



HYPOTHESIZING THE ABSURD  
LET'S WAIT AGAIN FOR GODOT IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

The expression Absurd usually means ridiculous or illogical in the strait forward form, but when it is taken up with absolute seriousness by the great writer like Beckett it becomes philosophical notion, which is then discuss, interpreted and analysed, and when it is construed, the most important think that it covers is human conditions, and are impregnated with an assortment of man's conditions and circumstances stirring absurdity and is unavoidably present in the post-world war generation. With passing time the whole notion of absurdity was sprouted in a different way because of different human quandary. The concept of absurdity spiked during 1920s, found its values during 1940s and disseminated in the upcoming world. This particular idea was enthralled, transformed and at times shattered by the so called scholar of this world such as W. B. Yeats, T. S. Eliot, Expressionists, Existentialists, Surrealists, and definitely Absurdist's of the last century. And Beckett's master piece Waiting for Godot is like a sun around which all the absurdist ideas moves around, and still the importance of Waiting for Godot is so significant that it has become a synonym for all the absurdist ideas even after we have login to the 21st century. It definitely implies modernism and has disseminated postmodernism which is zilch, but early or late, we will have to spend our life in front of it. So it can be said in this era, where there is terminological chaos, mayhem, and disorder, the notion of Absurd is best recognized with Beckett's Waiting for Godot with its sense of oblivion and emptiness of life.

Key words: Post modernism, Existentialism, Surrealism, Absurd, post-world war.

INTRODUCTION

The expression Absurd usually means ridiculous or illogical in the strait forward form, but when it is taken up with absolute seriousness by the great writer like Beckett it becomes philosophical notion, which is then discuss, interpreted and analysed, and when it is construed, the most important think that it covers is human conditions, and are impregnated with an assortment of man's conditions and circumstances stirring absurdity and is unavoidably present in the post world war generation. On one hand majestic work like waste land by one of the most admire writer of 20th century who has beautifully reflected the internal absurdity of the

contemporary world, on the other hand Samuel Beckett, who has actually given so much heat to the notion of absurdity and his work *Waiting for Godot* which has ground-breaking effect on the development of whole concept of Absurd. Going into the very meaning of the word absurd, it has great affiliation with the working and system of life. Because of the meaninglessness that every life brings to its observer in all sense which make the life nonsense, and because of the whole philosophical notion was theorised in the Great War century so it is also considered as anti-traditional, ultra-modern and avant-garde, and therefore it was seen as a mockery

But hey my dear readers, originally its implication stands in its rudimentary actuality When T.S. Eliot regret and lamented for religious infertility in the modern and contemporary world, which is full of anger and swamp. Absurd playwright were getting ready for an appropriate stage to render the absurdity of contemporary man's life and his living.

Absurd playwrights went on to plump and choose for the absurd appearance to expose and reveal the absurdity in its extreme effective method. This involves some of the great writer of all forms, and the most noteworthy among them were Jean Genet the grate French genius, Eugene Ionesco, again the intellect from the soils of France, Irish legend Samuel Beckett for whom the whole process is going on, the British absurd logician Harold Pinter, the American symbol of brilliance Edward Albee, and many more. Whether it was the absurd dramaturgy or the flavour of absurd mood, each and every element of absurdity were expected in their unforgettable and memorable works. And when the ride of absurdity was energized by the support of surrealism and expressionism, and when Franz Kafka came up with his forceful work in support of this current mood, motion, and movement of the whole philosophical concept of absurdity, which was probably started and appeared in France after the world war second, which was definitely a reaction against the fundamentalist believe and essential philosophy of customary culture and conventional literature, which had always grate conviction that life can only be presented either in a most tragic way or comic way through the tool of creativity and imagination, and there is no other way to present the idiosyncrasies of life. But slowly thinks started to change, and a new dimension started to add in the wing of realistic literature. Weather it was mellow dramatic representation of 17th century, comedy of error, much popular comedy of intrigue,

kitchen-sink drama, comedy of manners, GB Shaw's philosophical draping of unthinkable in his various dramas, poetic drama and the present topic of discussion, the absurd theatre. 1940s saw the coming of grate theorist like Jean- Paul Sartre and Albert Camus, whose existential philosophy defined human being as a lonely, cut-off and isolated existence, who act like a lost alien, with no purpose at all, but like a stupid searching for meaning in this meaningless world. Jean- Paul Sartre and Albert Camus together believe firmly that:

It's an odd world  
Full of all things absurd  
Most of it obscure  
Unseen and unheard. {Quoted in Brainy}

