

“The Theme of Deliberate Contrasting Coincidence in Beckett's

"All That Fall"

فكرة المصادفة المتناقضة المتعمدة في مسرحية
بيكيت "كل الذي يسقط"

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Abstract

In most of Beckett’s plays , there are prominent elements of absurdity that are landmarks of his style and the way of his writing like : the physical and the spiritual decay of characters, the disintegration of language as it becomes no longer a means of human communication because there is an inability to establish any kind of mental contact among them. These elements are quite apparent in Beckett’s “All That Fall”. The play exhibits a list of conflicts: one is between powerful forces as that between the force of life represented by Maddy and the forces of death represented by Dan .The second is the conflict and contempt between the old generation and the new one in the case of Dan’s desire to kill the boy fetching him home or as Beckett names it the theme of the new gulfs open under the old gulfs .The third is posing opposite viewpoints of the protagonists as in those of the old couple ,to stress modern man’s alienation . The play presents us perverted kinds of human beings who each seek a shelter as a type of

escape and withdrawal from the bitter life in the outside world, like Miss Fitt who seeks refuge in religion which is also a recurrent element in Beckett's works. Modern man is made and forced to live in an artificial and self-made conditions transforming shadow-like kind of life as Beckett thinks, in the sense of limiting himself to collective or superficial identity like Dan on the one hand. Whereas Maddy , on the other hand ,tries hard to get out of the cocoon of the cliché to a more active and vital role that in any way is made unsuitable for her due to her old age. This is because of that feeling of emptiness of the world around the characters who for their miserable lot , are fully aware of that and that surely there has been a fall but what is more certain is that there is no redemption.

List of Keywords

Indifference: عدم اكتراث

Theme: فكرة او مغزى

Contrasting: متناقض

Coincidence: مصادفات

Deliberate: متعمد

Disagreement: عدم اتفاق

Doom: مصير حتمي

Decay: تعفن

Bud: براعم ازهار

Nostalgia: الحنين للماضي

Defeated:	مهزوم
Giggle:	ضحك بصوت عالي
Indulgence:	انغماس وهوس
Afflictions:	مرض وعاهة
Shallow:	سطحي
Timidity:	خجل
Communication:	تواصل
Fertility:	خصوبة
Redemption:	علاج او حل
Superficial:	سطحي
Perverted:	منحرف
Withdrawal:	هروب
Tormented:	معذب
Frustrated:	محبط
Sterility:	عقم

Beckett's "All That Fall " followed the phenomenal success of "Waiting for Godot", and was commissioned by the B.B.C.'S third program. It was Beckett's first attempt at writing directly for radio. Samuel Beckett's first radio play is full of Irish humor and pathos. In 1957 Beckett made his first

attempt at writing directly for radio programs. It was his play "All that Falls" which was written in English, unlike most of his plays that were written in French and then translated in to English years later (Graver and Federman: 150).

His return to writing in English brought with it a return to more concrete settings, a matter which continued in his other English works, such as "Krapp's Last Tape" and "Embers" (Duckworth: 34).

As for "All That Fall", it is set in a recognizable, though stylized and caricatured, Irish realistic rural village named, Boghill, with its dampness, dusty roads, houses, a church and a race course. People of Boghill use their own dialect which is the Gaelic and this gives some realistic touch to the play (ibid).The use of language has a rich and a local flavor that it has a rhetorical zest , rhythmical extravagance and a melancholy humor that recalls the mood of John Synge's plays or Mr.O'casey in his earlier plays (Graver and Federman:165). The title of the play is taken from the psalm: "The Lord uphordth all that fall raisth up all those that he bowed down". The play is about an old Irish couple, Maddy Rooney, a very fat and ill woman and her blind husband, Dan Rooney. The old couple speak about the biblical text mentioned above that is to be preached on the next day at the church of Ireland(Ibid:167).But Beckett springs to another scene of the train when Jerry comes in with an odd object that resembles a rubber ball and he asserts that Mr. Rooney has dropped it in the station. Mr. Rooney accepts that willingly and shamefacedly saying :'It is a thing I carry about with me !' (Ibid:176). When they get home, the boy runs after them saying that Mr. Rooney has left a child's ball in his compartment. He tells Dan the

reason behind the delaying of the train which was because a child had fallen out of the train (Esslin:76).

