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Reimagining *Godot*

Exploring Resilience and the Human Condition in Pakistan

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Abstract

Recent developments in the critical arena indicate that scholars are showing a keen interest in tracing Samuel Beckett's influence on, or presence in, the non-Western world. They focus on how the Beckettian *oeuvre* is translated and adapted in various corners of the world. This study aims to contribute to this trend by examining the adaptations of *Waiting for Godot* in Pakistan. It operates on two interconnected levels. First, it explores how the metaphor of *Godot* was employed to adapt to Pakistan's political context. Second, it posits that the adaptable structure of *Waiting for Godot* empowers artists to mirror the audience's worldview, resulting in one-of-a-kind interpretations that contest the Eurocentric perspective. The pliability of Beckettian *oeuvre* encourages diverse literary responses.

Résumé

Les développements récents dans l'arène critique indiquent que les chercheurs montrent un vif intérêt à retracer l'influence ou la présence de Samuel Beckett sur le monde non-occidental. Ils se concentrent sur la façon dont l'œuvre beckettienne est traduite et adaptée dans divers coins du monde. Cette étude vise à contribuer à cette tendance en examinant les adaptations d'*En attendant Godot* au Pakistan. Il fonctionne sur deux niveaux interconnectés. Premièrement, il explore comment la métaphore de *Godot* a été employée pour s'adapter au contexte politique du Pakistan. Deuxièmement, il postule que la structure adaptable de *En attendant Godot* permet aux artistes

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de refléter la vision du monde du public, résultant en des interprétations uniques qui contestent la perspective eurocentrique. La souplesse de l'œuvre beckettienne encourage diverses réponses littéraires.

Keywords

Beckett's influence – non-Western world – adaptation – political metaphor – Eurocentric perspective

The 21st century has witnessed a significant expansion in Beckett scholarship, with literary scholars from various countries contributing to a broader and more diverse understanding of Beckett's work. However, there remains a lack of discussions on Beckett from a South Asian political perspective, particularly from Pakistan.¹ This study seeks to supplement the current scholarship on Beckett by analysing adaptations of *Waiting for Godot* in Pakistan. The main focus is to comprehend the implications of placing the Western canon in different dialogues with other global contexts. Thus, this study explores an identified gap in Beckett scholarship and highlights the emerging notion of Beckett as a global author.

Adorno (2000) is of the view that Beckettian *oeuvre* cannot be reduced to a 'clattering machinery' that grinds the text into a predetermined meaning to suit a specific intellectual system (40). This viewpoint finds resonance in a growing body of Beckett scholarship, including Shane Weller (2005), who observes that Beckett's "works [...] outwit all reading strategies" by evading shared meanings (195). *Waiting for Godot* exemplifies this challenge by defying attempts to categorize it or impose a formulaic reading (Fletcher and Fletcher 1978, 41; Zazzali 2016, 695). Despite its elusive nature, the play has attracted renewed scholarly attention worldwide, with Godot's character remaining a focal point of dis-

1 A few noteworthy adaptations of *Waiting for Godot* involve directly or indirectly Muslim audiences. Adaptations of *Waiting for Godot* by Ilan Ronen in Haifa (Weitz 1989, 186 & Levy 2002, 126–128) and Susan Sontag in Sarajevo during the Bosnian War (Taylor-Batty & Taylor-Batty 2010, 75–78) indirectly addressed the plight of Muslims, leaving a lasting impression on their respective audiences. Kabir Chowdhry's Bengali adaptation, performed for a Muslim audience, did not contain religious allusions due to an "inevitable cultural gap" resulting from the religious context of Islam (Mahmood 1993, 65–66). *Insha Ka Intezaar* in Pakistan explores the connections between Beckett's works and Pakistani Muslims. Nasir (2021) identifies how the Islamic context can influence the adaptation to expand the discourse on Beckett's relevance beyond the Western literary tradition.

cussion. While some critics interpret *Godot* as a religious figure, such as God or Christ's Second Coming (Mercier, 1977; Doko, 2022), the play's interpretive potential extends beyond religious themes and invites varied and conflicting readings that illuminate its openness to multiple perspectives.

Waiting for Godot has inspired artists, playwrights, and directors worldwide, which has led to numerous adaptations and reinterpretations, including stage production, films, and operas. Fernández and Sardin's *Translating Samuel Beckett Around the World* (2021) comprehensively analyses the challenges and creative opportunities that arise from adapting *Waiting for Godot* in different cultural contexts. It argues that adaptations can offer fresh insights into the play's themes and motifs while also reflecting the cultural and historical contexts of the adaptation.