Myth of Sisyphus (1942 is the best place where this exceptional phenomena of absurdity has been wonderfully describe by Albert Camus. On the other hand the very phenomena of absurdity has been fuelled for flames by Eugene Ionesco who in his own typical style states that, "Cut off from his religious, metaphysical, and transcendental roots, man is lost, all his actions become senseless, absurd and useless". {Quoted in A Glossary of the Literary Term} although the term and the phenomena of Absurdity is very new and it has been discovered in 20th century, but the signs of it, can be found in the poems and dramas of earlier writer also, for example the following immortal lines which can be interpreted in thousands of different way and with different situation it can be taken up with different connotation:

"Water-water  
Every where  
Not a drop to drink". {Quoted in Rime of the Ancient Mariner-Coleridge :}

This very notion which appeared in Rime of the Ancient Mariner is a kind of gentle wind which signify concept of absurdity and had a stormy effect in 20th century philosophy and especially in drama after the two

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world wars. Now it is the time to see the effect of absurd in present era and especially let us analyse the presence of Godot in this age of 21st century.

I would like to start this segment which is heart and soul of this research paper and definitely the most important and the most interesting with a quote from WB Yeats, which will clarify our stand in this world of absurd, ridiculous and illogical anarchy and disorder:

Turning and turning in the widening gyre,  
The falcon cannot hear the falconer'  
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold,  
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,  
The blood dimmed tide is loosed and everywhere,  
The ceremony of innocence is drowned. {Quoted in WB Yeats *The Second Coming*}

WB Yeats prediction is so true for this time and the time to come, as the complete flex of post-modern era has gone through either illogical anarchy in the form of democracy or presidential form of government weather it was in India, America or any other country, weather it was the coming of Bush or Tony Blair who attacked Iraq "Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world" or present American election which was a kind of campaign to remove Trump from the office, but the question of absurdity does not stand in his removal but rather in his appointment. Let us talk about India in the context of Godot. We had often heard about the electoral term anti incumbency, which actually stands for voting for those politicians who were not in power and throwing out those who were in power. And these phenomena so over energized the voter that even good people are slain because of this effect and this is what we called, "Godot effect".

"Godot effect" can be felt in all walks of life. "It is an inner desire of change which create the drive within us and pumps us to the extend to the limits of illogicality which is often recognized in the postmodern literature as phenomena of absurdity".

Let's take an example of Manmohan Government which completed its second term in 2014 and lost to NDA. Though the economy was in all time high but still why the government lost? This is what I call "Godot effect". One day some strange person "godot" will come and will change the whole life which is the major "living allusion of humanity in general. So the "Godot effect" is a kind of a chain of event, where people or circumstances are an indicators of the desired people or circumstances which will again become the indicators of the desired people or circumstances, and thus the cycle of Absurd life roles over and over and over just like in the [Myth of Sisyphus], where Zeus punished Sisyphus because of the different reason in the different version of the story by asking him to roll an immense boulder up a hill just to see the bolder rolling back to him, repeating this action for eternity. Just like the cycle of life has no end in the same way the very adjective [Sisyphus] stands for those task, which can never ever be completed, similar to the Godot Effect, as explained above.

Waiting for Godot wonderfully delegates all these bits and pieces of postmodernism through an indistinguishable and imprecise word along the expression of terminological turmoil appearance of absurd. The drama has propagated at an outstanding rate over the last seventy years, as it transacts with the idea of man's existence in this pointless and meaningless world. The stage of Godot brings to light sometime pixelated and sometime high resolution picture of man's existence, and even today in the age of Zoom and Google meet, where Marshmallow decides the message and Macintosh is responsible for the business, [Godot Effect] or the heat of Waiting for Godot is still so significant and so real. We definitely know that man of today is far more developed in areas of industry and technology but hard to say about mannerism, than the people around Godot's influx. But there is a kind of similarity between the people of that age and today's age and that lies in there internal worthlessness or frailty which is still prowling upon their self. For example Estragon and Vladimir the two major characters of Waiting for Godot, who act like a puppet and are string together, in the same way, in today's world the society, peoples, business and the latest in the term is IOT that is internet of things, are not just string together but rather they depend on each other for the proper functioning of each other, just like Vladimir's dependence on Estragon and Pozo's incompleteness without lucky. So what Beckett is trying to present through his characters of Estragon and Vladimir, is very very conclusive and valid in each and every layer

of society and things that we used in our day to today life, for example dependence of sim on mobile if there is no sim card mobile becomes a little toy, similarly the induction chulha becomes useless if there is no induction cook top. Not only people are being mirrored in this life and age but the circumstances to which Beckett involves Estragon and Vladimir is also very very relevant in this age for example the loneliness of human existence with a parallel dependence on each other is also presented in the best possible manor. The other interesting correlation can be found in the inability of Estragon and Vladimir to leave the condition by their own self is directly associated with [people of this time] that is our inability to come out of our own situation, weather it is official, domestic, or political. Just like Estragon and Vladimir we are also waiting for some Godot, who will give a joyful ride out of it. But wait, will this happen? I don't think so,

