

## A Common Thread of Religion, Mythology, Heroism, Individualism and Absurdity in the Selected Versatile Pieces of World Literature

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### Abstract

*The objective of this article is to trace an invisible and conceptual common thread—upholding the dignity of human soul confronting generations after generations’ man-made tortures and the Supreme Power’s punishment—produced from intermingled elements of different concepts such as religion, mythology, heroism, individualism and absurdity prevailing within the range of our study of such few selected world classes as Mahabharata, Ramayana, the Iliad, the Odyssey, the Aeneid, Beowulf, Shahnama, The Canterbury Tales, Paradise Lost, Meghnadbadh Kavya, Tilottamasambhav, Padmavati, The Pilgrim’s Progress, Anna Karenina, The Trial, Waiting for Godot, The Outsider/The Stranger, The Soldier in an Attic worthy to be woven into the canopy of invaluable world literature. We have tried to add a common thread to this canopy, keeping the following steps in mind: First, tracing back the past literary elements hidden into the literary treasures preserved by the connoisseurs of the pre-Christian era. Second, synchronizing the inner knots of concepts derived from different events occurred in the lives of different characters of these pieces of literature. Third, identifying an overall change visualized through the comparison—mythology vs. Semitic religion—especially with the advent of Christianity. Fourth, investigating the motifs behind the development of abstract philosophical mind-set. Sixth, taking initiative to highlight the common motif behind the conjuncture of the literature of pre-Christian and post-Christian era with the absurd literary set. Finally, showing how the synthesis of philosophical insight, mythological heroism and religious values leads gradually its path to an absurdist worldview through the vicious circles influenced by the human activities, the godly whimsicalities of the mythology and controlled by the Absolute Creator of the Semites.*

**Keywords:** myth and religion, heroism, individualism, absurdity

From the oral and audible past, versatile threads of human feelings and thoughts having crisscrossed through different religions, pantheistic views, rituals, cultural, traditional and the borrowed conceptual and literary materials came like different tributaries to be merged into an invisible ocean-like canopy with which the world literature was being covered into such a canopy continued to be interwoven various thought-provoking, pragmatic and aesthetic expressions and ideas every moment until being able to produce a visible pattern, i.e. a written form of literature, mostly epics, like *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana*, *Iliad*, *Odyssey* and *Aeneid* of the pre-Christian era. Indeed, “most great epics are widely considered as embodiments of oral tradition, folk poetry, myth and ritual (Honko 01).” However, these Aryan and Homeric treasure-mines opened such a gateway through which began to come out different literary treasures expressing the feelings

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gushing from millions of minds of different parts of the world. That bountiful dissemination was the turning point of the world literature of the post-Christian era. That was such a scope from which different literary talents of different nations absorbed, into their hungry hearts with careful and pragmatic genius, elements of religion, mythology, heroism, individualism depending on and observing the trends of their own generation's zeal and perspectives. When that kind of human intelligentsia did stand at the juncture of Indo-European and Indo-Iranian literature, they became so much curious, interested and amused as well to produce their own thread of feelings embedded in their own culture and tradition. But some of them did dare to show their feelings by following and sometimes even simulating the literature of their predecessors. Not that they began to hate their own cultural beauty and appeal; they were actually hypnotized with the innovative and exceptional beauty of the other domains of different taste. And that undiscovered appeal encouraged different authors and poets of different languages to try heart and soul to produce something different with foreign elements. Such trend of being different and unique made the literary genius, generations after generations, develop a 'modus operandi' to produce such masterpieces as *Aeneid*, *Beowulf*, *Shahnama*, *Paradise Lost*, *Meghnadbadh Kavya*, *Hectarbadh*, *Tilottamasambhav*, *Padmavati* though these literary works were produced in different languages through centuries.

As the characters and ideas of the literary works under our study originated from the same literary domain rooted deep into different languages, the nomenclature and its related issues seem to be different, though common in ideas and styles. Many similarities have been traced in the collective consciousness behind these works and the interaction among different nations in spite of apparent differences. There have been common mythological beliefs among ancient human beings that still manifest themselves in their psyche (thoughts and dreams) and artifacts (art and literature). As a result, the literary masterpieces of the world, including epics, often share common motifs, symbols, and mythological foundations.

