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Waiting for Godot: Not Just an Enigma

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Abstract

Waiting for Godot was a unique outburst on the literary world that changed the face of twentieth century drama. Samuel Beckett is a peculiar brand of the era. His weird ideas expounded within the framework of a few acts certainly allow him a stature quite distinct from his contemporaries whose work is an expression of their personal experience, which Albert Camus characterized as absurdity. One might feel that Beckett has made the feelings of absurdity yet uncertain, more philosophic and therefore distinctly obscure, it is difficult to pin point and pronounce a last word. I consider Beckett's dramatic art to be expressions of his most intimate visions on the fundamental philosophical question about the place of the human being in the surrounding world. His characters are perceived not as distinct individuals rather as grossly generalized images of all 'mankind' who have become the slave of an uncaring and cruel world. So, they need a Godot to give a meaning to their existence. It is true that character flaws are exaggerated and characters appear to be dull and boring yet Beckett's characters are stereotype and represent mankind in general. This article is an attempt to study Beckett's Godot as an enigmatic representation of human life as well as to show why there is no escape from Godot to live the human life.

Part I

> ...I've always been alone. That one always is alone....
>
> No..... It isn't that I want to be alone,
>
> But that every one's alone - or so it seems to me.
>
> They make noises, and think they are talking to each other;
>
> They make faces, and think they understand each other;
>
> And I'm sure that they don't. (Eliot 186)

ISSN: 2278-4012, Volume:8, Issue:3, July 2019

Because of this social and self-alienation, people have become 'stranger', 'free floater', 'outsider' and 'lonely crowd' in this vast world. S/he feels that 'every one's alone' and incapable of controlling their own actions. This sense of alienation is age old and obvious in art and literature. As it analyses what Ernst Fischer has described as "Alienation has had a decisive influence on the arts and literature of the twentieth century. It has influenced the great writings of Kafka, the music of Schoenberg, the surrealists, many abstract artists, the 'anti-novelists' 'anti-dramatists', and Samuel Beckett's sinister forces; and also the poetry of the American beatniks. ..." (quoted in Fischer 81)

The early twentieth century had been overshadowed by two World Wars that brought about uncertainties, despair, and new challenges to the all of the mankind. The poignancy and calamities of the wars found sharp reflections in the writings of the day. With the future still hazy, writers began to search and research the new meaning of existence in a drastically changed world. A spirit of restlessness with a mixture of sardonic bitterness became an inherent feature of the writings. The writers were torn between a wrecked past and an unpredictable future. Their experiences and memories were neither lively and worth recollecting nor peaceful and worth treasuring. Hence, the mental conflict, distress, loneliness, and anxiety that they went through found an overt and dominant expression in their writings. The development of these innovative writing styles simply separated it from conventional art, which is known as literature of the Absurd. It focused sharply on the irrationality and absurdity of the world. It was an intellectual reproduction of reality, rather than a physical or even practical one. The psychology of the work mirrored the helplessness and emptiness of human life as its creators saw it and as the individual modern man experienced that. The plays of Samuel Beckett, the eminent and influential writer of this mode, depict the irrationalism of life in a grotesquely comic and non-consequential fashion with the element of metaphysical alienation and tragic anguish. Martin Esslin's book *The Theatre of the Absurd* informed these dramatists write from "a sense of metaphysical anguish at the absurdity of the human condition."

This kind of play arises from the disillusionment, senselessness and isolation of life, loss of ideals. Ironically such play produces the effect of alienation. We (onlooker) find it very difficult to identify ourselves with the characters in Absurd Drama: so though their situation/ position is often painful and violent, we can laugh at them. Such play speaks, Esslin says, " to a deeper level of the audience's mind." It challenges the audience to make sense of nonsense, to face the situation consciously rather than feel it vaguely, and perceive with laughter, the fundamental absurdity of mankind. They face a world without God, a universe that has lost its meaning and with a sense of loss at the disappearance of solutions and purposefulness.