Hutcheon and O'Flynn (2013) describe adaptations as "palimpsestuous" because they are inherently influenced by the texts they adapt (6). They argue that adaptations are not mere derivatives of the original works; rather, they possess unique qualities. According to them, adaptations can be studied from three interrelated perspectives: as a formal entity or product, as a process of creation, and as a mode of reception (7–8). Recent adaptations, as Corrigan (2017) notes, have moved away from strict faithfulness to the source text and instead explored multiple meanings by breaking the strong link with the original work (23–35). Babbage (2018) supports this notion, stating that 'theatre practices of adaptation are artistically innovative, critically complex, conceptually ambiguous, formally varied, and fully vital' (213). Essentially, adaptation is a complex exercise that requires creativity, sensitivity, and skill to effectively imitate the source material and socio-cultural context.

Various adaptations of *Waiting for Godot* serve as vehicles for cultural exchange and highlight the universality of the play's themes. For example, Sontag's production of *Waiting for Godot* in Sarajevo (1993) emphasises the universality by introducing three sets of Vladimirs and Estragons- all-female, all-male (Taylor-Batty and Taylor-Batty 2010, 75–78). Smith (2009) praises Paul Chan's post-Hurricane Katrina production in New Orleans for its innovation and social commentary. In Pakistan, *Insha ka Intezaar*, the adaptation of *Waiting for Godot* intertwines religious and socio-political issues, exploring the characters' local issues and sparking discussions about the country's corrupt and dysfunctional institutions (Nasir, 2021; Nasir and Shehzad, 2022). These examples underscore *Waiting for Godot's* universal themes and its potential for cultural exchange and highlight the intricacies of adapting works of literature for global audiences, particularly in societies in which cultural, religious, and sociopolitical factors significantly impact the reception and interpretation of art.

Through an analysis of the metaphor of Godot in the Pakistani adaptations of *Insha ka Intezaar* (2008) and *Ghulami* (2022), this study illuminates the cultural and political dynamics of the country, with a primary focus on the latter. This approach supplements existing scholarship on the adaptations of *Waiting for Godot* and highlights how cultural exchange through adaptations can deepen our understanding of both the original work and the culture in which they are adapted.

1 Godot, the Delusion

In Pakistan, *Waiting for Godot*, in both English and Urdu adaptations, began its theatrical run in the 1960s and has since undergone various renditions. Of note are Anwer Jafri's *Insha Ka Intezaar* (Bari, 2011; Mahtab, 2011)² and Zulfiqar Ali Lond's *Ghulami* (Slavery),³ which have garnered significant attention as two recent adaptations.

Insha ka Entezaar (Waiting for Insha) sets the story in contemporary Pakistan while centring around Zulekha (female) and Karmu (male), who wait for *Insha* endlessly, a transformative leader, to bring change to the country. Nasir (2021) argues that the use of the name "Insha" invokes Islamic religious connotations, referring to "Insha Allah" as a metaphor for hope. However, the absence of "Allah" in the phrase reduces "Insha" to a meaningless word, emphasizing the bleakness and hollowness of the characters' waiting (201). Thus, the context of adaptation reflects the play's universal themes of waiting and the search for meaning in a specific cultural and political context.

Despite *Zulekha* and *Karmu's* hopes for transformation through *Insha*, their plans were thwarted when *Mansha* arrived. Upon being asked if he was *Insha*, *Mansha* grew furious, exclaiming, "have you not heard my name?" (کیا تم لوگوں نے میرا نام نہیں سنا؟). He demanded to know why they were waiting for someone else in his presence (میرے ہوتے ہوئے کسی اور کا انتظار) and identified himself as *Mansha*, expressing surprise they had not heard of him before. This reaction highlights *Mansha's* sense of self-importance and entitlement, which may

2 *Waiting for Godot* was translated into Urdu, Pakistan's national language, and uploaded in parts on YouTube, which is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-MGJ27_nyY (Sheemakermani, 2011).

3 *Waiting for Godot* was translated into Saraiki, a regional language of Pakistan, and uploaded on YouTube by the channel Saraiki BOL Saraiki, available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g1ZHpEOoqI> (Saraiki BOL Saraiki, 2022).

be rooted in his social status or personal background. Despite his aggressive behaviour, he later acknowledges the shared humanity between himself and the characters, describing them as the offspring of Adam (تم بھی انسان ہو، آدم کی (اولاد). However, this acknowledgement was delivered ironically, implying his superiority as “the noblest of creatures” (اشرف المخلوقات).