Whatever genre or form—be it epic, poetry, poem, novel, play or any other form—these literary works possess, their inner knots of concepts are linked with each other in a common thread in the sense that heroes, heroines, gods, demigods therein perform their duties in the same manner using their own mother tongues. So thanks to the originals or the lesser means like translation, it would be possible to grasp the universal enlightenment from the religious values, mythological beauty, heroism and destructive wars visualized in the themes. We cannot help being astonished while observing in *Shahnama* the legendary Persian king Keyumars' urges to the hero Hushang to take revenge for his own son Siyāmak's death against the ferocious demon (Ferdowsi, Sect-1: "The First Kings", *Shahnameh*) in the same manner as having been shown by Hrothgar in the contemporary Anglo-Saxon literature, the legendary king of the Danes, to the hero Beowulf to take revenge for his people against the Biblical character, Cain's ('Qabil' in Islamic History) descendant, the monster Grendel (Anonymous, *Beowulf*, Section-IX: p. 416-422). Keeping aside the apparent difference between these two myths, it can easily be observed that their 'esprit de corps' is prominent—the heroic effort for the betterment of the humanity. As Pouneh Saeedi in his study of 'the heroic' in 'Beowulf', 'The Shahnameh' explores:

"Studies of the heroic enjoy a long history and a large degree of diversity with most of them concurring on the hero's significant role in the history of the human race in terms of bringing about new patterns of power and major social changes." (19)

Heroism, sacrifice and adventure through the activities of different characters like Rāma, Rāvaṇa, Meghnad, Achilles, Hector, Odysseus, Aeneas, etc have been visualized in the same energetic and heroic manner. Rāma's taking his heroic venture in *Ramayana* to fight against Rāvaṇa who, kidnapping his wife Sītā (Keshavadas, p 23, 211), raised a conflict which led ultimately Ravana's son Meghnad to death (Dutt, Canto-I, Verse:1-3 and 270-273, *Meghnadbadh Kavya*), can be compared with Hector's having to sacrifice his life to Achilles for his brother Paris' act of eloping with Helen (Homer, Episode 3, lines 53-54, p-46,47). Not only their heroism but also their religious sacrifice to their own gods has caught our eyes in the same manner as has been observed the speech of Odysseus regarding his sacrificial activities in *The Odyssey*:

“[Perimedes](#) and [Eurylochus](#) restrained the sacrificial victims while I drew my sharp sword from its sheath, and with it dug a pit two foot square, then poured a libation all around to the dead, first of milk and honey, then of sweet wine, thirdly of water, sprinkled with white barley meal. Then I prayed devoutly to the powerless ghosts of the departed, swearing that when I reached [Ithaca](#) I would sacrifice a barren heifer in my palace, the best of the herd, and would heap the altar with rich spoils, and offer a ram, apart, to [Teiresias](#), the finest jet-black ram in the flock. When, with prayers and vows, I had invoked the hosts of the dead, I led the sheep to the pit and cut their throats, so the dark blood flowed. (Homer, XI: 1-50)”

Whereas, Aeneas' speech regarding his sacrificial activities in *The Aeneid*:

“I was offering sacrifice to Venus the Mother and to other Deities who might favour my undertaking, and also to the Supreme King of all the Dwellers in Heaven. I was just about to sacrifice a handsome bull by the sea-shore. (Virgil, III: 1-26)”

It is to be noted that the gods of *Mahabharata*, *Ramayana*, *Iliad* and *Odyssey* plot against each other for the sake of making their own worshippers win over the other worshippers. Besides, the same heroism can also be traced in the adventurous voyages made by the heroes—Aeneas in the epic *Aeneid* by Virgil and Odysseus in the epic *Odyssey*— in the perilous oceans confronting heroically untoward perils with their companions after the fall of Troy. However, Aeneas from the Trojan and Odysseus from the Greek, both the heroes have been seen to fall in the wraths of the goddess Juno and the god Poseidon respectively and treated by them in the same posture, i.e. making them fall in the storms to be drifted away. Such wrath of Poseidon towards Odysseus we observe in [Poseidon](#)'s thought in *The Odyssey*:

