

T.C
ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES



**EXISTENTIAL CRISIS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF CHAOS THEORY IN
KAFKA'S THREE SHORT STORIES: BEFORE THE LAW, THE VULTURE
AND A HUNGER ARTIST**

MASTER'S THESIS

Nur Banu KARAMAN

Department of English Language and Literature
English Language and Literature Program

NOVEMBER, 2022

T.C
ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES



**EXISTENTIAL CRISIS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF CHAOS THEORY IN KAFKA'S
THREE SHORT STORIES: BEFORE THE LAW, THE VULTURE AND A HUNGER
ARTIST**

MASTER'S THESIS
Nur Banu KARAMAN
(Y2012.020008)

Thesis Advisor: Assist. Prof. Dr. SANAZ ALIZADEH TABRIZI

Department of English Language and Literature
English Language and Literature Program

NOVEMBER, 2022

APPROVAL PAGE

DECLARATION

I hereby declare with respect that the study “EXISTENTIAL CRISIS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF CHAOS THEORY IN KAFKA’S THREE SHORT STORIES: BEFORE THE LAW, THE VULTURE AND A HUNGER ARTIST”, which I submitted as a Master thesis, is written without any assistance in violation of scientific ethics and traditions in all the processes from the Project phase to the conclusion of the thesis and that the works I have benefited are from those shown in the References.
(22/11/2022)

Nur Banu KARAMAN

FOREWORD

I offer my sincerest gratitude to my supervisor, Asst. Prof. Dr. Sanaz Alizadeh Tabrizi, who has supported me throughout my thesis with his patience, knowledge and tremendous guidance.

I am also grateful to my family for their never-ending support and for the trust they have in my ability to complete this challenging process successfully.

November 2022

Nur Banu KARAMAN

**EXISTENTIAL CRISIS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF CHAOS THEORY IN
KAFKA'S THREE SHORT STORIES: BEFORE THE LAW, THE VULTURE
AND A HUNGER ARTIST**

ABSTRACT

Franz Kafka is considered to be one of the representatives of existentialism as well as Modernism. In his works, the main characters are always on a journey through the unknown, adjusting themselves with the laws and authorities imposed on them so that they can fit in the society and deal with the uncertainties they confront as a result of their choices. His works not only demonstrate his rejection of traditional literary conventions of his time but also reflect Kafka's disoriented inner life and imagination. Considering the structures, characters, themes and contents of his works, Kafka can be seen as a writer who is reflecting the chaotic structure of life and how individuals can suffer from existential crises. His characters and their reactions to the incidents and challenges they face is quite similar to what Kafka had been through in his chaotic life: they look for an order in a chaotic life. However, the world is in a constant change which means a new order comes with another disorder and within this circulation, individuals either survive through challenges adapting themselves to these constant changes or get lost within their own values of life considering death as an escape based on the notion of freewill. Thus, the aim of this study is to discuss the existential crisis that the characters are going through in Kafka's short stories *Before the law*, *The Vulture* and *A Hunger Artist* within the context of chaos theory highlighting the lack of action that leads the characters under study toward an inevitable death.

Keywords: Chaos theory, Kafka, Before the law, The Vulture, A Hunger Artist, Existential crisis, Determinism, Authenticity, Death

**KAFKA’NIN KANUN ÖNÜNDE, AKBABA VE AÇLIK SANATÇISI İSİMLİ
HİKAYELERİNDE VAROLUŞSAL KRİZİN KAOS TEORİSİ
BAĞLAMINDA İNCELENMESİ**

ÖZET

Kafka Modernizmin yanı sıra varoluşçuluk felsefesinin temsilcilerinden biri olarak kabul edilir. Yapıtlarında ana karakterler her zaman bilinmeyen içinde bir yolculuğa çıkmakta, topluma uyum sağlayabilmeleri ve seçimlerinin bir sonucu olarak karşılaştıkları belirsizliklerle başa çıkabilmeleri için kendilerine dayatılan yasa ve otoritelerle uyum sağlamaya çalışmaktadırlar. Eserleri sadece zamanının geleneksel edebi geleneklerini reddettiğini göstermekle kalmıyor, aynı zamanda Kafka’nın karmaşık iç yaşamını ve hayal gücünü de yansıtıyor. Eserlerinin yapıları, karakterleri, temaları ve içerikleri göz önüne alındığında Kafka, yaşamın kaotik yapısını ve bireylerin varoluşsal krizlerden nasıl muzdarip olabileceğini yansıtan bir yazar olarak görülebilir. Karakterleri ve karşılaştıkları olaylara ve zorluklara verdikleri tepkiler Kafka’nın kaotik yaşamında yaşadıkları ile oldukça benzerlik göstermektedir: düzensiz bir yaşamda bir düzen arıyorlar. Ancak, dünya sürekli bir değişim içindedir, bu da yeni bir düzenin başka bir düzensizlikle birlikte geldiği anlamına gelir ve bu döngü içinde bireyler ya kendilerini bu sürekli değişimlere adapte eden zorluklarla hayatta kalırlar ya da ölümü özgür irade kavramına dayanan bir kaçış olarak görerek kendi yaşam değerleri içinde kaybolurlar. Dolayısıyla bu çalışmanın amacı, Kafka’nın *Kanun Önünde, Akbaba ve Açlık Sanatçısı* öykülerinde karakterlerin yaşadığı varoluşsal krizi kaos teorisi bağlamında tartışmak ve incelenen karakterleri kaçınılmaz bir ölüme götüren eylem eksikliğini vurgulamaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Kaos Teorisi, Kanun Önünde, Akbaba, Açlık Sanatçısı, Varoluşsal Kriz, Determinizm, Otantiklik, Ölüm

TABLE OF CONTENT

FOREWORD.....	ii
ABSTRACT	iii
ÖZET.....	iv
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. FREE WILL IN BEFORE THE LAW	10
III. MEANINGLESSNESS IN THE VULTURE.....	23
IV. AUTHENTICITY IN A HUNGER ARTIST.....	36
V. CONCLUSION	48
VI. REFERENCES.....	53
RESUME.....	58

I. INTRODUCTION

Existential crisis is one of the concepts that has been discussed by most philosophers as well as psychologists. It aims to offer explanations of how people must be encouraged to tolerate and survive the anxieties and dread encountered in a world which is chaotic and coercive. Furthermore, it raises awareness of people about how their attitude toward life helps them acquire the best meaning out of it. It is defined as the inner conflicts and anxieties that accompany important human issues of purpose, responsibility, freedom, and commitment (James, 2008, p.13). It is also the moment at which individuals question the foundations of life, its value, purpose, and meaning (Bourantas et al., 2014:25). According to Irvin David Yalom, people feel an existential crisis when they face existential realities, that is, death, meaninglessness, lack of freedom, isolation, and failure in authenticity. These are the realities that they seek to find an answer for, but fail to do so (Yalom, 1980:8-9) since life is chaotic and it throws obstacles on individuals.

From a wider perspective, some philosophers assert that existential crises such as anxiety, loss of meaning, and lack of freedom stem from people's incapability of defiance or adaptation to the order of the world where systems are in constant change. They came up with this point of view thanks to the advancements in the laws of physics that could be reflected upon so as to redefine human existence and essence.

Religious teachings prevailed in the Middle Ages and dictated the insight that people were predetermined, an ideology that was eliminated by the rise of Enlightenment, followed by the great chaos created in the way individuals and societies used to see the world. Before the Enlightenment, people believed that the creation of the world, as well as mankind, took place by a single force, God, and that there was no power above this source. The past, present and future were shaped only by the decision mechanism of God, and this was called fate. In this case, people had only one task in life; and that was to worship the God who has made them worthy of this life. But with enlightenment, the fact that each event occurring in the physical world became independent of God made individuals the center of life. The prominent

thinkers of the period, such as Descartes and Spinoza, proposed that people had to take an active role in life in order to shape their own destiny; thus, it was suggested that they could justify their own existence through acts and experiences in life. Descartes' words on human's capability of thinking—I think; therefore I am—proves that rather than being dependent on a single force in terms of reason and freedom, individuals can make their own lives and existence more meaningful by doubt, which signifies individuals' capability of questioning in order to build up a connection between the law of nature and human existence. Spinoza, another foremost philosopher in the Age of Enlightenment, asserted, "The highest activity a human being can attain is learning for understanding, because to understand is to be free" (de Jounge, 2016:56). He emphasized that people are not puppets that remain under the command of a single ruling power. They can self-determine their own destiny by understanding the world in progress. Consequently, there was an urge to reconsider the long-applied doctrine, and individuals began to seek meaning for their existence and to face the outcomes of their decisions, leading them to a world of chaos. In fact, such a mindset was inspired by those thinkers who were already influenced by the advancements in the field of physics.

Eighteenth-century physics is dominated by the idea of determinism proposed by Newton, who claimed that the universe is a huge clock working perfectly. The clock is ordered, regular, and mechanically precise, which emphasizes predictability, certainty, and determinism (Hayles, 1991:8). As such, life is considered to be a process on a linear scale whose end is predictable due to the fact that "no matter what positions and velocities at an initial time of observation -the initial conditions- the behavior of the system is determined for all future and past times" (Parker, 2007:3). Therefore, everything occurring in the world has a reason and an outcome that never changes.

When physicists in the nineteenth century achieved to dissolve molecules and particles, they started to explore a new world of physics where nothing is stable, neither determined nor undetermined. It was when the deterministic worldview was thrilled by the features of chaos theory which is based on scientific discourse claiming that natural systems, such as weather, are controlled by mysterious but simultaneously random and determined forces (Sim, 2002:89). That is to say, unlike determinism, chaos theory argues that the world is not uniform but a living entity that constantly changes on a nonlinear scale. As a result, the outcome of an event cannot be predicted

in advance because there may be many random and out-of-control conditions that affect that outcome. That is why systems that seem orderly might be disorderly. The basis of today's theory of chaos is laid by James Clerk Maxwell in the nineteenth century. Maxwell opposes the classic determinism by suggesting the kinetic theory of gasses, which claims that particles, molecules, and atoms are not only in a constant change but also in a random motion. He theorizes that "when an infinitely small variation in the present state may bring about a finite difference in the state of the system in a finite time, the condition of the system is said to be unstable" (Mahon, 2003:158).

Similarly, in 1961, a well-known weather forecaster and mathematician Edward Lorenz found out that a tiny change in the initial state of a system can cause big shifts in the future. Through his research on nonlinear weather functions, he entered different rounded-up numbers for each function on the computer. As he examined the new forecast outputs, he observed the weather diverging so rapidly from the pattern of the last run that, within just a few months, all resemblances had disappeared (Gleick, 2011). After the study, Lorenz concluded that one small change in the initial conditions can cause devastating outcomes in a world, and that is what makes it complex, unstable, and unpredictable, a phenomenon he called Butterfly Effect. Hence, it can be deduced that chaotic systems may look as if they evolve randomly along with chaotic behaviors that are considered to occur without any cause and by chance, but it should be emphasized that chaotic behaviors are determinate and law-governed (Reisch, 1991:6). The source of determination in nonlinear chaotic structures is called strange attractors, which are based on the response of the outcomes to the initial conditions. Hence, based on Chaos Theory, it is possible to work on the cause-effect relationships in nonlinear systems and random behaviors of the functions within set boundaries thanks to these strange attractors (Brady, 1990:70). Lorenz introduces these attractors as the orbits that remain within a certain volume, but within this volume, two orbits never coincide; thus, the system never repeats the same motion exactly. In this sense, these attractors represent mysterious entities that dictate what happens within each system, as a demonstration of the deterministic feature of chaos. The strange attractors also justify that within chaotic systems; there are two paradoxical premises. The first premise underlines that chaos is the order's precursor and partner rather than its opposite. The second premise, on the other hand, suggests a hidden order exists within

chaotic systems (Hayles, 1990:9). In this sense, there is an order within chaos and chaos within an order. When these two parts of the scale are in balance, it is called the edge of chaos. According to Stuart Sim, it is where systems are at their most creative and most unpredictable because a balancing act is expected between order and chaos. If it fails, it might trigger an unexpected turn of events resulting in greater changes (Sim, 2002:93).

As a result of these developments and changes in philosophers' ideas about God, man, and existence, individuals have got the privilege of being active participants and agents being responsible for their actions taken and their inevitable consequences. Nevertheless, while enjoying this bestowed freedom of choice, they struggle to keep a balance on the edge of chaos; otherwise, they would suffer from existential crises, that is, fear, anxiety, and death. These crises generally result from a lack of freedom, meaninglessness, and failure in authenticity.

Chaos theory has attracted literary critics' attention to better understand the collision of the chaotic inner world of the characters with the outer world they inhabit. Harriett Hawkins proposes that chaos theory sheds light on the way we approach a work of literature since "deterministic chaos is the context, the medium we experience in everyday life" (Hawkins, 1995:8). He further suggests that literature and deterministic chaos are equivalents as both conjure up responses, contradictions, and deep interpretations (Hawkins, 1995, p. 8). Apart from Hawkins' point of view, many writers consider writing a medium through which they filter their inner conflicts to share them with their audience, hoping to maintain the supposed balance for themselves. Accordingly, Patrick Brady states that "Chaos theory may provide a key to sudden thoughts and intuitions" emphasizing that it is a means to rise from a mental churning of disorder and desire for reducing chaos (Brady, 1990:69). It is a great way to crystallize the insights into human nature and existence fashioned in a chaotic world presented in works of literature. It helps to analyze the dichotomous relationships between free will and determinism, purpose in life and meaninglessness, and authenticity and self-deception.

In this context, in order to come up with solutions to the existential crisis that arises with the constantly changing world order, Jean-Paul Sartre discusses the first principle of existentialism based on freedom. He explains that as there is no God, there is no human nature; therefore, "since he conceives of himself only after life exists, just

as he wills himself to be after being thrown into existence, man is nothing other than what he makes of himself,” underlining the fact that man is condemned to be free (Sartre, 2007:22-29). It can be deduced from Sartre’s point of view that human actions become the determining factor for individuals to form their own path in life independent from outside forces that are ready to bring chaos/order. In their article, Robert J. Blomme and Kirsten Bornebroek-Te Lintelo suggest that Albert Camus highlights the awareness of one's own existence because “this consciousness of existence gives [them] the freedom to make choices in [their] existence. Therefore, he suggests people are continually forced to make choices whose outcomes they are responsible for” (Blomme et al., 2012: 411).

