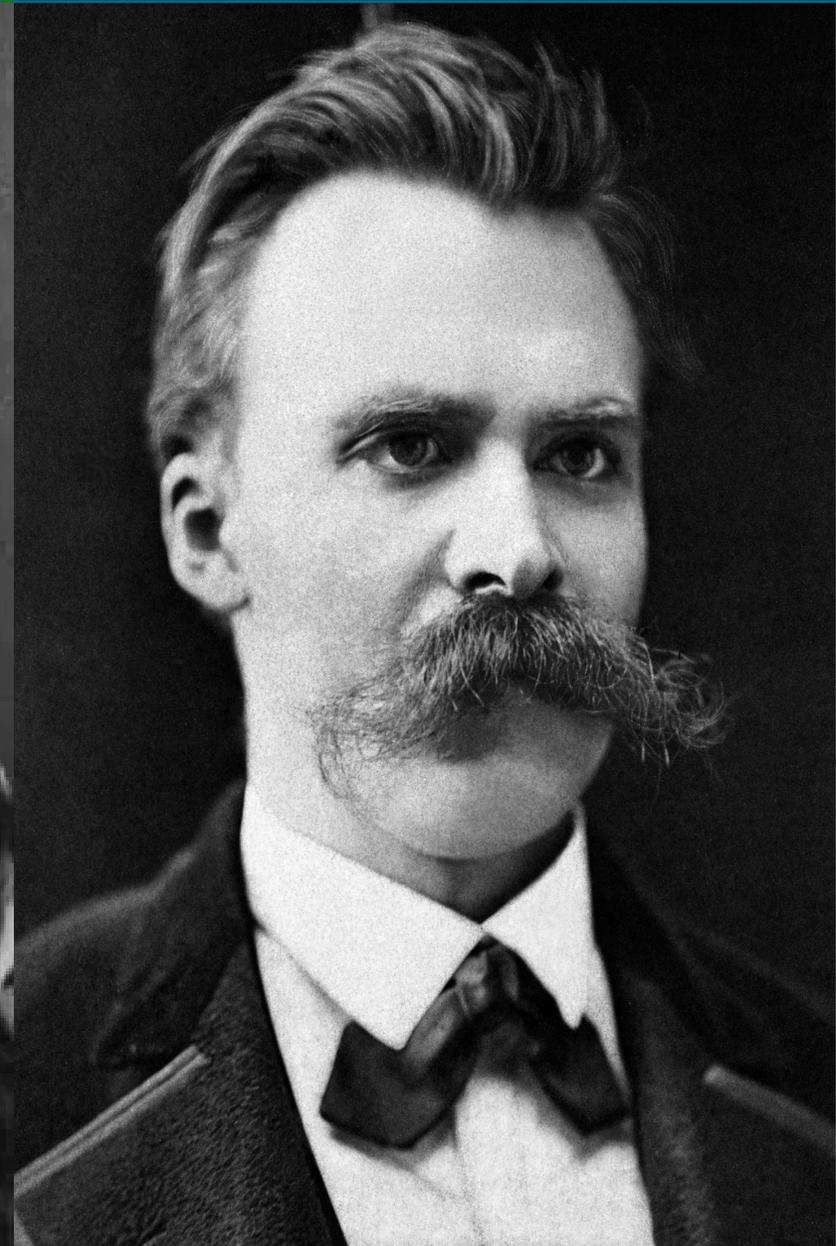
Sartre



Albert Camus



Nietzsche



Human Acts is fundamentally an **existential novel** - it asks the core questions that define existentialist philosophy:

- What does it mean to be **human**?
- How do we create meaning in an absurd, violent **world**?
- What is the relationship between individual freedom and collective **suffering**?
- How do we maintain authenticity in the face of **dehumanization**?
- Is there inherent meaning in suffering, or must we **create it ourselves**?

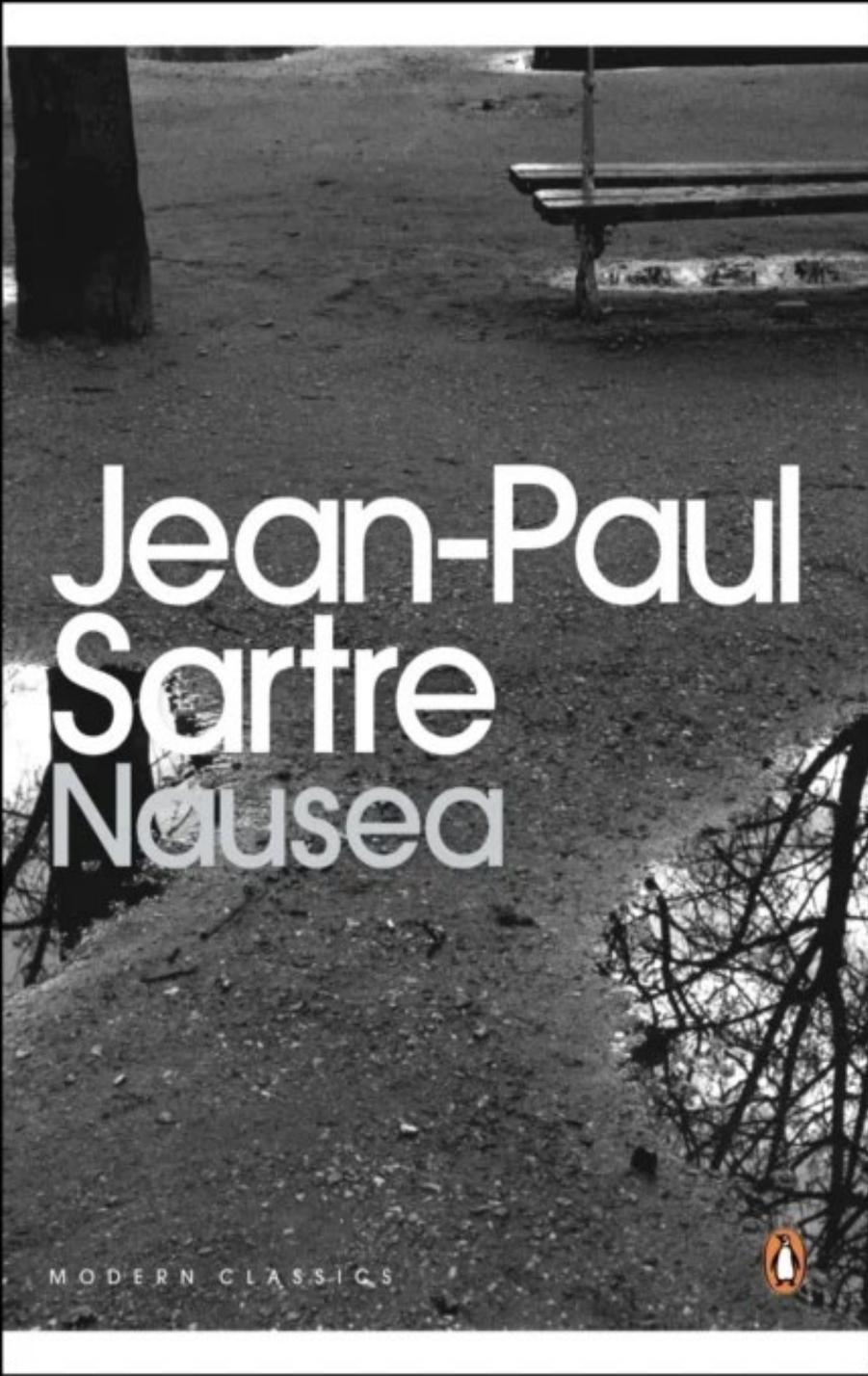


Sartre



Sartre

**‘Existence
Precedes
Essence’**



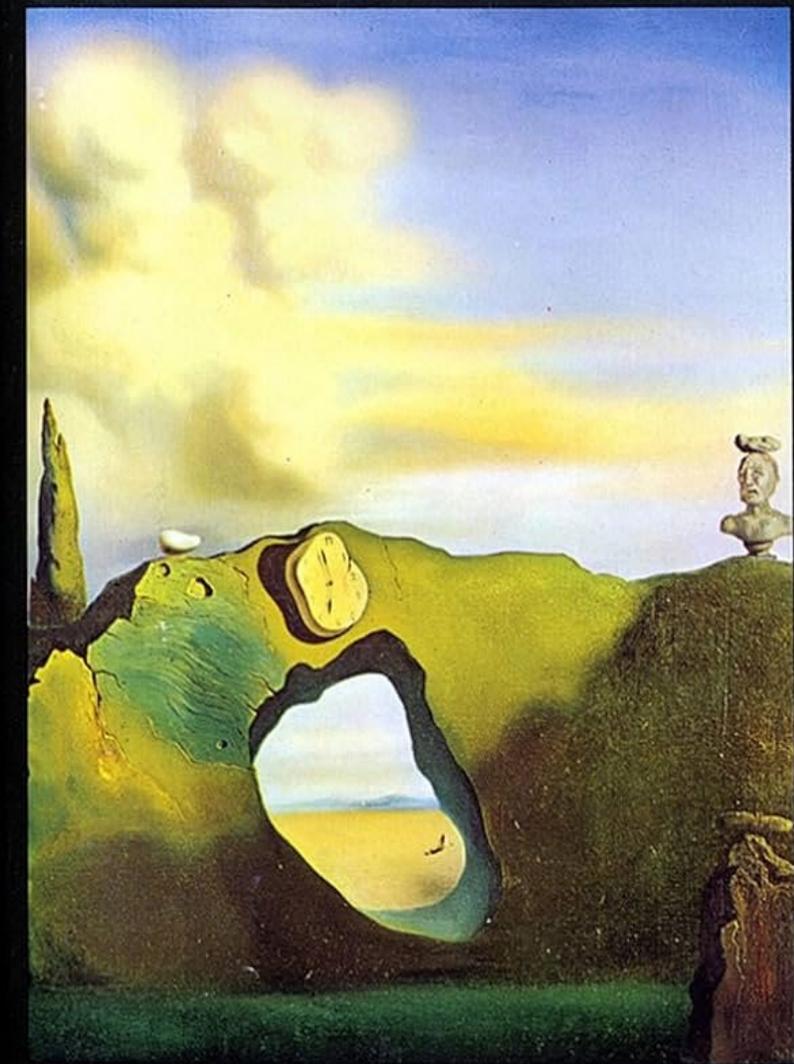
Sartre's Core Ideas:

- We are "condemned to be free" - we must create our own essence through choices
- There is no predetermined human nature - we define ourselves through actions
- "Bad faith" = living inauthentically, denying our freedom and responsibility
- We are radically responsible for our choices
- "Hell is other people" - we're defined by the gaze of others