He referred to *Nassebun* (Lucky), a female character, as a “pig’s daughter” (سور کی بچی) and a “bastard” (حرامزادی). At one point, he raised a stick intended to be used on *Zulekha*. The use of derogatory language and abusive behaviour highlights his dominant disposition, and his resemblance to a landlord or a member of the political elite instils fear in those around him.

Furthermore, *Mansha’s* revelation of remaining busy in military parades (فوجی مشقیں کرنے سے فرصت نہیں ملتی) and *Nassebun’s* servitude to him for 61 years⁴ reinforces *Zulekha’s* belief that *Mansha* embodies the negativity of military regimes in Pakistan, which promise a brighter future, yet history shows that each regime was worse than the last. Thus, *Mansha’s* arrival disappoints *Zulekha*, affirming her notion that waiting for *Insha* is futile. She expresses her despair by lamenting that their hope for a better future is continuously shattered by *Mansha’s* periodic presence.

The discussion argues that *Insha* fails to offer any relief, leaving people to endure life’s hardships alone. Moreover, the play suggests that waiting for *Insha* (Godot) is a delusion, ultimately resulting in the arrival of *Mansha* (Pozzo), a figure representing domination, suppression, and exploitation, cloaked in kindness and generosity. Following *Mansha’s* rule, people come to realize his exploitative and cruel nature. *Insha* is portrayed as a deceptive and delusional figure, relishing in manipulating those seeking him. Consequently, the historical pattern of deception by rulers in Pakistan has succeeded, resulting in people being manipulated and exploited.

4 The theatrical production in question was staged in 2008, precisely 61 years after Pakistan gained independence. The play’s thematic undercurrent is that *Nassebun* symbolizes Pakistan or the Pakistani populace who, as a result of oppressive rulers like *Mansha*, are portrayed as being weak and disempowered.

2 Godot, a Symbol of Hollowness

Ghulami in Saraiki⁵ was performed on 21 February 2022, on the occasion of International Mother Language Day, under the umbrella of Saraiki Lok Saanjh (سرائیکی لوک سانجھ). This organization is known to promote political and cultural awareness in South Punjab and advocates for a separate province for the region as an act of resistance.

Zulfiqar Ali Lond, a senior journalist, theatre practitioner and human rights activist, translated and directed *Waiting for Godot* to highlight the political and social issues faced by the inhabitant of South Punjab, Pakistan. He was born in Shadan Lund, a remote village in Dera Ghazi Khan (Punjab). Lond has been actively involved in theatre since the late 1990s, and his multidimensional personality has always kept him actively engaged. He continues to utilise his skills by participating in various NGOs, local theatre groups, and regional political movements, all while contributing to print and social media platforms.

In an interview, Lond stated that *Waiting for Godot* offers a flexible structure that allows multiple interpretations (Lond, 2022). Instead of translation, he used this flexibility to convey social, political, and cultural issues in his region through domestication. Thus, his play, *Ghulami*, domesticates Godot's figure to highlight regional issues. The adaptation of *Waiting for Godot* manipulates its setting and changes time and place to suit the audience's preferences using traditional costumes to emphasize the poverty of the region. The text is altered significantly, including dialogue, names, and the removal of religious allusions to match the setting, costumes, and local audience. These changes were introduced possibly to increase accessibility and relevance to the target audience. Moreover, the adaptation comprises one act only. All the roles in the play were performed by male actors. Lond himself played the role of Pozzo, using the domesticated name of *Nawab Rulhanr Khan*.⁶ Lucky, under the name

5 Pakistan adopted Urdu as its national language to create a unified national identity, which resulted in the suppression of regional languages. Saraiki, spoken in 16 districts of Punjab, is categorized as a dialect of Punjabi in textbooks (Chaudhry and others 2021, 99), leading to protests by its speakers to highlight how Saraiki creates a unique and natural identity for the people of this area (Arif & Nasir, 2020). Approximately 90% of Saraiki speakers reside in Southern Punjab (Newsdesk, 2020). Past injustices, such as the merger of Bahawalpur into Pakistan and then into Punjab (Ahmad & Khalid, 2020; Javaid, 2018), along with the deprivation of river rights under the Indus Water Treaty (Singh & others, 2017), have led Saraiki nationalists and politicians to demand a separate province (Butt and Burhan, 2016).