On the other hand, meaninglessness, which is generally associated with absurdity, is another reason why people experience existential crises in a chaotic world. Gene Blocker defines meaninglessness, in its modern sense, as the combination of being disconnected and uprooted; being impotent or incapable of controlling the events; the experience of hollowness or emptiness of life; and lack of reason or purpose in life (Blocker, 1974:17). According to Yalom, meaninglessness is a dynamic existential conflict resulting from the dilemma of an individual who is in search of meaning in a world that lacks it (Yalom, 1980:9). Camus insists on this issue by defining that such a trait makes life more absurd than it is, underlining a fundamental conflict between what individuals want from the universe (whether it be meaning, order, or reason) and what they find in the universe (formless chaos) (Kaplan, 2020). Therefore, to overcome this conflict, he believes that death is an inevitable fate, but individuals need to live a fruitful life since it is impossible to comprehend what is beyond the physical world, which signifies that it is reasonable to ground decisions on what is available to them through experience (Roskowski, 2013:17). Camus, in this sense, emphasizes not only the finitude of human beings but also their capacity to make life meaningful in a chaotic world. Similar to Camus, other philosophers such as Heidegger and Sartre keynote the significance of action to seek and find meaning. Sartre, who does not believe in a predetermined human essence, advocates that “life has no meaning a priori” and adds that “ it is we who give it meaning, and value is nothing more than the meaning that we give it” (Sartre, 2007:51). He puts emphasis on the fact that similar to human essence, life is not predetermined and must be fashioned by individuals whose active participation with freedom of choice and

embracement of the obstacles on the way to the ultimate purpose, whatever it could be, are required. Likewise, lying around existence, Martin Heidegger rejects detachment from the world and instead emphasizes *being-in-the-world* and encourages the involvement of social environments to detect meaning (Panza et al., 2008:116-117).

In the realm of existentialism, authenticity also plays a pivotal role in indicating the approach individuals take to manage their lives which consequently represents their personality and their being (Gale et al., 2008:92). According to Sartre, authenticity is a self-discovery that requires two stages. First, a luminous awareness and acceptance of the structural instability or ambiguity at the core of the self (Aho, 2014). Authenticity is then the basic human essence and at the heart of this authenticity are the values that people reflect upon in life. While claiming their authenticity, individuals must be aware that they are living in a world in which systems are in a perpetual state of change. Therefore, to achieve authenticity, Sartre suggests, individuals need to adapt themselves to the obstacles they encounter in a chaotic life, preserving their own values; and this leads to the second stage. He suggests that a willingness to act and adaptation to life is therefore required (Aho, 2014). That is to say, individuals should not be passive when they face an obstacle while they are in a struggle to gain authenticity. They must regard their essence as a part of an ambiguous and unpredictable world because the essence is likely to change the new orders imposed on them. If individuals fail to create their own essence, then they fail in the process. Thus, it is significant to act, be a part of the changing world and adapt to new orders in life. Nonetheless, the values should not be avoided.

Literature provides the appropriate context to deal with the existential crisis, and Kafka is considered a writer whose works strikingly reflect the elements of existence. Moreover, he is known to be one of the representatives of modernism with his works in which “exploration of emotional subjectivity and revelation of an inner reality” is overtly covered (Hand, 2012:62). His characters are generally on a journey through the unknown, dealing with laws and authorities, which are figurative elements that Kafka is inspired by as his experiences. Apparently, his relationship with his father plays an important role in depicting his characters as individuals who are unable to communicate with others. Moreover, he generally characterizes his protagonists as

incapable of fitting into a constantly modifying society. Thus, they generally question their own freedom to choose, meaning in life, and authenticity in bafflement.

Contrary to most philosophers and writers, such as Sartre and Camus, Kafka introduces the concepts of free will, meaninglessness, and authenticity from a different point of view. Considering the structures, characters, themes, and contents of his works, Kafka reflects on the chaotic structure of life and how individuals suffer from the obstacles they encounter. His characters do not have the freedom to use their own free will because their world is perpetually unpredictable, leaving them cowardly to take risks to shape their fates. Although the characters in most of Kafka's works are in search of meaning in a chaotic world, they can never fulfill their desire to find it because they are trapped in a context whose orders are ever-changing. Authenticity, on the other hand, is another important issue that Kafka deals with in his works. His characters always look for ways to fit into the society they want to be a part of. They generally act like they are being authentic, but on the contrary, they value themselves in the eyes of others, so they cannot prioritize the value of self-awareness and the way their existence is perceived in the eyes of others. This is because of the changing face of the universe together with the consciousness of human beings in it. As the order of the universe changes, human beings try to adapt themselves to it. This adaptation, however, requires changes in the consciousness of people, the way they approach the case, and how the decisions they make accordingly. In Kafka's works, characters are so adaptive that they even adjust themselves to the unbearable or torturing processes that lead to their commonly faced tragic end.

The first chapter explores the concept of free will that Kafka introduces in his short story *Before The Law*. This chapter aims to reveal how existential crisis is handled by the protagonist, the man from the country, through the lens of chaos theory. The chapter begins with some background information about how determinism evolves into deterministic chaos. Highlighting the concepts of determinism and free will, the story *Before the Law* will be analyzed in line with Kafka's relationship with his father and experience of his traumatic childhood. The chapter will further discuss how Kafka applies metaphorical figures to reflect his thirst for order, his relationship with his tyrant father, and the fear he feels of facing obstacles that hinder him from making his own decisions in life. The chapter closes with the solution that Kafka offers

to eliminate the existential crisis, the fear the protagonist feels due to his incapability of taking risks before the law.

The second chapter focuses on the meaninglessness that the protagonist faces in the short story *The Vulture*. The analysis will be associated with the creation of the universe, which demonstrates deterministic features in order to foreground the meaning of external power, that is, God. Further, the discussion will revolve around Nietzsche's announcement 'God is dead' in order to signify how individuals fall into the absurdity of life where they suffer from meaninglessness as a result of lack of action. Similar to the discussion in Chapter I, the second chapter will also provide an analysis within the concept of chaos theory, and it will underline the threshold of determinism and unpredictability through the protagonist and the other character, named the passerby. The inactiveness and passivity of the main character, who gives in to face his scapable fate, will be compared with Kafka's personal experiences as an individual shadowed by the strong figure of his father being left hesitant and unconfident to take action.

The third chapter covers authenticity in *A Hunger Artist*. The chapter commences with Kafka's perception of body image in relation to his father's rules that affected his eating order. The concepts of bad faith and authenticity are explored regarding Sartre's definition. The significance of these two notions lies at the heart of chaos theory because it will help uncover how the protagonist is incapable of keeping the balance between order and chaos in the constantly changing world he inhabits, and consequently, he falls into the dilemma of authenticity and bad faith. This dilemma will be discovered through the way he measures his authenticity in the eyes of authoritative figures making decisions on his behalf of him or leading his life through the unknown. It will be discussed how the character relies on the judgments of others to escape probable chaos and the consequences of his choice to deceive his audience into enjoying the fake order he created.

The conclusion wraps up the three short stories by considering the causes and effects of living in a chaotic world where high powers rule to impose new orders. It will be explained how the characters' attitudes towards obstacles affect their search for free will, coping with meaninglessness and losing their authenticity in a chaotic world. Kafka attempts to explore why people remain passive through existential crises

such as fear and ambiguity and how this passivity leads them to live in a purgatory where they pave their path towards their actual death.

II. FREE WILL IN BEFORE THE LAW

“Time is short, my strength is limited, the office is a horror, the apartment is noisy, and if a pleasant, straightforward life is not possible, then one must try to wriggle through by subtle manoeuvres.”

—Franz Kafka

Determinism and freewill have been a matter of debate due to the changes in the understanding of the perception of laws of the universe. It is undeniable that people have always tended to believe in an absolute creator to determine their course of life. They assert that even their decisions are bound to what they believe is God. Thus, the consequences are all up to it. Accordingly, in ancient times, determinism was generally considered to be synonymous with fate, and it was believed that only God could determine what the future held for humanity. This kind of determinism is a threat to the freedom and will of the people since it condemns them to abide by an external power, which is God in this case, with no questions asked. However, the ancient philosophers were enthusiastic about shedding light on the secret of nature so that they could bring new dimensions to redefine human nature and its capabilities in terms of free will. Around the 5th century BC, the Greek philosopher Democritus, who is considered to be the father of modern science with his studies on atoms, stated that “nothing occurs at random, but everything for a reason and by necessity” (Boulter, 2011:629). Spinoza, on the other hand, conveys a similar idea of determinism as Democritus and highlights that human beings are free and each of their actions are determined and the future cannot be altered. He asserts that

In the mind there is no absolute, or free will, but the mind is determined to will this or that by a cause which is also determined by another and this again by another, and so to infinity. (Melamed, 2021:343)

The idea of determinism suggested by Democritus and Spinoza inspired many physicists, such as Newton. In the 17th century, when scientists were making breakthroughs in physics, Newton claimed the universe to be like a huge clock mechanism and stated that every system in the universe is predictable, regular, and mechanically precise, just like a clock (Hayles, 1991:8). However, after the developments in physics, the association of human nature and its existence with the laws of the universe has added another dimension to identifying the notions of free will and determinism.

In the 19th century, chaos theory was first uttered by French mathematician Henri Poincaré who proposed dynamical systems that are defined as a system whose state evolves continuously over time according to a fixed rule (Tomen et al., 2019:35). “A dynamical system consists of a set of possible states in a given space, together with a rule that determines the present state of the system in terms of past states” (Chellaboina et al., 2008:71). Life is also a dynamical system that consists of variables such as culture, language, perception, and consciousness. These variables are subject to alterations by determiners that people are incapable of realizing most of the time. These shifts occur based on the prior state of the variable. In other words, whatever happens, today, due to the previous conditions of the variables which have opted for a change. Similar to Poincaré, Edward Norton Lorenz, a well-known mathematician, and meteorologist, furthered his studies on the weather, which is a part of dynamical systems, and defined chaos theory as “dynamical systems [that] are sensitive to initial conditions” (Bolland et al., 1999:368). This is what is known as the butterfly effect which suggests that “the flap of a butterfly’s wings in Brazil set off a tornado in Texas” (Lorenz et al., 2003). It signifies that the changes in dynamic systems such as economy, weather, or social structures occur due to a very small cause that determines a considerable effect that is impossible to ignore. Nonetheless, these causes and changes do not occur randomly. Instead, an underlying structure behind them known as strange attractors, which creates orderly disorder. In this sense, Lorenz opened doors to a determinism defined as nonlinear dynamics imposing “simplistic cause-and-effect thinking on the complex and uncertain situations commonly encountered” (Bolland et

al., 1999:367). In other words, contrary to classic determinism, whose claims are based on the predictability of life, deterministic chaos highlights the idea that the universe is dynamic and, with a tiny change, a deterministic system can become unpredictable. Therefore, within the context of deterministic chaos, systems should be observed on the basis of a cause-effect relationship rather than one specific high power ruling or determining the systems in advance. Lorenz, in this sense, embraces the fact that "... there are initial conditions compatible with the laws for which the laws do not determine all future positions. However, those conditions are unusual, and it is plausible that they can be ruled out as obtaining in our world" (Loewer, 2008). In this sense, not everything occurs by mere chance in the universe, but the mysterious entities known as strange attractors dictate what happens within each system, such as the phenomenon of weather, which is assumed to have its strange attractor shaping its behavior (Sim, 2002:92).

The fact that people are living in a world in which most things are unpredictable raises awareness about the freedom and free will of individuals who were once a part of a mechanism proposed by Newton. Many philosophers who think individuals should free themselves by using their decision mechanisms, independently of fate and destiny, have put forward propositions on the matter. Accordingly, Jean-Paul Sartre proposes that existence precedes essence, which signifies that individuals first exist and then materialize themselves in the world to define themselves as an individual. In other words, Sartre suggests that individuals are not predetermined, and no fate can determine their actions or future. Thus, people are condemned to be free (Sartre, 2007:29). In addition, Daniel C. Dennett advocates that free will is real. However, it does not preexist in the same way that the law of gravity does. In addition, it is not the ability to exclude oneself from the physical world's causal web, as is claimed by tradition. It is an evolved product of human beliefs and action, and it shares the same degree of reality as other products of human activity, like music and money (Dennett, 2003:13). On the contrary to Sartre, John Hospers puts forth that "freedom is an illusion and that all human actions are caused or determined by certain forces" (Odesanmi, 2009:86). Moreover, he suggests that,

"...everyone has been moulded by influences which in large measure at least determine his present behavior; he is literally the product of these influences, stemming from periods prior to his "years of discretion," giving him a host of

character traits that he cannot change now even if he would (Hospers, 1950:316).

Hospers' definition of free will signifies that individuals are not capable of shaping their future of their own will. When he states influences, he highlights that there are external powers, say, the environment, society, or family, that affect the way people construct their own future. In this way, he underlines the fact that people's decisions and their consequences are dependent on the initial conditions, which is proposed in the butterfly effect. If a flap of a butterfly can cause a storm on the other side of the world, it cannot be expected from individuals who have been raised by the oppression of external powers to be an adult with free will in the short or long term. On the contrary, in every aspect of their lives, whenever they want to make use of a decision-making mechanism, they will look for a deterministic mechanism. Yet, they will believe that it is their own free will to act in a certain way without realizing that the world is a nonlinear dynamic system whose rules constantly change. Thus, free will becomes an illusion.