“But now Lord [Poseidon](#), the Earth-Shaker, returning from visiting [Ethiopia](#), saw him far off from the [Solymi](#) range, as he came in sight over the water: and the god, angered in spirit, shook his head, and said to himself: ‘Well now, while I was among the Ethiopians, the gods have certainly changed their minds about Odysseus! Here he is, close to Phaeacian country, where he's fated to escape his trials and tribulations. But I'll give him his fill of trouble yet.’” (Homer, V: 262-332)

On the other hand, Juno's wrath towards Aeneas has been clear at the time of Juno's making her submissive appeal to Aeolus, the King of the Winds, to endanger the life of Aeneas in the sea-voyage in *The Aeneid*:

“Now a certain people whom I hate are sailing on the Etruscan Sea, and conveying Troy itself and the vanquished gods of Trojan homes to Italy. Smite fury into your winds. Sink their ships; make the sea close over them. Or drive them apart, pitch out their crews, and scatter them on the deep.” (Virgil, I:51-82)

So, through all these epics gods and goddesses are seen to walk sometimes in the even line with the human race. These human attributes of the mythological gods and goddesses indeed signify the respect for the victory of the agonized soul of the human race.

However, this direct link between the human race and the gods and goddesses of Hindu, Greek and Roman mythologies had to be confronted with the advent of one of the Semitic religions—Christianity! Later on, it is seen that the Hindu mythology is still being regarded as religion in Hinduism; whereas, the Greek and the Roman mythologies seem to be regarded as just stories and legends without historical backgrounds. This is how the outlook of literary themes of the two parts of the world began to move to two different directions. This change began to affect differently the mind-set of some occidental and oriental writers of the world. As a result, some writers of the Eastern part continued to create their epics, novels, plays, poems, etc based on the mythological themes up to the 19<sup>th</sup> century; whereas, in the Western part some writers began to turn gradually their mind-set from the influence of Homeric mythology to the era of Christianity-based themes. That gradually changed and developed the mind-set of the western part became prominent while being caught into our eyes a common thread of mythological and ancient religious values between the Bengali literature of the nineteenth century and Greek literature or English literature of the seventieth century.

In creating such a common thread, Michael Madhusudan Dutt played a unique and dominant role in Bengali literature, as he was able to show his mastery over Greek and Hindu mythologies by inserting lots of elements thereof in his plays like *Tilottamasambhav*, *Mayakanan*, *Krisna Kumari* and *Padmavati*; and prose works like *Hectarbadh* and especially his epic *Meghnadbadh Kavya*. Among them, *Hectarbadh* and *Meghnadbadh Kavya* are the brightest examples of that era to show the common heroic spirit embedded in those two mythologies. Even the act of quarrelling between goddesses like normal human beings for a simple matter like beauty-contest is interestingly and surprisingly supposed to be almost similar. It is observed that in his play *Padmavati*, based on the Hindu mythology, three goddesses like Murja, Sachi and Rati took part with a flower ‘*padma*’ in their beauty-contest in front of a king named Indraneel (Dutt, Act-I, lines:62-69, p-237), whereas, in *Iliad* three goddesses, Hera (Juno in Roman), Athene (Minerva in Roman) and Aphrodite (Venus in Roman) took part with an apple in their beauty contest in front of a prince named Paris (p-xiii of Peter Jones’ translated portion of *The Iliad*, and Herbert Jordan’s prologue to *Homer’s Iliad*). In another epic *Tilottamasambhav*, the Hindu gods and goddesses call in their blacksmith named ‘Vishwakarma’ to implement their plans (Dutt, Canto-iii, Verse: 328-333, p-29) just like Greek and Roman gods and goddesses’ getting help from their blacksmiths named ‘Hephaestus’ and ‘Vulcan’ respectively to implement their plans (Homer, *The Iliad*. Ch-I: Verse: 605-608). We cannot even avoid the subtle similarity between the wife of Bath having five husbands in the Chaucerian literature *The Canterbury Tales* (Chaucer, “Fragment-iii”, Verse: 5-6, p-150) and Draupadi’s having five ‘*pandavas*’ as husbands in *Mahabharata* (Manmatha Nath Dutt, Ch: I-X, p. 1-14). Such is the similarity which indicates the same tone prevailing in the activities of gods and goddesses of the mythologies in the two parts of the world.