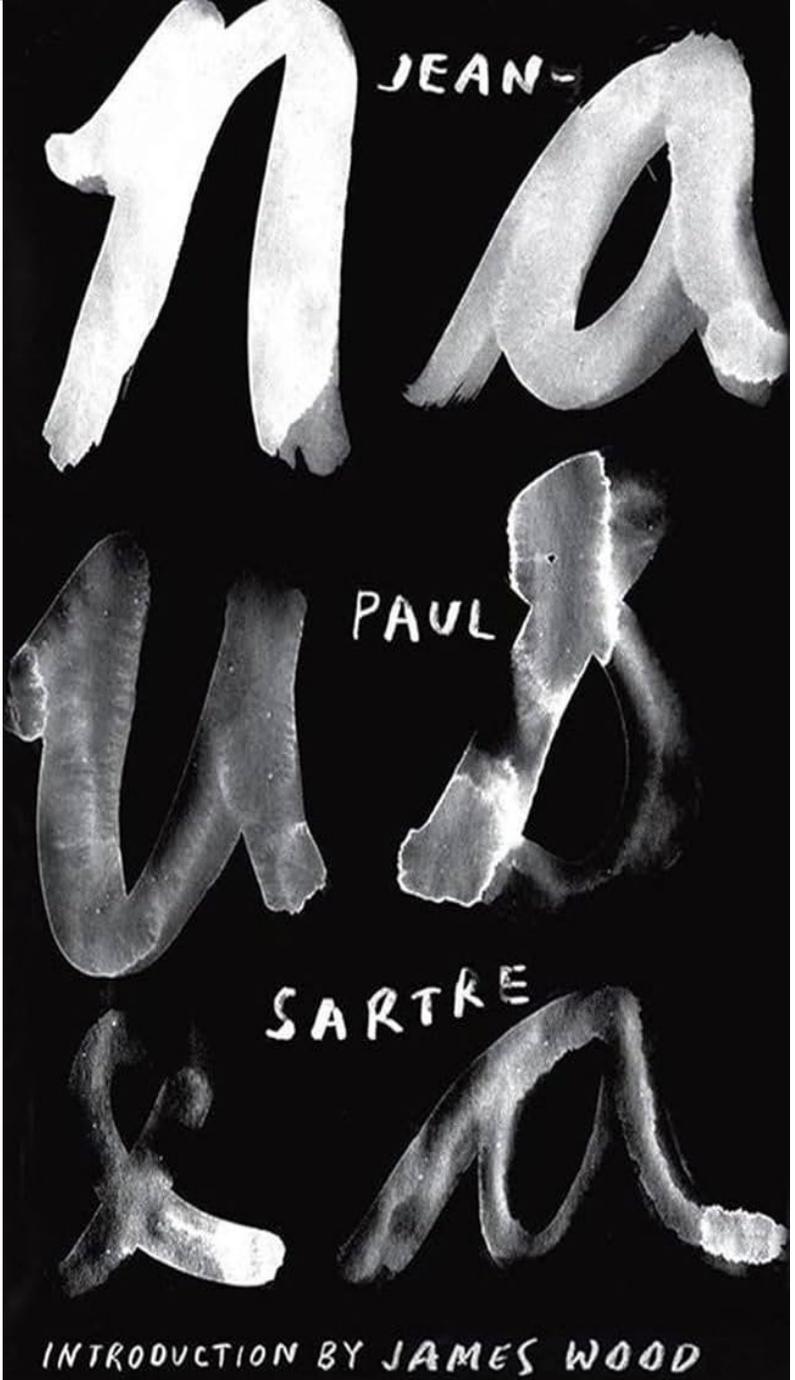
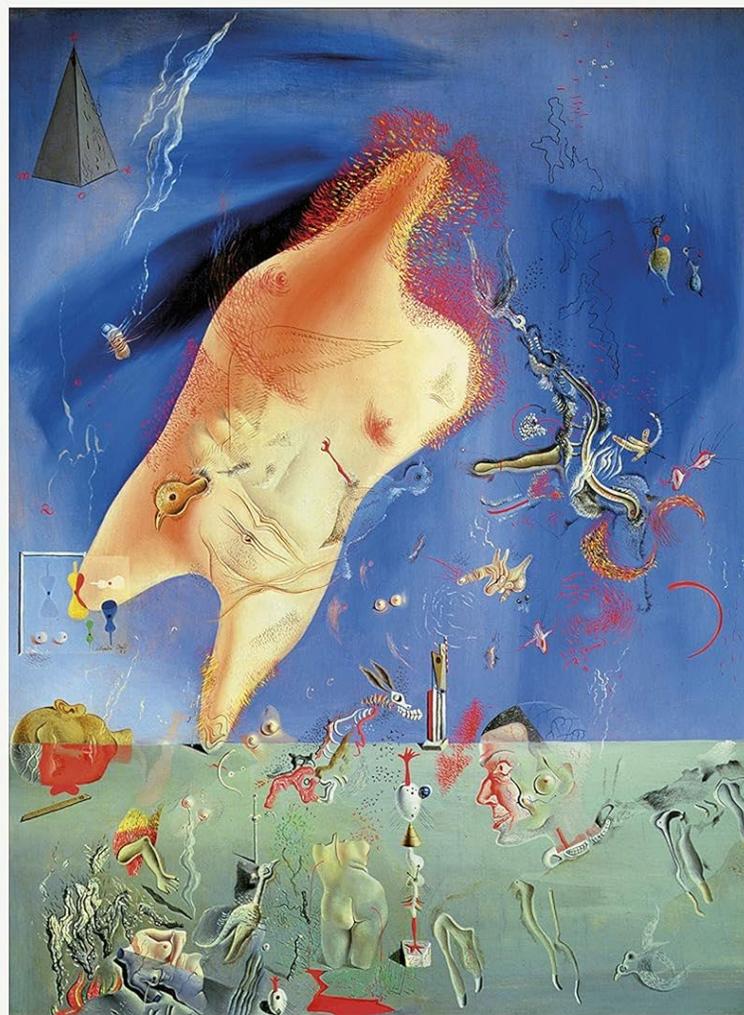
Penguin Modern Classics

Jean-Paul Sartre Nausea



MODERN
CLASSICS

Jean-Paul Sartre Nausea



JEAN-

PAUL

SARTRE

INTRODUCTION BY JAMES WOOD

A. The Fundamental Question: "What Makes Us Human?"

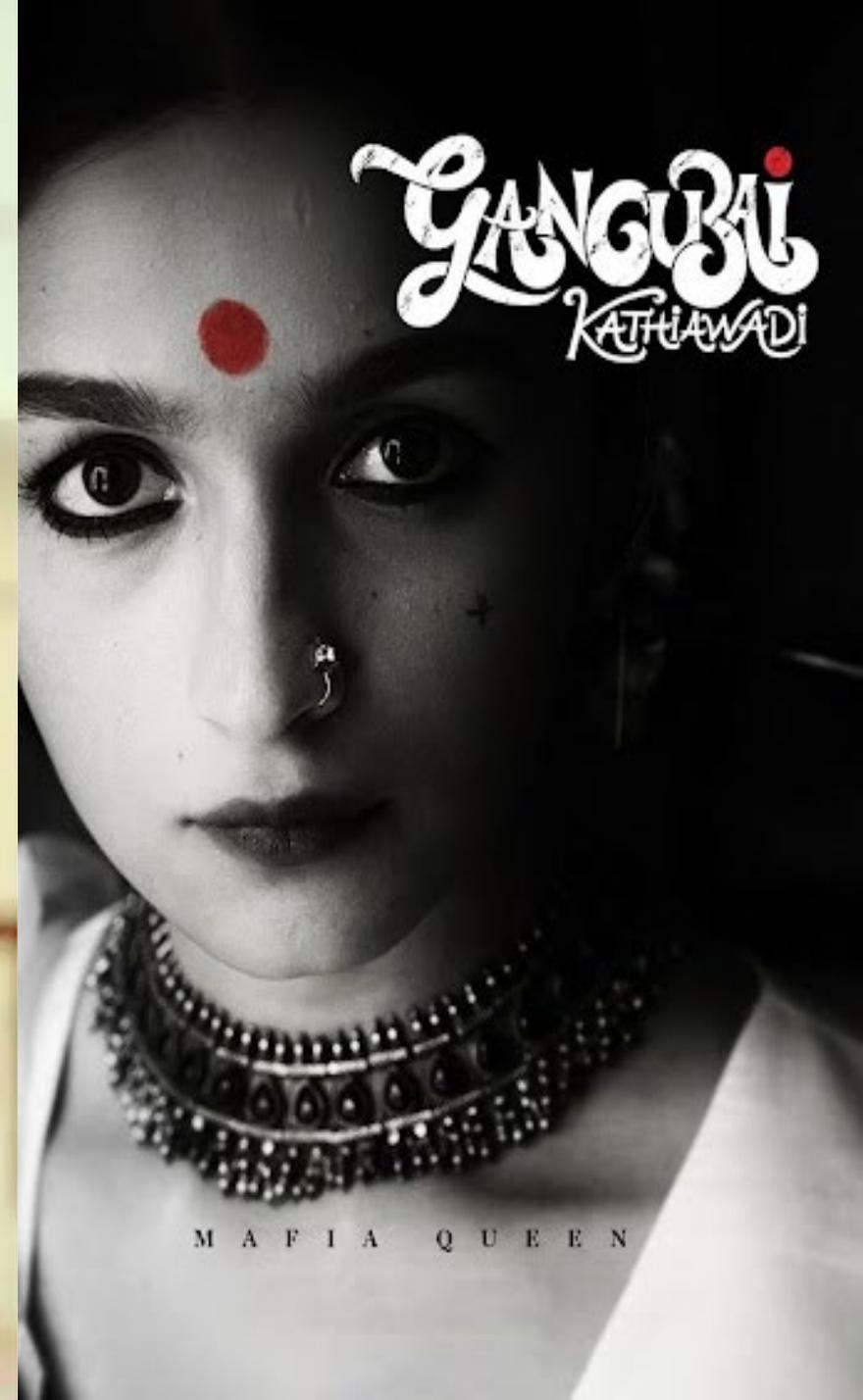
This is THE central question of the novel, and it's **pure Sartrean existentialism**:

- **Dong-ho asks repeatedly:** "What is a human being? What makes us different from animals or objects?"
- **Sartre would say:** There is no essential "human nature" - we create our humanity through our choices and actions
- **The novel tests this:** Can violence destroy our humanity? Or do we remain human as long as we choose human actions?

Question: "Han Kang is asking Sartre's question - if there's no God-given essence of humanity, what IS it that makes us human? Is it our bodies? Our souls? Our choices? Our dignity?"



"आप लोगों से
ज्यादा इज्जत है
हमारे पास, आपकी
इज्जत एक बार गई
तो गई, हम तो रोज
रात को इज्जत
बेचती हैं, सा**
खत्म ही नहीं होती"



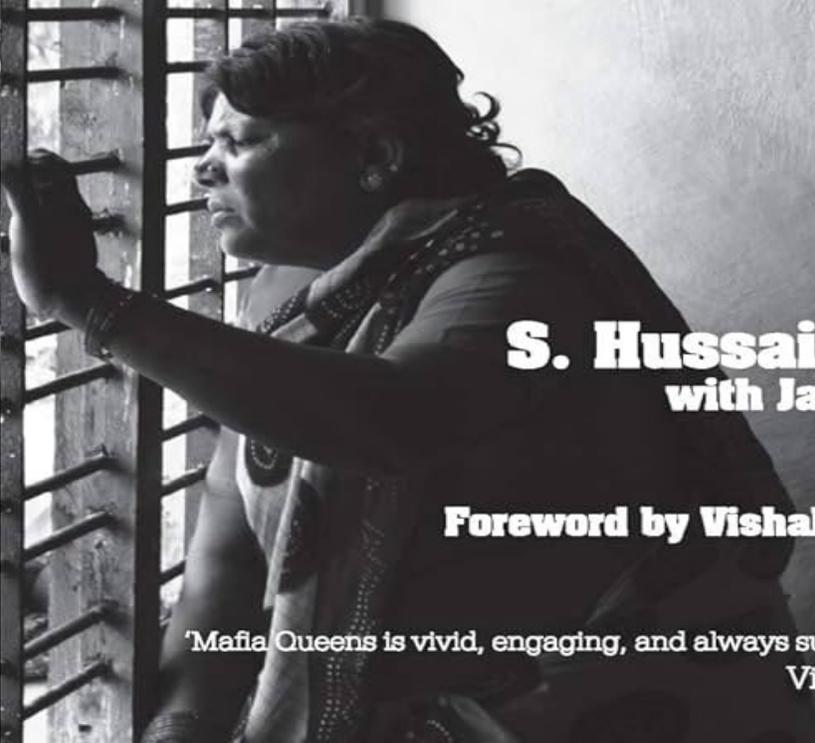
Mafia

stories of women

Queens

from the ganglands

of Mumbai



S. Hussain Zaidi
with Jane Borges

Foreword by Vishal Bharadwaj

'Mafia Queens is vivid, engaging, and always surprising. Read it.'
Vikram Chandra

THE PHENOMENAL BESTSELLER

ANNIVERSARY EDITION

MAFIA

QUEENS

OF MUMBAI

STORIES OF WOMEN

FROM THE GANGLANDS

S. HUSSAIN ZAIDI
WITH **JANE BORGES**

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VIKRAM CHANDRA

FOREWORD BY VISHAL BHARDWAJ



B. Radical Freedom and Radical Responsibility

The protestors' choice:

- They **CHOOSE** to resist, knowing they might die
- They could have **stayed home, hidden, survived** - but they chose to act
- This is **Sartrean freedom** - making authentic choices even when facing death

Key moment: The citizens at the Provincial Office in the final days know the military will come. They choose to stay. This is **existence precedes essence** - they **BECOME heroes/martyrs through their free choice, not because they were born that way.**

Quote: Sartre: "Man is condemned to be free; because once thrown into the world, he is responsible for everything he does."