Different concepts of free will and determinism have dominated numerous plays and novels whose writers aim to portray the human condition against outside forces such as a family member, a stranger, or social norms. In Kafka's short story *Before The Law*, it appears that the character does not have free will. *Before The Law* is a story about a man from the country who wants to enter the law. However, "Before the Law stands a doorkeeper. A man from the country comes to this doorkeeper and requests admittance to the Law" (Kafka, 2012). Yet, the gatekeeper mockingly tells the man that he can enter the law as long as he takes risks of encountering more powerful gatekeepers that he probably will not stand to see. Considering that the law must be open to all, the man from the country is surprised, but still, he waits for months and even years to enter the law. He even bribes the gatekeeper, who happily accepts all the bribes offered. Yet, the man cannot have access through the door, which is currently open. Finally, before he perishes, the man asks the gatekeeper how come he is the only one waiting to be allowed to pass through the door, and the gatekeeper answers: "No one else could gain admittance here, because this entrance was meant solely for you. I'm going to go and shut it now" (Kafka, 2012).

Before The Law was published in December 1914. It evokes the impossibility of entering the law and the inaccessibility of life's secrets (Anckaert et al., 2017:125). In

this story, freedom is presented as an illusion, and it is reflected through metaphorical elements. Kafka had so many chaotic periods in his short life and faced too many external forces in his chaotic world. The most distinct external power in his life is his father, Hermann Kafka. Father Hermann is the legislator of the house, who starves him, kicks him out of the house in the middle of the night, and tragically affects Kafka, his existence, and his free will with his huge body. The laws invented by Hermann Kafka were invented solely for Kafka at home. Those laws were changed so frequently that Kafka found himself in another chaotic world and unpredictable life. Moreover, he was not sure what to obey:

I, the slave, lived under laws that had been invented only for me and which I could, I didn't know why, never completely comply with. (Kafka, 2012)

It is impossible for Kafka to obey the rules applied by his father because he does not have the same strength, appetite, and skills as his father, which implies how remote those two parties are from each other (Kafka, 2012). The impact of his father on Kafka had a blow to his decision-making mechanism and severely hindered him from becoming a free individual who was supposed to be able to fashion his own life. Kafka, facing the challenge, remained passive due to the fact that whatever he did, he would not be able to beat his father. Thus, in *Before The Law*, Kafka demonstrates the concept of free will similar to Hospers' definition of it. Kafka asserts that freedom is an illusion and it is impossible for people to achieve order in a world where the laws and orders are always in constant change. Every little influence on the current order drags people back to chaos, and their decision-making mechanisms are interrupted. Hence, people are unable to use their own free will to create and embrace their own order.

In the story, the man from the country can be considered as the embodiment of Kafka himself, who is supposed to obey the rules that his father sets. In his letters that he writes to his father, he depicts his father as having great power and inconsistency in ruling the world from his armchair. He writes to his father that "Your self-confidence indeed was so great that you had no need to be consistent at all and yet never ceased to be in the right" (Kafka, 2013). This demonstrates that Kafka had to abide by an external power, his father, and how desperate he is to remain passive as he is unable to embrace his free will. Similar to Kafka, the man from the country is incapable of using his own free will properly because of the external power, that is, the doorkeeper waiting in front of the door magnificently with "his fur coat..., his

large, sharply pointed nose, his long, thin, black tatar's beard" (Kafka, 2012). When the man asks the doorkeeper if he can enter the law, the doorkeeper replies the man that

He can't grant him admittance now. The man thinks it over and then asks if he'll be allowed to enter later. 'It's possible,' says the doorkeeper, 'but not now.' (Kafka, 2012).

'The law' before the man standing is a metaphor for death, and he is supposed to take part in life in order to fashion his existence with his own free will along the way to death. Notwithstanding, along the way to the law, there are various obstacles, as the doorkeeper informs the man; and he makes sure that the man is aware of the risks that the man is about to take if he tries to enter the law despite his veto. Hence, in order to warn the man in advance, he explains how horrifying the journey it would become for the man to enter the law:

If you are so drawn to it, go ahead and try to enter, even though I've forbidden it.. But bear this in mind: I am powerful. And I am the lowest doorkeeper. From hall to hall, however, stand doorkeepers each more powerful than the one before. The mere sight of the third is more than even I can bear. (Kafka, 2012).

The introduction of the doors and their keepers along the way to the law emphasizes an important aspect of free will. It suggests that people have the capacity to realize themselves by walking a path that they can choose, although life is a chaotic structure, like a maze that spans every single aspect of life (Kohl, 2019:80). In this sense, if the law that stretches behind the door represents death, then the other doors and the keepers that the doorkeeper talks about are some obstacles that the man might encounter in life in order to reach the law. It is up to the man's decision to enter the law and take responsibility for his own life and the consequences of his free will. However, the man is not aware of that fact because he falls into a delusion in a chaotic state at the sight of the doorkeeper and his introduction of the other doors and doorkeepers. According to him, the law is universal, and everyone can enter the law. In other words, the man is offered a life to live, and while he can shape it with his own free will, he considers the doorkeepers he is told as an obstacle. According to Kafka, "in pursuit of one's immense task, one should not look for an obstacle where *perhaps* there is none (Kohl, 2019:73-74). If man can choose the path of this life and if he has

the capacity to materialize himself along the maze of chaotic life, then no obstacle must prevent him from his true purpose. He must be able to make decisions to take a step ahead and see what the consequences of its result will be. Once the man from the country finds out about the other gatekeepers and how fierce they are, he is confused by the new order, and although the gatekeeper never tells it is forbidden for the man from the country to enter the law, it is just not at the moment, the man from the country never takes the risk and the responsibility of entering the law.

When he learns that it is accessible to anyone who is able to bear the frightening gatekeepers on the way to law, he neither disobeys the gatekeeper nor leaves the setting. The reason for this is that the man from the country already lives in a certain order peacefully; that is, he lives a life that he is accustomed to. The obstacles and postponement of admission he faces when he comes before the law are a different order and probably a painful process when the other gates and keepers are considered. The reason why the man doesn't even think about setting foot in the door is the obstacles he has to overcome when he leaves the peaceful order he is currently living in and moves to another order. In other words, he is offered a new life and asked to choose to be a participant in it, but the fear he feels due to the possibility of the disturbance of his order renders him passive and hinders him from using his own free will to take the journey to the law. Therefore, he continues standing before the law and he "...who has equipped himself well for his journey, uses everything he has, no matter how valuable, to bribe the doorkeeper" (Kafka, 2012). In fact, there are two things the man from the country needs to do at this point: out of his own free will, either he will take all the risks avoiding the gatekeeper, pass through the door and reach the law by overcoming the obstacles he will encounter, or he will live like a coward without disturbing his current order by following all the rules laid down by the law. For he fears the unpredictability of the journey to the law, he feels an obligation to obey the rules set by the law without even questioning the reason why or how long he has to keep waiting. He even bribes the gatekeeper in order to persuade him to enter the door. In addition, he tries to justify his suffering with it. The depiction of the man at this point of the story is significant in demonstrating Kafka's implication of how numb people's perception can become on the edge of chaos. Although the edge of chaos is the balance between chaos and order, the external powers disturb this balance in order to impose their order. In the meantime, people being imposed by a new order also lose

their balance and are trapped in a vicious circle of chaos and order leading them to an unpredictable end. Therefore, people become too numb and frightened to realize their purpose in life and achieve it of their own free will. According to Kafka, “life is a continuous distraction” because there is nowhere to hide from the external powers and the imbalance of the edge of chaos that people are obliged to face in life (Kohl, 2019:71). In fact, Kafka asserts that as long as people are numb within the vicious circle of order and chaos, the purpose that they have to justify their existence as free-willed person is irrelevant to them. It is due to the fact that the perception of people might convince them there is no way to reach the destination they aim for. Therefore, Kafka asserts that

“We keep ourselves busy with charming, tiring distractions that fill the narrow chamber of our consciousness and divert our attention from the wounds and suffering that we have incurred, as well as from our failure to catch a lasting glance of a final destination that might redeem these wounds and losses” (Kohl, 2019:76).

In the story, the man has imposed a new order, so he loses track of his destination to his death. He becomes so numb and frightened by the obstacles he might encounter in life that he cannot realize his true purpose in life, which is reaching the law, that is, his own death. The thought that the life presented to him would be full of constant distractions gives him the feeling of saving the moment he is living, diverts him from his true goal, and causes him to take vain actions. Thus, bribes the gatekeeper to justify his sufferings rather than putting an end to it by taking action to enter the door out of his free will.

He starts waiting there because he is never explained the reason for the postponement of his entrance to the law because the man from the country never questions it. When he is admitted to the law is the only issue he wishes to reveal; yet, it is the wrong question. Thus, he feels free when

“The doorkeeper gives him a stool and lets him sit down at one side of the door. He sits there for days and years. He asks time and again to be admitted and wearies the doorkeeper with his entreaties.” (Kafka, 2012)

By accepting the stool to sit and wait until he is allowed to enter the law, the man voluntarily accepts the postponement of his admittance. He ignores the fact that it is

entirely up to him to proceed to his own destination, as there is no tangible external force that strictly prevents him from achieving his task (Kohl, 2019:74). Too ignorant to realize his capacity of free will, he forbids himself from entering the law as if it is his own decision. In this sense, the man from the country "...has no freedom to choose, however because of his ignorance, he believes he has made a free decision" (Mazur, 2016). As a result, free will is nothing but an illusion until we are aware of it and capable of using it. Similarly, Jacques Derrida states that the law is forbidden in the story. He implies that the man from the country does not make use of his own natural, free will in order to enter the law. Instead, he applies self-prohibition, which allows him the freedom of self-determination. Yet, this freedom destroys itself through the self-prohibition of the law (Derrida et al., 1992:204). Hence, free will becomes an illusion, and it turns into a vicious circle through an unpredictable journey of life. The postponement of the admittance also signifies that the man from the country misses the decisive moment of the here and now (Anckaert et al., 2017:132). By offering the stool, the doorkeeper wants the man to live his life and the moment. In other words, he offers the man the chance to fashion his way to the law, but since he is not sure of what lies beyond the door, he remains in a passive state and waits in vain. Metaphorically, Kafka justifies the significance of time and how fruitfully people can spend it throughout their lives despite all obstacles they might encounter in a chaotic world. Ideally, every obstacle encountered in life drags people into another order because each time they face an obstacle, they have to change their direction towards another, which promises a new order and hope to achieve their goals in life. The path of life traveled in this way becomes meaningful; and in order to achieve this, it is necessary to have free will and use it wisely. In the story, the man from the country loses his chance to take his journey of life that he can shape because he is not aware of the free will he has. Most importantly, he becomes a coward because of the frightening introduction of obstacles he might encounter on the way to the law. In other words, he is afraid to take risks to reach the law. In this context, Kafka asserts that people are free to decide, but external powers might hinder them to achieve their tasks in life. He believes that human beings are not predetermined, but everything depends on outside forces. Yet, Kafka remains passive because he does not want to take risks against his father. Since the father is the figure that determines Kafka's personality, it becomes unlikely for Kafka to make his own decisions concerning his own life. Thus, I suggest, it becomes the main problem for Kafka that he cannot manage his free will

against his father. His decision-making mechanism is broken, and all he has are regret and sorrow because he is a coward when he encounters his father's tyrant treatment of him. The cowardice he feels because of his father is depicted by Kafka's own words in his Letter to His Father. Due to Hermann Kafka's "effective rhetorical methods" in raising Kafka, those methods include abuse, threats, irony, spiteful laughter and self-pity (Kafka, 2013). Thus, he is afraid of him hiding himself in his room among his books (Kafka, 2013). He is obliged to obey the rules set by his father. As for obedience, Kafka calls himself a disgrace due to being a slave to the laws that he can never completely abide by; yet, it would be also a disgrace if he was defiant. In this sense, he is supposed to remain passive instead of taking action of his own to fashion his life. Even if he is a grown-up, he still cannot manage his free will in jobs, marriage, and many other issues in his life. It is due to the fact that his father's influence is like a shadow following him in every aspect of his life. Thus, I suggest, *Before The Law* is the work that reflects the sorrow, cowardice and regret he feels through his entire life. It can be considered as the demonstration of regret and sorrow that one might feel as a result of cowardice against an authority rendering them passive. Marcus Kohl, in one of his articles on Kafka, states that people are free to choose their path in life, but if their freedom of choice on how to proceed depends on a past personality that is not their own anymore, then it is not tangible in what sense their pace and path is up to who they are now (Kohl, 2019:80). Kafka, who has a lot of trouble with free will in his life and reflects this in his works, is unable to break away from his past. There is always an ambiguity in his life because of the laws the father dictates at home, not knowing why he should follow these laws and the possible and unpredictable consequences of obedience or disobedience. Similarly, the man from the country depicted in the story is in an ambiguous state within a chaotic atmosphere where the future is unpredictable. He is in a different world whose initial conditions are different from the current situation he is in. The law is not accessible anymore, and in order to reach it, he needs to overcome the obstacles on the way. Therefore everything turns upside down for him because of the inconsistency between his perception and the changing world. He falls into chaos that is ambiguous and unpredictable because he is afraid of the consequences of his actions, so he cannot enjoy the moment and take a step toward his goal of reaching the law. Instead, he "sits for days and years" (Kafka, 2012) before the law renders him passive.

As the man waits for permission, he grows old and draws close to his death:

“his eyes grow dim and he no longer knows Whether it’s really getting darker around him or if his eyes are merely deceiving him. And yet in the darkness he now sees a radiance that streams forth inextinguishably from the door of the law. He doesn’t have much longer to live now “ (Kafka, 2012).

On the verge of death, the man from the country is looking at his own death. The challenges he encounters and anticipated obstacles with unpredictabilities drag the man into a black hole that is created by the man himself as a result of the order having been imposed on him. It is his responsibility to choose his own path out of this black hole to find order in life. Yet, it is impossible because of the doorkeeper. Furthermore, Kafka emphasizes the fact that death is an unchangeable system in life since it is the only part of the system that is definite and finale.