Therefore, through these literary works of the occidental and the oriental parts of the world, it can easily be realized that the universal feeling and viewpoint towards religion, mythology and

heroism had a common base prone to pantheism within which gods and human beings were inter-related before the advent of Semitic religions all over the world. Of these gradually expanded religions, Christianity worked as the most influential impulse for literary thoughts and insights of the intelligentsia for more than thousand years all over the Western part of the world, especially, the Anglo-Saxon literature. Andrew Lang in his *Myth, Ritual & Religion* explores the background showing how Christianity remained influential over other myths-

“When Christianity became powerful, the Christian writers naturally attacked heathen religion where it was most vulnerable, on the side of the myths, and of the mysteries which were dramatic representations of the myths. “Pretty gods you worship,” said the Fathers, in effect, “homicides, adulterers, bulls, bears, mice, ants, and what not.” The heathen apologists for the old religions were thus driven in the early ages of Christianity to various methods of explaining away the myths of their discredited religion. (19)”

From these religious values and thoughts emerged out such masterpiece as *The Paradise Lost* in which John Milton produced Biblical effects absorbing the required themes from the Old Testament of the Bible signifying the revolting role of Satan against God. That was really a bold step at that time to portray ‘the rebel against the God’ as a hero committed to realize the downfall of the mankind without denying the nobility of the almighty God. Satan declares “Here at last [in Hell] / We shall be free; the almighty [...] will not drive us hence: [...] Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven!” (Milton, book I: 258-260, 263). The same motif is to be noted in the masterpiece *Meghnadbadh Kavya* the theme of which was selected from the required portion of Hindu’s religious book, *Ramayana*. In this epic, Madhusudan dared to uphold the dignity of Ravana as a hero committed to cause the downfall of Rama and Laksmana, the representatives of the mankind though they were always under the mercy of the Hindu gods. Whatever the difference between Christianity and Hinduism remains, the common spirit of heroism against the logical downfall of mankind has been reflected through the artistic and eloquent contribution made by John Milton of the 17<sup>th</sup> century and Michael Madhusudan Dutt of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Despite such different viewpoints and insights provoked by the literary genius like John Milton, some special literary works were created with the full zeal for Christianity by John Bunyan who directly encouraged the readers in *The Pilgrim’s Progress* to understand the Bible and to become a true Christian. Christian, the protagonist who represents a role follower of Christianity, in the very beginning, realizes his deplorable condition in the City of Destruction from his reading of the book in his hands which represents the Bible and tries to find out his questions “What shall I do? (51) and “What shall I do to be saved? (52): “Sir, I perceive by the book in my hand that I am condemned to die, and after that to come to judgment; and I find that I am not willing to do the first, nor able to do the second. (52)” Christian, directed by Evangelist who represents true spiritual guide, eventually finds his answer and starts his journey for spiritual salvation to The Celestial City crying out “Life, life, eternal life. (53)” But Bunyan’s sticking to the preaching of Christian belief had not been able to convince Leo Tolstoy’s Christian mind of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century while it is observed that in *Anna Karenina*, Constantine Dmitrich Levin remembers :

“---if the principal proof of the existence of a Deity is His revelation of what is good, why is that revelation continued to the Christian church alone? What relation to that revelation

have the Buddhist and the Mahomedan faiths, which also teach and do good?" (P. 802; Vol-2, Part-viii, Ch-xviii)

Although Bunyan was 200 years away from Tolstoy, these two religious minded literary genius had actually nurtured a common belief of religious good in two different perspectives and been common in thinking of the importance of religious influence for the welfare of mankind.