6 *Nawab* is a title given by the rulers in South Asian states to landlords. *Nawab Rulhanr Khan* is ironic as it means a Nawab who owns no land and keeps straying from one place to another,

of *Bhachar*,⁷ was performed by Ranjha Jogi, while Muhammad Shahid played the role of Vladimir, referred to as *Ditto*⁸ (likely a distorted version of *Allah Ditta*). Fazal-e-Rab Lond replaced Estragon in the role of *Kalu*.⁹

The play commences with a conversation between *Ditto* and *Kalu*, two vagabonds who are ensconced on a piece of land that they do not own, but claim as theirs. During their exchange, *Ditto* reminisces about the traditions of his homeland, while *Kalu* appears to have been busy removing one of his boots. *Ditto* laments the disappearance of love among the populace, the richness of the land, and the prestige of the native language. In response, *Kalu* implies that the decline was attributable to people's fondness for boots, alluding to the military's footwear. He employs the word "boot" ironically to expose how the Army and its allies, landlords, and regional politicians have exploited their area. By referring to his boot, he endeavours to communicate his feelings.

Kalu: May you suffer ruin, the impact of the oppressive boot of tyranny on my life is akin to the affliction that has befallen the entire nation. Not only does it cause physical pain, but it also emits a foul odour. Deceived by its apparent radiance, I was unaware that it would not only hurt my feet but also uproot me from my land. The extent of my distress is immeasurable. I implore you to aid me in removing this boot.

برباد تھیوں، میڈی گچی اچ تاں ایہہ بوٹ لگ گئے جیوں پوری قوم دی گچی لگ گئے
ڈکھدا وی ہے، بو وی ہے میں تاں ایندی چمک دمک ڈیکھ کے بھلیا ہامی، میکوں
کیا پتہ ہا پیر کپتر دے نال نال ایہ میڈیاں پاڑاں دھرتی کنیں وی کپ ڈیسی - تیکوں
میڈے ڈکھ دا اندازہ کینی میڈی این بوٹ کنوں چیل چھڑوا

depicting the situation of the landlords of the South Punjab, who own no rights to their own lands.

7 Literally, it means "idiot", but it also refers to a person who interrupts the conversation of others for no reason.

8 *Allah Ditta* means 'given by God'.

9 While *Kalu* in Urdu means "black," using it is not considered a racist gesture in Pakistan. However, in developed countries, the use of such a word is regarded as racism. The habit of using distorted names has crept into the minds of people in such a way that it seems normal, as demonstrated by Pakistan Cricket Team Captain Sarfraz Ahmed, who was heard commenting 'Hey black [man]' to a South African cricketer in 2019 (Malik, 2019 & Ghaffar, 2019). Also, West Indian cricketer Darren Sammy revealed that he was named called '*Kalu*' by his Indian (Deol, 2020). The community is trying to change this ingrained racism, but expecting a quick change would be unrealistic (Kamal, 2020).

Kalu directly involves the Army in this dialogue. He conceives that injustice in his area finds its source in the Army establishment. For this reason, he later mentions the event of the execution of Bhutto.¹⁰ *Kalu's* complaint also suggests that politicians who maintain relationships with the Army establishment cannot be trusted and are complicit in the perpetuation of injustice and exploitation in the area. A recent fact-finding report by HRCP (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan) indicates that thousands of acres of land have been allotted to non-locals or military in Cholistan, a region in South Punjab (HRCP, 2022). Such stories, rarely highlighted in the Pakistani media (Rodrigues, 2006), reinforce *Kalu's* belief that the people in the area are becoming strangers in their land. In response, *Ditto* suggests that collective effort is required to reclaim the past. For *Ditto*, this effort starts with a thorough search of the "boot" metaphorically representing their combined determination to take back what is rightfully theirs.

Ditto: What is in the boot? Look, could it possibly be full of gold? Might it hold the dreams of my ancestors, including those of my grandmother? Could it even contain the rivers we have lost? Please peer into it: would it contain one of my grandfather's hamlets lying within its depths?