There is no response to this incident except laughter or tears or in other words there is only the noise of the wind and the rain instead. Mrs. Rooney usually goes to the station of Boghill to fetch her blind husband, in her way she meets a number of people with whom she wants to contact and make friends but in vain. When she gets to the railway station, she found that the train will be delayed for a mysterious reason because it has stopped for a while on the way. On their way home, Dan asks Maddy if she has ever wishes to kill a child. He acknowledges that he was often tempted ,especially in winter time, to attack the boy who leads him home from the station (Esslin: 76).

In this play, the two forces, of death and life are in a continuous clash which is represented by the aged Maddy Rooney and still her more aged, blind husband in their different reactions towards life as a whole For example the idea of bringing up children. It could be said that their advance in age and consequently their physical decay led to general disappointment and disagreement. Maddy longs for having a child, she often laments her loss of her child Minnie; whereas Dan hates children to a degree that he might have killed a boy when he was on the train. This is because he thinks that a young child is only as "a young doom that could be nipped in the bud" (Ibid: 77). Even their attitudes are deliberately contrastive and this is because, to Beckett, it strengthens the theme of alienation and the state of undeniable individual solitude of each character, even between married couples.

There is even a mixture of comic and desperation elements made on purpose in the play that can be seen in Mr. and Mrs. Rooney's wild laughter about the text preached "the Lord Upholding all that fall" which has an effect of comic blasphemy. Whereas the desire to kill the young boy is not a joke and the young life of the maiden must be taken (Graver & Federman:167) in Mr. Rooney's hints throughout the play makes an atmosphere of mocking sardonically at all values as a symbol of positive value which at last means it is something can be seen to matter. There is even fear and warmth in the incidental humor though unintended one by the playwright and some minor characters, notably the daydreaming church mouse, Miss Fitt, are tiny comic masterpieces (ibid) .

Dan and Maddy feel no longer nostalgia for the past since life in the past, present and even the future had deprived them of their lot.

Dan for example, has spent all his life feeling fed up of their life while Maddy on the other hand is always attached to life. Although she is sometimes defeated by despair and gets obsessed with thoughts of death, but she retreats immediately because she has a desire to live a full life (Esslin: 77).

It was Maddy who tries to drag Dan back into love the life he had succeeded in escaping from because she needs him to fulfill her desire to live and satisfy her motherly impulse (ibid). Much of the play's ideas are communicated through sound effects indicating the themes and the ideas of the play. Other theme is concerned with the possibility of making a meaningful life for man in a world in which meaning seems always be slipping away from man (ibid).

The shock of Beckett's last scene has been , as it were , 'planted ' by the introductory music on the first page , from a house in Mrs. Rooney's way, the song of the ' Death and the Maiden ' . It has been 'planted' as Beckett says, also by the talks about Mrs. Rooney's child dead long ago, by the children who throw mud on the Rooneys in their way home . Also by Mr. Rooney's wistful talk about 'nipping a young doom in the bud; . But we are not meant to suppose that the blind man actually attacked the young girl and flung her out of the carriage. What actually must have happened, Beckett leaves, like Henry James in 'The Turn of The Screw', to our own sense of evil. Mr. Rooney thought that he 'had the compartment to himself as usual. At last ,he says , 'I hope so , for I made no attempt to restrain myself .My mind-'The reader or the hearer of the play is left imagining in numb horror and pity what the blind man, in obscenity of his fancied solitude ,may have said or done to make the little girl , of whom he was unaware , fling herself in terror out of the moving train (Graver & Federman:167).

