



THE IMPACT OF ABSURDISM IN “WAITING FOR GODOT” BY SAMUEL BECKET

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Abstract:

This Research paper explores the impact of the absurdism in Samuel Becket's play "Waiting for Godot". Samuel Becket's "Waiting for Godot" written in French 1948, is a play dedicated to the absurd. This work based on the belief that the universe is irrational and meaningless and the search for order brings the individual into conflict with the universe. "Waiting for Godot" is the best example of absurd literature where leafless tree and no development of plot show human condition. So, this play totally deals with the life of a modern man and its purposeless life so through this article, we look into the impact of absurdism in "Waiting for Godot". According to absurdist, "there is no meaning in life. The life is permeated men but there is no man. Human life is like a bubble."

Key Words: Impact, Absurdism, Waiting & Samuel Becket

Introduction:

"Absurdism" means something silly, foolish, nonsensical, purposeless, confusing. Martin Esslin was the first who used this term "Absurd" in his book. This term basically used to describe the irrational, nonsensical, foolish and silly aspects of human life. It is a philosophy which based on the belief that this world is meaningless, purposeless and irrational and also the existence of human beings is useless, meaningless and irrational. This philosophy is based on the belief that human beings are leading a meaningless life. They have no positive purpose in their lives and their existence is useless and meaningless. A philosophical definition of Absurdism is "It is a school of thought stating that the efforts of humanity to find inherent meaning will ultimately fail because no such meaning exists at least in relation to the individual."

According to Absurdist "There is no meaning in life. The world is permeated men but there is no man. Human life is like a bubble".

There are many dramas which based upon the philosophy of absurdism. In literature "Absurdism focuses on the situation and on characters. In an absurd drama, characters have no meaning and purpose in their life. They live a meaningless and purposeless life in the whole drama. Even their dialogues and conversation to each other is unmotivated and always revolve around some specific and meaningless things.

Samuel Becket was a critic, playwright and an author and he was born on 13 April 1906. He won the noble prize for literature in 1969. He was very famous writer and especially known for his beautiful play "Waiting for Godot". Samuel Becket born in Ireland and he started his writing from prose. He published many stories and poetry. Samuel Becket's "waiting for Godot" is the best example of absurd drama in 1952 and appeared on stage in 1953. He is an absurdist play writer. "Absurd" is that type of drama who focuses on the absurdity of human existence. In absurd drama, nothing is happen. Everything is useless and meaningless. There is a confusing situation even characters themselves do not know what they are doing and why. Characters' dialogues and conversation are totally confusing and meaningless.

This drama is a part of the theatre of absurd which discusses the idea that human life is useless, purposeless and meaningless.

"Waiting for Godot" is an absurd drama and it shows the absurdity of human beings. In this play, nothing is happen and no development of plot is found and there is

no beginning, middle and an end. The setting of the play clearly shows the absurdity. A country road, leafless tree and two homeless men. So from the point of view of setting, it is an absurd play and no meaningful thing is present. The setting of the play reminds the post war conditions of the world which brought violence, uncertainty, despair and pessimistic outlook. These things are present in "Waiting for Godot".

Two main characters of the play, Vladimir and Estragon, show the condition of modern men and they live a meaningless life. They are waiting for a person whose name is Godot and they do not know about Godot who Godot is and will he come or not. Vladimir and Estragon's dialogues also revolve around one thing. They repeat the same dialogues in whole drama.

Valdimir: Well Shall We Go?

Estragon: Yes Let's Go.

But they don't move. There is no female character is present in this drama. Characters are present but they loss their identity. They breathe but they live a meaningless and purposeless life. They wait for a person but their waiting is useless. They are not sure about his coming. So, these elements show the absurdity of human beings. As modern human beings live meaningless lives. Modern men have no clear purpose in their lives. As well as every good play has a motivational and meaningful dialogues but in this play the dialogues are meaningless. Breakdown of communication is present in this play. There is no meaningful message in this play even the fact is that the characters are not interested to talk to each other.

Every good play has good and motivational characters but in this play we have five characters that are not recognizable human beings and they are not motivational at all. They pass their time with doing through meaningless activities. They are waiting for Godot whom they never met. They argue to each other and make a plan of suicide and discuss passage from the Bible. Two characters named Pozzo and Lucky are playing two different roles as master and slave. A messenger boy comes with a message from the Godot that he will not come today but come tomorrow. The two tramps decided to go away but they don't move. The actions of first act repeated in the second act with a few changes and the change is that tree has some leaves and Pozzo is blind and again messenger boy comes with a Godot message that Godot will not come today.

The ending of the play is not a conclusion as in the start of the play two tramps are waiting a person whose name is Godot till at the end of the play Godot will not come. Absurdism is closely related to existentialism. It is a theory which is based upon the belief that human existence is meaningless and the universe is indifferent.

So this play "Waiting for Godot" contains all the elements of absurdism like the mention play has a lot of impact of absurdism.

Aims and Objectives:

- To explore the impact of absurdism in "Waiting for Godot".
- To analyze the purposeless and meaningless life of a modern man.
- To analyze the meaning of this term "Absurdism".
- To describe useless existence of a human beings.

