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Oral Presentation: **Van Eyck's *Mystic Lamb*, element in Camus' *La Chute***  
Special Need, projector for PowerPoint slides

« *Il est trop tard, maintenant, il sera toujours trop tard. Heureusement !* »<sup>1</sup> Absurdism, the frenzied desire for clarity about the irrational purpose of life<sup>2</sup>, is the focus of many 20<sup>th</sup> Century French authors. A perfect example of this exploration is found in Albert Camus' *La Chute*, published in 1956. A novel in which the guilt-driven main character reconsiders society, religion, and the purpose of life, *La Chute* embodies absurdism with all of the maddening complexity that the philosophy entails. Camus elucidates the absurdist theme by incorporating a famous painting into the plot of the novel. *The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb*, by Jan Van Eyck, connects the thought process of the main character with the religious ideologies he opposes. My research involved an interdisciplinary approach, utilizing my double major of French and Art History. I studied French sources that addressed both the nature of the novel and the subject of the altarpiece. By analyzing *The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb* as an element of *La Chute*, I was able to prove in my essay how Camus communicated absurdist themes through the imagery of a painting.

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<sup>1</sup> "It's too late, now, it will always be too late. Fortunately!" Albert Camus, *La Chute* (Paris: Gallimard, 1956), p. 153.

<sup>2</sup> "Camus Et L'absurde." *Camus Et L'absurde*. Christophe Calice, n.d. Web. 15 Nov. 2014.

*Key Words: absurdism; French literature; 20th-century literature; 20th-century philosophy; Albert Camus; La Chute; Jan Van Eyck; The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb; The Ghent Altarpiece; Saint John the Baptist*