There is an intention in Beckett's plays to provide meaning through emptiness but the final effect of the play is like that effect of "Waiting for Godot" in being not of mere nihilism.

Another theme shows the conflict between forces of life and those of death. Maddy stands for the forces of life, while Dan stands for the forces of death-wish. The sounds of the animals represents the vitality of nature showing the fertility of nonhuman nature in contrast with man's sterility. Then comes the sound of Maddy dragging her feet on the course of a tormented life she has, on her way to the station to fetch Dan. The sound of

her dragging feet due to the afflictions of human condition experienced by old age and decay (Esslin: 77).

Moreover, Maddy hears a sound of music of a song "Death and the Maiden". She begins to cry. This song symbolizes death as an appealing escape that tempts a maiden in ruinous old house to go with him and sleep soundly in its rms. But the maiden rejects its invitation although death is a solace for her but it will not let her develop in to a full womanhood. Maddy, in fact is like that maiden in being alone in a ruinous house and her suffering of not fulfilling her womanhood by being deprived of children that she even blames her husband for not doing much to give her that opportunity (Webb: 45).

One of Mrs. Rooney's sorrows is to have lost a girl child long ago. Mr. Rooney is a black pessimist .The world is the more bearable to him, the less his senses expose him to it. "No, I cannot be said to be well. But I am no worse. Indeed, I am better than I was. The loss of my sight was a great fillip. If I could go deaf and dumb I think I might pant on to be a hundred '.Mrs. Rooney's heart has not hardened as Mr. Rooney's has. When she speaks of bad dreams that keeps her awake ,her 'lifelong preoccupation with horses 'buttocks' and on the puzzle of a neurologist about a little girl, 'the only thing wrong with her as far as he could see was that she was dying', her wretchedness has an absurdity and a tenderness lacking in her husband's(Graver & Federman:165).

Consequently, Maddy is waiting nothing but death. Despite her old age, she conveys a sense of a frustrated sexuality in her conversation with Mr. Tayler who tries to flirt with her but her answer is that she is fed up

with his laying hands on her shoulders which is another outburst added to that scene when she asks Dan some Pecks on cheek. Her resentment against her husband for not providing her with the love that she wants is expressed in her mistaking Mr. Tayler as Dan (Friedman: 193).

There is something about her wild laughter which seems to spring from a traditional domain of sexual suggestion. The first is her invitation to Mr. Tayler while the second is when she and Dan join in a loud giggle about Sunday's preaching topic. This laughter recalls the implication that Providence or the Lord is neither good nor true or comforting. Tayler and Dan are remote from the natural world which Maddy like to be involved in, in their preference of the artificial and mechanical over the organic and alive world (ibid). For example, Dan's preference of artificial calculations refusing to negotiate the actual the concrete way with Maddy and as well as his indulgence in the etymologies of valuable communication are all behind his desire to be cut off from the world of nature by wishing to be deaf and dumb (Webb: 48).

But it is not only man's failure to value natural life that becomes the source of sickness of this world but Maddy refers to much more fundamental and complex afflictions as physical decay, gentility and churchgoing which destroy her (Webb: 48).

In this play, Beckett gives us a lot in a few lines. His shorter plays are the work of a genius, poignant as usual and more concise than ever. He gives us a lot to think about. The general failure of Maddy and community is due to the fact that they live on a shallow conventionality of tradition for an instance, gentility tempts man to be well- behaved and civilized but it

isolates him from people and imprisons him within the concept of civility. Religious life gives much attention to appearance rather than reality and this reduces the life of Maddy's community to a producing-nothing state since any impulse towards the thought and experience of individual is inhibited by timidity. Therefore; it is not only old age that reduces Maddy's vitality but her sense of being fractionally alive (Webb: 48).