بوٹ اچ کیا ہے؟ ڈیکھ ہاں سونے دا تاں نیں بھریا لاتھا۔ ڈیکھ ہاں میڈی ڈاڈی
دے سمی دے خواب تاں وچ کوئی نیں۔ ڈیکھ ہاں ساڈے او دریا تاں وچ کائنی
ودے۔ ڈیکھ ہاں میڈے ڈاڈے دی وچ کوئی جھوک تاں کائنی۔

Ditto implores *Kalu* to continue his exploration of the boot in the hope of finding gold or any possibility of reclaiming lost rivers. He believes that such a turn of fate can help him fulfil his grandmother's dreams and restore the traditions of his forefathers' communities. He echoes the local ideology that powerful elites, politicians, and the Army have seized control of the rivers and other resources in South Punjab. For instance, the merger of Bahawalpur in Punjab was detrimental enough, but the allotment of lands to non-locals and the Army further exacerbates the plight of locals. The metaphor of finding rivers in the boot serves as a reminder to the audience of the unjust allocation of the rivers

10 Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was sentenced to death by the Lahore High Court and subsequently executed on 4 April 1979 for the alleged murder of a political opponent. This event is widely regarded as a 'judicial Murder', implicating the then-President and military dictator Zia-ul-Haq (Unknown, 2011). Zia-ul-Haq had previously declared martial law in 1977 and overthrown Bhutto, Pakistan's first elected Prime Minister (Jones, 2017).

in the region to India according to the Indus Water Treaty. However, *Kalu* is realistic and does not lead *Ditto* to cherish false hope.

Kalu: Listen, fool: anything that enters into this boot, ultimately deteriorates, decomposes, and emits a putrid stench.

اوئے بے عقل آ، بوٹ اچ جیڑی شے امدی اے او گند تھی ویندی اے، او برباد
تھی ویندی اے، او گل ویندی اے، او بدبودار تھی ویندی اے

Kalu's words provide a clear direction for *Ditto* amidst uncertainty. He cautions *Ditto* against having false hope and steers him towards a more realistic and secure path. *Kalu's* notion is clear: whatever is aligned with the boot undergoes an irreversible process of decay and deterioration, implying that they cannot bring back the past. Nevertheless, the present moment allows them to think about something fruitful if they work together.

In contrast to the aimless waiting of *Estragon* and *Vladimir*, the play's progression unfolds slowly, as *Ditto* and *Kalu* continue to engage in meaningful conversations that highlight the prevalent issues in the region. The arrival of *Nawab Rulhanr Khan* (*Pozzo*) and *Bhachar* (*Lucky*) worsens their situation, particularly due to *Nawab's* inhumane treatment of *Bhachar* and the latter's desolate thoughts make them feel even more isolated.

When *Bhachar* is forced to think and speak, he exacerbates the wounds of his audience by asserting that we tend to show kindness to those who consistently deceive us. He also questions the role of God, declaring that, "the blue and serene sky's silence and apparent indifference to human suffering is shameful" (نیلے آسمان یعنی شانت آسمان کی انسانیت کے دکھوں پہ چپ اور خاموشی انتہائی) (شرمناک ہے). Through the use of metaphors and emotive language, *Bhachar* expresses his moral outrage and disappointment with what he perceives to be the divine abandonment of humanity. The metaphor of the "blue and serene sky" accentuates the contrast between nature's peacefulness and human suffering, while emotive language underscores the personal connection to the issue at hand. Overall, his statement reveals his faith in the divine, while simultaneously expressing his disappointment due to the lack of divine intervention in the face of human suffering.

After delivering his speech, *Bhachar* collapses and is presumed dead. In response, *Nawab* asserts "he cannot die, his roots are in this very soil" (یہ نہیں مرے گا اس کی جڑیں اسی زمین کے اندر ہیں۔). His statement satirizes the notion that the poor are inherently loyal to their land regardless of the harsh realities of poverty and exploitation. The "root" as a metaphor indicates a strong devotion

to one's motherland, which is typically coupled with patriotic feelings. However, in this context, the statement subverts this idea by using it to comment on the situation of the poor: the statement implies that the poor are trapped in their poverty and unable to escape their circumstances, much like a plant whose roots are firmly embedded in the soil.

Moreover, through the employment of irony, *Nawab's* statement critiques *Kalu* and *Ditto's* romanticized idea of attachment to the land. Rather than portraying it as a source of pride, the statement depicts it as a source of helplessness, underscoring the inability of the poor to change their situation. This exposes broader issues of power and inequality, challenging simplistic notions of national identity and loyalty, which form a prominent topic in the discussion of *Kalu* and *Ditto*, as they consistently emphasize their connection to land, which is rapidly slipping out of their hands. Sensing their discomfort, when *Nawab* inquires whether they have any objections to sharing the land for a certain period. *Ditto* responds with deference:

Ditto: Please forgive us, our lord! (سٹیں سا کون معاف کر ڈیو!) We cannot oppose your presence as we are non-native to our homeland. We do not even know who we are!

(اساں اپنڑیں زمین دے پر دیسی ہیں سا کون کائنی پتہ اساں کون ہیں!)