However, it is also true that this type of religious zeal has been distracted by the tendency of preferring to yield to self-damnation to follow the will of God to uphold individualism. So, this audacious attitude of being anti-God has been visualized by Christopher Marlowe in *Doctor Faustus* in which Faustus utters such words: *Che sera, sera*, "What will be shall be" (1.1.46), has been ultimately damned and doomed for his individualistic mind-set and limitless pride for his own intellect like the proud Satan of Milton's *Paradise Lost* in which Satan has invited his damnation uttering: 'Evil be thou my God' (Book-IV, Line-110). Deliberately, Faustus and Satan have chosen the wrong refusing to submit and to repent, knowing fully what they are doing.

This anti-God haughtiness of Faustus was getting gradually rooted deep into the minds of some writers of the next generation of Marlowe along with the alluring existence of materialism and destructive wars like the World War I and the World War II, one after another through the centuries, paved in the world literature the way to welcome those types of literary genius who began to observe the human life from a very different, neutral and critical way believing only what they can see, feel and sense. They wanted no more the inexplicable religious issues, heroism in wars for upholding the human dignity and mythological fancies or the unseen. They began to take refuge in the domain of introvert, self-opinionated and individualistic mind-set where they would be able to explain on the basis of the true circumstances created by the predecessors and the contemporaries as well around them. From that mind-set emerged out a common thread of ungodly existentialism nurtured as brain-child of some literary genius like Franz Kafka, Samuel Beckett, Albert Camus, Akhteruzzaman Elias creating another knot to be linked with the very common thread worthy to be woven into the vast canopy of world literature.

As a result, with this new conceptual knot of existentialism, their subjective and idealist response begins to contemplate the world in abstract philosophical terms and ensures a strong position. It usually ends up accepting meaninglessness, loneliness and disintegration as the deep rooted condition of human existence itself. If we go through their thoughts and experiences gathered from the last part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to the last part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we would observe that all these writers have undergone psychoanalysis and historical interpretations of the human conditions and their thinking implies an image of man, not as a social being, but as "by nature solitary, asocial, unable to enter into relationships with other human beings" (Lukács 19).

Actually, the literary works like *The Trial* (*Der Prozess*), *Waiting for Godot* (*En attendant Godot*), *The Stranger/The Outsider* (*L'étranger*), *The Soldier in an Attic* (*Chilekothār Sepāi*), have contained some fundamental traits of modern individualism, the determination to trust one's own experience while distrusting the many and varied forms of authority, the attempt to face the absence of transcendence and to enjoy this life.

Kafka's *The Trial* throws light on Joseph K.'s subconscious ideas, instincts and desires, his career, his affairs with woman and his problem of guilt. However, we observe that the first chapter of *The Trial* begins with the unexpected arrest of Joseph K. So, K. charges into his first courtroom appearance full of indignation, and why not? No one has told him why or on what evidence he has been arrested. The court itself appears to be not so serious because it's stuck in an attic in a rundown apartment complex. When his speech appears to entertain the audience, the examining magistrate informs him that he has irreparably damaged his case. Here consciousness is rendered powerless. Faith has to be substituted for knowledge and knowledge has to be submitted to fate, but not to rebel or become angry and this is what K. refuses to do. He does not follow his instincts. The lawyer's illness is symbolic of others' sufferings. Dog-like submission is the only answer to religious hope. Here Kafka presents a frightening world where conscious life is going out of control.

Kafka has presented many absurd traits in *The Trial*. Clearly, Joseph K. has failed to have faith in his life and also to live an absurd life. The ending also brings up the question as to what K. could possibly have done to deserve such an extreme punishment, particularly since K.'s only failing in the novel seems to be either arrogance or sexual promiscuity. K.'s final act of defiance—his refusal to kill himself, thus sparing the executioners the labour involved in killing a man—suggests that, perhaps, he is being punished for not completely submitting to the will of the court, which seeks to eliminate

any and all expressions of individuality. K.'s last words, "*Wie ein Hund!*" sagte er, *es war, als sollte die Scham ihn überleben.*"<sup>vi</sup> (Kafka 92) voices his protest over his utterly inhumane end.