Before he dies everything he has experienced over the years coalesces in his mind into a single question he has never asked the doorkeeper. He motions to him, since he can no longer straighten his stiffening body. The doorkeeper has to bend down to him, for the difference in size between them was altered greatly to the man’s disadvantage....’[H]ow does it happen, ..., that in all these years no one but me has requested admittance.’ The doorkeeper sees that the man is nearing his end, and in order to reach his failing hearing, he roars at him: ‘No one else could gain admittance here, because this entrance was meant solely for you. I’m going to go and shut it now’ (Kafka, 2012).

The man’s shrinking body justifies that the law that appears to be forbidden is becoming more powerful and that the doorkeeper is turning into an infallible obstacle (Anckaert et al., 2017:130). Waiting before the law, the man from the country is merely concerned about the doorkeeper rather than realizing the law itself and reaching it with the least damage to his capacity of free will and his end. He is deceived by the doorkeeper’s majestic appearance and accepts him as a guarantee of his admittance to the law. While bribing and trying all the possible ways to pass the gate, he forgets that free will is achievable. More importantly, his superiority over the doorkeeper can be claimed, provided that his free will is real rather than an illusion. Hence, the man from the country shrinks before the superiority of the law and the doorkeeper.

The response given by the doorkeeper to the man's inquiry is the most crucial point of this story which underlines the feelings of regret and sorrow of the man, who has remained passive for ages. In fact, since the doorkeeper offered him a stool, the man has bountiful chances to draw his path, one way or the other. Notwithstanding, ambiguity, and unpredictability hinder his decision-making mechanism, so he turns out to be the slave of external power. The message that Kafka wishes to convey is that man is alive before the law, and as long as he is alive, there is always chaos since "this world seems to be completely disordered, a swamp world" (Rosendal, 2016:78). He never believes in the power of free will to bring order since no one is capable of realizing the consequences of the decisions made in a life full of uncertainties, but it is certain that chaos will occur. Therefore, how people deal with external powers in a chaotic world defines to what extent people are courageous.

In the story, the symbolic death of the man takes place when he remains passive before the law. He is strictly surrounded by outside forces and uncertainties, which result in the man's fall into chaos. He becomes incapable of realizing his own insight while waiting before the law, so he loses his ability to make decisions to reach his destination. He is not brave enough to take risks to pass the door, nor does he take a step back, so he creates an inferno of himself and lives in that inferno until he grows old to die. The symbolic death of the man signifies Kafka's attempts to demonstrate the life of the protagonist, which consists of the impossibility of living and the experience of despair and fear felt as a result of the outside forces. The man is alive before the door, facing his death, while he is attempting to prove that it is impossible to live; he bribes the doorkeeper, asks for help from the fleas in his coat, he even answers the irrelevant questions of the doorkeeper so that he can find a way to reach the law (Heller, 1969:277). However, he fails to achieve his utmost goal. Most importantly, he fails to realize his freedom to choose the best in his life to shape it. This fact reduces the man's life and his attempts to overcome the obstacles and the fear caused by these obstacles. He remains passive, and thus, he suffers in the inferno, that is, chaos. His true death, on the other hand, occurs when the man's shrinking body cannot tolerate the greatness of the law and the doorkeeper. It would depend on his free will to lead a meaningful life by overcoming obstacles with his own freedom to choose so that he could reach death and make it meaningful. However, he does not have enough courage to experience the meaningful death that he sees as a radiance

from the doorway. Unaware of the fact that the door is meant only for him, he dies for nothing in sorrow, regret, and fear since it is too late to take the route to the law independently from the obstacles on the way. Finally, he dies in the hope of finding order.

III. MEANINGLESSNESS IN THE VULTURE

The tremendous world I have in my head. But how to free myself and free it without being torn to pieces. And a thousand times rather be torn to pieces than retain it in me or bury it.

—Franz Kafka

The Vulture is a story in which a vulture hacks a man's boots and stockings and finally his feet. While the vulture is hacking and circling around the man giving a break and then continuing to tear his flesh, a passerby stops and asks the man why he has been suffering all this when it is only one shot that can take the vulture's life away. The man explains that the vulture has attacked for no reason, and even if he tried to drive it away, it was an unsuccessful attempt. The passerby tells the man to wait for half an hour until he gets his gun and shoots the vulture so that the man can be saved. However, like the vulture has understood every word they have exchanged, it attacks the man by thrusting its beak into his mouth through the man's veins, "filling every depth, flooding every shore" (Kafka, 1988).

In terms of its structure as well as its characters and setting, *The Vulture* is the reflection of the chaotic universe that we are living in. The story starts in the middle of nowhere, signifying there is neither a proper beginning nor a clear ending of the story. One cannot be sure where the vulture has come from and when and how it starts hacking the man. In other words, both reader and the protagonist are thrown into a situation whose initial conditions are unknown. Furthermore, the setting is unknown to the readers due to the fact that the narrator does not depict the setting, which creates a big nothing, just a void in the mind. In this respect, the way the protagonist of the story creates the atmosphere and setting in the story resemble the creation of the universe, which is based on mythical, religious, and scientific doctrines.

There are several myths related to the creation of the universe. In Sumerian Myth, the creation of the universe is attributed to four gods who are in control of heaven, earth, sea, and air, and one or another of these four gods created every other entity in accordance with plans originated by them (Kramer, 1963:115). According to Greek Mythology, it was only chaos which is also known as the cosmos, in the beginning. Out of this chaos, gods existed to bring order to the universe with night, fate, love, revenge, sleep, death, and many other systems that we are fiercely familiar with today. Empedocles, one of the pre-socratic philosophers, claims that all creation was composed of the four elements—air, fire, water, and earth. The cosmos began with the separation of these elements and with the formation of light and darkness (Budín, 2004:381). Hesiod, on the other hand, introduces Chaos as the void and darkness which exists spontaneously before the creation of the universe. After Chaos, he claims, broad-bosomed Earth (Erebus), the everlasting seat of all that is, And Love (Collins, n.d.:18). Similar to Sumerian myth, Hesiod believes that out of that Chaos, which is described as a gloomy and misty atmosphere, gods come into existence to bring order into the universe with its mortals. These myths underline the chaotic system in which the world first exists. For the purpose of bringing order, Gods come out of the chaotic setting.

In contrast to the myths, some religious doctrines such as Arabic, Christian, and Hebrew assert that there is an ultimate source which created the universe out of nothing. This belief is called ‘ex nihilo’ which is based on the idea that “no matter existed prior to a divine creative act at the initial moment of the cosmic process” and “matter was created instantaneously by God out of nothing” (Yu et al., 2004:149). As in 2 Maccabees 7:28 stated,

“ask you, my child, to look upon the heaven and the earth and to contemplate all therein. I ask you to understand that it was not after they existed that God fashioned them, and in the same manner the human race comes to be.”
(Schwartz, 2008:297)

That is to say, first, there was God, and then he created the earth, heaven, fire, and water out of nothing. Accordingly, God is the supreme power that exists first to bring order to the universe that is created out of chaos. In addition, Martin Meisel depicts creation ex nihilo as,

“...a chaos precedes the making of the cosmos in Genesis, and this chaos is imagined as shapeless, lightless, and empty, an abyss elaborated in the imagery of unfathomable waters and the rush of invisible, uncontained air.” (Meisel, 2016:50)

The theories about the creation of the universe are not limited to myths and religions, though. In the 20th century, thanks to the developments in physics, the creation of the universe was explained with the theory of The Big Bang. First proposed by the Russian physicist George Gamow, The Big Bang theory envisages the universe beginning from an extremely small, hot, dense initial state followed by a big explosion some 15 billion years ago (Halliwell, 1991:76). This explosion occurred simultaneously everywhere, rather than starting from a definite center, and it filled all space with every particle of matter rushing apart from every other particle (Weinberg, 1993:14). The infinity of all space and the infinite density concentrated in a single zero point before the explosion signifies that the universe existed out of nothing (Kragh, 2007:62). On this basis, the universe and all space in which it exists represents either an infinite or finite state of it, and possibility is not easy to comprehend as well (Weinberg, 1993:14). Thus, the universe is full of possibilities, unpredictable events, and endings creating a chaotic and absurd setting.

Considering the myths, religious doctrines, and scientific facts about the creation of the universe, the omnipotent power—of God—and unpredictability—chaos—are two significant points to take into great consideration while discussing *The Vulture*. In the story, the power and chaos signify how the protagonist is struggling to look for meaning in the chaotic world, which is also full of possibilities, unpredictable, and, most importantly, incomplete. As an all traumatized individual, Kafka tries to picture his effort to find meaning in this meaningless and chaotic universe.

Considering the protagonist and the setting in the story, it can be suggested that it is a challenging task to find meaning in life because life is already absurd. Absurdity is defined as man’s standing face to face with the irrational. It was given rise to when Nietzsche announced that “God is dead.” Nietzsche emphasizes that because of the scientific developments with the Enlightenment, science becomes its own religion, eliminating the existence of God. In the medieval era, God was believed to be the supreme power who created the universe, where everything has a purpose, a reason, and an order. Nonetheless, with the Age of Enlightenment, science has become the

absolute system of understanding the world (Gale et al., 2008:40). With the advancements in science in the Enlightenment Era, people threw themselves into chaos because they did not believe in God anymore. Before they adopted science as their guide, they had been accustomed to the tenets of Christianity. Those tenets basically lectured that God created the universe out of nothing, and he is the absolute power to bring order to it. In this sense, human beings were just a part of a gigantic machine whose way of working had already been determined. That is to say, they were not supposed to question their existence or the laws of nature. However, when science got ahead of religion, they found themselves in a new order where they needed to find the meaning of life to claim their own existence. In other words, people lost the absolute source of value, which is God, to have a meaningful life in order and were condemned to create the ground for their existence and “be the author of their own existence” (Gale et al., 2008:45). They were bound to choose their path in life to justify their existence by attributing meaning to life with their own choices. However, life was not the one they had been used to. It was already chaotic and absurd because now that God is dead, it was not predetermined. Rather, it became unpredictable. As a result, they started leading a life that was unreasonable and meaningless. That is why Nietzsche questions if human beings are ready to take responsibility for the existence of their own and of the order in the universe:

God is dead. ... And we have killed him. How shall we comfort ourselves, the murderers of all murderers? ... What festivals of atonement, what sacred games shall we have to invent? Is not the greatness of this deed too great for us? Must we ourselves not become gods simply to appear worthy of it? (Nietzsche, 1974:181)

After the announcement of Nietzsche in the 20th century, absurdity became the most encountered notion. After the great depression resulting from World War II, people started to think that the universe was devoid of purpose, and they started to long for meaning, significance, and purpose (Veit, 2018:211). In addition to Nietzsche's statement, Albert Camus claims that life is meaningless; a claim which is falsely regarded as a statement that imposes depression or pessimism. However, Camus tries to point out that human beings are the ones to attribute meaning to their own lives. That is to say, it is the responsibility of individuals to give meaning to their lives, hence giving meaning to their existence. Therefore, the world is inherently meaningless, and

individuals take over the responsibility for overseeing meaning in the chaotic world. In his famous work, *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Camus defines the world as not being “...reasonable [and] that is all that can be said. But what is absurd is the confrontation of the irrational and the wild longing for clarity whose call echoes in the human heart” (1991). Camus depicts the chaotic world that we inhabit; a world that is inherently in order, but that order is bound to change because of the initial conditions. Since this ambivalence between chaos and order leads to a more chaotic and irrational life, individuals cannot perceive what is true and wrong, so life becomes meaningless for them. As a result, they start seeking order and meaning.

As Camus puts it, absurdity means the combination of an irrational and chaotic world and a person who is looking out at it to find a way to make it rational and ordered (Gale et al., 2008:74). The world that Nietzsche and Camus present can be regarded as an optimistic one. They try to find a way out of the despair that individuals encounter in their quest for meaning.

Kafka, on the other hand, pictures an absurd world where it is challenging to find meaning in life because of the authoritative figures that individuals encounter through the course of their lives. His short story, *The Vulture*, is a unique story that demonstrates the fact that the world that we inhabit is such big chaos that it is difficult to find meaning in it. It depicts how the character gets lost as a result of his attempts to search for the answers to “why...?”. He is questioning his existence, but his questions remain unanswered. Generally speaking, when individuals question their existence, the consequence of it is unsatisfactory because the world is changing and developing together with their perception of them. Thus, the meaning in life that has been looked for is bound to change, which means whenever the meaning of life is acquired, it may not have any significance in the already-disturbed order that comes into existence immediately. According to Karl Jaspers, every individual lives at every moment in a situation, one that is, to be sure, constantly changing and never totally grasped or understood (Gray, 1951:118). Jasper’s statement justifies that the universe is always in a continuous change creating chaos and order ambivalence, and it is difficult for individuals to cope with its constant shifts. As a result, they may feel confinement in this universe of absurdity. They can even lose their sense of belonging and suffer from existential anxiety and dread, which is the exact case in Kafka’s *The Vulture*.