Research Questions:

- Why does the existence of human beings remain useless and meaningless?
- What is the basic reason behind the purposeless life of a modern man?
- Is "for away from the religion" the main cause of a purposeless life?

Research Methodology:

This research work focuses on the impact of absurdism in "Waiting for Godot". The nature of the research is Qualitative as for as descriptive. "Waiting for Godot" is the text which is taken as a sample to explain the impact of absurdism in the mentioned play.

Literature Review:

Albert Camus in his work "The Myth of Sisyphus" "considers absurdity as a confrontation an opposition a conflict or a "divorce between two ideals. Specially, he defines the human condition as absurd as the confrontation man's desire for significance and the silent, cold universe".

Albert Camus also said that "in a universe that is suddenly deprived of illusions and of light man feels a stranger". His is an irremediable exile....."This divorce between man and in his life, the actor and his setting, truly constitutes the feeling of absurdity". Eugene Ionesco French author of the Bald Soprano (1949)"The Lesson" and other plays in the theatre of absurd has put it "cut off from his religious, metaphysical and transcendental roots, man is lost, all his actions become senseless, absurd and useless."

Ionesco also said "In commenting on the mixture of moods in the literature of the absurd. "People drowning in meaninglessness can only be grotesque their sufferings can only appear tragic by derision".

Danish philosopher Soren Kierke-Goard wrote extensively on the absurdity of the world. "In his journals Kierke-Goard writes about the absurd, what is absurd? It is as may quite easily be seen, that I, a rational being, must act in a case where my reason, my powers of reflection, tell me: you can just as well do the one thing as the other, that is to say where my reason and reflection say, you cannot act and yet here is where have to act, but reflection has closed the road. So I take one of the possibilities and say...this is what I do, I cannot do otherwise because I am brought to a standstill by my powers of reflection."

Sartre in his plays "No Exit" discusses the philosophy of existentialism. "Existentialism is a root of absurdism and it is deal with the freedom, existence, position, responsibility of human beings and similarly absurdism also deals with the meaningless life of a modern man".

Arthur Andanov's work "deals with the isolation and loneliness of all human beings and also based on the ability of individuals to make meaningless connection with other".

Findings:

Becket play deals with the life of a modern man. It discusses the condition of a human life. Becket's play "Waiting for Godot" has no conventional plot, has no motivational characters, and has no clear setting. As two main characters like Vladimir and Estragon useful purpose in their lives and their conversation to each other, is purposeless and their conversation have no positive meanings. So this play totally shows the condition of modern human beings. As modern man also lives a meaningless and purpose life and even modern man does not know what is the final destination of his life.

In "Waiting for Godot" Valdimir and Estragon are a waiting for a Godot but they don't know about Godot who Godot is and they even never met Godot before. So "Waiting" is an essential part of human beings. Every person in the world lives a life and waiting for something. Some persons are waiting for a job some are waiting for a wealth so all persons lives in a state of waiting.

Vladimir and Estragon just passing a time with useless activities they don't have any knowledge and information they are ignorant. They live as they have no existence and they have no identity. They are in a place and a mental state where nothing is happened. Today's modern also have no clear identity. Modern men also are ignorant and they have no useful information and knowledge even modern man doesn't know about the purpose of his life.

So this play deals with the meaninglessness, purposelessness and foolishness of human beings. In this play nothing is happen all things remain same throughout the play. The opening line of the play is "Nothing lives a meaningless life and they to be done" when Estragon fails to remove his boots. This line is the main idea of the play. The characters, plot, setting, dialogues, conversation of the play are useless based on absurdity. There is a breakdown of communication. Their dialogues are useless and meaningless. When the messenger boy comes with a message that Godot will not come today but surely come tomorrow so at this spot they exchange a dialogue

Vladimir: well shall we go?

Estragon: Yes let's go.

But they don't move.

They change the dialogues but they don't act. This shows the absurdity of human life. So we can say that this play is a best example of an absurd play it contain all the elements of absurdist play. Characters' conversation and their dialogues are based on absurdity. The setting and the plot of the play is unconventional. The plot of this play has no beginning, middle and end. The play start with a same thing that the two characters are waiting and the play also end with the same thing that they are still waiting and Godot not come at the end of the play. So all things remain same. No development show throughout the play. Usually a tree is a symbol of life but in his play leafless tree shows the condition of modern man human beings.

It is an absurd play and closely related to the life of modern human beings. Becket's work concerned with the civilization of today.

Delimitation:

This play "Waiting for Godot" is a master piece of the absurd literature. It focuses on the absurdity of life. It describes all the elements of the absurdity through the two main characters "Vladimir" and "Estragon". This play totally deals with the life of a modern man and discuss the useless existence of a human beings and also discuss that how a modern man live a meaningless and purposeless life. Even modern man doesn't know why he lives a life and what purpose of his life is? All the characters of this drama and their dialogues and their actions clearly show the absurdity of human beings. So this play is a best example of absurd literature. It contains all the elements of absurdism.

References:

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