Thus the modern individual becomes "anti-man", and s/he is "lost" in the crowd and "at a loss" (Collins 5) without the crowd. Alienation creates "individuals without an anchor, without a horizon, and produces colourless, stateless, rootless people' (Fanon 175). S/he feels a lonely self that stands in the empty world having no mild helper to come and instruct her/him about everything. As Kafka has correctly observed, " I am separated from all things by a hollow space and I do not even reach to its

boundaries".(Kafka 196)Hence people remain strangers to themselves and do not understand and remain unknown to each other. "Each one is the farthest away from him selves" - as far as ourselves are concerned we are not "knowers" (Nietzsche 1-2).

Why, this is so? Because, since the end of World War II, people undergo such an experience, which Albert Camus characterized as 'Absurdity' in his book of essays *The Myth of Sisyphus*. They feel, they are in a world, "that is suddenly deprived of illusions and of light, man feels a stranger. He is an irremediable exile, because he is deprived of memories of a lost homeland as much as he lacks the hope of a promised land to come. This divorce between man and his life, the actor and his setting, truly constitutes the feeling of Absurdity". (Camus 279)

Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* has claimed its place in literary history as a masterpiece that changed the face of the twentieth century drama. In this play two characters pass the time by playing games on the open road. In it practically nothing happens. There is nothing done in it, no development is to be found, and there is no beginning and no end. The entire play, as Ruby Cohn observes is "woven with repetition". Act two is a repetition of Act one. In each act we are offered basically the same sequence. The presentation of the entire sequence twice and the repetitive character of the verbal and gestures activities within that sequence imply an endless and unchanging process. This meaningless, everlasting circularity intensifies the feeling of stasis condition of mankind. Since everything remains as it was in the beginning.

The place where the tramps wait for Godot is not fixed. Beckett's stage direction identifies it as a 'country road', near a surrealistic tree. Such non-specific setting of the play can be described in Kenner's interesting phrase, as 'nowhere - no when' (quoted in Malik 24) which symbolizes 'all where - all when' - within which man is a helpless prisoner and all human endeavors are devalued as mere meaningless routine. Such setting which is 'indescribable, it's like nothing. There's nothing. There is a tree' (*Godot* 117), enable Beckett to isolate his characters from any social reality that might deflect attention from the generalized human situation he is portraying. Where people feel that in an instant all will vanish and they'll be alone once more: 'in the midst of nothingness'. What surrounds this lonely, empty space on all sides is further nothingness. This is why the tramps say - 'let's go' and do not move at the end of each Act. They have nowhere to go. They are tied to this nothingness and incarnate it. It is absolute emptiness, a vacuum, and an absence. The tragedy of Beckett's man and the absurdity of this world are seen as 'the inability to face the world deprived of delusions, the impossibility of integrating a finite and limited life with the infinity of the Universe, where he stays'(quoted in *Irish Studies*).

Thus, the subject-object conflict, described by Camus as the " denseness and strangeness of the world", called by Descartes subject-object "dualism", and understood by Schopenhauer as the conflict of body and the will, is viewed here from the perspective of time and change. The inconsistency now consists in different being in time or rather different time categories: finite and infinite.

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Time takes hold of them and becomes the "worst enemy" (Camus Myth 10), time which actually does not exist, but crushes through memories and a nonsensical hopeful vision of tomorrow. "In these moments time loses its only quality: the delusion of fluency seeming to be the natural life process makes no sense anymore." (quoted in *Irish Studies*)

Time seems to be virtually non-existent for the space-bound trams. They exist in a static, perpetual present. "They all change. Only we can't." (*Godot* 78) As if they are imprisoned in a static situation. And 'time' for them has become a habit, and habit, as we are told a little later, is a 'great deadener' (*Godot* 121). This time is repetitive and cyclical - an existential prison house from which there is no escape.

On the other hand Pozzo and Lucky incarnate time's twin qualities of change and changelessness. They are the only ones in the play who change. Both of them undergone a drastic change so time changes or moves, but, in Beckett's perception of it, it moves inexorably towards loss, devitalization, and death; life itself is devalued as a brief flash of light that 'gleams an instant' between birth and death. And on the collective level, time is perceived as a devitalizing process in which human continues to 'waste and pine' (*Godot* 73).

