



RESEARCH PAPER

Intertextual Echoes: A Comparative Study of Ali's *The Last Metaphor* and Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the intertextual relationship between Ali's play *The Last Metaphor* and Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, employing Kristeva's Theory of Intertextuality as the theoretical framework. Intertextuality refers to the interconnectedness among literary texts, wherein readers can discern echoes of established literary traditions. Using Qualitative Textual Analysis, the study gathers and analyzes data to identify the elements of intertextuality. The findings reveal that the two plays share structural and thematic parallels. *The Last Metaphor* exhibits a considerable influence from *Waiting for Godot*, particularly in its setting, characterization, and narrative structure. Both plays explore the human condition and engage with existential concerns, such as meaninglessness, waiting, and the search for identity, albeit within distinct cultural contexts. The findings also highlight that Beckett's dramatic vision significantly resonates within Ali's play, illustrating powerful intertextual connections. Further studies are essential to unveil the underlying thematic and structural interconnectedness among literary texts.

KEYWORDS Intertextuality, Structural Parallels, Characterization, Thematic Parallels, Dramatic Art

Introduction

Intertextuality, a key concept of postmodern literary theory, emphasizes the interconnectedness of texts, asserting that every text is, in some form, an intertext (Kristeva, 1980). Scholars argue that every writer is a reader first, making the influence of prior texts on new works inevitable (Allen, 2021). Thus, the effects of other texts on his/her writing are inevitable. No text exists in a vacuum; every text is shaped by the cultural and literary artifacts that precede it, and it cannot be considered an entirely original or autonomous entity. It always contains explicit or implicit reflections of other texts.

Intertextual analysis of any literary or non-literary text enables the reader to derive deeper meaning by examining how a text engages with others across time, genre, or ideology (Allen, 2021; Kristeva, 1980). In literary works, readers can identify reflections of other texts or established literary traditions. Some important forms of intertextuality are allusion, pastiche, echo, direct quotations, collage, imitation, calque, translation, structural parallelism, and parody (Genette, 1977). Intertextuality has different levels, including conscious and deliberate and unconscious and accidental. Sometimes, a writer deliberately uses intertextuality to criticize or appreciate some previous text or discourse. However, in some cases, a reader identifies parallels between different literary works that the author may not have consciously intended. In

intertextual criticism, "... the reader becomes the critic who delivers a unique process by detecting parallels between works..." (Bastan, 2022, p. 522).

This research aims to identify parallels between Ali's play, *The Last Metaphor*, and Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. Kristeva's theory of intertextuality provides the theoretical lens. The method of Textual Analysis is used to identify similarities between two plays. This research contributes to a broader understanding of how literary tradition influences new creations, particularly in the case of Ali's dramatic works, which reflect intertextual engagement with modern Western theatre and the Theatre of the Absurd. Additionally, it offers a critical interpretation of *The Last Metaphor* within the context of global literary dialogues. Therefore, the objective of this study is to examine parallels between Ali's *The Last Metaphor* and Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. This study examines various parallels between these two plays, including thematic, structural, and characterological parallels, as well as similarities in dialogue.

Literature Review

Different scholars shed light on the concept of intertextuality, a poststructuralist, deconstructionist, and postmodernist theory. Intertextuality has changed the concept of text, "... recognizing it as an intertext owing to the interrelation between texts and texts' absorptions of other texts. . ." (Zengin, 2016, p. 300). According to Allen (2021), the term intertextuality "... foregrounds notions of relationality, interconnectedness, and interdependence in modern cultural life. . ." (p. 5). Kristeva was the first to use the term intertextuality in her work *Word, Dialogue and Novel* (1966). Her notion of intertextuality builds upon Bakhtin's idea of dialogism and Saussure's linguistic theories. Bakhtin claims that texts are constantly in dialogue with existing texts. He gives the concept of open-mindedness and the dynamic nature of texts. "Bakhtin situates the text within history and society, which are seen as texts read by the writer, and into which he inserts himself by rewriting them" (Kristeva, 1980, p. 65).

Barthes (1981) develops the ideas of Kristeva and Bakhtin regarding intertextuality. He puts forward his ideas on 'text' and intertextuality. He differentiates between text and work. According to him, "The work is held in the hand, the text in language" (p. 39). He challenges the notion of a fixed, singular, and unified meaning of a text. He favors multiple interpretations of any text. He gives credit to modernist texts, which enable the reader to reproduce meaning. He emphasizes the reader's role and value in creating meaning from any text. According to him, the central feature of intertextuality is the birth of the reader and the death of the author. No work is solely the author's own or original creation but stems from existing cultural and linguistic systems. As Allen (2021) states that meaning does not depend on the author. Readers produce meaning by looking at language intertextually.