Disney
HERCULES

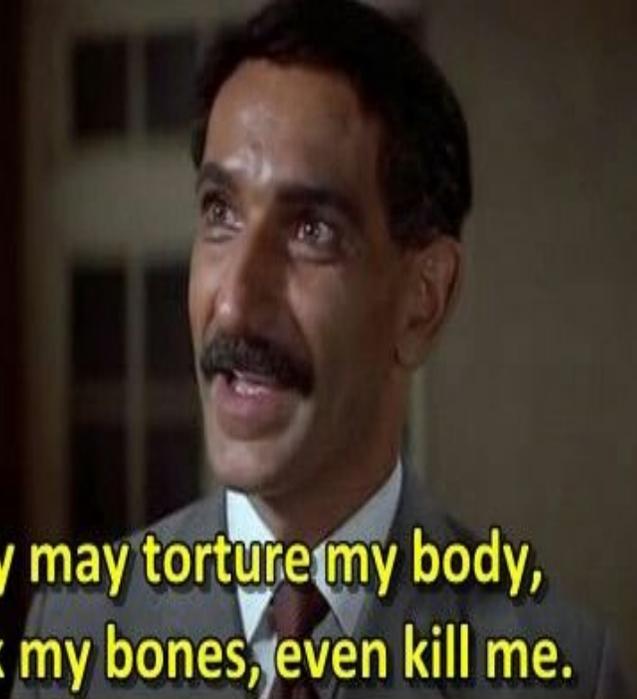




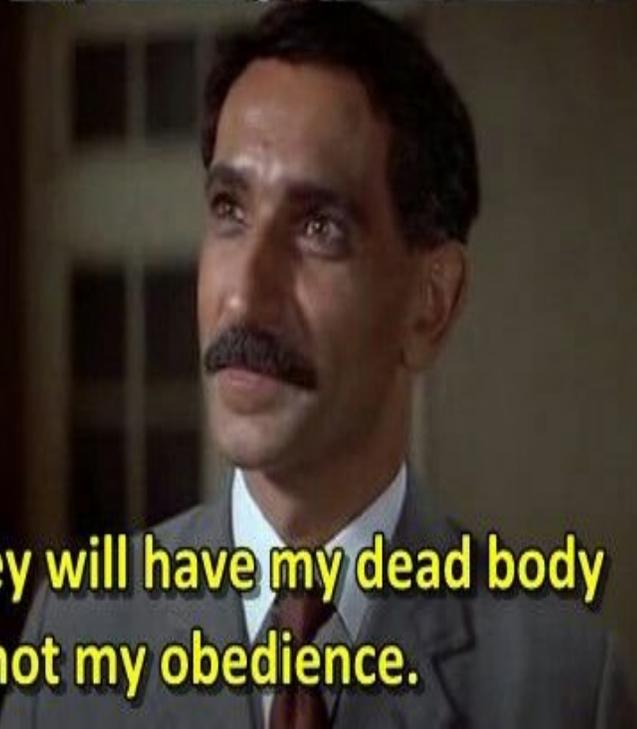
They will imprison us. They will fine us. They will seize our possessions.



But they cannot take away our self-respect, if we do not give it to them.



They may torture my body, break my bones, even kill me.



Then they will have my dead body not my obedience.

C. Bad Faith vs. Authenticity

Bad faith in the novel:

- **The torturers** live in bad faith - they deny their freedom by saying "I was just following orders"
- **The government** lives in bad faith - denying responsibility for the massacre
- **Those who forget** live in bad faith - choosing not to remember because it's easier

Authenticity in the novel:

- **Dong-ho** acts authentically - chooses to care for bodies despite horror
- **Eun-sook** acts authentically - risks herself to publish truth
- **The protestors** act authentically - accept their freedom and its consequences
- **Han Kang herself** (Chapter 6) acts authentically - accepts responsibility to bear witness

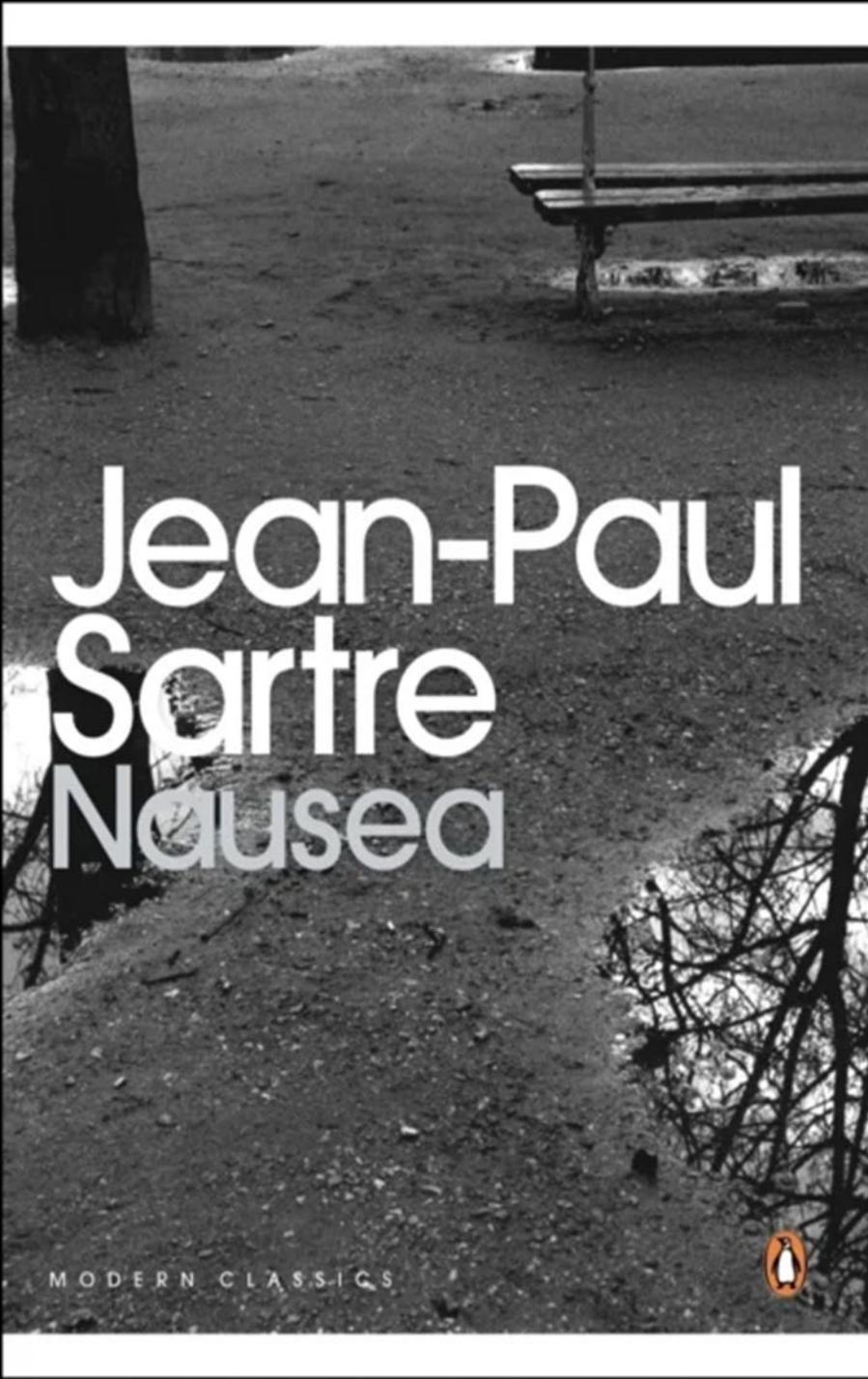
D. "Hell Is Other People" - The Gaze and Identity

Sartre's idea: Others' perceptions of us limit our freedom; we're objectified by their gaze

In the novel:

- **The state's gaze:** Reduces protestors to "rioters," "communists," "threats" - dehumanizing objectification
- **The torturer's gaze:** Sees victims as objects to be broken, not as human subjects
- **The novel's counter-gaze:** Han Kang and her narrators INSIST on seeing the victims as full human subjects with interiority, dignity, names

The mortuary work is an attempt to **restore subjectivity** - treating bodies as people, not things



E. Nausea and the Absurdity of the Body

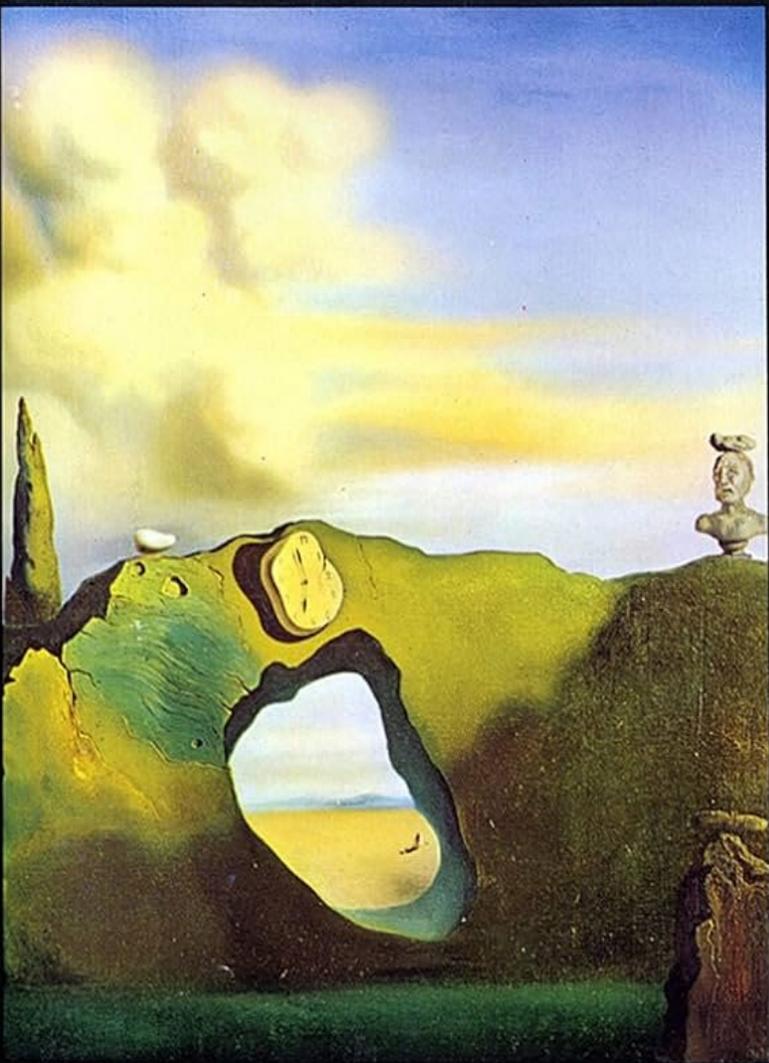
Sartre's novel *Nausea*: The protagonist is overwhelmed by the absurd physicality of existence - the "too-muchness" of matter

