

## **Endgame by Samuel Beckett Analysis as a Form of Post-Colonialism**

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**Abstract:** A play is a literary work written for stage performance needs. It contains of dialogues and stage directions, which become the center of the play. In today's society, play is not just about the dramatic, tragic, or comedic story that is quite classic and usual. But it also contains unusual plays like the theater of the absurd. The problem undertaken in this research relates to literary works called Theater of Absurd, especially the play entitled 'Endgame' by Samuel Beckett. And the objectives of this research are to find out the relation between the play and postcolonialism theory and the way to prove it. This research used a descriptive qualitative method and the data are collected from the script of the play 'Endgame'. The data collection used description as the instrument to discover the relation between the play and postcolonialism theory. As the result of the research, it describes that the relation between the play and postcolonialism theory comes up in several dialogs and narrations of the play.

**Keywords:** endgame, play, postcolonialism.

### **RESEARCH BACKGROUND**

A play is a literary work written for the purpose of the theater which dramatizes events through the performance of dialogue and stage directions. plays aim to entertain and share meaningful insight into human life. The purpose of a drama is to arouse in the audience feelings of pity and fear and to purge these emotions (catharsis), thereby making people stronger emotionally (Aristotle, 2006). Plays are typically divided into many genres such as drama; which is serious in tone, tragic, and comedy; which is light and funny. But in the late 1950s, the genre of the play became various. Theater of the absurd as a part of dramatic plays started to rise up among the playwrights at that time. Theater of absurd is a post-world War II designation for particular plays of absurdist fiction. The plays focus on the idea of existentialism and express what happens if human existence lacks meaning or purpose and also communication breaks down. It has no specific sequences; the construction is irrational and it contains illogical speech throughout the play.

Theater of Absurd is practically written by European playwrights, one of them is Samuel Beckett. He has been one of the important playwrights of the 20th century. His plays contain

a lot of absurd content that became famous that day and were followed by other creators as well. He made plays with a different stream of plot but still interesting. His well-known plays are *Waiting for Godot* (1952), *Endgame* (1957), etc. In this article, the author wants to figure out one of his plays, which is *Endgame*. *Endgame* is a set of apocalyptic disasters, which only contains four characters in the play. Hamm, his servant Clov, his father Nagg, and his mother Nell that trapped together in Hamm's house. They are trapped in a claustrophobic setting, they struggle to find the words that "mean something" in order to escape from the absurd condition of their existence.

In this play It contains so many contents that related to the post-war situation. The playwright himself also spills out that it contains about the traumatic life after world war II where he was into. He wrote the play while in the middle of the war. that complicated situation lead the author to analyze this play with the theory of postcolonialism. Postcolonialism is an academic discipline and theoretical structure that analyzes, explains, and responds to the cultural legacy of colonialism and imperialism. Speaks about the human consequences of external power and economic exploitation of native people and their lands. The final hour of colonialism has struck and millions of inhabitants of Africa, Asia, and Latin America rise to meet a new life and demand their unrestricted right to self-determination (Che Guevara, speech to the UN, December 11, 1964).

This research is a literature study that focuses on postcolonialism, especially the relation between the theory and the play, and also to prove it that way. Furthermore, the discussion also focuses on the content of the play entitled *Endgame* by Samuel Becket. This research uses a qualitative descriptive method with the analysis of the play, *Endgame* as a form of post-colonialism.

## **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

Postcolonialism consists of two words 'post' and 'colonialism'. 'Post' means 'after' (Smith, 1996). Then, 'colonialism' means people's control of other people's goods and land (Loomba, 1998). It can be concluded that postcolonialism is the time after the colonialization of people to different human beings of their land and goods. Postcolonialism befell for the duration of colonization and after it. The authorization for governing is held by way of the colonial itself and the government of colonized land. It gives a couple of political, monetary, and cultural for the land and its inhabitant.