Hutcheon (2004) elaborates on postmodern intertextuality. According to her, "Postmodern intertextuality is a formal manifestation of both a desire to close the gap between past and present of the reader and a desire to rewrite the past in a new context. . ." (p. 118). Existing texts can be appreciated, subverted, and criticized in new texts. She uses the term 'historiographic metafiction' to describe the relationship between fiction and history. She provides examples of canonical writings in this regard. Intertextual discourses utilize canonical writings as a tool to write back and appropriate existing discourses. In this way, the meaning of any text can only be understood by looking at it from previous discourses. We can identify intertextuality within the setting, themes, characters, and narrative voice.

Porter (1986) investigates the relationship between intertextuality and discourse community. He states that for intertextual critics, ". . . no text escapes intertext" (p. 34). He differentiates between two kinds of intertextuality: presupposition and iterability, which encompass explicit references or allusions, along with unannounced influences, within a text. Presupposition- understanding of the unwritten or implied parts of a text. These are logically presumed based on previous words or sentences. He examines Jefferson's *Declaration of Independence*, the Pepsi commercial, and the Kent State news article to show the traces of already existing discourses in these three. He avers that "Intertextual theory suggests that the key criteria for evaluating writing should be 'acceptability within some discourse community'" (p. 43).

Many researchers have employed the theory of intertextuality to examine various literary texts. These researchers explore similarities between different literary works. Bastan (2022) compares Delaney's *A Tale of Honey* and Angelis' *Jumpy* to find parallels between them. The research utilizes Kristeva's theory of intertextuality. The study finds similarities between the settings and the characterization of these plays.

Furthermore, the researchers identify that "De Angelis' perception of teenage pregnancy and daughter hatred for mother is parallel to Delaney's *A Taste of Honey*..." (p. 3399). In another article, Bastan (2022) investigates the intertextual correspondence between Churchill's *Vinegar Tom* and McDonagh's *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*. The study incorporates Kristeva's notion of intertextuality. The study reveals various types of parallels, including thematic parallels, similar settings, and similar characters, between these works. The characters Alice and Joan in *Vinegar Tom* are similar to Maureen and Mag in *The Beauty Queen of Leenane*. The settings of both plays are rural and share the theme of poverty.

Zainab, Shaheen, and Qamar (2022) study intertextuality between Kamal's *Unmarriageable* and Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. The study employs Mukherjee's concept of rewriting canonical texts to examine intertextuality between these two works from different cultures and Countries. They identify explicit similarities between the events, characters, and social issues presented in both works and conclude that "Kamal beautifully re-uses Austen's magic and style" (p. 628). Sarkar and Sarkar (2020) examine Shamsie's *Burnt Shadows* as a rewriting of Forster's novel *A Passage to India*. They employ Kristeva's Intertextuality and Bakhtin's Dialogism as a theoretical framework. The study proposes that Shamsie presents a counter-narrative in *Burnt Shadows* by recontextualizing Forster's novel. Shamsie does not employ intertextuality to establish hierarchies or manipulate the meaning of the source text. She uses "intertextuality to rewrite *A Passage to India*" (p. 282).

Intertextuality between *Waiting for Godot* and other literary works has also remained an important topic for researchers. Different researchers venture to investigate its influence on other literary works. Bastan (2022) explores the intertextual correlation between McDonagh's *The Pillowman* and Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. The study reveals that *The Pillowman*'s themes, setting, characters, and their names, as well as specific phrases and storytelling techniques employed by the characters, resemble those of *Waiting for Godot*. Another researcher, Kouachi (2018), compares Beckett's play and Pinter's *The Dumb Waiter* to examine the differences and similarities between them. The theme of silence is focused. The study reveals some striking similarities between the plots, characterization, techniques, and themes of waiting. However, the researcher also points out some differences. Pinter merges absurdity with realism in his work, which makes it different from *Waiting for Godot*. In *The Dumb Waiter*, the actions of the characters

at the end are also in contrast with the passivity of the characters in *Waiting for Godot*. Regarding the theme of silence, the study concludes that the silence in *Waiting for Godot* is "an indication of the void and emptiness of modern life..." (p. 180). However, in *The Dumb Waiter*, silences suggest "threats and violence" (p. 180).