not because of the absence of Godot in *Waiting for Godot*, but rather we should believe on the philosophy that says that "man is responsible for his own condition", and this is where we fail completely, because of our believe that one day mask man Godot will come, but that one day will never come in anyone life. The play is a contemporary allegory of after war human in a dimensionless and meaningless world. *Waiting for Godot* devises a description of humanbeing that transcends the time. The dramas that were later on presented on the lines of *Waiting for Godot* are also pre-occupied with the sentiment characteristic of our age: *Last Tape* {1958} is dealing with the ideal understanding of Beckett's idea of "mans segregation." *Embers* (1959) is a monologue of an extremely old man who is horrified by the reminiscence of the past and feels confused, used, and abused. The radio play, *All that Fall* {1959}, , explain humans aggravation and absurdity, on the other hand, even the most ludicrous but sarcastically very real and genuine of Becketts play *Happy Days*, dramatises the illogicality and absurdity of man's existence without rationale, reason, and order. Beckett's drama and the world inside his very own creation, abide a very intimate semblance to Camus's viewpoint portrayed in his masterpiece *Myth of Sisyphus*. *Cosmos* abruptly strip off of delusions and lights, human feels a stranger within himself. His

Cast out is devoid of answer as man is destitute of the reminiscence of a gone home or the anticipation of a guaranteed piece of land. Camus's book emerged during the Second World War in 1942 to be precise. The complete process of the growth of the feeling of the absurd exceed through three different phases: the first and the far most important stage is the process of recognition of the emptiness of life which is intensely appalling. The second developmental faze of absurd feeling goes through in the reality of living in the real conflict of this absurd world, this conflict can be brought either by man's intention or his suppress inside voice. Third and the most important and also the final faze consist in the conscious and mindful assertion that nothing occurs in life in actuality which actually give way to human mental anguish and agony. This sense of torment on the hand of the absurdity of our own life is the central idea of the dramas not only of grate Beckett, but the same phenomena can be found in dramatic creation of playwright like Ionesco, Adamov, and definitely Genet. If we take up Beckett's plays in today's contexts, it sits down very convincingly just like Beckett's plays which lack the sense of plot in it all form and work on the symphony of the characters movement, and dialog delivery, the real life of today is also absolutely plot less, sense less, and functions on the basis of symphony set by the society, where there is only little room left for rational action and the whole area of life is wasted in structured pattern of living, what we called [circular plot]. Generally Beckett's characters present their writers instinct and impulse of the human synchronization by a means that is fundamentally polyphonic, they generally brazen out their spectators with a prearranged pattern of proclamations and imagery that break-in in each other and that should be detained in their entirety. The Absurd theatre discards all kind of rational devices, as it is clearly visible in most of the plays of Beckett, and in the views of Martin Esslin Beckett's plays are apt, appropriate, and suitable, and the most absurd and ludicrous characteristic of beckett's plays is its non-precise setting. The space on beckett's stage is absolutely nude and naked, it cannot be described in a sense full language, actually there is nothing that can be describe. The stage of Beckett has more resemblance to the current condition to different society of the world, because from the politics to bureaucracy, from education to commerce, from doctors to teachers, and in all profession, the stage within, is absolutely nude and rotten. Just like the plays of Beckett the society is not just absurd but It is also like nothing. There is nothing. It is absolutely empty from inside. As in *Waiting for Godot*

There is a tree which is bare, in the same way there is a jungle of concrete and which is empty from inside. Strange happenings had also shaken the audience of Beckett for example emergent of leaves, abrupt rise of the

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moon, bizarre characters and their illogical behaviour suggests abstract quality of this setting. And so in today's society the nature of Beckett abruptness is clearly visible in the area of policy making, government decision and in many more social working and structuring of the society. Whether it was the plot of Godot or life in 20first century, things have not changed much. The complete story line [if there was any!] revolved around the person for whom the absent plot was just waiting, and the best thing about this was that the person, for whom waiting was going on even his identity, was not sure. Even today in 20first century or probably in all ages we as a human being has this tendency of waiting without knowing the real nature of the thing for which we are waiting. But just like the two, Vladimir and Estragon, we are also sure that life will change after the arrival of Godot ultimately the elegance of Beckett's Waiting for Godot clips the modern man's soul and body comparable. Even after seventy years of its coming, we delegate its implication and application both theoretically and stylistically. in truth when a human being goes through overload deficiency, despair, or misery either he commits suicide or endeavours to take vengeance but absurdity even does not permits this also.

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