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A Bird's eye view on Use of Time, Space, Uncertainty and nothingness in 'Waiting for Godot'

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper to scrutinise the use of time, space and uncertainty. In this paper, I have observed at certain major inconsequential and particular relevant to the theme of time, space and uncertainty in '*Waiting for Godot*' The conjoint viewpoint about the play is that the themes immensely revered. In waiting for Godot, Beckett accomplished use of the worldwide theme of human circumstance and man's anguish at being impotent to find a meaning in presence (The Theatre of Absurd, 45), when antagonizing men's wish to explore the meaning of life. Usually, men try to catch the meaning of life his particular pattern centred on their daily routine. If a man is not able to find his own his way, while promptly fantasizing about the reminiscent life that he has been expecting. Waiting for Godot is the story of two destitute men dreadfully seeking some meaning for their survival, and persistently hoping to meet someone called Godot who might able to help them out of their current circumstances. In order to fulfil this hope, waiting is the pattern they create to represent the meaning of their lives, because they strongly believe that their lives create to represent the meaning of their lives, because they strongly believe that their lives will be fulfilled if they meet Godot. However, they would be hopelessly disappointment if they encounter a negative aspect from Godot. However, they would be hopelessly disappointed if they happenstance a negative aspect from Godot.

Introduction:

Waiting for Godot (1952) is an unusual and distinguished play written by Irish Nobel Prize-winner *Samuel Beckett*. The main intention of this paper is to analyse how Beckett constructs his world of the absurd in the play. The play was an exploration of a new form of drama by selected playwright. He insists, "The theatre of the Absurd, nevertheless, it can be perceived as the replication of what appears to be the stance most genuinely illustrative of our own time.

Throughout the play, the role of time, it plays a major part and therefore the question of whether time controls the protagonist or the protagonist control time will be explored. This paper brings out the hidden inferences and concepts of time, space and uncertainty. The essay will also explore the theme of words, memory, waiting and hope. The entire plot centres on two protagonist and their waiting for the mysterious character named Godot.

1) The Use of time in *Waiting for Godot*:

The dictionary definition of absurd is approximately that is entirely imprudent and unreasoning. In a musical perspective, it means ‘out of harmony’ (The theatre of absurd 23). Nevertheless, the classification ‘absurd’ originates into the literature from the mid-twentieth century. *Waiting for Godot* is a story of ‘time’ written in the form of ‘Absurd’ set throughout two sequential days. The two main character are vagabonds awaiting Godot’s advent. However, Godot persistent absence wastes of time in the lives of the tramps by assembly them living marionettes in the world of the absurd, consequently they merely “Let it go to waste”. Instead of outcome of suitable tactic to spend it. Beckett’s aim in forming these characters may have been to variety them the fatalities of time, aiming out that we cannot sojourn the time, signifying that we live in the existing moment with what we have, instead of waiting for enhanced survives or for what we do not have. The notion of a past and future is a deception, and yet the play seems to be only set in the ‘present’. However, the present does not seem to have a fixed beginning or end the play seems to hold its audience in a kind of limbo. It would seem that we cannot control time, and the senselessness of time suggests that it is pointless to attempt to stop its passage. Time passes, we age become sick, and one day we eventually die, the truth is that time stops us. Therefore, no matter how hard we try to succeed in our lives, all our achievement are buried with us as time survives unchanged.

In *waiting for Godot* proves that the tramps do not live in the present moment, and instead of enjoying the present time, they are waiting. They are excited that Godot will come along after some time and “Will miraculously save the situation” (The theatre of the Absurd 50) As Vladimir says, “To-morrow everything will be better”. (34) Because the boy said to them “Godot was sure to come to-morrow” 34. Time could be identified as another major character in the play, since the tramp have nothing else to do in their lives but wait for Godot. In fact, the idea behind the waiting is that letting time pass on its own, instead of using it. The Vladimir and Estragon excitement to meet the mysterious Godot may be a represented of man’s desire to fill the time between birth and death with something meaningful. This period often could be a continuation of endless hope, which connects the beginning birth, to the end, death. In *Waiting for Godot*, it seems that the tramps’ hope is Godot they continue their lives with that hope of meeting Godot.

For instances:

Vladimir: What do we do now?

Estragon: Wait.

Vladimir: Yes, but while waiting.

Estragon: What about hanging ourselves?

Vladimir: Hamm. It'd give us an erection!