The best example of deadening, perverted power of convention is Miss. Fitt, the symbol of churchgoing fellow and gentility but there is even an ambiguity about her name which can mean that she is not fit with this town for her indifference to others. Her name may mean on the other hand that she is very fit because her distinguishing qualities that enabled her to be separated from people of other towns. Miss Fitt as a singer in the church, chanting her hymns makes her alone with her Maker that she becomes unaware of the surroundings. This is because religion for her is an escape into herself so, she wants nobody to violate this privacy i.e. religion for her is a kind of a withdrawal from life. She is called "dark Miss" by others and even by herself (Worth: 208).

The extension is made that all creatures except Man have the greater advantage that they are able to live without contrasting meaning. Therefore; man's connection with reality is carried out through words and ideas. Once he becomes aware of the emptiness of words he uses, then he can not avoid realizing that his entire mental life is empty and both Maddy and Dan are close to this recognition (Graver and Federman: 201).

It is us that we choose to live shadow lives by limiting ourselves to collective, superficial identity whereas Maddy tries to get out of the cocoon

of cliché to a more active and vital role. The value of life is symbolically communicated by recurring images of manner and excrement as symbols of fertility for non-human nature, while man is living in an emptiness of land because he realizes that there has been a fall but there is no redemption (Graver and Federman: 201).

The play perhaps intends to sympathy with those who fall and those who are bowed down and has not yet been broken .Again the contrasting clash old generation and the new generation. In this sense , the play is considered as a tragedy as a whole using the theme of the new gulfs open under old gulfs i.e. the mutual misunderstanding and contempt between the two generations and that the worse according to Beckett is yet to be due to society illness. It is a short play in which almost nothing seems to happen and yet what is found to have happened in the end is something irreparable (Graver & Fedreman:166).

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"فكرة المصادفة المتناقضة المتعمدة في مسرحية بيكيت" كل الذي يسقط "

الباحثة: اسيل مجيد

الخلاصة

هناك العديد من عناصر تقنيات المتعلقة بمسرح العيب في اغلب مسرحيات الكاتب العيبي ساموئيل بيكيت والتي تعتبر علامات مميزة لطريقة كتابته والى اسلوبه لطرح هذه الافكار مثل هذه العناصر التعفن الروحي والجسدي للشخص , وتفكك اللغة بين الشخص كونها لم تعد الوسيلة البشرية للتواصل الفكري بسبب عدم القدرة على بدء اي نوع من انواع التواصل العقلي بينهم. ان هذه العناصر بارزة جدا في مسرحية بيكيت "كل الذي يسقط" حيث ان المسرحية تعرض صراع قوى كبرى تسيطر حياة الانسان مثل قوى الموت المتمثلة بشخصية دان من ناحية وقوى الحياة المتمثلة بشخصية مادي من ناحية اخرى هذا بالاضافة الى تعارض واصطدام وجهات النظر بهدف تشديد فكرة انعزال انسان القرن العشرين . وقد تطرقت المسرحية الى انواع منحرفة من الشخصيات والتاكيد بان كل من الشخص يبحثون عن ملجأ للهروب من واقع الحياة المر الذي يعيشونه وهذا متمثل في شخصية الانسة فت التي اتخذت من الدين والروحانيات كمهرب من الواقع. ومثل هكذا حياة هي نوع مصطنع من الحياة واشبه ما تكون بخيال او ضلال لحياة يعيشها الانسان الحديث كما يعتقد بيكيت بسبب حصر الشخصية لهوية سطحية وجماعية كما في حالة دان . اما في حالة مادي فهذه الشخصية تحاول جاهدة للخروج من شرقة الكليشة الى دور اكثر فعالية وحيوية والذي لايناسبها باي حال من الاحوال لكبر سنها . وهذا الشعور نابع من الشعور الكامل بالفراغ والادراك التام بأنه من المؤكد كان هناك سقوط ولكن الاكثر تأكيدا هو انه ليس هناك حل .