Time's cyclical static is evident in Pozzo and Lucky's perpetual wanderings. Though they are feeling that they are going somewhere, they are actually going round and round in a circle. Like them human beings are trapped within the unchanging circularity of time in which day and night follow each other cyclically:

> -But night doesn't fall.
>
> -It'll fall all of a sudden, like yesterday.
>
> -Then it'll be night.
>
> -And we can go.
>
> -Then it'll be day again. (Pause, Despairing)
>
> -What'll we do, what'll we do? (*Godot* 101)

Static time is expressed through the motif of a circle. This circularity is presented as stasis, a meaningless and everlasting repetition of seasons, days and hours. As if they experience the static sameness of a long stopping moment. One of the factors, which give the idea of the sameness, is permanent repetition. Therefore, Pozzo, after losing his sight, says, 'Have you not done tormenting me with your accursed time! One day, is that not enough for you, one day we were born, one day we shall die, the same day, the same second, is that not enough.....' (*Godot* 119).

ISSN: 2278-4012, Volume:8, Issue:3, July 2019

Thus time's changes in the play are experienced as a static circularity. In this, Beckett's time is like T.S.Eliot's Christian time-wheel which turns yet remains 'forever still' (*Murder in the Cathedral*) .But, in direct contrast to Eliot, in Beckett there is no possibility of escape. Since, in the latter, physical nature follows its own cyclical movement- man is born, grows old and dies: the sun rises and sets; bare trees sprout leaves and will be bare again - but Godot, the only but irredeemably absent possibility of escape from this existential trap, never comes. We just face an unalterable condition where man is a helpless prisoner and all human endeavours are devalued as mere meaningless routine.

Yet we dance and drink, play hide and seek build doll's house and only when the game turns boring then we realize the foot sores and pang. Alas! We were and still are playing in the wasteland in the midst of empty space. But the game- our game goes on. Such is the life. As if there is no way round or out. It has to be played in spite of oneself. Naturally, it ceases at one end and starts at another, Pozzo says, 'the tears of the world are a constant quantity. For each one who begins to weep, somewhere else another stops. The same is true of the laugh. Let us not then speak ill of our generation, it is not any unhappier than its predecessors.' (*Godot* 63)

Every individual feels that s/he is the one who probably suffers the most of all creatures. Here, it seems Beckett introduces the Schopenauerean vision of life as suffering and pain. The 'will' to life is infinite, and fulfillment is limited. Throughout the life, man is tossing about in a flood of instincts and desires, and never reaches satisfaction, happiness, or peace. They are aware of their fate as misery. All of them are isolated by wills; their situation and their suffering are the same. We long for the time, an end, when our suffering will stop, but 'the will' to life never promises any ending. This is the suffering of being. There is no any difference between one fraction and the next. As it is also observed by the chorus:

"All the generations of mortal man add up to nothing!

Show me the man whose happiness was anything more than illusion

Followed by disillusion.

Here is the instance, here is Oedipus, and here is the reason

Why I will call no mortal creature happy." (*King Oedipus* 59)

Part II

There is an otherworldly alienation in the sparse setting of a country road: "It's indescribable .It's like nothing. There's nothing. There is a tree" (*Godot* 117). It could be anywhere, in any country of the world. No visible horizon exists; no markers of civilization are present and the characters have nothing to do but

to be and to expect. The main subject of the play is not only "Godot", but also the "Waiting" itself, which is the most evident experience of time of mankind which is reflected by Esslin also: "If we are active, we tend to forget the passage of time, we pass the time, but if we are merely passively waiting, we are confronted with the action of time itself"

The main theme of the play is not any act or any activity, but the passive expecting of somebody/ something that should bring some evident change into the characters passive position. Godot is somebody/ something that evokes the characters' expectations as well as the on-looker's expectations that something will happen at the end of the play. Thus, Vladimir and Estragon expect Godot in the same way as the audience expects it; the characters are waiting along with the audience - here audience and characters represent the image of all mankind.