In *Human Acts*:

- The **obsessive focus on bodies** - flesh, blood, decay - creates a similar effect
- Dong-ho experiences something like Sartrean nausea - overwhelmed by the sheer physical reality of corpses
- The body becomes both absurdly material AND the site of human dignity

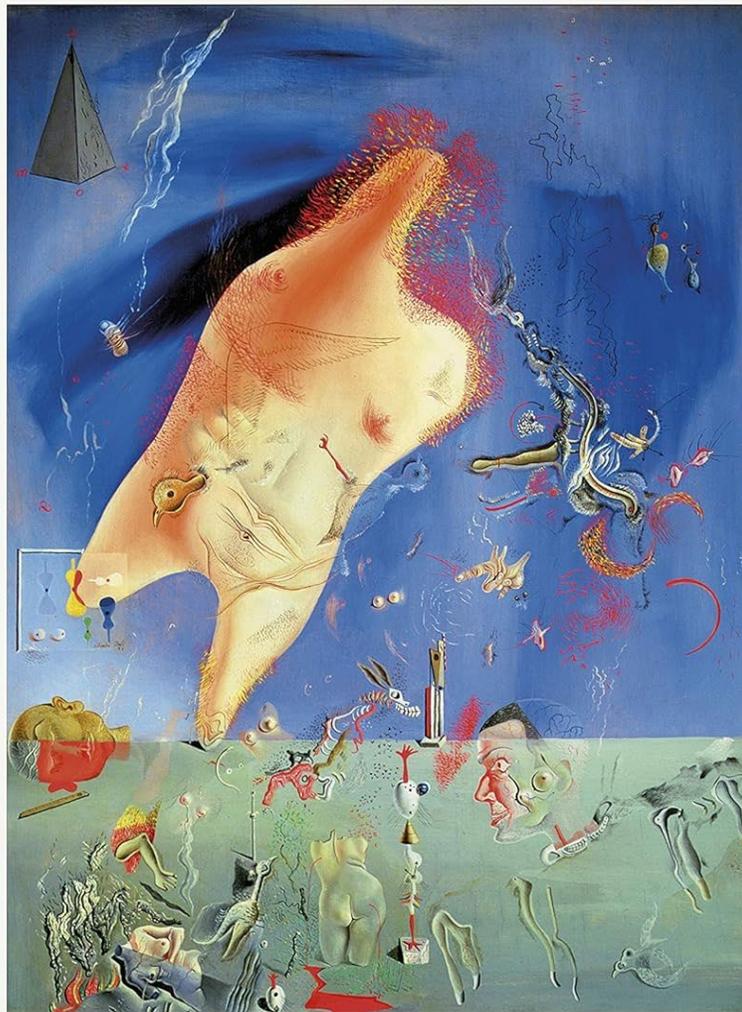
Penguin Modern Classics

Jean-Paul Sartre Nausea



MODERN
CLASSICS

Jean-Paul Sartre Nausea



**Dong-ho
is better
than
Sartre's
Roquentin**



Albert Camus



Albert Camus

**‘The
Absurd &
Rebellion’**

The Myth of Sisyphus

Albert Camus

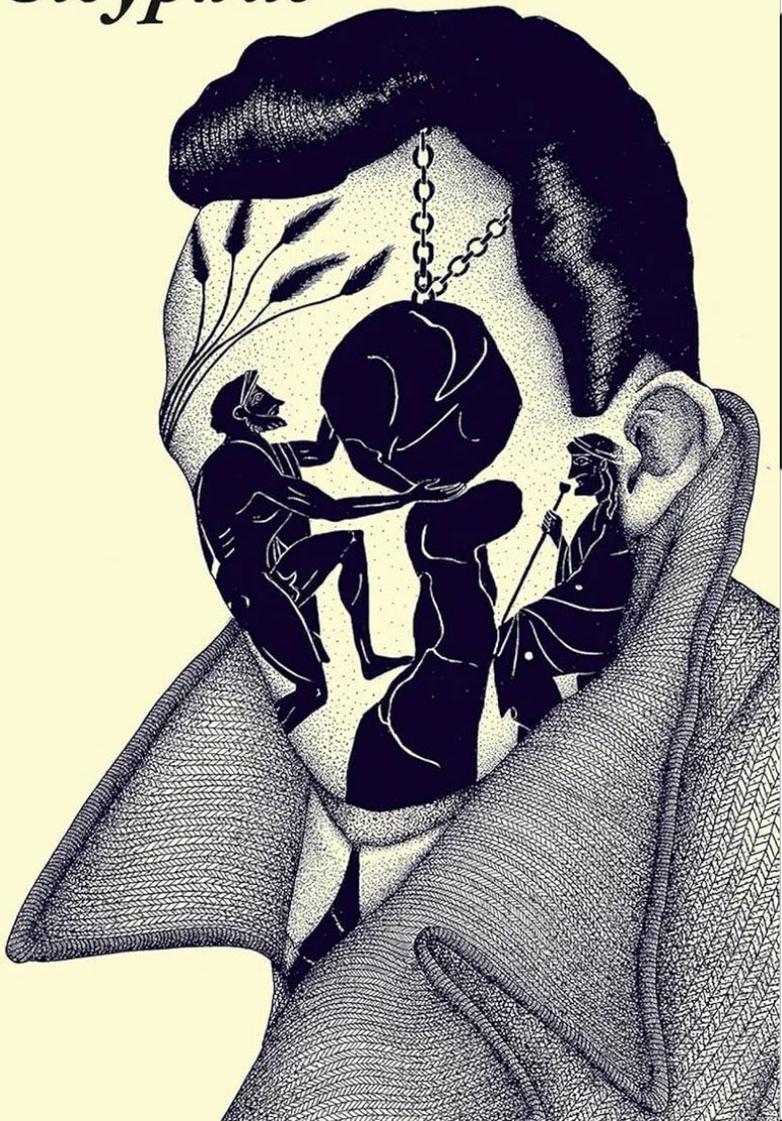


Camus's Core Ideas:

- Life is absurd - there's **no inherent meaning in the universe**
- We must **imagine Sisyphus happy** - create our own meaning despite absurdity
- The only serious philosophical question is suicide (whether life is worth living)
- Rebellion is the authentic response to absurdity
- We must live without appeal to transcendent meaning

Albert Camus

The Myth of Sisyphus



Albert Camus
There is but one truly serious philosophical problem and that is suicide
The Myth of Sisyphus

Penguin Books Great Ideas

The Myth of Sisyphus

ALBERT

CAMUS

Winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature

The Myth of Sisyphus

Albert Camus



**"The struggle itself is
enough to fill a man's heart."
- Albert Camus
The Myth of Sisyphus (1942)**

A. The Absurd: Meaningless Suffering

Camus in *The Myth of Sisyphus*: The universe is indifferent; there's no cosmic justice or meaning

In the novel:

- The massacre is **absurd** - innocent people killed for demanding democracy
- There's no divine justice, no redemption, no cosmic meaning
- The suffering is **gratuitous** - it serves no purpose, accomplishes nothing good
- The dead remain dead - no resurrection, no transcendence

Key existential moment: When characters ask "WHY?" - Why did this happen? Why did they die? - there's no satisfying answer. It's absurd.

"Camus says the universe is indifferent to human suffering. Han Kang's novel presents the Gwangju massacre as absurd violence - meaningless, unjustified, without cosmic purpose."



Penguin Modern Classics

Albert Camus The Rebel



C. Rebellion as the Authentic Response

Camus in *The Rebel*: "I rebel, therefore we exist" - rebellion against injustice is what creates human solidarity and meaning

In the novel:

- The **Gwangju Uprising itself** is **Camusian rebellion** - refusing to accept authoritarian rule
- The protestors rebel knowing they might fail and die - but rebellion itself is meaningful
- **Eun-sook's editorial work** is rebellion - refusing censorship, insisting on truth
- **The novel itself** is an act of rebellion - against forgetting, against the state's narrative

Key Camus quote: "The only way to deal with an unfree world is to become so absolutely free that your very existence is an act of rebellion."

In the novel: The protestors embody this - their very insistence on democracy and dignity is rebellion.

...one back to
... Deeply to wait and
... Comes and goes on this planet
... I couldn't see the lighthouse
... Lonesome Bay. I could see
... the Horn. It sounded like the
... something I could say.



2

THE PEDESTRIAN

TO ENTER out into that silence that was the city at eight o'clock of a misty evening in November, to put your feet upon that buckling concrete walk, to step over grassy seams and make your way, hands in pockets, through the silences, that was what Mr. Leonard Mead most dearly loved to do. He would stand upon the corner of an intersection and peer down long moonlit avenues of sidewalk in four directions, deciding which way to go, but it really made no difference; he was alone in this world of 2053 A.D., or as good as alone, and with a final decision made, a path selected, he would stride off, sending patterns of frosty air before him like the smoke of a cigar.

Sometimes he would walk for hours and miles and return only at midnight to his house. And on his way he would see the cottages and homes with their dark windows, and it was not unequal to walking through a graveyard where only the faintest glimmers of firefly light appeared in flickers behind the windows. Sudden gray phantoms

