

**ESTRAGON AND VLADIMIR: ‘THROWNNES’ INTO THE WORLD:  
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SAMUEL BECKETT’S *WAITING FOR  
GODOT* AND THILAK HETTIARACHCHI’S *GUTI KAEMATA  
NIYAMITHAI***

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This paper articulates the nature of the concepts of existence and identity and the factors that determine and condition these concepts in relation to Samuel Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot* and Thilak Hettiarachchi’s *Guti Kaemata Niyamithai*. The plays are significantly modernist and can be categorized under the genre of absurd literature. The paper, being a comparative study, examines the way in which the two plays problematize the notions of individuality, identity and existence. The characters, their identities, their aims and actions are presented as tangled in order to portray the absurdity of human life. It is also implied that their identities are in a state of flux. The characters of the two plays are stuck in a certain structure which metaphorically symbolizes the bigger and more complex structure of the world and existence of the ‘being’. The two plays, even though they are products of two entirely different cultures belonging to two different epochs, share many similarities. The paper also examines the nature of the socio-political, cultural and ideological situation(s) of these different time periods. Moreover, the characterization is significantly extra-ordinary and innovative. The absurd and surrealist plots are suggestive of the nihilism of identity and existence of the ‘being’. Both plays seem to question the notion of religion, God and certainty and they operate through the mechanism of waiting. The characters have been waiting even before the two plays begin. They are waiting for the entire duration in both plays. They will wait even after the plays end. The paper is an in depth analysis of the nature of the amalgamation of literary techniques and philosophical stances in two distinct socio-political and historical contexts. The extensive comparisons of the similarities of the two plays show that the playwrights simultaneously construct and de-construct the entity which is called the individual being. Hence, it can be argued that the two playwrights show the being’s existence amidst turmoil and the inability of the individual ‘being’ to exist as a pure, absolute consciousness. Since the being is unable to maintain a pure, uncontaminated status, he/she is always subjected to displacement, and even erasure. Thus, the individual being is always already ‘thrown’ into the world and his/her ‘throwness’ into the world constitutes his/her personality.

*Keywords:* Individuality, Existence, Throwness