This announcement captures the profound despair and loss of identity experienced by those individuals who have been uprooted from their homeland. *Ditto* expresses a sense of helplessness in resisting the presence of the lord. Particularly, his employment of the word "forgive" reveals the power dynamics at play, where the landlord is seen as an authority who can grant or deny forgiveness. This situation reinforces the sense of weakness and lack of agency emphasized by *Ditto*, who cannot assert his rights or protect his land. The second sentence further accentuates the speaker's loss of identity and feelings of displacement. He characterises those people who have been uprooted from their homelands. Thus, their forced removal from their land through various manipulative means, including the allocation of land to non-natives or the conversion of fertile soil into barren terrain due to water scarcity, has not only resulted in material losses but has also stripped them of their cultural and historical roots. This loss of identity adds to the emotional burden felt by the speaker, who is consistently depressed because of their displacement.

The narrative progresses until *Nawab Rulhanr Khan* and *Bhachar* depart, and an anonymous messenger arrives at the end and makes a significant announcement (ھو کا).

Messenger: Our possessions are continuously stripped away, and we have to fulfil our responsibilities. The fence erected around the land is consuming our crops, and we must unite to safeguard our harvest.

جو ہے قبضے تھیندے پین۔۔۔۔۔ آپڑیں بہارے آپ چاوں
 لوڑھا رڑھ کون کھادی ویندے۔۔۔۔۔ رڑھ پچاوں

The statement highlights the community's predicament in relation to their actions. Despite erecting a fence to protect their land, it has become their foe, continuously destroying their crops and possessions and leaving them feeling helpless against the power of the fence. It conveys that although the community feels a sense of obligation towards their land and the protection of their possessions, there is a need to come together to defend their rights. This implies that the community should put aside their differences and work together towards a common goal. Thus, the explicit message sets itself apart from that of the messenger in *Waiting for Godot*, who announces twice that "he (Godot) won't come this evening" (Beckett 2012, 85) to keep the feelings of optimism and bleakness alive. In contrast, *Ghulami* concludes by spreading the notion that people can improve their prevailing situation by identifying their rights and actively protecting them.

This adaptation advocates that waiting for an external rescuer like Godot is futile and emphasises the importance of taking action to address the underlying causes of the characters' unfortunate situation. It argues that hoping for external help will worsen their situation if they are not prepared to act for changing themselves. By personifying the area's helplessness in an oppressive environment, the play attempts to inspire the audience to become activists and crusaders. Thus, this production is reminiscent of the production of *Waiting for Godot* in New Orleans as an act of uniting the community and aiding in the city's recovery after Hurricane Katrina (Cotter, 2007).

3 Conclusion

In summary, although both adaptations share *Godot's* ideological projection, each does so in its own way. In *Insha ka Intezaar*, *Karmu* (Estragon) and *Zulekha* (Vladimir) are portrayed as marginalized characters. *Mansha* (Pozzo), a powerful and brutal figure holding the economy in his hands, represents *Insha* (Godot). This suggests that *Insha* (Godot) was never meant to arrive and that waiting for *Insha* would always culminate in the arrival of a *Mansha*-like fig-

ure. On the other hand, *Ghulami* portrays *Kalu* (Estragon) and *Ditto* (Vladimir) recognizing that the ruling class is *Godot* and that hoping for change through an external figure is delusional. This play seeks to create awareness among the audience that they should understand their responsibilities and take action, rather than accept painful situations.

Moreover, the discussion exemplifies that the process of recontextualizing *Godot* is ongoing. It is noteworthy that Pakistani adaptations of *Waiting for Godot* demonstrate the potential of *Waiting for Godot* for reinterpretation and for using it as a tool for social and political commentary. Thus, these adaptations fall in line with Hutcheon and O’Flynn’s idea that adaptations are “palimpsestuous” (2013) and prioritize multiple interpretations over strict faithfulness to the source text, as noted by Corrigan (2017). They showcase artistic innovation and creativity, while also fulfilling the ideology of Babbage (2011). Thus, such adaptations offer a powerful platform for diverse voices and perspectives, fostering cultural exchanges and dialogue. By reframing classic works from the Western literary canon within local cultures and experiences, audiences can engage with and appreciate them in new and meaningful ways, challenging the notion of static and fixed canons. By incorporating different cultural contexts and interpretations, adaptations such as *Insha ka Intezaar* and *Ghulami* demonstrate the continued relevance and adaptability of *Waiting for Godot* and Samuel Beckett in a global context.

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