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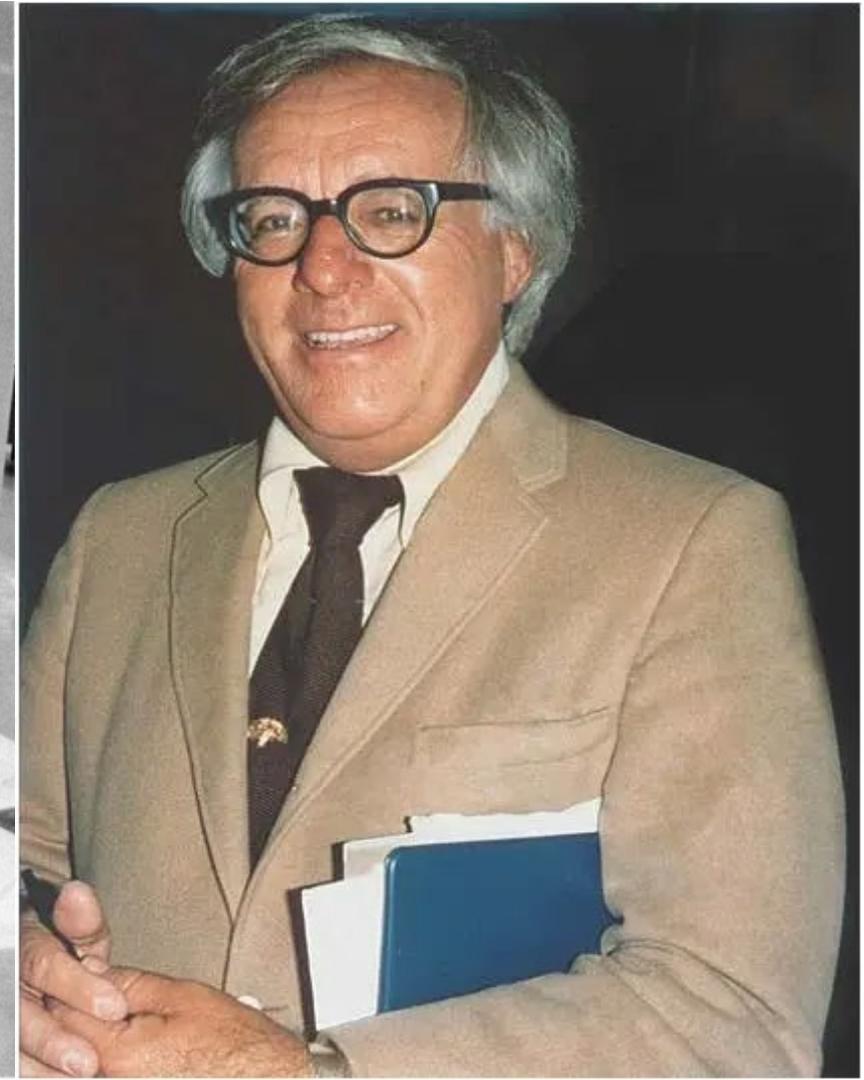
'Ray Bradbury's gift for storytelling reshaped our culture and expanded our world' **BARACK OBAMA**

**RAY
BRADBURY
FAHRENHEIT**

451

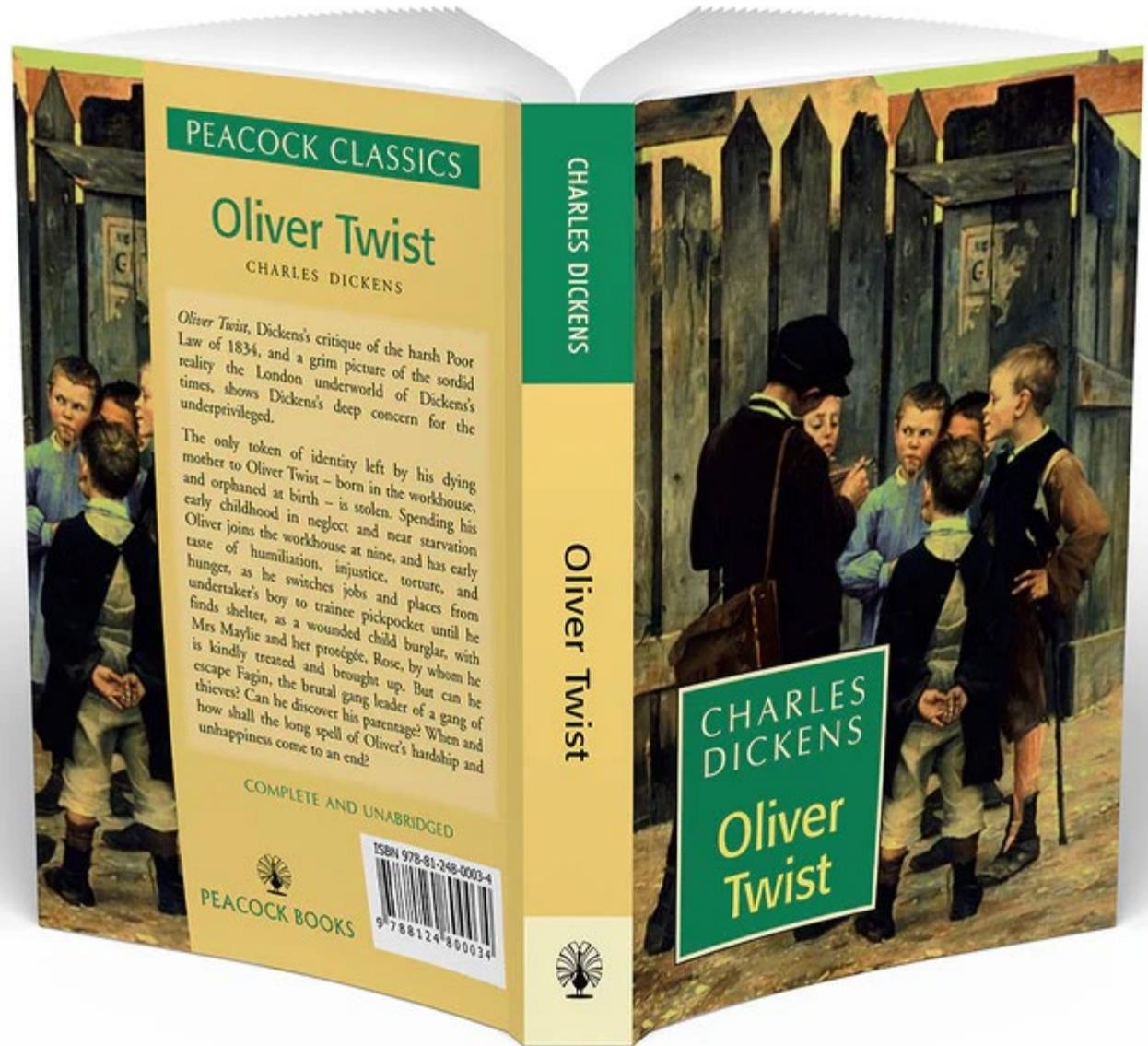
Ray Bradbury – Pulitzer Prize winner

Was just a high school graduate - poverty





PLEASE SIR I WANT
SOME MORE



**I WANT
SOME MORE**

**An Act of
Rebellion in
itself**

D. Solidarity in the Face of the Absurd

Camus: Though the universe is indifferent, humans can create meaning through solidarity with other sufferers

In the novel:

- The **mortuary volunteers** create community through shared care for the dead
- The **protestors** find meaning in collective action
- **Survivors** connected by shared trauma form a community of witness
- The **novel's structure** (multiple voices) creates textual solidarity - we're all in this together

Solidarity = Suffering = Communion

E. Living Without Appeal (No Transcendence)

Camus: We must live without appealing to God, afterlife, or transcendent meaning - we must accept the immanent world

In the novel:

- Han Kang offers **no religious comfort**, no afterlife certainty, no redemption
- **Jeong-dae's ghost** doesn't go to heaven - **he's stuck**, confused, not transcendent
- There's no suggestion that suffering has divine purpose
- We must find meaning **HERE**, in this world, in human action and memory

This is deeply Camusian: accepting the world as it is, without metaphysical consolation.



arre kaun devi prasad, yeh devi
prasad ka ghar nahi hai

NO Rapture!

All Rubbish!

**Incorrect
Theology!!!**



Tu chup reh Baba
Tu chup reh



Utha le re baba...Utha le



Arey...Kehna kya
chahte hooo

No Divine Purpose = Transcendence OUT!