The story starts with the narrator explaining that he is under the attack of a vulture by saying that “A vulture was hacking at [his] feet” (Kafka, 1988). While it is not known how the vulture appeared and why it attacked the man, Kafka avoids naming the character or giving any other background information about him. Therefore, the readers find themselves at the center of the chaos right at the beginning of the story. In this sense, the story presents a picture of a recently disordered world where events and experiences seem to make little or no sense (McKinlay, n.d.). Within the context of chaos theory, the vulture attacking the man becomes the symbol of authority, disciplining the individual by imposing the new order. This can be considered as the depiction of the helplessness of individuals in real life in the face of social, political and economic changes. The vulture also renders the idea of chaos for the man since he is unfamiliar with it. The rules have an absolute hold over humanity but with no concern for its well-being. Everything about it is extreme, repulsive, and horrific (McKinlay, n.d.). For Kafka, the order is frightening and extreme because it is difficult to pace up with the changes in the world. It is something that challenges and oppresses individuals leading them to confinement in search of meaning. The confinement in Kafka’s stories occurs due to dread and ambiguity. It is not the confinement that one can visualize as imprisonment behind bars. Rather, it is the constriction that the characters feel under the pressure of tense which results from the search for meaning in life. Kafka constructs the confinement metaphorically in *The Vulture*. The plot in the story is built on the relationship between the vulture, which symbolizes order, and the man, who is in search of meaning despite the changing face of the order. Within confinement, it is impossible for the man to find the meaning of life and the events happening at the moment he is attacked by the vulture. Therefore, the man is on a journey of unpredictability which causes him to suffer dread and ambiguity. He not only feels detached from the world he is living in but also is unaware of what lies ahead of him. In this respect, Kafka uses the element of confinement which is a crucial feature not only to demonstrate the horrific face of world order but also to construct the tragic situation of the man (Vardoulakis, 2016:1). The confinement in the story underlines how Kafka considers order in life. The extremity and the abhorrence of the order are pictured explicitly when the man explains that the vulture “...had already torn [his] boots and stockings to shreds, now it [is] hacking at the feet themselves.” The way the vulture damages the boots, the stockings, and the feet, respectively, embodies the actualization of the catastrophe, which appears as a result

of a tiny spark of an initial condition that resembles the creation of the universe. The vulture comes out of nowhere similar to the universe itself. Hacking the boots is the initial point, the explosion, where the new order is being imposed by the omnipotent, that is, the vulture. Overtime, the vulture, damages the stockings and causes more horrifying scenes for the man. This is the point that the man is trying to question the reason why the vulture is attacking him. However, he remains passive and lets the vulture lead him to an unpredictable future. In this sense, man resembles stars, atoms, molecules, and all other matter being dragged and spread into all space to form today's universe. When the vulture finally reaches the man's feet, the man falls into absurdity with his ambiguous state of mind. He is trying to find the meaning of all the things he experiences, but without knowing the initial point of the attack, everything becomes meaningless and unpredictable. Therefore, he remains inactive. If the future of the universe is unpredictable, then it is inevitable for the man attacked by the vulture to lead a determined life because unpredictability leads him to remain passive against the attacks of the vulture. The way the vulture gradually destroys the man's feet signifies the fact that order does not occur overnight. It takes time to set the new order because "it turns out that an eerie type of chaos can lurk just behind a facade of order -and yet, deep inside the chaos lurks an even eerie type of order" (Brady, 1990:66). In other words, chaos and order are intertwined, and one of them always leads to the other with seemingly insignificant initial conditions. It signifies that one tiny change can lead to greater differences in the future, making it unpredictable. Even a microscopic fluctuation can send a chaotic system off in a new direction. This observation leads to another important characteristic of complex systems (chaos bound). Most critics and scientists use the proverb stated below in order to clarify to what extent the sensitivity to initial conditions cause ambiguity and an unpredictable future:

For want of a nail the shoe was lost.

For want of a shoe the horse was lost.

For want of a horse the rider was lost.

For want of a rider the message was lost.

For want of a message the battle was lost.

For want of a battle the kingdom was lost.

And all for the want of a horseshoe nail. (Sanjuán, 2021:43)

This proverb highlights that each chain of events can be assumed as the initial point, which results in unpredictable events. It represents the orders that might come out as a result of another event in the long term. However, this order renders chaos for individuals because each chain of events justifies unpredictability in terms of the effects of initial conditions and time. In the story, the initial conditions are unknown, but it is obvious that the vulture starts hacking the boot in the first place. In this sense, Kafka draws the picture of the events like the boots, the socks, the feet, and finally, the man himself and all for want of imposing a new order. As for the man in this chaotic atmosphere, he is confined to suffer the dread and ambiguity that the vulture brings. He does not know when he can tolerate the attacks and what the result of the attack will be. Thus, the depiction of the way that the vulture is hacking the men's feet also shows how unpredictable the future might be. The man already in an unknown situation, is shocked and looking for meaning and justification. However, the unknown initial conditions lead him to fail in building a cause-effect relationship. Thus, he experiences meaninglessness. The proverb mentioned above also refers to the absurdity of life in which individuals encounter events but cannot find their meanings. Without knowing where it will take them in the future, they futilely attempt to seek meaning. However, Kafka drives the man into a passive state in the face of an absurd situation that he is in. Hence, he cannot escape his tragic end.

Soon after, a gentleman passes by the man, looks on for a while, then asks him why he is so passive and tolerant of the vulture's attack. The passerby, on the other hand, is another chain in this absurd situation. He plays a crucial role in conveying the idea of our perception and our reaction to the absurdity of life. He stands for two different personalities with two separate attitudes toward the absurdity of life within the story. The first possibility is that the passerby is an individual who is brave enough to accept the meaning of life in the face of the absurdities in it. According to Viktor Emil Frankl, being brave to face absurdity can be achieved through doing good deeds leaving selfishness aside, and going beyond himself to make a change if needed (2006). Therefore, the way the passerby tries to help the man in his encounter with the external world is to help the man to realize the reason why he is attacked. Thus, the question of *why* also plays an important role in addition to his offer to kill the vulture: "One shot and that's the end of the vulture" is the passerby's solution for the conflict in which the man has been entrapped (Kafka, 1988).

The second possibility includes the idea that the passerby is in a state of self-deception, deceiving himself that he has found meaning in life. According to many philosophers as well as existential writers, the human condition is absurd because the world itself is absurd, meaningless, and chaotic, so the struggle to find meaning in such a world becomes meaningless and irrational. According to Donald Allen Crosby, “there is no justification for life, but also no reason not to live. Those who claim to find meaning in their lives are either dishonest or deluded. In either case, they fail to face up to the harsh reality of the human situations” (1988). It is important that individuals have a true purpose of overcoming anxiety and existential crisis, which is defined as the inner conflict leading individuals to question the very foundation of their life, its value, purpose, and, most importantly, meaning (James, 2008: 13). Despite all these facts and considering the story’s overall structure, as we mentioned, it resembles the creation of the universe out of nothing. We cannot even predict what might happen to him because Kafka tries to impose the idea that in this absurd life, everything is chaotic, and it is in vain to attempt to find meaning in it; instead, it offers nothing but despair and anxiety.

Another idea that Kafka conveys in the story is that an orderly world is scary and extreme. The man is being drawn into a new order, a new system that he feels like denying, and he is incapable of stepping out of the old system because the new order which has been imposed by the vulture is basically unpredictable. This unpredictability prevents the man from having a clear understanding of the situation and thinking of a possible way to save himself. Therefore, he is afraid to ask the question, “why?”. He explains the predicaments:

I’m helpless,” I said. “When it came and began to attack me, I of course tried to drive it away, even to strangle it, but these animals are very strong, it was about to spring at my face, but I preferred to sacrifice my feet. Now they are almost torn to bits. (Kafka, 1988)

In addition to the unpredictability, the man feels confined in the universe in the face of a new order since he cannot set up a bridge between the cause-effect relationship of the circumstances he is living in. Kathleen Bolland and Charles Atherton argue that “much of traditional ways of thinking about the world are infused with a longing for an orderly universe in which cause-and-effect are straightforward processes” (1999, p. 367). However, it is not the case in many of Kafka’s works,

including *The Vulture*. The man attacked by the vulture finds himself in suspense without knowing what happened, what is happening, and what will happen, which challenges the mind of the character to perceive the meaning of life. However, as Kafka suggests in *The Vulture*, the more the man seeks order without grasping the doctrine, the less likely he is to survive in the world. That is the reason why the character feels in confinement in the world.

“Fancy letting yourself be tortured like this!” said the gentleman. “One shot and that’s the end of the vulture.”

“Really ?” I said. “And would you do that?”

“With pleasure,” said the gentleman, “I’ve only got to go home and get my gun. Could you wait another half hour?”

“I’m not sure about that,” said I, and stood for a moment rigid with pain. Then I said: “Do try it in any case, please.”

“Very well,” said the gentleman, “I’ll be as quick as I can.”

This conversation highlights the threshold of determinism and unpredictability through an absurd setting. The passerby, who is in a deterministic point of view, is sure that the vulture can be killed with one bullet. He asks the man if he can wait for half an hour until he gets his own gun to kill it. Even ironically, he says he will come back “as quick as” he can. It is ironic because the setting and the atmosphere created by Kafka is an absurd disorderly world in which chaos and order, determinism, and unpredictability clash which consequently leads to a big chaos. The passerby, then, is unaware of how fast the change occurs in the system and how tiny is the possibility for him to be a savior.

However, the deterministic feature of the passerby is kind of a laughter at the man who is confined by the attack of the vulture. In his narratives, Kafka tends to describe situations where individuals cannot find a way out of the confinement that is brought about by a new order (Vardoulakis, 2016:9). In this sense, through his character, Kafka laughs at the man stunned after encountering a new order and trying to find meaning in his absurd confinement. However, this laughter is not sarcastic. Kafka himself is the victim of the social, political, and lingual upheavals, and he was incompatible with dealing with them. Hence, he suffered from the confinement himself. The man, in this sense, is the embodiment of Kafka himself with his in-

betweenness, unpredictability, and lack of courage, as well as his vain attempts to win over authority. When the passerby asks if he can wait another half hour, he is not sure about that. His uncertainty demonstrates how much the man is in an ambiguous state of mind in the face of the vulture, which represents a new order and the passerby who tries to impose another one. Therefore, when the man who is unable to see what lies ahead is offered help, he answers the passerby in despair “[to] do try it in any case” (Kafka, 1988). The man is already aware of the fact that he is in an irrational and meaningless setting and situation. He does not know when and how the vulture found and started hacking his feet is unknown. Moreover, although the man has tried to kill the vulture, it is still alive, and the man is not sure how long he will have to tolerate it. In such an absurd situation, it is almost impossible what will happen next. Therefore, the man and the passerby are representatives of the two opposite sides that an individual might encounter. You will either remain passive and suffer in life without achieving meaning to it or take action to be an active participant in life to attribute meaning to it.

The last part of the story pictures the vulture as the order that cannot hold on and destroy itself rather than an authority that circling around its prey and hacks it. The man illustrates the situation by stating,

...the vulture had been calmly listening, letting its eye rove between me and the gentleman. Now I realized that it had understood everything; it took wing, leaned far back to gain impetus, and then, like a javelin thrower, thrust its beak through my mouth, deep into me. Falling back, I was relieved to feel him drowning irretrievably in my blood, which was filling every depth, flooding every shore (Kafka, 1988).

Based on the butterfly effect, it is suggested that one flap of a butterfly can cause a tornado on the other side of the world. Similarly, one small hack and its power are increased by the vulture in time, and that one initial act upon the boot reaches the man's feet and finally results in the man's death. Although we do not know where the vulture, and the new order, came from -it is like it came from out of nothing, like many tenets about creation claim that the universe is created out of nothing. Now, it is clear that the initial point brings about the new order destroying the old one; the passerby offers a hand and asks the man to wait until he is back with his gun to kill the vulture. The passerby that has been attributed two possibilities now becomes the possible precursor

of the new order. The man attacked by the vulture, on the other hand, cannot understand that chaos is brought about by his passive state in the face of the changing, absurd and chaotic universe because he is not sure what he needs to rebel against and what to embrace. Moreover, whether he embraces this absurdity and the meaninglessness of life or rejects it, he cannot predict the future because it is assumed to be unpredictable. What we know is limited to the fact that the man is killed by the vulture as a result of the new order resulting in a different initial condition that has just occurred.

In this story, Kafka pictures the modern individual who feels confined, similar to the feeling that Kafka had suffered throughout his life. Rather than physical repression, the confinement depicted in *The Vulture* refers to authoritative and bureaucratic settings along with the individuals who are seeking meaning in a world ruled by deterministic chaos. In addition to the coercion that order brings with itself, it also causes absurdity together with meaninglessness. Thus, in the story, the man is unable to survive in the face of the absurdity of life because of the fact that he never attempts to question why he is attacked by the vulture. When the vulture attacks, the man feels content with it. "Falling back, I was relieved to feel him drowning irretrievably in my blood, which was filling every depth, flooding every shore" says the man; a statement which emphasizes the submission to the new cruel order and his failure of the man in an absurd world (Kafka, 1988). It is significant to highlight that the absurdist vision may be defined as the belief that we are trapped in a meaningless universe and that neither God nor man can make sense of the human condition (Harris et al., 1972:17). In other words, as long as the individual lives in a chaotic world, it is impossible to find meaning in life, and thus, despair is felt in the most powerful way. This is what the man in the story encounters. He is in an absurd situation, and he faces a horrific order. He does not believe that the passerby can help him out of his desperate situation. If it offers heaven to man, then death can be considered as a redemption for man because the experience of despair is a virtue and a blessing, or at least the stepping stone to virtue and blessing (Heller, 1969:268). Thus, the man is the protagonist who is precisely in the experience of living and, consequently, in the experience of despair (Heller, 1969:277). That is why he prefers self-destruction to feel relieved by allowing the vulture to kill him. In this sense, death becomes a virtue for the man as he believes that, by escaping from the absurd and indifferent world, he can find the meaning he is

looking for through his own death, although it is unpredictable what comes next. Although Camus believes that absurdity can never be accepted, instead, it requires constant revolt and confrontation (Onwuatuegwu et al., 2020:45), Kafka pictures the man suffering from the ambiguity of despair in chaotic and absurd life, a wholly negative condition in which an individual feels incapable of choosing between life and death (Heller, 1969:278). Therefore, it can be considered that the man feels relieved because he does not have to choose between life and death, as the new order of the universe has already chosen death for him. As a result, instead of embracing the absurdity of the universe and accepting the order, or the chaos, in the universe, death becomes the way man puts an end to his miseries in an unpredictable, chaotic world.