Albert Camus' *The Stranger* also deals with absurdity inherent within the individuality of Joseph K. and the beginning with unexpected and absurd events. In the novel, it can be observed that Meursault's self-explanation about the exact time of his Mother's death, just after getting the telegram, has indicated his indifference from the very beginning:

"Aujourd'hui, maman est morte. Ou peut-être hier, je ne sais pas. J'ai reçu un télégramme de l'asile: «Mère décédée. Enterrement demain. Sentiments distingués.» Cela ne veut rien dire. C'était peut-être hier."<sup>vii</sup> (Camus 1.1.44)

The figure of Meursault, who shuns introspection and is devoted to sensuous experience, reminds us of Joseph K.'s promiscuity. Obviously Albert Camus has deepened the concept of indifference, which in Meursault is an unexplained mixture of inability to feel and protest against inauthentic emotion as visualized in the following thought of the last moment:

"Comme si cette grande colère m'avait purgé du mal, vidé d'espoir, devant cette nuit chargée de signes et d'étoiles, je m'ouvrais pour la première fois à la tendre indifférence du monde. De l'éprouver si pareil à moi, si fraternel enfin, j'ai senti que j'avais été heureux, et que je l'étais encore."<sup>viii</sup> (Camus 2.5.98)

Camus' concept of absurdity may be regarded as the reminiscent of *The Stranger*: the daily routine of work, which is rendered tolerable by habit, can trigger an onrush of futility; man lives for the future but ahead of him lies nothing but death; a landscape may by its very beauty indicate its indifference to man.

Now, let's turn to another absurdist literary piece *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett whose prime concern is absurdity of human existence and experience : it is realized that Godot cannot be

made to represent any one idea, ideal or person, precisely because he represents an absence. Beckett perceives him to be the void at the centre of human existence. Even the tramps who wait for Godot as well as the wayfaring couple whom they encounter have no fixed individual identities, barring a few biological, temperamental and situational traits. They are perceived not as four distinct personalities but as two radically truncated and grossly generalized images of all ‘mankind’, which is expressed in an important portion of Lucky’s mad holocaust of phrases:

“---l’homme en bref enfin malgré les progrès de l’alimentation et de l’élimination des déchets est en train de maigrir---”<sup>iv</sup> (Beckett 1.60)

Incapable of any significant action or initiative, they (the tramps) imply an utterly pessimistic view of man as a helpless victim of his fate. The entire play woven with repetitions offers basically the same sequence: the tramps reunite, wait, contrive ways of passing time, encounter Pozzo and Lucky, receive Godot’s disappointing message, contemplate suicide, decide to leave and do not move; besides, it contains a variety of verbal repetitions, the most important of which are—‘Rien à faire’<sup>v</sup> (Beckett, 1.9) and ‘On attend Godot/Ah!’<sup>vi</sup> (Beckett, 1.16).

Ultimately this nothingness and boredom shown by Estragon and Vladimir leads us to such an absurd state of mind, seen to be possessed by the persons like Joseph K. and Meursault, in which human beings feel and sense many unexpected matters in their subdued minds to express and to protest but find nothing to be done. This sort of frustration and depressive mood has also been found to be prominent in Akhteruzzaman Elias’ *The Soldier in an Attic* in which Osman Gani alias Ranju has been seen to be so much engrossed in the nuances happening in his introvert life impounded by the four walls of a prison-like attic. He observes what is happening around; listens, joins the processions and the meetings; but does not do anything sincerely. His frustrated and obsessed mind finds no ideal place other than that attic. That’s why, it is seen that in his dream he has expressed his sensuality even at his father’s funeral as he says in the first chapter:

“---cold rainfall is happening on the thickened thighs of Sicilian miss world. Keeping it in the front masturbation can easily be done between the thighs under the blanket.”<sup>vii</sup> (Ch 1, P 1)

This absurd act of Osman reminds us of the promiscuity of Joseph K. and Meursault’s obsession with the thinking of the women in the prison. However, through this novel, it is to be realized that Elias’ insight into the subtle aspects of human character, his use of physical and psychological details, his sarcastic treatment of hypocrisy are the indications of the latest consequences derived from the cumulative ideas and concepts piled up centuries after centuries into the minds of the intelligentsia of world literature.