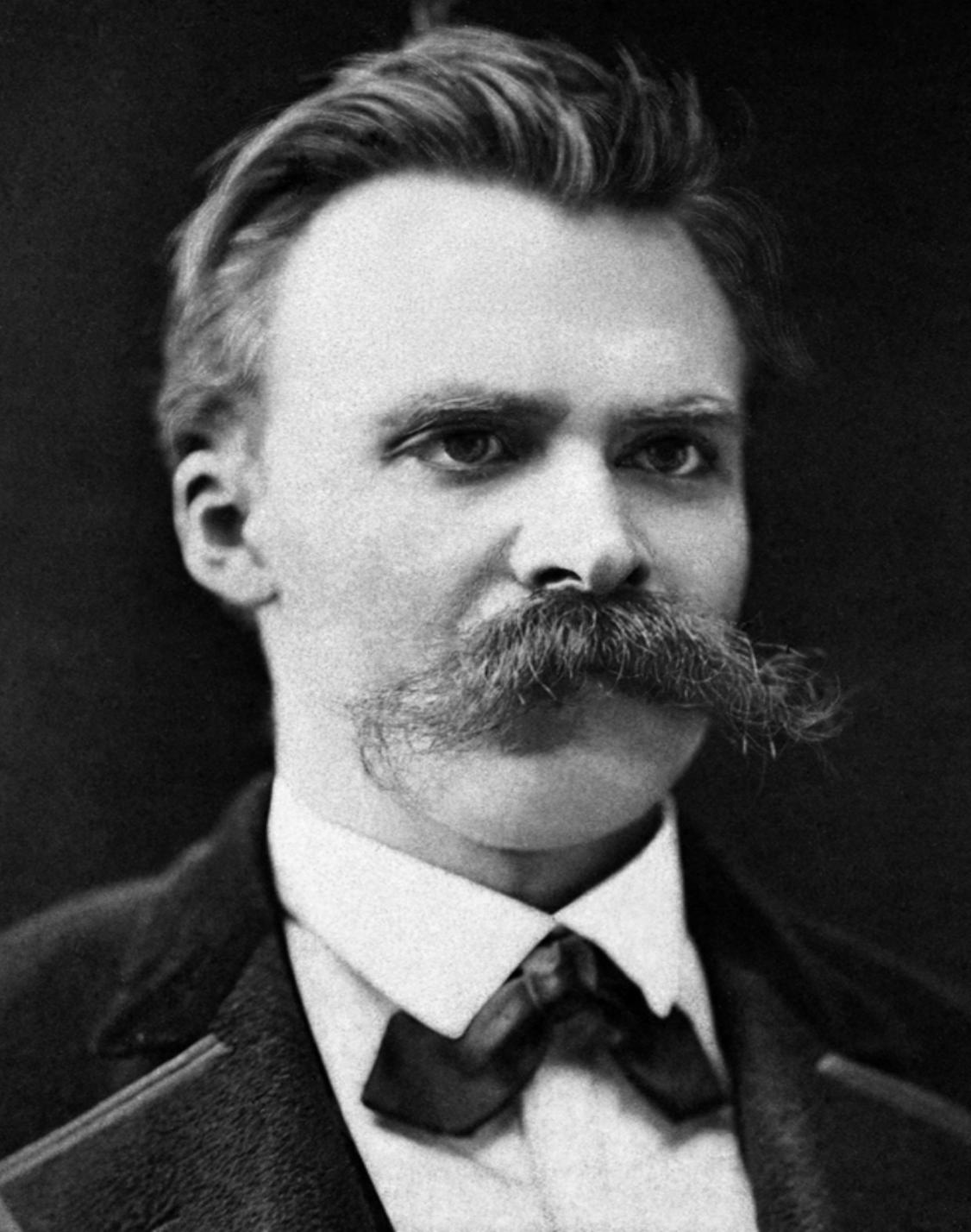


F. "One Must Imagine Sisyphus Happy"

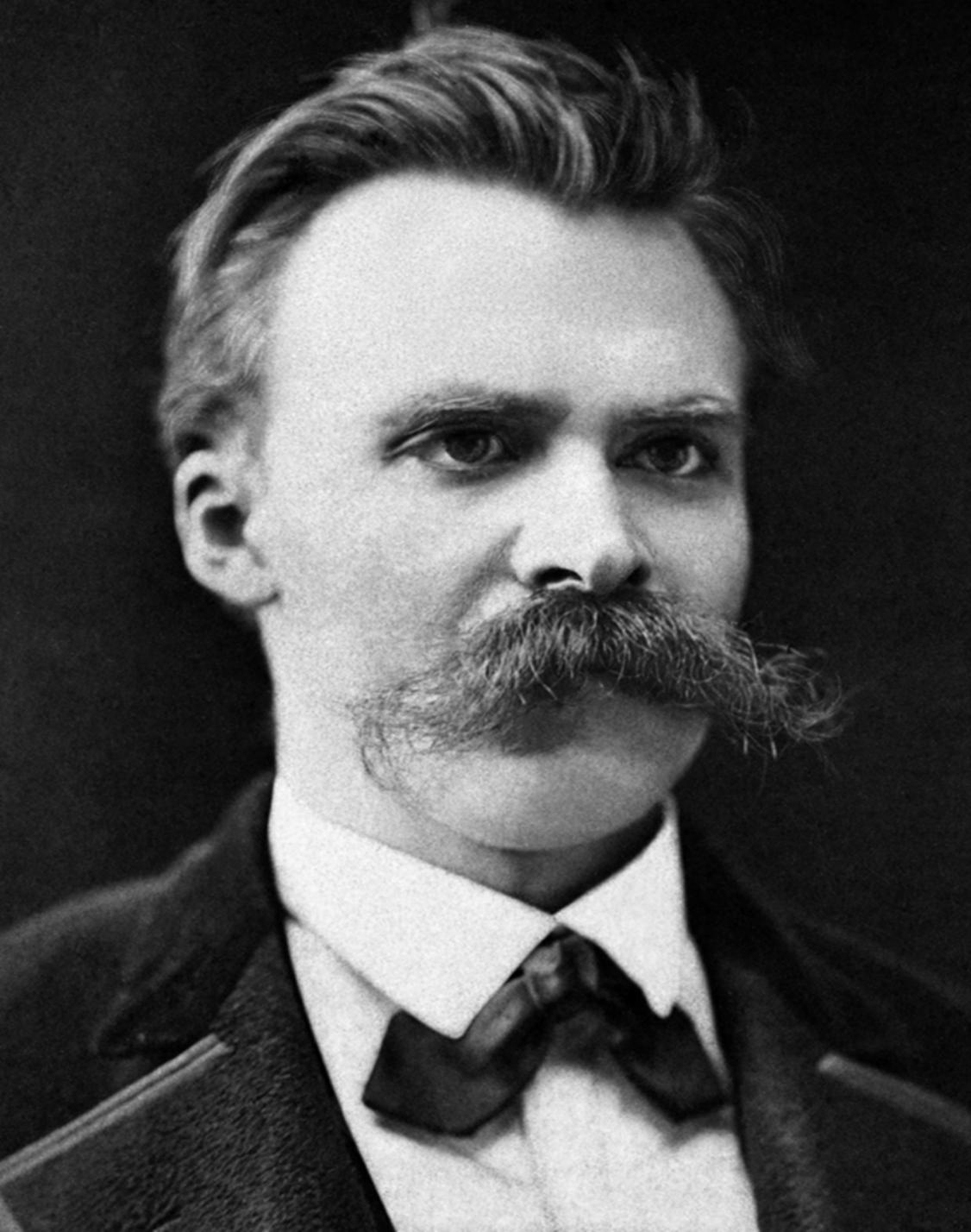
Camus's conclusion: Despite the absurdity, we must find **joy in the struggle itself**

In the novel:

- There are **small moments of beauty** even amid horror - human kindness, dignity, connection
- The **act of remembering and testifying** becomes meaningful in itself, regardless of whether it "fixes" anything
- The **volunteers' care for bodies** is their version of Sisyphus's rock - seemingly futile but meaningful

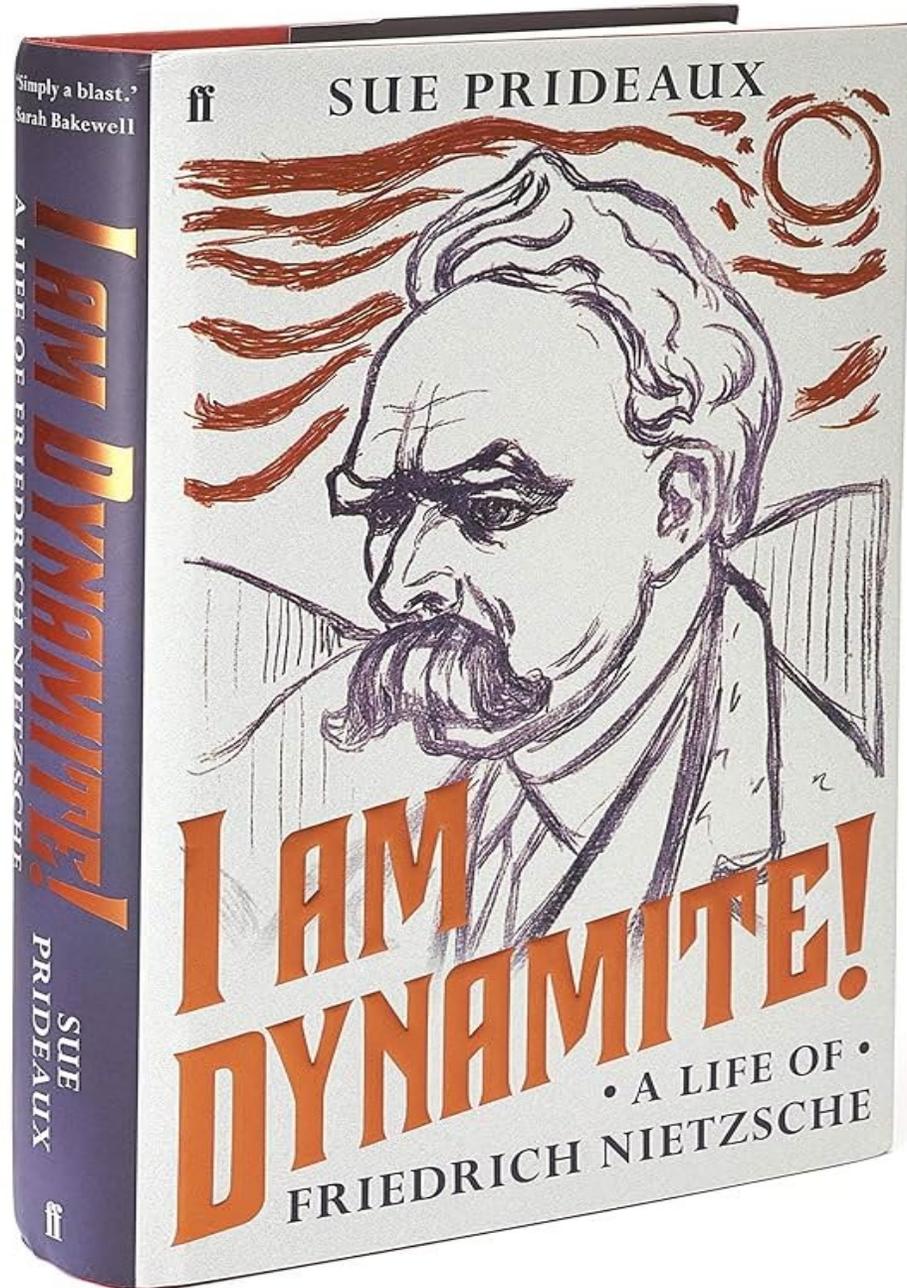


Nietzsche



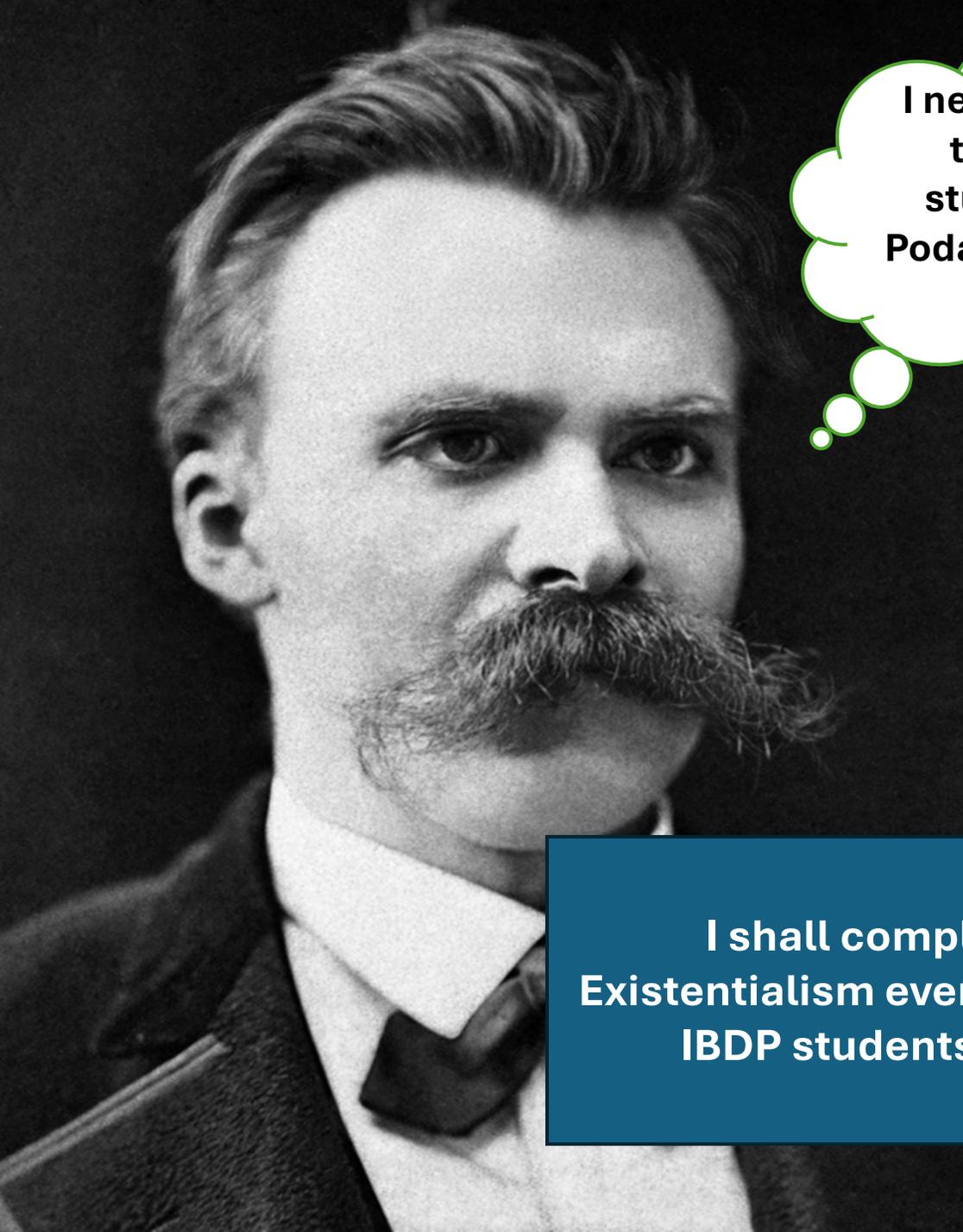
Nietzsche

**‘Nihilism, Will to
Power & Eternal
Return’**



Nietzsche's Core Ideas:

- **"God is dead"** - traditional values and meaning are collapsing
- **Nihilism** is the danger of meaninglessness
- The **Übermensch (Overman)** creates their **own values**
- **"Will to power"** - life is about asserting force and creating meaning
- **Eternal return** - would you live this life infinitely?
- **Suffering can be meaningful if it strengthens us (what doesn't kill you...)**