Although both sides, the actors and the audience, are waiting for Godot, at the end of the play the audience's expectations are finished: the curtain falls, even though Godot did not come. The audience expected him/ it, he/ it does not come, the play is over. That is the solution for the onlookers that is the end of their expectations: the curtain. There is no reference in the play, no trace that Vladimir's and Estragon's waiting will ever finish, there is no promise that Godot will fulfill to his promises. On the contrary, the solution will never appear, as their waiting does not tend more toward any conclusion. Such is the condition of human being. Such is life. We wait, wait and wait. We hope, hope and hope against hope. And thus our life is going on.

What is it Beckett wants? In a way, he wants us to wait. Simply wait. For what? Is it for Godot who symbolizes our expectation? Our unique contribution to this world lies in watching each other's monkey tricks and in role-playing. We are spectators and performers. "That is, I am a spectator and performer. This duel act goes on incessantly, involving myself in the most intense active participation. One acts at both ends, at one and the same moment. This may turn me into a kind of a person, who though inhabited the earth, never felt the terrific of rotation. Therefore dissociation is essential." (Sayeed Ahmad, *Samuel Beckett and his 'Waiting'*, "The New Age Xtra", September 05, 2008)

The fun of life lies in waiting, in fulfilling the mission. Nothing can excite human capabilities more than a challenge of 'probability'. We are a bundle of 'probabilities'. It is in the act that the flowering lies.

There is pain yet we are glued to our position. The lure of the probability/ the hope, keeps us tied to the edge of the vast expanse. As if that is the destined cycle. Human beings are damned to go through this cycle. A glimpse of rescue is always visible, in the hazy arena of waiting.

Waiting for the uncertainty; whose form and shape has not yet been well conceived and having a grotesque name Godot. Are we waiting for God or a change in any sense? May be or may be not. Apparently this waiting function can be tiring, boring and disgusting. Yet what more can human beings do? - Except waiting for Godot / something. Now who/ what is this Godot? He / it is nothing or next to nothing - who never comes. Does he represent the target of human life then? Godot's identity - indeed, the

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very reality of his existence - is in serious doubt. Though he is perceived in various ways, he cannot be made to represent any one idea, ideal or person since he represents an absence. He is absent figure whose non-presence is the play's centre. He is also the name for that emptiness which one finds at the heart of the play after cutting through all its immediate noise and activity. His absence reflects the void that philosophers and Beckett perceive at the centre of human existence. This wretchedness and miserable condition of human being is not new rather it is age-old common scenario to us - since time immemorial "the fundamental notion of alienation is at least as old as recorded time" (Mizruchi 111). Alienation is a socio- psychological condition of the individual, and to escape from the sense of alienation, we need something. Perhaps the name of that something is Godot. Like the tramps, we need a Godot to pass our time, to give a meaning to our universe, to live a life that thrown us into these distressful circumstances of the world. It becomes our everyday routine and thus it becomes a habit protecting us against the suffering of being. Camus mentions this daily routine, it is something, which protects humanity from waking up to, Absurdity: "Weariness comes at the end of the acts of a mechanical life, but at the same time it inaugurates the impulse of consciousness" (Myth 10). We realize what kind of future lies before that and our situation will not, in any case be better in any respect. Even though, we keep waiting for Godot or for the thing that remains unnamable.

The tramps that wait for Godot as well as the wayfaring couple whom they encounter are the representatives of all 'mankind', which in Lucky's phrase, 'is seen to waste and pine waste and pine' (*Godot* 73). Incapable of changing the situation and doing any significant action, they portray the image of an utterly pessimistic view of man in general as a helpless victim of their ontological fate. King Oedipus, Macbeth, Hamlet - none can escape from this relentless fate. The situation, the suffering shared by all of them is exactly expressed by Macbeth at the end of the play when he says:

> Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow
>
> Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
>
> To the last syllable of recorded time;
>
> And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
>
> The way to dusty death. Out; out, brief candle!
>
> Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player
>
> That sturts and frets his hour upon the stage,
>
> And then is heard no more: it is a tale
>
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury

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Signifying nothing. (*Macbeth*, V, v)

Macbeth reflects on the futility of life – its nothingness. Human life is nothing but an unreal passing shadow, a short-lived candle, an insignificant actor making a good deal of fuss on this stage of the world, only to vanish into nothingness for ever. Life is like a story told by an idiot, full of raging passions having no meaning.