In the book entitled *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Postcolonial Literature*, postcolonialism have an impact on the imperial or colonial system towards the culture from the colonization period to this moment (Ashcroft, 2002: 2). Different statements come from Ahmad stated from Bush's work, *Imperialism and Postcolonialism*, Ahmad states that the early of Postcolonialism is commenced from the colonialism itself (Bush, 2006). Previous research entitled *Postcolonialism Letters of a Javanese Princess Memoir as Reflected Through The Main Character: R.A Kartini* shows that the effect of postcolonialism can be seen in the character's memoir by the character mimic and hybrid the colonizer (Maghfurrah, N.S et al, 2017).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

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This research uses a qualitative descriptive method to find out the reason why the play entitled *Endgame* by Samuel Becket is related to post-colonialism theory and to prove that this play brings up so much content about the post-colonialism era. Qualitative research is a type of social science research that collects and analyzes the data without numerical data. This method of research uses to analyze meaning, structure, symbol, interpretation, the social relationship in the groups of society, and the social phenomenon. According to Gay (1996: 208), descriptive qualitative involves intensive data collection, which is the collection of extensive data on many variables over an extended period of time, in a naturalistic setting.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Co-dependency Relationship Between Hamm and Clov

Hamm : *Gone from me you'd be dead.*  
Clov : *And vice versa.*  
Hamm : *Outside of here, it's death!*

The relationship between Hamm and Clov is co-dependency between two leftover participants from an imperial colonial historical situation that no longer exists. Clov is defined as the body and Hamm as the brain. Hamm is a blind man that needs Clov to do the physical stuff that he can't do. While Clov is Hamm's servant that will do whatever his master asked. Hamm depended his life on Clov and *vice versa*.

### Western cultural knowledge was applied to exploit non-European people. Non-western will lose their language, identity, and culture because of colonialism.

Hamm : *That means that bloody awful day, long ago, before*  
(violently) *this bloody awful day. I use the words you taught me.*  
*If they don't mean anything anymore, teach me*  
*others. Or let me be silent.*

Clov's ethnicity is Irish, but the act of Hamm's colonialization has forced him to use English to talk, think like an English man, and behave like English people. From the twelfth century onward, the presence of English colonizers in Ireland, as the nation of Clov and the background of the story, ruined the linguistic autonomy of the nation and they brought various restrictions to the application of the Gaelic Language, which is Ireland original language, that was old and rich in references, in social, cultural and political affairs. So Irish people were repressed and the legitimacy and originality of their language were under threat and an "English" language and stuff were imposed upon them, which would do nothing rather than stereotype them, making them like strangers or the "other" in their own nation.

### Clov's Identity

...*Good. I inquired about the situation at Kov, beyond the gulf...*

The main issue of Clov's identity is the story of Clov's father's arrival and the way he asked Hamm to adopt Clov as his son. It refers to the fact that during one of his narrations, Hamm

mentions "Kov", as the exact geographical place that Clov's father had come from. Relate this situation to the due historical context, during the British occupation, Spike Island, which lies in the harbor at Kov, was a British military post where Irish political prisoners were kept and later transported to Botany Bay, a British penal colony in Australia. And Beckett has artistically placed such indirect Anglo-Irish references in his play to portray his anticolonial interests for the whole play can be interpreted in that line: Clov is an Irish descendant whose father had been kept at Kov Harbor because of his political activities to be sent to Australia. He then rescues himself and is successful in finding shelter for his little son Clov in the home of Hamm, a powerful English Landlord who possesses a great deal of corn.

*... bread for his brat? Bread? But I have no bread, it doesn't agree with me. Good. Then perhaps a little corn?*

### **Hamm's Colonist Symbolism**

Hamm always takes charge of everything as the brain of the characters and this is portrayed in the play by just sitting on a chair in the center of the scene, which means he also becomes the center of decision the whole time as the master of the house. He controls Clov's understanding of what goes outside when he explores with a telescope outside the window and tells the story of Clov's first arrival to his house, especially to him as a child over and over again to control Clov's mind to not leave him alone. It can stand for the way the colonizers would manipulate reality and produces their own version of it to control the colonized ideologically and stuff. By taking all of these issues into consideration it becomes clear how ironic Hamm's blindness and his taking painkillers to take its pains away.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the result of the research, the relationship between the play entitled *Endgame* by Samuel Becket and the postcolonialism theory is quite crucial. The play contains various hidden meanings that show the after-war or post-colonialism situation in the play. From the identity of the main character, the habit of the characters, the past life of the character, the colonial background of the characters of the play, and so on. The plays show the depression and trauma after colonialism or the imperial era. The dialogues and stage performances show it all.

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