**I need to save
the IBDP
students of
Podar from Han
Kang!**



**I shall complicate his
Existentialism even further – poor
IBDP students of Podar!**

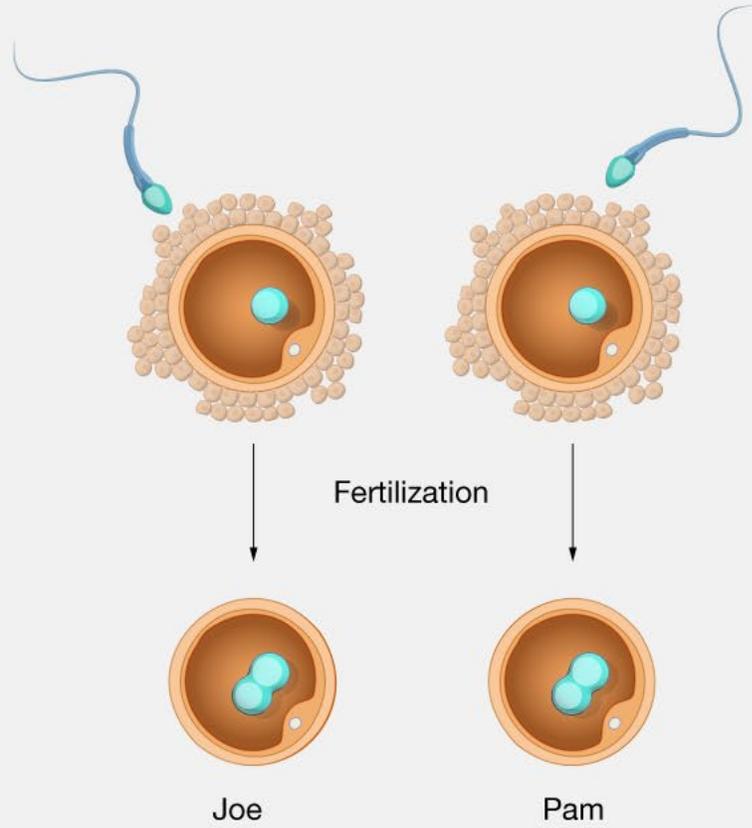
A. "God Is Dead" - The Collapse of Meaning

Nietzsche's proclamation: Traditional religious and moral frameworks no longer hold - we're in a crisis of meaning

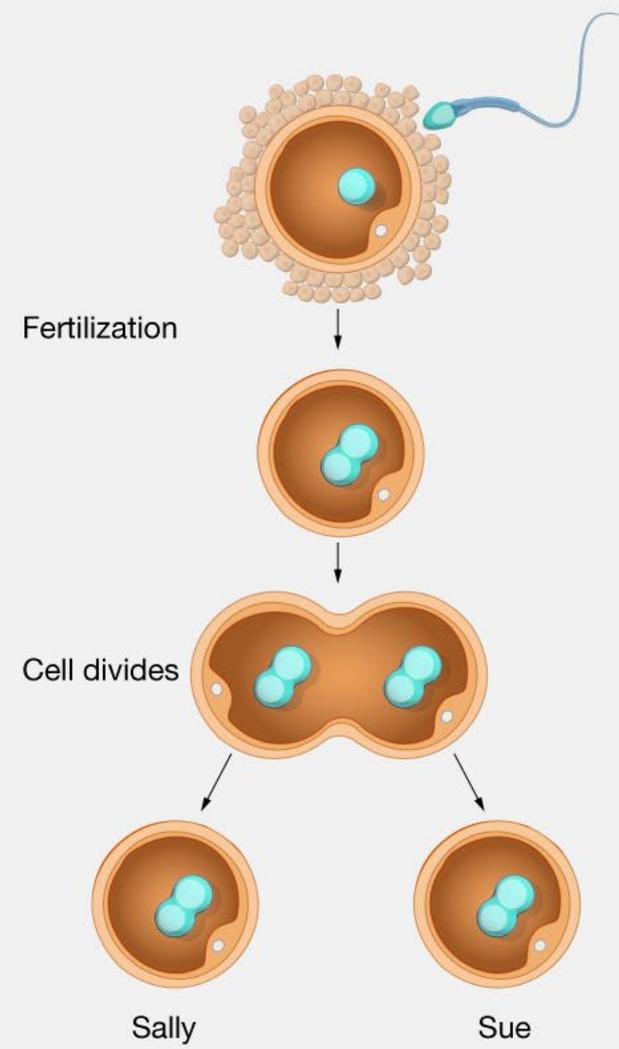
In the novel:

- The massacre **destroys conventional meaning** - justice, goodness, divine protection all fail
- There's no religious framework that makes sense of this suffering
- Survivors face **nihilism** - the threat that nothing means anything anymore
- The state's violence reveals that traditional values (human rights, dignity, law) are fragile constructs

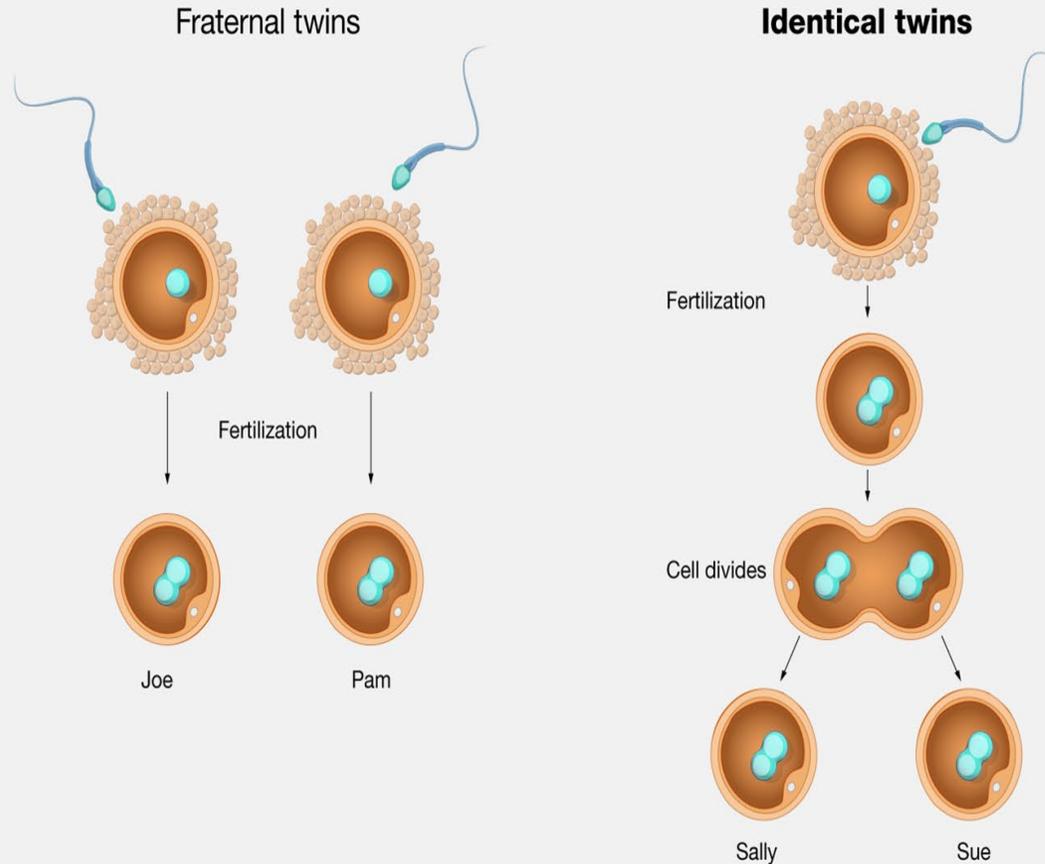
Fraternal twins



Identical twins



Abortion Topic Over = Case Closed = Roe & Wade Controversy solved by PATHAN



Thoomo Jo Pathaan



**KARL
RAHNER**

**The
Content
of Faith**

**THE BEST OF
KARL RAHNER'S
THEOLOGICAL
WRITINGS**

KARL
RAHNER

KARL
RAHNER

KARL
RAHNER

KARL RAHNER
**THEOLOGICAL
INVESTIGATIONS**

VOLUME XV

THEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS
JESUS, MAN AND THE CHURCH

XVII

CROSSROAD

THEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS
EXPERIENCE OF THE SPIRIT: SOURCE OF THEOLOGY

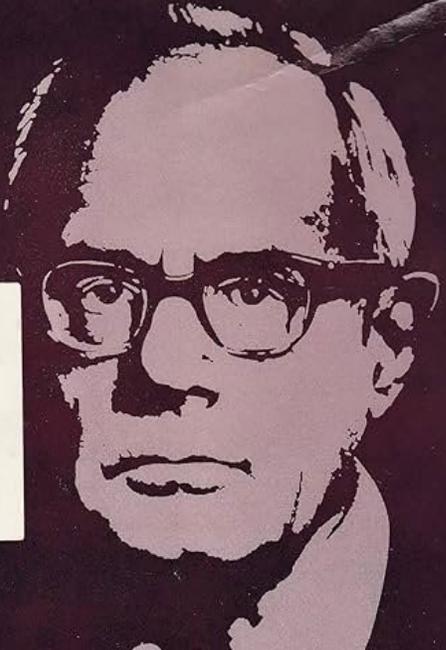
XVI

SEABURY

THEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS
PENANCE IN THE EARLY CHURCH

XV

CROSSROAD



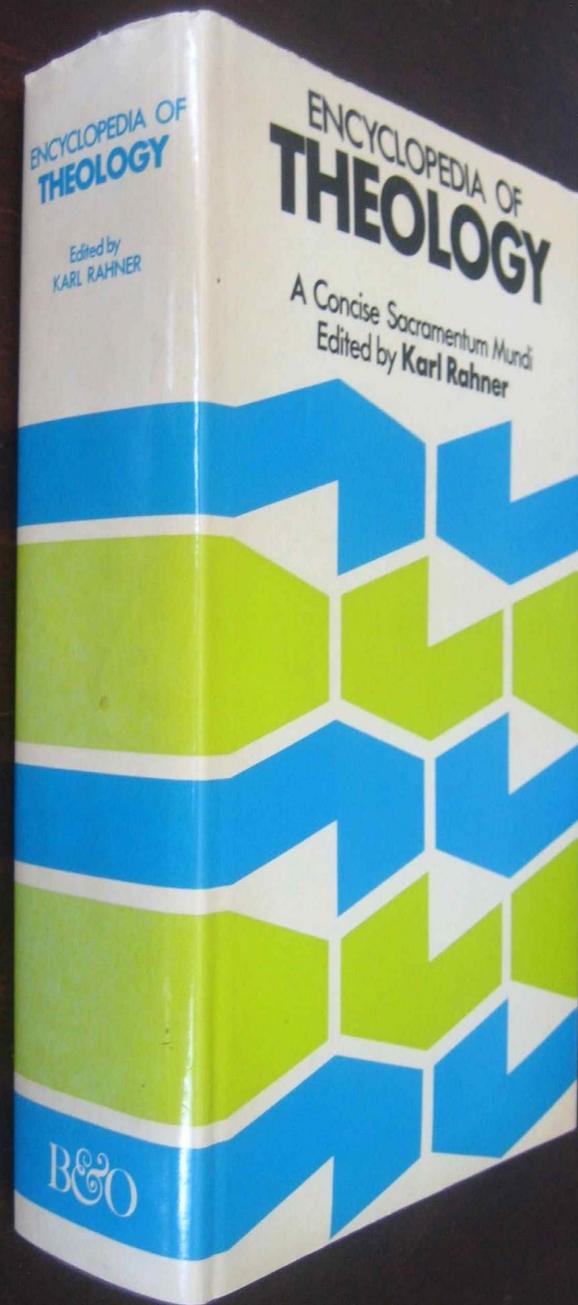
**karl
rahner**
an introduction
to his theology

karl-heinz weger

**KARL
RAHNER**

**Foundations
of Christian
Faith**

AN INTRODUCTION TO
THE IDEA OF CHRISTIANITY



B. The Übermensch and Creating Values

Nietzsche: In the absence of God-given values, the Übermensch creates their own values through will and strength

In the novel:

- The **protestors create their own values** - they decide democracy and dignity are worth dying for
- **Dong-ho creates meaning** through his choice to care for the dead - he makes this work sacred through his own will
- **Han Kang creates value** through writing - she makes remembering morally necessary

However: Han Kang complicates Nietzsche - her characters aren't super-humans, they're broken, suffering, ordinary people. They create meaning not through strength but through **vulnerability and care**.