We see Oedipus though battling against the vicissitudes of life, cannot escape 'piercing pain' in the 'flesh' and 'soul'. "O agony! Where am I? …What fate has come to me". (*King Oedipus 62*)

Suffering, combined with appalling condition, human beings are entangled in the 'net' (i.e., world as a stage of circus). Oedipus represents mankind here, so the condition of man is disturbingly precarious. Jocasta expresses her view about the distressful circumstances of the world: "Chance rules our lives, and future is all unknown" (*King Oedipus* 52)

Shakespeare's Hamlet is 'bounded in a nutshell who counts himself as the 'King of infinite space' (*Hamlet*, II, ii) and tosses between 'to be or not to be'. Like Hamlet, the tramps also feel trapped to infinite space. Apparently like us, they also enjoy full freedom to do whatever they like except freedom to leave or stop waiting for that unnamable or Godot:

Everything in the play, including the place, time, the person for whom they are waiting are uncertain - which always promises, yet never grants an end. After every burst of activity, always reach the point of complete exhaustion and they feel the utter futility of their endeavours, and realize that it is pointless, since:

-Nothing you can do about it.

-No use struggling.

-One is what one is.

-No use wriggling.

-The essential doesn't change. (*Godot* 51)

Yes, such is life and two representatives of us; Vladimir and Estragon's situation seems to be like a never-ending number SQUARE ROOT 2, which can never be measured. Only an end i.e. the coming of Godot gives it undoubted evidence, it is the last figure in a series of numbers determining the content of the whole number meaning. In their waiting, Godot or the fulfillment of our expectation is such a last figure, which can never be reached, staying unknown forever, but on which their situation, their whole existence is dependent. They are almost in a position where an immediate "now" fuses with eternal lasting. Everyday brings them closer to Godot, although each one is less progressive.

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While waiting, Vladimir and Estragon occupy themselves with a number of little games. They talk to each other, because to talk means to while away the time and not to realize its horrible endless emptiness. Vladimir and Estragon find an escape from their condition in killing time through conversation and playing games to protect them from the sense that they are waiting. They confront Time (i.e., are conscious of Godot) only when there is a break in the games and they 'know' and 'feel' that they are waiting." Vladimir says: "We have time to grow old. The air is full of our cries. But habit is a great deadener" (*Godot* 121). Our life involves misery and suffering and we have nothing to say. So Estragon reflects, here in this world "Nothing happens, nobody comes, nobody goes, it's awful."

Part - III

The limitation and isolation of man from the world, having its roots in Descartes' dualism, is, at the same time, the foundation of the Sisyphusean feeling of the absurdity as Camus describes it. Absurdity consists in permanent conflict; it is a contradiction and a struggle. It can be faced only through struggling with it and disagreeing with it. That is why, as Camus says, to commit suicide means to agree with absurdity, it means to give in, because the sense of life is looked for in another world. (None of Beckett's character commits suicide or dies in any way.) It seems that it is impossible to escape from the absurd fate, to stay here means to face it, to commit suicide means to consent to it, and therefore it must be accepted. That is the basis of human freedom. Absurdity does not have any sense, does not have any reasons, any aims, that is why it does not reflect yesterday, nor tomorrow. He is offered only an instant moment and that is what his freedom consists of the only way how to paralyze absurdity is to not ask for reasons.