Estragon: (highly excited). An erection (12).

As above mentioned the dialogue it shows that Vladimir and Estragon have been waiting for Godot until and unless he comes there. At this juncture, it explores that Beckett might have been use a humour as vehicle to elucidate and apprehension the thoughtfulness of audience; it has been helping man understand the significant of time in his own existence. This is a nimble way to fetch humour into the play through outright absurdity. At this point, it reflects the meaningless, ludicrous and bizarre to hang oneself in order to pass the time. Nevertheless, the desperate do not hang themselves and they endure their journey, both used to come with different hope and little bit anticipated. One day Godot coming again the next day with the same hope despite nothing-significant happening. When man cannot find meaning for his/her existence then his/her life becomes absurd, and that state of absurd.

1) The Use of Space in Waiting for Godot:

It is adequate to flinch with a short overview to Beckett's backdrop; meanwhile almost all his works are entirely different from what we use in the theatre as well as in veracity. In *Waiting for Godot*, a space without identification of its contextual, whichever materially or aesthetically, it is formed or applies to the world in general. This consents the audience to emphasis on the discourse itself somewhat than the scenery. The audience is presented with abandoned, unfamiliar and strange space where almost nothing exists. Nothing perceptible and it changes in the form of the stage, excluding for few leaves growing on the tree in the second day of the second acts.

The tree is the only object that exists in the middle of emptiness. Interestingly, the first astonishing absurdist element, the tree, seems struggling to survive with the tramps, and functions as everything that the tramps have except the clothing that they are wearing. Yet seems the tree means nothing for them since they take nothing from it to affect their current circumstance. The tramps' attention to the tree is repeated in the play.

For example:

Estragon: What is it?

Vladimir: I don't know. A willow.

Estragon: Where are the leaves?

Vladimir: It must be dead (10)

At the conclusion of the second act, they allusion the tree for the last time.

For instance:

Vladimir : Everything is dead but the tree.

Estragon : (looking at the tree) What is it?

Vladimir : It's the tree (Page 59)

In waiting for Godot here it shows the symbol of tree and keeping only a tree without any other objects seems to be Beckett's attempt to highlight characters and ongoing events on the stage, because multiple objects on the stage distract the action and the intended message. The tree may symbolize many possibilities, such as death, survival, change and life. The tree, which has no leaves or fruit, could be a representation of lifelessness and death, although it is surviving throughout the harsh circumstances; likewise, the tree in the wintertime looks pale and dead. Eventually that tree slowly begins to change and growing leaves, and perhaps regaining life.

In the play, the notion replicates the tramps who struggle between waiting and suicide, often considering the idea of suicide, but they come back to the same point to wait. Although, there is no change in the plot on the second act, the space changes by growing few leaves. The tree's awakening at the second day with few leaves may symbolise hope for tomorrow, which in the tramps' case is Godot. However, empty space may represent the empty souls of the tramps waiting to be filled Godot.

The space in the play can also be seen as eternity. Both past and future are illusion, and seen under this aspect, we begin to taste the notion of eternity. The distance between the world the tramps are trapped in and the distance from the tramps to Godot or the place where they can enjoy comfortable lives; still, they are not capable of changing their current circumstance for better ones instead of wasting time for Godot. They hope that perhaps he will bring the happiness and prosperity into their lives. It is also shows the play could be understood in a number of ways. It could be hell; a replication of the miserable situation the tramps are in. It could be limbo; waiting for Godot or it could be heaven; where they expect to live fully and happily ever after the meeting with Godot. Whatever the space occurs to be, whether it is

either visible or invisible, seems absurd in both aspects. We are to assume that the visible space is not the one where we used to see in conventional plays or in reality; the space on the play rather gives the impression of hollowness and emptiness.

2) **The Uncertainty in Waiting for Godot:**

Waiting for Godot guides us to ponder over “What they mean”? (The Theatre of the Absurd, 44) and its replication to the world we perceive in. The tramps’ paucity of knowledge about everything appears to be a representation for humankind’s dearth of basic exploring of the universe and lifecycle itself. The creation of the entire is a huge question mark, exclusively for those who do not want to rely on Christianity’s religious theory that God formed the world in seven days. Modern science plugs the role of religion by trying to find realistic answers for these questions, but the truth is that we recognise neither our formation nor end. We are born to live life, it instructs ourselves, then become get married, afterwards we come into the old and sick and finally we arise towards the death. The path of life could not be exactly speculated and it is entirely unknown to the death of life. Throughout the play, we ponder over the things happened in our life it become speechless and thoughtless towards life where we spent without getting trouble and restless. Afterwards we come across hundreds of questions that have no answers, consequently.