IV. AUTHENTICITY IN A HUNGER ARTIST

It is commonly acknowledged that Kafka's relationship with his father affected him physically. As a child, Kafka was overwhelmed by his father's massive body, which seemed like a giant to him. He was thrown out to the porch in the middle of the night by that massive body making Kafka feel he was nothing at all when he was compared to his father (Robertson et al., 2004:6). He was also prohibited from eating at the table when his father was devouring the food with a great appetite (Robertson et al., 2004:57). Kafka's world was so contaminated by his father's attitudes that although he was interested in sports such as hiking, it was a big challenge for him to embrace his own body because he was not the one who wanted to have a body like the one he had. In this sense, Kafka's father, the person who is in charge of making decisions on Kafka's behalf, is determined to have a thin, frail, and skeleton-like body. In one of his letters, Kafka points out the change in his body image by recalling his 'little skeleton' body and addressing his father as he states that 'I was oppressed by your sheer corporeality' (Robertson et al., 2004:6). The fact that Kafka had to endure such an abusive and controlling relationship with his father led him to have an eating disorder which inspired him to create some stories, including *A Hunger Artist*.

A Hunger Artist is a short story about a man whose art is based on fasting in a cage. He fasts so many days that his animal-like body can be observed clearly "as he sat there pallid in black tights, with his ribs sticking out so prominently..." (Kafka, 1988). It is no doubt that Kafka is inspired by the way his eating order is authorized by his father while creating the protagonist of the story. His impresario is the authority that decides how many days the artist will fast, despite the artist's capacity to fast for more than the number of days determined. He cannot demand more days from his boss in order to perform fasting, nor does he have the freedom to refuse the food that is forced on him at the end of each performance. Despite the restrictions, the hunger artist draws the most attention with his art at first. The spectators watch his art with great enthusiasm and admire his body. Yet, the environment in which the hunger artist lives is changing, and the spectators start losing interest in the fasting art. The decrease

in the number of spectators and their excitement for the artist and his art is the initial point of the challenges that the protagonist will encounter while he is seeking his own identity within a chaotic environment. In order to watch the artist's performance, as the narrator states, people flood his cage whether it is day or not. Despite all the excitement felt for the art of fasting, the artist completely loses his spectators one day. The reason for the decrease in the number of spectators is never explained throughout the story, which highlights the unpredictability of the story. Fasting is the order that the hunger artist is living in. Thanks to this order, he considers himself to be authentic because he claims that fasting is the easiest job to do and only he can do it the best. Notwithstanding, the unpredictable decrease in the number of spectators destroys the order of the hunger artist leading him to the duality of authenticity and bad faith. As the hunger artist and his art are not the center of attraction now, his boss looks for another place in Europe in order to exhibit the hunger artist. Because he cannot find a place, the hunger artist finds himself a job in a circus where his cage is placed at one of the back corners. However, either because he is old or because the interest of people in him and his art has been diminished, animals exhibited in the circus take more attention than the hunger artist. In other words, the artist owes the visits of the spectators to the animals who draw more attention than him in the circus. Over time, he is forgotten because his body shrinks too much to be found among the straws in the cage. One day, an overseer sees the cage where the hunger artist is supposed to be and investigates inside the cage. The attendants tell him that the cage belongs to the hunger artist. They find his tiny body by poking a stick in the straws in his cage and ask if he is still fasting. Surprisingly, the hunger artist is still there on the verge of death. Whispering, he asks for forgiveness because he cannot help fasting. When the overseer inquires why he cannot help it, the hunger artist states that

“because [he] couldn't find the food [he] liked. If [he] had found it,... [he] should have made no fuss and stuffed [himself] like [the overseer] or anyone else.” (Kafka, 1988)

Following this confession, he dies. After his death, his cage is cleaned, and a panther is put in.

Throughout the story, the hunger artist struggles to become authentic. If an individual achieves to act in his own freedom and decisions to choose his path in a chaotic life, then he is called an authentic individual. This authenticity is originally

introduced by Sartre, who states that *existence precedes essence*, emphasizing that each individual is living the truth about themselves and it is their condition as human beings. (Flynn, 2006:64). He highlights that individuals must take responsibility for their actions, and others cannot involve in their actions. In other words, authenticity is achieved when the individual denies the universality of all moral values; hence, it is rooted in the existential interpretation of freedom (Greene, 1952:266). Yet, authenticity is a problematic concept for many scholars and philosophers. According to Jonathan Webber, although authenticity is recommended to be objective and universal, without reason, individuals seem to be left with two problems: in the normative sphere, they seem to be left with relativism and nihilism to choose from. Secondly, it seems that people pursuing the fundamental project of bad faith cannot discover any motivation for abandoning it in favor of authenticity (Webber, 2009:133). Although authenticity is the result of the freedom of the individual, it is in danger when bad faith appears. Bad faith, at first sight, is considered a self-deception, a notion that helps Sartre explain the widespread acceptance of certain values that he considers false (Detmer, 2008:75). However, it is an attempt to flee from the tension that occurs in the duality of facticity and transcendence. The notion of facticity represents the race, nationality, and talents that an individual has, so it refers to things that are beyond our control. Transcendence, on the other hand, corresponds to the capacity that an individual has, which helps to face up the facticity (Flynn, 2006:65-66). According to Sartre, bad faith occurs when individual experiences the ambiguity of facticity and transcendence. The ambiguity of these two becomes observable as each individual's capacity to face difficulties is different from the other. Some individuals live on the edge of chaos when they encounter a new order. In physics, the edge of chaos refers to the systems which lead to chaotic/orderly behavior, and a tiny change in the initial condition can lead to other chaotic/orderly dynamics. From an existential point of view, it is a place where everything is in flux, and agents are constantly forced to adapt to one another (Waldrop, 1992:330). Through that adaptation, the hunger artist experiences the ambiguous mixture of authenticity and bad faith when confronting the edge of chaos. Hence, he opts for two possibilities; he will either self-organize and adapt himself to the new order without losing his authenticity or embrace what is imposed on him by the authority and act like it is his own will to accept it he can achieve authenticity. However, he fails in them both due to authoritative figures and the chaotic environment with constant changes created by outside forces.

The change in the order of the story is indicated by the initial condition of the hunger artist together with his art when the narrator states that

“During these last decades the interest in professional fasting has markedly diminished. It used to pay very well to stage such great performances under one’s own management, but today that is quite impossible. We live in a different world now” (Kafka, 1988).

At first, the hunger artist is capable of attracting hundreds of people who want to see the artist daily. He is even visited by spectators at night with a torch in their hands. On fine days, his cage is taken out to public places so that not only adults but also children can enjoy his fasting performance. Over time, however, the attitude to his art of fasting changes, and this puts the authenticity of the artist at risk leading him to unpredictable conditions.

Apart from the spectators, the hunger artist is watched by “permanent watchers selected by the public, usually butchers, strangely enough, and it was their task to watch the hunger artist day and night” (Kafka, 1988). Their task is to observe the hunger artist day and night so that he does not eat anything secretly. The task is merely a formality to assure the spectators that the hunger artist is not cheating while he is fasting. For the hunger artist, on the other hand, this formality causes agony due to the fact that he considers fasting as an order of his own. Moreover, it is a way that he can define himself as an authentic individual. When the hunger artist realizes that the observers deliberately stop observing the hunger artist let him eat, he feels humiliated in terms of his fasting art, whose honor forbids eating during the performance. Thus,

“Nothing annoyed the artist more than such watchers; they made him miserable; they made his fast seem unendurable; sometimes he mastered his feebleness sufficiently to sing during their watch for as long as he could keep going, to show them how unjust their suspicions were” (Kafka, 1988).

It is unbearable for the hunger artist to see these observers because fasting is an order through which he finds his authenticity. In order to achieve authenticity, the hunger artist thinks he does not need any approval from people or have to prove anything to them since fasting is the easiest thing in the world. That is why he feels insulted in his cage.

The boss of the hunger artist is another external power that is an obstacle for the hunger artist to achieve his authenticity. Fasting is the order that the hunger artist has been living in, so it is an easy job for him to pursue. In fact, for the final exhibition, his boss limits him to forty days as the longest fasting time.

Although he can fast for more than forty days, he is taken out of his cage on the last day of his performance when “a military band play[s] and two doctors enter[s] the cage to measure the results of the fast, which [are] announced through a megaphone” (Kafka, 1988). The way the hunger artist is forced to stop fasting and leave his cage on the fortieth day of his performance represents the new order that he is pulled into. When the boss finishes the performance, the artist doubts:

“Why stop fasting at this particular moment, after forty days of it? He had held out for a long time, an illimitably long time; why stop now, when he was in his best fasting form, or rather, not yet quite in his best fasting form? Why should he be cheated of the fame he would get for fasting longer, for being not only the record hunger artist of all time, which presumably he was already, but for beating his own record by a performance beyond human imagination, since he felt that there were no limits to his capacity for fasting?” (Kafka, 1988)

The reaction of the artist to his boss is due to the fear of losing his justification during the transition from one order to another. Although the hunger artist believes that he is an authentic individual with the art he is performing, the environment he is in is constantly changing. Since he started the art of fasting, the hunger artist performs his art at certain intervals, followed by ceremonies where he is fed various foods out of his cage. Over time, these ceremonies become the order that the hunger artist is familiar with but cannot adapt to, as it is an order that is imposed on the hunger artist rather than embraced by him. Thus, it is something that is out of his control. If a system is out of the individual's control, adaptation to a new order with authenticity becomes challenging. It is because human beings tend to think about ultimate fears resulting from unpredictability. In order to avoid thinking about the fear of existence, individuals restrict themselves from growth and limit their experience (Blomme et al, 2012:412). In this sense, it is remarkable to highlight that the hunger artist is afraid of losing his authenticity, so he resists when he is taken out of the cage and served food. After his performance, the hunger artist is taken to the area where he will eat, and “then

[comes] the food, a little of which the impresario manage[s] to get between the artist's lips, while he [sits] in a kind of half-fainting trance..." (Kafka, 1988).

If for Kafka, the body is capable of redemption through healthy living, it is also the supreme site of punishment (Robertson et al., 2004:50). Kafka had never been able to eat of his own will since it was his father who decided when and what Kafka would eat. Likewise, in the story, the boss feeding the hungry artist signifies the authority that imposes the new order on the artist. The art that the artist has been performing is already the order that he is familiar with. If he is not able to eat of his own will, then he is condemned to be dragged into a new order which is defined as a swamp. That is why the hunger artist is reacting against his boss. The hunger artist also reacts to the spectators because admiration of the spectators for his body lasts as long as the boss allows them to do so. The hunger artist believes that if he cannot escape from his boss—the new order, then he needs the excitement of the spectators to uplift and maintain his identity as a hunger artist. This is when the artist starts losing the balance between authenticity and bad faith. Living authentically is hard to achieve for individuals since they are living a life that acknowledges the fact that whatever life path they pick to follow, they will never receive any external justification for why that path is the right one for them to take (Gale et al., 2008:87). The hunger artist picks fasting to follow as his order and authenticity. Obviously, his decision to fast is affected by the admiration of the spectators, but the artist is not aware of it. Once the interest of the spectators in fasting decreases, the hunger artist strives for their approval of them so that he can achieve his authenticity, so he falls into bad faith. In other words, authenticity for authenticity's sake leads the hunger artist to bad faith. That is why the artist believes it to be unfair that the public has little patience with his art, and he questions, "if he could endure fasting longer, why shouldn't the public endure it?" (Kafka, 1988). The hunger artist, who has no other virtue than fasting and believes himself to be authentic with it, also deals with the accusations of his spectators. Whereas some of the spectators believe that it is the modesty of the hunger artist to call his art to be an easy task, others accused him of being "some kind of cheat who found it easy to fast because he had discovered a way of making it easy, and then had the impudence to admit the fact, more or less" (Kafka, 1988). As the years pass, the accusations of the spectators are replaced by their humiliation of them. The more he tries to be authentic, the more he feels unhappy due to the fact that authenticity causes

lots of discomforts since it requires resistance against being absorbed by the crowd (Gale et al., 2008:87). Similarly, the hunger artist tries to resist all the accusations and humiliations against himself and his art which causes rage and frustration:

“if some good-natured person, feeling sorry for him, tried to console him by pointing out that his melancholy was probably caused by fasting, it could happen, especially when he had been fasting for some time, that he reacted with an outburst of fury and to the general alarm began to shake the bars of his cage like a wild animal” (Kafka, 1988).

The fact that a person might tell the artist that his unhappiness is because of his art is a complete interference with his authenticity. It is a pity that people feel for the hunger artist rather than the comfort that he needs to get out of his melancholy, so he gets angry and frustrated. Interference with his art is the last thing that the artist wants because fasting is something divine for him. It helps him escape from the chaotic environment that he never wants to step into because the new order would be something unpredictable. In other words, the hunger artist becomes a participant in the system that he is not able to step out to obtain an overview of the system as a whole, let alone have any idea about the evolution of the system (Blomme et al., 2012:407). The evolution of the system signifies unpredictability in the story. Unpredictability is based on the idea that initial conditions spread out more than a specific diameter representing the prediction accuracy of interest, and in the long term, the consequences of the initial conditions cannot be predicted (Werndl, 2009:202). In chaos theory, the principle of unpredictability is also known as Prigogine’s uncertainty. According to Prigogine, although the predictability of the future depends on the sensitivity to initial conditions, systems become so complex that a threshold of complexity will be reached, and the system will begin functioning in unpredictable ways regardless of its initial conditions (Schueler, 1996:4). In the story, though the initial conditions are unknown, the hunger artist is pictured as an individual condemned to get lost as a result of the unpredictability. The world he is living in is a combination of self-regulating dynamic regimes, each following the other in greater forms of complexity to create new self-regulating structures as well as fluctuations that disrupt the former structure (Bolland et al., 1999:370).