Camus' Sisyphus is a typical absurd hero personifying the real quality of an absurd life; he is absurd through his passion and suffering, through his eternal fate, work that can never be finished: The Gods had condemned Sisyphus to ceaselessly rolling a rock to the top of a mountain, whence the stone would fall back of its own weight. They had thought with some reason that there is no more dreadful punishment than futile and hopeless labour. We see the great effort in him, recurring again and again; he tries to move the boulder and push it up the hill thousands of times. Finally, at the end of his long exhausting effort, he reaches his aim. However, at the same moment, he sees the boulder rolling down back to the lower world from where it will have to be lifted again. And so he returns back to the bottom. "It is during that return, that pause, that Sisyphus interests me. A face that toils so close to stones is already stones itself! I see that man going back down with a heavy yet measured step toward the torment of which he will never know the end. That hour ... is the hour of consciousness." (Camus) These moments of consciousness open up the world of the absurdity, the world from which it is impossible to escape, the world of estrangement, loneliness, waiting and nonstop endurance.

The world surrounding Estragon and Vladimir, as it is already sketched, is alienated through its indifference. They have a possibility to walk away, but never make a move tied up by the false hopes and

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belief in the coming of Godot, who will solve this deadlock. Thus, Godot, infinitely remote, fuses with an infinitely alien world.

-Let's go

-We can't

Substantial dualism corresponds with the concept and theory of Arthur Schopenhauer, whose philosophy later became one of the important foundations of Beckett's plays. Schopenhauer's main thesis is that it is impossible to get to the essence of the thing from the outside; it is impossible to achieve knowledge, in the case it is postulated beyond all human beings disposition. He understood the human being as an object between objects, as something that appears to a perceiving mind (phenomena) in time and space. Time, space, and causality are the forms of knowledge; they are necessary conditions of knowledge of the world, as it is perceived. However, on the other hand, a human being's experience assures himself, that he is something more than only an object among other objects. Man is also aware of himself as a self-moving, active being; this inner consciousness is a consciousness of will. The awareness we have of ourselves as will is quite different from the awareness we have of ourselves as body; and it is, in fact, the awareness of philosophical truth itself; of the thing which is not mediated through our sense organs, through the forms of time, space, and causality, but it is thing itself. The will is the ultimate and the simplest foundation of being all together, it is the source of all phenomena, a breed, which is present in every particularity and individuality. (Schopenhauer)

It seems that Beckett's characters are aware of nothingness but 'the will' they have inside, which impels them to live. It is an unsurpassable instinct, a blind and groundless power, operating in them, out of time, space and causality. They are propelled to life by unmotivated power - the will to live -, which always wants to go on - to transform itself into the living or being objects. Human intellect and reason are the will's servants and that is why it cannot stop this strong inclination towards being. Consciousness is only a surface of our being, because the real essence lies in the depths of human personality.

The will is, in its core something fundamentally woeful, it is discomposure, never-ending struggle for something, need, desire, greediness, lust, it is suffering, and the world of will can be nothing but the world of pain. To escape from this pain we need a Godot.

Vladimir, Estragon, Pozzo, and Lucky - all are suffering, persisting in their existence. They long for an end, a death, but cannot kill themselves, being driven by their nature - the will to life. Their suffering is their desire to die. They want to leave but cannot; they want to die but cannot.

- Let's hang ourselves immediately!…

- Don't let's do anything. It's safer. (*Godot* 47-48)

ISSN: 2278-4012, Volume:8, Issue:3, July 2019

It seems they are very close to death; to be does not mean to live for them, but to last and continue on. They are human beings existing as the will itself. The ceaseless will is realized through Estragon and Vladimir's expectation, their need to meet with Godot, who should be a solution. Godot is not any person, any event, anything; it is an embodiment of human wishes, desires, expectations and attempts for at least something "better". Their waiting is blind, because Godot, representing non-existing happiness that will never gratify, an empty promise which will never fulfill, in fact, it does not exist. Their waiting has no motive, as the will has not. According to Schopenhauer, this is the concept of the basic human situation in the world. All his life man is waiting for something, which cannot bring any definite satisfaction to him, any definite peace (Like Sisyphus). Man is waiting for happiness, not realizing that the greatest suffering consists in it. Her / his nature is rooted in lust and trying, which is an unquenchable thirst.