Another vital dispute in the play is the character’s names. A person name is major signifiers of his presence, but the audience’s insight of the tramps is chaotic since they go by many names given to them by dissimilar people. The tramps go by names including Vladimir, Didi, Albert, Estragon, Gogo and Adam. There are no two people who call them the similar name, as Estragon calls Vladimir, Didi, the boy calls him “Mr. Albert” (32) and Vladimir calls Estragon Gogo, but Estragon acquaint with himself to Pozzo as ‘Adam’ (25) so who are they?, and what are their identities? The audience is left in darkness about the identity of the leading role whereupon the mysterious becomes the most important dispute.

Vladimir: Oh he’s a ...he’s a kind of acquaintance.

Estragon: Nothing of the kind, we hardly know him.

Vladimir: True....we don’t know him very well ...but all the same....

Estragon: Personally I wouldn’t even know him if I saw him

The complete plot runs with the expectation of this enigmatic character’s appearance says, when Beckett’ was enquired by Alan Schneider (who was to straight the first American production of the play) who or what does it means by Godot?, the answer was “If I knew, I would have said so in the play”. (The theatre of the absurd 44) Over the last sixty years, criticisers have suggested that Godot is cheerfulness, perpetual

life, everlasting love, death, silence, hope, time, space, uncertainty, God and many other things. Certainly, if we ponder over the overall performance of the play, we conclude ourselves and feels Godot is everything, at the same time he is nothing. The identity of Godot is like listening to a blind man who is asked to describe an object or person.

The play challenges our integrities when uncertainty plays vital role with the memory of the characters throughout the play, making them doubt the little details they are given, including the tramps meeting with the travellers and the messenger, the place, the time and simply everything. In the second act, when Vladimir reminds Pozzo of their meeting yesterday. Pozzo refutes it by having no memory of meeting anyone on the aforementioned day

Vladimir: And you are Pozzo?

Pozzo: Certainly, I am Pozzo.

Vladimir: The same as yesterday?

Pozzo: yesterday?

Vladimir: We met yesterday. (Silence) Do you not remember?

*Pozzo: I do not remember having met anyone yesterday. But
To-morrow I won't remember having met anyone
Day. So do not count on me to enlighten you (56-57)*

Pozzo's claim, for he has no absolute memory concerning the meeting with the tramps on yesterday, make Vladimir question himself "Would that be possible". He is disillusionment for the world as it is "The air is full our crisis (page no. 58), when no one is sure of their memory, tomorrow and life itself. In this manner, everything is uncertain and you cannot believe Pozzo's claim for their meeting. As above mentioned the extract shows that Vladimir and Estragon, they are not sure that how they remind their discourse. Firstly, when Pozzo introduce himself as Pozzo next day he forgets and he replied with another answer 'he did not that remember anything on yesterday?' So here it shows that the uncertainty between Vladimir and Estragon like life and death. Therefore, in 'Waiting for Godot' it includes the uncertainty in between character where they meet and they communicated to everyone.

Conclusion:

The purpose of the paper, I have looked at some material to the themes of time, space, and uncertainty in ‘*Waiting for Godot*’ The main and conjoint judgement about the play is that the themes are highly appreciated. In this play, the “Tomorrow” which never arrives in reality keeps the tramps alive with the hope of meeting Godot. Nevertheless, we conclude that Godot is an illusion; he cannot exist in reality, but only in the mind of the tramps. Therefore, the truth is that they are “*Waiting for nothing*” significantly similar to the title “*Waiting for Godot*”, thus; time has no meaning in their lives because from their point of view time only brings difficulties into their lives. They do not see the opposite side, which is the beauty that life offers in the form of choices, which come with time. In this play, it shows that time, space, and uncertainty appears the nothingness until the end of this play. If Godot is a misrepresentative figure in the mind of Vladimir and they are “*Waiting and they are Waiting for nothing*”, then the truth is that the whole plot is only waiting without anything noteworthy happening, neither loss nor achievement. So the audience may surprise what would have happened if Becket had titled the play as its representation “*Waiting for nothing*”.

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