Even though he is admired by thousands, he has lost all his spectators and encounters a big predicament. Moreover, he should go through a process of self-

regulation in order to become accustomed to the new order because one day, “the pampered hunger artist suddenly found himself deserted one fine day by the amusement-seekers, who went streaming past him to other more-favored attractions (Kafka, 1988). After the last tour in Europe, the artist’s impresario realizes that fasting is not an art that attracts anyone, so they have to part ways. In order to escape the unpredictable fluctuation, which is caused by the spectators’ dwindling interest, with the least damage, the hunger artist hesitates to take a risk in his life. However, he cannot prevent the longing for order within himself as a fasting artist. He never thinks of another profession that can help him find authenticity because “as for adopting another profession, he [is] not only too old for that but too fanatically devoted to fasting” (Kafka, 1988). The hunger artist’s devotion to his art prevents him from self-organization to enter a new order and keeps him from seeking a sense of similar order to ease the sense of chaos, even if it is temporary (Aman, 2007). This temporary state of order/chaos is due to the unpredictability and their duality. Generally speaking, There are two branches of chaos. The first one stresses the idea that the universe is running on deep principles that are difficult to realize but can be discovered; thus, there is an order which is hidden in chaotic systems. The second branch includes the fact that the universe is a living organism that can renew itself, and it is the constant process of creating complex structures. Hence, there is an order which arises out of chaotic systems (Bolland et al., 1999:369). If systems are pushed to change through complex systems, they will subsequently reach a chaotic state of equilibrium in which repetitive cycles are never followed (Blomme et al., 2012:406). equilibrium is the phase where new order is embraced; that is, if a chaotic state of equilibrium is achieved, you keep the balance between order and chaos on the edge of chaos. In the story, the absence of repetitive cycles brings about unpredictability and a temporary sense of order because the hunger artist does not choose to enjoy the equilibrium. Instead, he wants to follow his repetitive order, which is fasting. Therefore, he insists on performing his art as effectively as he did in the past. Yet, while claiming his authenticity, the hunger artist also does not forget the way things really are in the current world he inhabits. He knows that he and his art will not be the center of attraction anymore and

“...he and his cage [would] be stationed, not in the middle of the ring as a main attraction, but outside, near the animal cages, on a site that was after all easily accessible” (Kafka, 1988).

As a matter of fact, as anticipated by the artist, his cage is placed near the animal cages at the back corner of the circus. The fact that his anticipations come true justifies that the hunger artist is aware that the new order he is about to step into is also unpredictable and temporary. This performance will also have an end for the hunger artist, but he never knows how he will be subjected to changes after it or where he will perform his art. Thus, he loses his balance on the edge of chaos. Unlike the intense interest of the spectators in the past, people are just passers-by showing little or no interest at all in the hunger artist which leads him to the conviction that “these people, most of them, to judge from their actions, again and again, without exception, were all on their way to the menagerie” (Kafka, 1988). At one stage of the story, we learn that two groups of visitors occur; the ones who “wanted to stop and stare at him...— not out of real interest but only out of obstinate self-assertiveness,” and “those who wanted to go straight on to the animals” (Kafka, 1988).

The hunger artist is so devoted to his art that he is totally forgotten in his cage until he is found by the supervisor. When his half-dead body is discovered among the straws in his cage, he asks for forgiveness due to the fact that he has to fast as he has not been able to find the food he likes. This is the turning point for the hunger artist because the artist’s speech clearly signifies how he has completely lost his balance. The act of balance occurs at the edge of chaos, where chaos and order act together. The edge of chaos is where systems are at their most creative as well as most unpredictable (Sim, 2002:93). While it is on this edge of chaos that those creative and new ways of emerging, it is also where the attractors can become more complex, which causes the agents to be more adaptive (Galatzer-Levy, 2016:419). In other words, although the edge of chaos is a place recommended to be because it is the most exciting place to be in evolutionary terms, it is also highly insecure since it involves a delicate balancing act (Sim, 2002:94). The balancing act represents the balance between order and chaos. Sometimes, sensitivity to initial conditions can bring about unpredictable changes, which makes it either exciting or quite pitiless (Sim, 2002:94). As the hunger artist loses his spectators, he fears losing his identity as a hunger artist. However, fasting does not turn out to be his authenticity. The fact that his boss decides for the hunger artist, the change in the look of the spectators to him causes the hunger artist to realize his authenticity. As a result, he falls into the ambivalence of authenticity and bad faith. His self-deception makes him think that fasting is only specific to him, and

he wants everyone to accept him as he is. When he realizes he cannot achieve it, he asks for forgiveness from the overseer. The fact that the hunger artist cannot help fasting is an indication that it is the only way that the artist could have claim himself to be authentic. Due to the fact that he could not find the food he liked, he chose fasting; the hunger artist emphasizes his ineffectiveness against the new order and the unpredictability it may bring. He believes fasting becomes a resignation from the changing world rather than a means to his authenticity. Being authentic does not necessarily mean that you have to be all alone, embracing your virtues, values etc. It requires active participation in the life and adapting yourself to your surroundings, yet you protect your values and your identity as an authentic individual. Yet, it is a great challenge to realize to what extent people can become authentic. It is due to the fact that the way people perceive the world is changing with the order in the world. Allowing the way in which people live to reflect a kind of conformity to the world and the pre-given meanings that other people present is always easier to do. Kafka pictures the tragic result led by the conformity in the story, and it is the fact that The hunger artist has no means of escaping other than death. Living authentically causes lots of discomfort in the hunger artist's life. He chooses to conform to the crowd rather than being his person because it is manageable (Gale et al., 2008:87). The way he is dragged from one cage to another and fed by his boss during the intervals destroys his consideration of himself to be the only one who can fast longer than expected. He has already created a world that is based on fasting, so it is the order in which he can assume himself to be authentic. The hunger artist deceives himself into assuming that he is an authentic individual because of the excitement and admiration that the audience has shown for him and his art; thus, he falls into bad faith. The social environment oppresses him with its foreignness, its unsuitability as a home for all that is specifically human about him as an individual. If he was genuine, he did not have to gain any hold or support in society because it did not become his element as an authentic individual (Gray, 1951:114). Only death becomes something that belongs to his true being and authenticity because he realizes that he cannot live depending on the constant shifts in his life and ambiguity, which causes despair. The ambiguity of despair consists in the fact that in despair, life is maintained even though it is experienced as a wholly negative condition. And it is consequently proper to characterize despair as a condition in which an individual feels incapable of choosing between life and death (Heller, 1969, p. 278). This incapability of the hunger artist

comes out as a result of his lack of ability and awareness of how to adapt himself to a changing environment. Thus, he loses his act of balance at the edge of chaos, where systems are all well-organized and in balance. Despite the fact that it is the place where he wishes to be, it becomes the place where everything turns upside down with the changes in initial conditions, and he walks through his wretched death gradually.

Fasting, for Kafka, “is a means of abandoning the physical world, and possibly entering a spiritual one” (Robertson et al., 2004:57). Therefore, Kafka pictures the spiritual death of the artist at first. The spiritual death the hunger artist experiences resembles the human condition after the announcement that God is dead by Nietzsche. His identity as a hunger artist was already determined. He received the admiration of the spectators with the art he performed and regarded fasting as a source of his true identity, that is, authenticity. That is to say, spectators are the absolute power determining the artist’s identity. Due to the decrease in the spectator’s interest in the artist and his art, the hunger artist loses the source that makes his life and being meaningful. This causes him to fail in keeping the balance on the edge of chaos. To explain, the authenticity of the artist, which has been determined by the audience, is the order that he has been accustomed. Now that he has started to lose the audience, this order is broken. Therefore, he falls into chaos wandering through the black hole in order to find an absolute source so that he can redefine his authenticity as a hunger artist. In this way, he assumes that he can manage to regain the order he is familiar with. Nonetheless, he cannot avoid the imbalance between his perception of the world and the constantly-changing world, that is, order and chaos. Therefore, he dies spiritually.

The chaos that the hunger artist has fallen into brings another external power with it, and that is the boss whose purpose is to impose his own order. Whereas each performance for the hunger artist is a reflection of his own authenticity, the feasts given between these performances and the meals forced on the artist drag him from one chaos to another. Thus, he is led through chaos and ambiguity by each, and every order imposed because he does not know what each of these orders will bring to him. In this sense, it is in vain for him to claim his authenticity through the unpredictability of his future. Consequently, he condemns himself to his pain and dread through fasting to make his finitude valuable. But in doing so, he is deceiving both himself and other people. In addition to the fact that the audience moves away from him, the constantly-

changing world he inhabits does not give him the opportunity to participate in his order to claim his authenticity. When he realizes he is likely to remain passive against the imposed orders, he cannot handle this idea and chooses self-destruction. In other words, because he cannot maintain the balance between chaos and order, he stays connected with fasting instead of turning into a person he does not want to be in the face of chaos. In this sense, the artist deceived the spectators into keeping his balance.

His wretched death, on the other hand, is something unique to his own being; a call for an order. The disconnection from the absolute leads him to find another way to claim his authenticity, which is death. It is due to the fact that the detachment from the absolute is disconnection from the outside world where he can fashion his purpose in life. However, all he gains is the dread of a distasteful life, so hoping to find the order he is longing for, he dies in his cage.

V. CONCLUSION

In this study, Franz Kafka's three short stories, *Before the Law*, *The Vulture*, and *A Hunger Artist* are examined through the lens of chaos theory which is based on a scientific discourse advocating that the world is an orderly disorder. Through the characters in these stories, Kafka tries to reflect the existential crises that individuals encounter in a chaotic world that is full of uncertainties and obstacles. The protagonists in the stories are on a journey through the unknown, dealing with external powers and losing their free will, the meaning of life, and authenticity. These characters are not only the products of Kafka's observations of the world but also the reflection of his disoriented inner conflicts and imagination in his chaotic world. This study has analyzed the protagonists' reactions to the challenges and obstacles they face in an absurd world where they look for an orderly life. However, the world is in constant change which signifies an upcoming new order with unpredictable consequences for the characters.

In Kafka's *Before The Law*, the man from the country is the protagonist whose effort to reach the law is witnessed. He supposes that the law is open to everyone and will be easy to access. However, he confronts the doorkeeper when he arrives before the law. Although there are no strict rules imposed by physical force for the man to pass the gate, he chooses to wait in front of the gate until he grants permission. However, he dies without realizing his wish.

The Vulture is a story of a man who is attacked by a Vulture. The narrator starts telling the story right in the middle of the event. Therefore, *The Vulture* includes the vagueness of the cause-effect relationship of events in the story. Despite his little efforts to get rid of the vulture, he cannot escape. Interestingly enough, he does not question the reason for the attack. Despite being offered help, he doubts he will ever get rid of the vulture. His suspicions are justified when the vulture brutally kills him.

A Hunger Artist is the story of a fasting artist trying to be an authentic individual. The protagonist, who has been working as an artist for a long time, announces himself

to be the mere representative of the fasting art and advocates it to be an element of his authenticity. Nonetheless, he is not allowed to perform his art according to his will because of his spectators and bosses. His performance continues as long as the spectators' determination to watch his art. Thus, in order to protect his authenticity, he starts deceiving himself and the people around him, pretending to enjoy his art. As a matter of fact, the reason why he wishes to fast as long as it takes is that he has not been able to find the food suitable to his taste. After this explanation, he dies dreadfully in his cage.

One of the common aspects of these stories is the efforts of the characters to exist in a chaotic world where orders are imposed by outside forces. These efforts cause existential crises as long as there are external powers. Kafka was severely affected by the negative consequences of living in a chaotic world in his personal life. Thus, he reflects on his inner conflicts through his characters in the short stories *Before the law*, *the vulture* and *a hunger artist* within the framework of the impossibility of free will, meaninglessness, and authenticity.

In the story *Before The Law*, the man from the country arrives at the door he must pass to reach the law; when he is informed that he is forbidden to enter, he falls into chaos. This is due to the fact that in the order that existed before, the laws were open to everyone, and man was accustomed to living in this order. With the doorkeeper placed in front of the door, the man's free will has been completely taken away. Moreover, the man was told about the other door he would encounter and the keepers who guarded them if he passed through the door. This prevented the ability of the man to use his free will. Kafka integrates figurative elements, that is, the law, the door, and the doorkeeper, in this work. Among these, the law represents death. All the doors and keepers that a man will encounter if he enters the door represent the obstacles he will face in his chaotic life. Each door means a new initial condition that brings a new order. However, each order comes with chaos for the man from the country since the man's life will be full of unpredictability. Kafka justifies in this story that you are free as long as you get rid of the shackles of external power, but we are surrounded by them already. That's why he asserts that if you want your own order, death is the best remedy.

The Vulture, on the other hand, tells the story of a man who has become confined in a meaningless world. The story justifies how Kafka allows the readers to establish

a magnificent connection between God, creation, and existence. In most religious beliefs, there is always a figure of God, whether before or after the creation of the world. The existence of this external power adds a serious degree of meaning to the reason for people's existence. However, Nietzsche's announcement that God is dead destroyed the cause-effect relationship between God and people's existence. Therefore, people went in search of a new meaning in life. In addition to this search for meaning, Kafka demonstrates that life is not uniform and that it is impossible to attach meaning to our own life or create our order as long as there are external forces. In the story, the vulture is the external power dragging the man into a new order. Metaphorically, the vulture signifies how Kafka regards an order to be terrifying and extreme because, in a world of constant change, it is difficult to pace up with the alterations that are out of one's control. The man who has been tolerating the attacks of the vulture feels in confinement which leads him to a dreadful and ambiguous state of mind. It is due to the fact that, for the man, the consequences of the attack are unpredictable. As a matter of fact, he is killed by the vulture with an ambiguous state of mind.

A Hunger Artist is the reflection of the viewpoint that Kafka holds about his own body image. Kafka always had to live in the shadow of his father, who was an authoritarian figure. Kafka's eating habits were also included in the rules that his father set for Kafka at home. The restriction of food caused Kafka to have a puny and weak body, and for Kafka, this body is a reflection of his inner conflict and an intervention in his authenticity. Kafka reveals the conflict he experienced through the hunger artist. The hunger artist is pleased that he is performing the art of fasting because fasting is easy for him. It is an excellent tool to justify its authenticity. For the hunger artist, fasting performance is his authenticity. However, his performance, that is, his authenticity, is interrupted frequently throughout the story. First, the boss decides how many days the hunger artist will perform his art, which is 40 days. However, the hunger artist has the capacity to fast for more than 40 days. Thus, the limitation on the fasting days is the first obstacle that the protagonist contradicts. In addition, the fact that he is forced to eat at the end of each performance prevents him from being authentic since fasting is the order the artist is accustomed to. When his order is disrupted with the intervals after each of his performances, he experiences an interrupted edge of chaos where order and chaos are typically in balance. As a result, his authenticity is hindered.