"Nietzsche says we must create our own values. The Gwangju protestors do this - but Han Kang suggests that ordinary, suffering humans can create meaning, not just Nietzsche's 'Overman.'"

C. Will to Power - But Which Power?

Nietzsche: Life is fundamentally about the will to power - asserting force, overcoming obstacles

In the novel - **TWO KINDS OF POWER:**

1. The State's Will to Power:

- Military force, violence, domination
- This is destructive, dehumanizing power
- Nietzsche would potentially admire the "strength" - but Han Kang critiques it

2. The People's Will to Power:

- Power through solidarity, resistance, testimony
- Power through refusing to be silenced
- Power through memory and witness
- This is **generative power** - it creates meaning and community

D. "What Doesn't Kill You Makes You Stronger" - Or Does It?

Nietzsche famously claimed: Suffering can strengthen us, make us greater

The novel's response: Not always. Sometimes suffering just destroys.

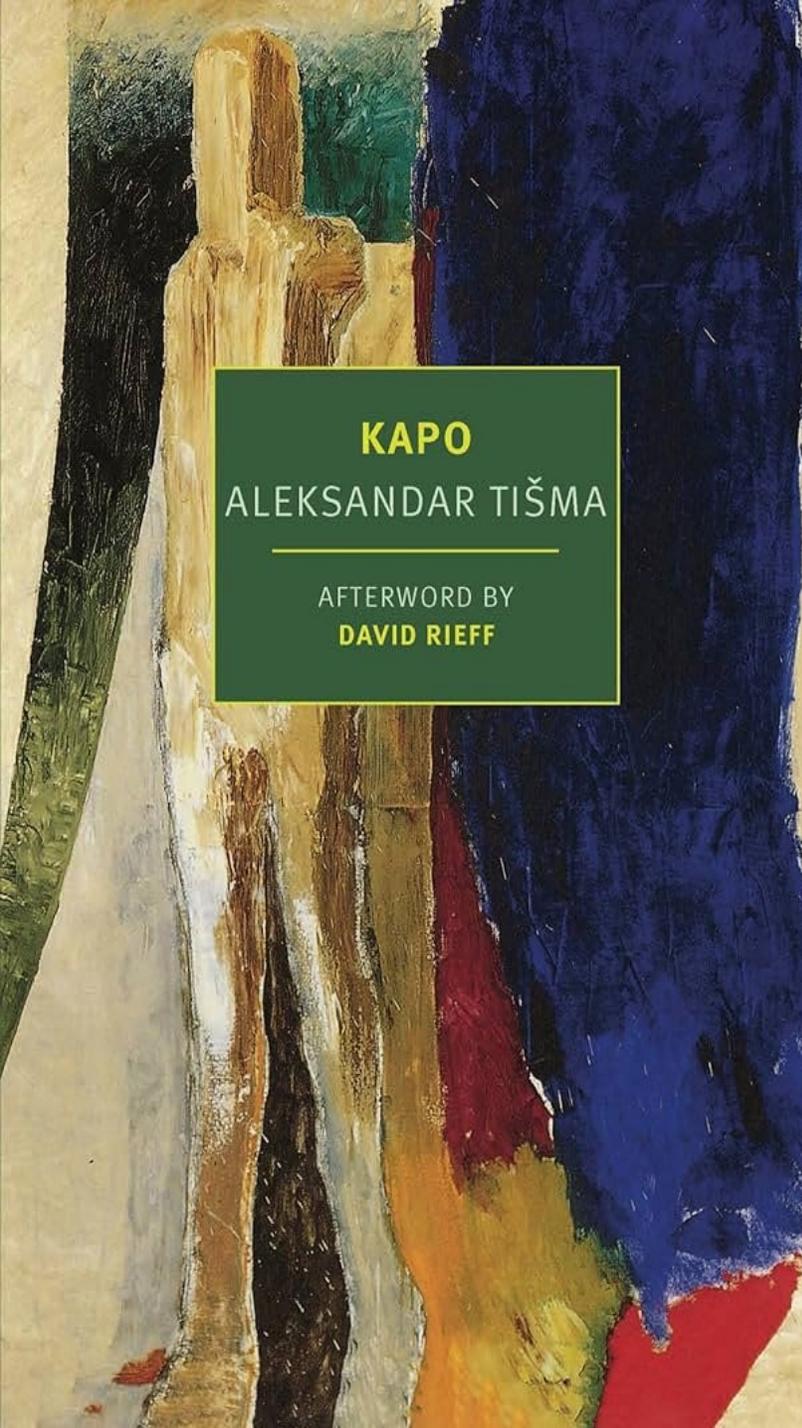
- The **tortured prisoner** (Chapter 4) isn't strengthened - he's broken, damaged permanently
- **The mother** isn't stronger - she's haunted, barely surviving
- **Survivors struggle** with trauma that doesn't ennoble them - it just hurts

This is Han Kang's critique of Nietzsche: Sometimes **suffering is just suffering** - it doesn't make you stronger, **it destroys you**. There's no redemptive arc.

Point to be Noted: Nietzsche romanticized suffering as strengthening. Han Kang shows us: sometimes **trauma just breaks people, and that's the truth we must face.**

Holocaust Example





KAPO
ALEKSANDAR TIŠMA

AFTERWORD BY
DAVID RIEFF



VINTAGE KERTÉSZ

Kaddish for an Unborn Child



VINTAGE KERTÉSZ

Fateless

THE NIGHT TRILOGY

CONSISTING OF A MEMOIR, TRANSLATED BY MARION WIESEL, AND TWO NOVELS

Night · Dawn · Day

ELIE WIESEL

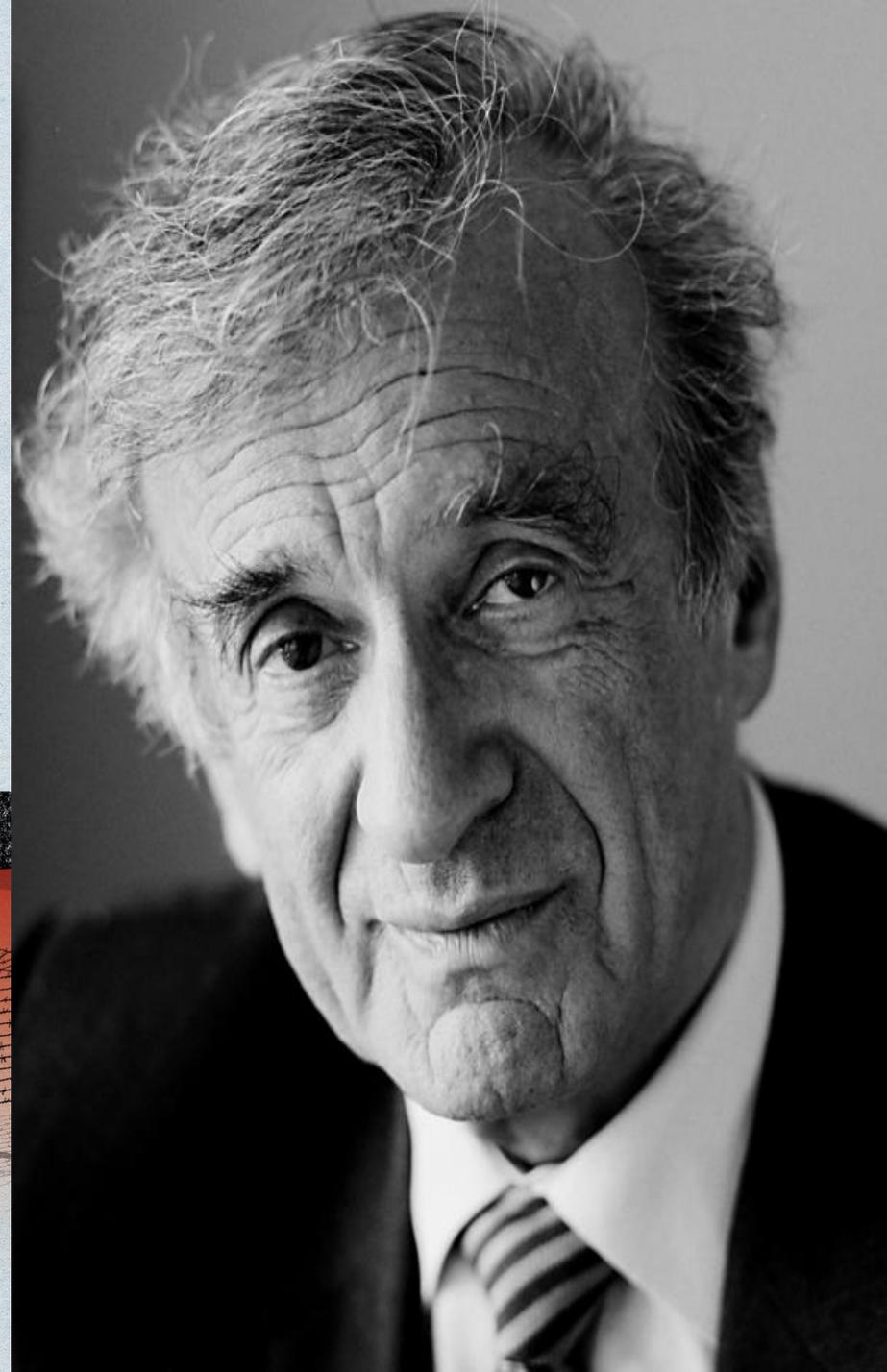
WINNER OF THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

WINNER OF THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE



'Through his eyes, we witness the depths of both human cruelty and human grace. I gain courage from his courage'
OPRAH WINFREY

ELIE WIESEL NIGHT



E. Eternal Return - "Would You Live This Life Again?"

Nietzsche's test: If you had to live your exact life infinitely, repeating forever, would you say yes? This reveals whether you truly affirm life.

The novel asks this implicitly:

- Would **Dong-ho** choose this life again, knowing he'll die at 15?
- Would **survivors** choose their lives again, knowing the trauma they'll carry?
- Would **the protestors** make the same choice again?

**Would you want to live your life over
& over again?**

F. Nihilism vs. Life-Affirmation

Nietzsche's fear: Nihilism - the belief that nothing has meaning

Nietzsche's hope: Life-affirmation - saying YES to life despite suffering

In the novel:

- **The threat of nihilism** is real - after such violence, meaning seems impossible
- But characters **choose life-affirmation** through small acts:
 - Caring for bodies
 - Telling stories
 - Continuing to love
 - Refusing to forget

The novel itself is life-affirming - it insists these lives mattered, these deaths demand remembrance, human dignity is worth fighting for.

End
of Lesson
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insaneowl.com

I would love to
see your writing
work!

