

IN SEARCH OF GODOT: BUDDHISM RE-VISITED

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ABSTRACT

Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* is a journey of two men amidst drab reality to find wisdom through experience. Godot, for which Estragon and Vladimir are waiting, never turns up and therefore their waiting goes on. Throughout the play, Beckett uses Existentialism as a tool to express human suffering. While dealing with the process of unveiling the meaninglessness of life, the futility of existence and the repetitiveness of human follies, Beckett has highlighted the four noble truths of Buddha.

My paper will seek the presence of the four noble truths of Buddha in a text which is written in the period of postmodernism. The universal fact of suffering, or the unsatisfactoriness of life, its pain, its malaise, its 'ill'-ness, is the starting point of the first noble truth of Buddha and it is the starting point of Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* as well. The second noble truth which identifies with the motive power which keeps this universal suffering going, the fuel which prevents the fire from going out, and this is the craving or desire. This same factor has occurred with Estragon and Vladimir with their occasional intrusion of existential crisis. The third noble truth which concerns cessation (*nirodha*), and it is that the cessation of suffering is a consequence of the cessation of craving. In *Waiting for Godot*, frequent mentioning of Godot's arrival by Estragon and Vladimir is a kind of craving to meet the unknown as they think Godot to be that healer who will help them to attain salvation. The fourth noble truth which deals with the declaration that a way existed through which the cure might be achieved; this was the way delineated by the Buddha, which consisted of morality, meditation and the attainment of wisdom. Through my paper, I will interpret Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* in the light of Buddhism. Though written after the Second World War, this text strongly values Buddhism, therefore, establishing the ever presence of Buddhism even in the minds of intellectuals despite their origins and cultural backgrounds.

KEYWORDS: Beckett, Buddhism, Five Noble Truths, Godot



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