Schopenhauer, as well as Camus, deny suicide as a solution to a distressful human world, and also none of Beckett's characters dies or commit suicide. As Camus says, to commit suicide means to agree with the absurdity and according to Schopenhauer suicide is nonsense. Because suicide means only to destroy the body but never the will itself. In this way - through suicide - the will finds another realization in a stronger individual, which becomes its stronger "self-realization".

Thus, Beckett's characters are persisting between life and death, driven by a Schopenhauer will to life, though physically they are dying. Their existence is absurd, through the conflict of body and mind. Their suffering consists of permanent waiting, they used to "wait for happiness, fulfillment;" or they are waiting for the end, occupying themselves with various things of life, for "a chance of happiness". In Thomas Hardy's words, "Happiness was but the occasional episode in a general drama of pain." (*The Mayor of Casterbridge* 310) Now this happiness is as rare as to meet God, which cannot be achieved. So, they have only one wish - to die, and so to shed the ceaseless will to life.

Beckett deals with the position and the situation of Man in his surrounding world. His hero is a Sisyphusean type of man waiting for the fulfillment of his fate, which seems to be eternal through his suffering and hoping. He is alienated from the world, which is unknown, remote, and indifferent, and from which he is isolated by the walls of his self. The conflict between two different substances the world and the human subject, leads to the feelings of 'Absurdity' and to fundamental existential questions about the meaning of human life in a world where s/ he lives as a stranger. Beckett's characters' tragedy consists in their empty waiting which becomes a long period of suffering; it consists in the power of life which still keeps them breathing and going on, although they are very close to their aim, the end.

The world has become empty for the two anti-heroes. Like them, in this so-called modern world today millions of us have begun increasingly to feel that we live in a world in which we do not act but are acted upon. That's why the two tramps in spite of their inaction and the pointlessness of their existence still want to go on. They feel and say, "let us do something, while we have the chance!... Let us make the most of it, before it is too late! Let us represent worthily for once the foul brood to which a cruel fate consigned us! (*Godot*109). In the waiting of the two tramps we the audience, recognize our own experience, respond

in our own terms, draw our own conclusions, and Beckett makes us experience those i.e. 'waiting', 'frustration', 'helplessness' directly through the absence of Godot. Godot can be interpreted in any way that suited the spectators. No doubt, their waiting contains a certain element of hope and this mood of expectancy has a universal validity, because whenever we wait we are expectant even knowing that our waiting may not be rewarded.

Waiting means to experience the action of time and which is in constant change. The more things change, the more they are the same. That is the terrible stability of the world. If one day is like another there is nothing but fruitless repetition and no transition can take place - only deteriorates -as Pozzo expresses, ".... They give birth astride of a grave, the light gleams an instant, then it's night once more." (*Godot* 119)

Yet Estragon and Vladimir live in hope as we do all through our life, believing that Godot may bring a change. Like them we wait for Godot whose coming will bring the flow of time to a stop. Godot symbolizes our expectations, fulfillment, desire, wish, hope, want, etc. that human being can never reach and always remains too far away, even beyond our sense like the never-ending number Square Root 2, which can never be measured and which always promises, yet never actually grants an end. The more appalling thing is that there is no sufficient reason why the future and the end should be within reach. So like Pozzo, we shout, "Help" (*Godot*109) that, echoes the cry of all mankind as observed by Vladimir, " To all mankind they were addressed, those cries for help still ringing in our ears! But at this place, at this moment of time, all mankind is us…" (*Godot* 109). They are perceived not as two distinct individuals rather as grossly generalized images of all "mankind". We become the slave of an uncaring and cruel world. It is true that character flaws are exaggerated and characters appear to be dull and boring yet Beckett's characters are stereotype and represent mankind in general. And, even though the expected thing never comes they keep on going, keep waiting, keep hoping against hope and doing things as there is nothing else to do. They try to find their own meaning in a meaningless world. There is no meaning to be found in a hostile and cruel world except the meaning we (characters) give to it. We need a Godot to give a meaning to our existence, to our universe where Godot's very absence demonstrates his presence. There is no escape from Godot to live the human life.

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