The second obstacle that the hunger artist faces is the decreased attention of the audience. As interest in the art of fasting, which was previously overly attracted to and admired, decreases, the protagonist realizes that, in fact, its authenticity depends on the interest of the audience. Kafka highlights the power of outside forces. External forces not only disrupt our order and lead us into chaos but also make us dependent on them. That is why individuals need self-realization in order not to lose their authenticity. In this way, they can get rid of the chaos-order dilemma and create their genuine personality. That is where the hunger artist loses the balance because he is unable to realize that his authenticity is not genuine; it depends on outside forces. Thus, the artist is deceiving himself by claiming that he is authentic. At the end of the story, it is also understood that he has been deceiving the spectators the whole time when he explains that he could eat food if he had been able to find one that suits his taste. After his confession, he dies dreadfully without achieving his authenticity.

To sum up, all three protagonists are pictured as individuals with the incapability of dealing with the changes in their chaotic lives. In the short stories under study, Kafka seeks to engage with a world consisting of chaotic structures and explore the passivity of human perception in such a world. The characters are the reflections of his chaotic inner world created by the outside forces, that is, his ill-tempered father. Like Kafka, the characters are constantly forced to accept a new order imposed by external forces in order to fulfill their goals of freedom, meaningful life, and authenticity. Notwithstanding, they are accustomed to a determined system, so they refuse to take risks by stepping into a new order. This rejection causes them to remain in a passive state before the obstacles that will lead to ambiguity at present and unpredictability in the future. In other words, the short stories explore fear, ambiguity and anxiety through the characters' passivity in the chaotic structure where they inhabit. The attitude and behavior of these characters in a chaotic structure cause them to lose the order/chaos balance in life, which is moving in a nonlinear direction. As a result, they create their purgatory while they are alive; the man from the country rejects to take risks to face the obstacles on the way to the law, which symbolizes his path to be paved by his own free choices, and waits until he acquires permission; the man attacked by the vulture never questions the situation he is in and tolerates the hacks of the vulture, which signifies the new order; the hunger artist has to struggle with all the upheavals throughout the performances so as to preserve his genuine personality as a fasting

artist, but finally ends up deceiving himself and other people for the sake of his authenticity. In this context, Kafka implies that no matter how hard the characters struggle in a chaotic life, it is impossible for them to achieve their own freedom, meaning, and authenticity due to their high powers. In the stories, the struggle to achieve freedom, meaning, and authenticity signifies the fact that the more they fight, the more they become detached from life. As soon as their connection with life is destroyed, they turn into an object that is now floating through a black hole and heading toward-obscure. At this point, the only reality for them is death, which will bring order to their miserable lives. Thus, they die desperately, wretchedly without realizing their existence due to their passivity and not taking action to try a different path which would give them the opportunity to overcome such predicaments and ultimately face a far different ending as a result of their freedom of will despite being trapped in their perpetual unpredictable, chaotic world.

VI. REFERENCES

BOOKS

- AHO, K. (2014). **Existentialism: An Introduction**, Wiley.
- BLOCKER, G. (1974). **The Meaning of Meaninglessness**, Springer Netherlands.
- Bourantas, D. and AGAPITOU, V. (2014). **Leadership Meta-competencies: Discovering Hidden Virtues**, Gower Publishing.
- BUDIN, S. L. (2004). **The Ancient Greeks: New Perspectives**, ABC-CLIO.
- CAMUS, A. (1991). **The Myth Of Sisyphus And Other Essays**, Translated by J. O'Brien, Vintage.
- CHELLABOINA, V. and HADDAD, W. M. (2008). **Nonlinear Dynamical Systems and Control: A Lyapunov-Based Approach**, Princeton University Press.
- COLLINS, W. L. (n.d.). **Ancient Classics for English Readers: Hesiod and Theognis**, J. B. Lippincott Company.
- CROSBY, D. A. (1988). **The Specter of the Absurd: Sources and Criticisms of Modern Nihilism**, State University of New York Press.
- de JOUNGE, D. (2016). **Bits of History - from the Big Bang to Now**, BoD - Books on Demand - Schweden.
- DENNETT, D. C. (2003). **Freedom Evolves**, Viking.
- DERRIDA, J. and DERRIDA, P. J. (1992). **Acts of Literature**, Edited by Derek Attridge, Routledge.
- DETMER, D. (2008). **Sartre Explained: From Bad faith to Authenticity**, Open Court.
- FLYNN, T. (2006). **Existentialism: A Very Short Introduction**, OUP Oxford.
- FRANKL, V. E. (2006). **Man's Search for Meaning**, Beacon Press.
- GALE, G. and PANZA, C. (2008). **Existentialism For Dummies**, Wiley.
- GLEICK, J. (2011). **Chaos: Making a New Science**, Open Road Integrated Media, Incorporated.
- HAND, R. J. (2012). **Adaptation and Modernism**, In D. Cartmell (Ed.), *A Companion to Literature, Film, and Adaptation* (pp. 52-69). Wiley.

- HARRIS, C. H. and HARRIS, C. B. (1972). **Contemporary American Novelists of the Absurd**, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Incorporated.
- HAWKINS, H. (1995). **Strange Attractors: Literature, Culture, and Chaos Theory**, Prentice Hall/Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- HAYLES, N. K. (1990). **Chaos bound : orderly disorder in contemporary literature and science**, Cornell University Press.
- HAYLES, N. K. (1991). **Introduction: Complex Dynamics in Literature and Science**, In: *Chaos and Order: Complex Dynamics in Literature and Science*, University of Chicago Press.
- HELLER, P. (1969). **Dialectics and Nihilism: Essays on Lessing, Nietzsche, Mann and Kafka**, The University of Massachusetts Press.
- KAFKA, F. (1988). **The complete stories**, Edited by N. N. Glatzer, Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.
- KAFKA, F. (2009). **Diaries, 1910-1923**, Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.
- KAFKA, F. (2012). **The Trial: A New Translation Based on the Restored Text**, Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.
- KAFKA, F. (2013). **Letter to the Father/Brief an Den Vater: Bilingual Edition**, Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group.
- KAPLAN, K. J. (2020). **Living a Purposeful Life: Searching for Meaning in All the Wrong Places**, Wipf and Stock Publishers.
- KRAGH, H. S. (2007). **Conceptions of Cosmos: From Myths to the Accelerating Universe: A History of Cosmology**, OUP Oxford.
- KRAMER, S. N. (1963). **The Sumerians: Their History, Culture, and Character**, University of Chicago Press.
- LOEWER, B. (2008). **Determinism**, In: *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Science*, Taylor & Francis.
- LORENZ, E. N. and LORENZELLI, F. (2003). **The Essence Of Chaos**, Taylor & Francis.
- MAHON, B. (2003). **The Man Who Changed Everything: The Life of James Clerk Maxwell**, Wiley.
- MEISEL, M. (2016). **Chaos Imagined: Literature, Art, Science**, Columbia University Press.
- MELAMED, Y. Y. (Ed.). (2021). **A Companion to Spinoza**, Wiley.

- NIETZSCHE, F. W. (1974). **The Gay Science**, Translated by W. Kaufmann, Edited by W. Kaufmann, Vintage Books.
- PARKER, J. A. (2007). **Narrative Form and Chaos Theory in Sterne, Proust, Woolf, and Faulkner**, Palgrave Macmillan.
- ROBERTSON, R. (2004). **Kafka: A Very Short Introduction**, OUP Oxford.
- ROSENDAL, S. (2016). **The Logic of the “Swamp World”: Hegel with Kafka on the Contradiction of Freedom**, In: Kafka and the Universal, De Gruyter.
- SARTRE, J.-P. (2007). **Existentialism is a Humanism**, Translated by C. Macomber, Edited by J. Kulka, Yale University Press.
- SCHWARTZ, D. R. (2008). **2 Maccabees**, Walter de Gruyter.
- SIM, S. (2002). **Chaos Theory, Complexity Theory and Criticism**, In: Introducing Criticism at the 21st Century, Edinburgh University Press.
- TOMEN, N., ERNST, U. and HERRMANN, J. M. (2019). **The Functional Role of Critical Dynamics in Neural Systems**, Springer International Publishing.
- VARDOULAKIS, D. (2016). **Freedom from the Free Will: On Kafka’s Laughter**, State University of New York Press.
- WALDROP, M. M. (1992). **Complexity: The Emerging Science At The Edge of Order and Chaos**, Simon & Schuster.
- WEBBER, J. (2009). **The Existentialism of Jean-Paul Sartre**, Taylor & Francis.
- WEINBERG, S. (1993). **The First Three Minutes: A Modern View of the Origin of the Universe**, Fontana Paperbacks.
- YALOM, I. D. (1980). **Existential psychotherapy**, Basic Books.
- YU, J. and BUNNIN, N. (2004). **The Blackwell Dictionary of Western Philosophy**, Wiley.

ARTICLES

- AMAN, Y. K. R. (2007). “Chaos Theory and Literature from an Existentialist Perspective”, **CLCWeb: Comparative Literature and Culture**, Vol.9, Issue 3.
- ANCKAERT, L. and BURGGRAEVE, R. (2017). “Crisis and Meaning: F Kafka and The law”, **CoaCtivity: Philosophy, Communication**, Vol 25, 2017, pp.123-134.

- BLOMME, R. J. and LINTELO, K. B.-T. (2012). "Existentialism and organizational behaviour", **Journal of Organizational Change Management**, Vol. 25, Issue 3, pp.405-421.
- BOLLAND, K. A. and ATHERTON, C. R. (1999). "Chaos Theory: An Alternative Approach to Social Work Practice and Research", **Families in Society: The Journal of Contemporary Human Services**, Vol. 80, Issue 4, pp.367-373.
- BOULTER, S. (2011). "The Medieval Origins of Conceivability Arguments", **Metaphilosophy**, Vol 42, Issue 5, pp.617-641.
- BRADY, P. (1990). "Chaos Theory, Control Theory, and Literary Theory or: A Story of Three Butterflies", **Modern Language Studies**, Vol 20, Issue 4, pp.65-79.
- GALATZER-LEVY, R. M. (2016). "The edge of chaos: A nonlinear view of psychoanalytic technique", **The International Journal of Psychoanalysis**, Vol. 97, Issue 2, pp.409-427.
- GRAY, J. G. (1951). "The Idea of Death in Existentialism", **The Journal of Philosophy**, Vol. 48, Issue 5, pp.113-127.
- GRENE, M. (1952). "Authenticity: An Existential Virtue", **Ethics**, Vol. 62, Issue 4, pp.266-274.
- HALLIWELL, J. J. (1991). "Quantum Cosmology and the Creation of the Universe", **Scientific American**, Vol. 265, Issue 6, pp.76-85.
- HOSPERS, J. (1950). "Meaning and Free Will", **Philosophy and Phenomenological Research**, Vol. 10, Issue 3, pp.307-330.
- KOHL, M. (2019). "Kafka on the Loss of Purpose and the Illusion of Freedom", **The Polish Journal of Aesthetics**, Vol. 53, Issue 2, pp.69-90.
- ODESANMI, A. C., "Jean Paul Sartre and The Concept of Determinism", **Global Journal of Humanities**, Vol. 7, Issue 1- 2, pp.85-89.
- ONWUATUEGWU, I. N. and ARINZE, A. T. (2020). "The Problem of Absurdity and its Solution in Albert Camus Existential Philosophy", **London Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences**, Vol. 20, Issue 15, pp.43-46.
- REISCH, G. A. (1991). "Chaos, History, and Narrative", **History and Theory**, Vol. 30, Issue 1, pp.1-20.
- ROSKOWSKI, M. (2013). "Absurdity and the Leap of Faith", **Journal of Student Research**, pp.15-23.
- SANJUAN, M. A. F. (2021). "Unpredictability, Uncertainty and Fractal Structures in Physics", **Chaos Theory and Applications**, Vol. 3, Issue 2, pp.43-46.

SCHUELER, G. J. (1996). "The Unpredictability of Complex Systems", **Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences**, Vol. 84, Issue 1, pp.3-12.

VEIT, W. (2018). "Existential Nihilism: The Only Really Serious Philosophical Problem", **Journal of Camus Studies**, pp.211-232.

WERNDL Charlotte, "What Are the New Implications of Chaos for Unpredictability?", **The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science**, Vol. 60, Issue 1, pp.195-220.

ELECTRONIC SOURCES

MAZUR, M., "Changing the way you learn | Flashcards", GoConqr, <https://www.goconqr.com/flashcard/1012686/philosophy-ethics-g582-key-philosophers-ocr->, (Access Date: August 2022)

DISSERTATIONS

McKINLAY, C., Neil (1996). "Order in a World of Chaos: A Comparative Study of a Central Dialectic in Works of Thomas Mann, Franz Kafka and Luis Cernuda", (Doctoral dissertation), Departments of German and Hispanic Studies, University of Glasgow.

RESUME

Name Surname: Nur Banu Karaman

EDUCATION:

- **Bachelor :** 2013, Karadeniz Technical University, English Language and Literature
- **M.A:** 2022, Istanbul Aydin University, English Language and Literature

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND AWARDS:

- September 2017: English Instructor
Yeditepe University, Istanbul, Turkey

OTHER PUBLICATIONS, PRESENTATIONS AND PATENTS

- Karaman, Nur Banu, 2022. The Monk: The Ancestor of Gothic Novel. *15th International IDEA Conference: Studies in English*, May 11-13, 2022 Hatay, Turkey.
- Karaman, Nur Banu, 2022. Subaltern Portraits in Waiting for the Barbarians, Sea of Poppies and The Afghan Girl, *Overtones Ege Journal of English Studies*, 1(1), 1-8.