Therefore, observing the literary works either created or simulated partially or translated from the pre-Christian era up to the twentieth century, it is truly felt that all these special literary works produced either orally or in written form tend to analyze the aspects of the human race enlivened and stirred up by the essence of religions, mythologies, stories and legends of heroism to uphold ultimately the soul of the whole humanity. In order to do that massive analysis on their literary works it is urgent to fathom the depth of the origin hidden into the unseen past though the whole mankind has been so far able to feel just the heartbeats of the generations left five thousand years back, let alone reach the origin. Yet the least portion of that massive analysis done for generations after generations may be regarded as a great achievement of the literary genius of world literature. Willing to enjoy the vastness of that achievement, we do try to engage in tracing at least a thread-



like link that may have been able to connect some interrelated common ideas prevailed into religions, mythologies, pantheism, heroism, individualism, absurdity borne in the minds of different generations from that oral past to the last decade of the twentieth century with the vast canopy of world literature.

It is true that all these literary elements of religions, mythologies, pantheistic views, heroism, individualism and absurdity could not partake of an entity of the same generation as the mind-set of one generation, influenced by the changing lifestyles and thinking levels, led naturally the next generations to another level of mind-set. So, it is realized that the literary mind-set of the pre-Christian era to the pre-medieval era with its changing effects led itself to the literary mind-set of the medieval era to the era of 18<sup>th</sup> century, thus leading ultimately the whole previous generation to the ultramodern literary mind-set where even absurdity is allowed for the literary genius to disseminate whatever they can see, feel and sense through their literary works. Although the absurdists are conscious of the knowledge of religions, mythologies, pantheism, heroism, they are prone to maintain the balance between the reality and the imagination based on their own neutral analyses to trace the dignified position of the humanity in this world. Finally, it is to say that if literary elements of such concepts as religions, mythologies, pantheism, heroism, individualism, absurdity, prevailing in some literary works of different times, are intermingled, it would be quite possible to trace a common thread—upholding the dignified position of humanity—worthy to be woven into the expandable canopy of world literature.

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## Endnote

- <sup>i</sup> Trans.: “Like a dog!” he said, it was as if the shame of it should outlive him” (See Kafka 2012, p. 165)
- <sup>ii</sup> Trans: “Mother died today. Or may be yesterday, I don’t know. I had a telegram from the home: ‘Mother passed away. Funeral tomorrow. Yours sincerely.’ That doesn’t mean anything. It may have been yesterday.” (See Camus 1983, Part-I, Ch-I. P-9)
- <sup>iii</sup> “As if this great outburst of anger had purged all my ills, killed all my hopes, I looked up at the mass of signs and stars in the night sky and laid myself open for the first time to the benign indifference of the world. And finding it so much like myself, in fact so fraternal, I realized that I’d been happy, and that I was still happy.” (See Camus 1983, Part-II, Ch-V, p-117)
- <sup>iv</sup> “--- man in brief in spite of the strides of alimentation and defecation is seen to waste and pine---” (See Beckett 1989, 1.73)
- <sup>v</sup> ‘Nothing to be done’(See Beckett, 1989: 1.39)
- <sup>vi</sup> ‘We are waiting for Godot/Ah!’ (See Beckett 1989: 1.44)
- <sup>vii</sup> Translated by the authors from the original. (See Elias, 1986)
- This indistinct indication of masturbation in this quotation seems to remind us of Meursault’s masturbating in the prison, if Stuart Gilbert’s translation- ‘Next day I did like the others’ (2.2.49) is accepted on the basis of Patrick McCarthy’s (p. 106) explanation.