Ali's plays have also been compared and contrasted with Western literary works. Sehrish, Shah, and Shaheen (2021) examine the intertextual relationship between Beckett's *The Prisoners* and *Waiting for Godot*. The study examines *The Prisoners* as a Pastiche of Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. The study finds explicit resemblance between the characters and themes of both plays. They also mirror several important themes of *Waiting for Godot*, including angst, absurdity, existential crisis, and boredom. The characters of Rustam and Sohrab are similar to Vladimir and Estragon. Beera and Veera are identical to Pozzo and Lucky. The research concludes that *The Prisoners* is utterly influenced by *Waiting for Godot*.

In another study, Musarrat, Adnan, and Khalil (2017) compare Ali's play *The Odyssey* with Homer's epic *Odyssey*. The socio-cultural aspects are focused. The study incorporates Faiz's concept of Culture and identity. Some important elements are present in both works, including symbols, metaphors, sensual appetite, dreams, and customs. However, by incorporating these elements, Ali and Homer present their own respective cultures, as the research concludes that both writers have skillfully represented the socio-cultural aspects of Pakistan and Greece, respectively.

The Last Metaphor has not been much explored yet. However, we find few studies on it. Khaliq and Rehman (2022) analyze Gricean implicature in it. The study applies Grice's idea of Implicature. It reveals that the characters disregard the principles of quality, relevance, quantity, and manner in their conversations. As a result, their statements seem absurd and senseless. However, their meaningless conversation has some deep, symbolic, and implied meanings. The study proposes that "...absurdist fiction where details are compromised as compared to the novel, implicature acts as a useful tool to say a lot in few words" (p. 105). In another study, Alam, Khaliq, and Jamil (2020) examine the role of anger in Ali's *The Odyssey*, *The Guilt*, and *The Last Metaphor*. They employ Lerner's theory of Anger. The study proposes that anger is central in Ali's plays. Ali uses outrage to highlight social evils and tries to draw attention to the need for positive change. They examine that "...outrage turns into an interpretative device for Ali that empowers him to decide the human condition" (p. 47).

The foregoing discussion examines the concept of intertextuality and its different theoretical perspectives. It helps to understand the application of the theory of Intertextuality in studying literary texts. It also reveals that Ali's plays have been examined from various perspectives. However, Ali's *The Last Metaphor* has not been much explored yet. By keeping this research gap in mind, this study examines the intertextual correspondence between *The Last Metaphor* and *Waiting for Godot*.

Material and Methods

The present study is qualitative. The method of Textual Analysis is employed to investigate the intertextual correlation between Ali's *The Last Metaphor* and Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. Kristeva's theory of Intertextuality serves as a theoretical framework. Both plays are compared to highlight parallels between them. Furthermore, the observed evidences are interpreted to support our inquiry.

Theoretical Framework

This study employs Kristeva's Theory of Intertextuality. She was the first to use this term in her work *Word, Dialogue and Novel* (1966). Her notion of intertextuality builds upon Bakhtin's idea of Dialogism and Saussure's linguistic theories. She rejects the self-sufficiency and close-ended nature of a text. She rejects the notion of the work's originality and the author's sole authority in creating any text, as "no text is produced in isolation; every text is the absorption and transformation of another." Therefore, it cannot escape the influence of already existing discourses and socio-cultural contexts. For her, the text is a "mosaic of quotations, an absorption and transformation of another text..." (p. 37).

She asserts that text is an integration of two axes. The horizontal one stands for the link between the reader and the text. The vertical axis represents the correlation between the text and other existing discourses. For her, ". . . each word(text) is an intersection of the word(texts) where at least one other word(text) can be read. . ." (p. 66). Also, she rejects the singular and unified meaning of any text. The reader's role in the production of meaning is crucial. The reader becomes a critic who creates meaning from any text by examining it in relation to other existing texts. Therefore, the text can only be understood with other interrelated texts.

Results and Discussion

The analysis focuses on conversations, structures, characters, events, and some key themes that both plays share in common. Upon examining the structures of both plays, several similarities are identified. Both plays' structure is circular; there is no progression of action. In *Waiting for Godot*, the second act seems like a repetition of the first act without any particular advancement. Godot does not come when they are waiting for him. The play ends where it begins. Similarly, in *The Last Metaphor*, the situation remains almost the same till the end. Finally, Banka and Jugnoo remain in the same place with the dead body where they were at the beginning. The only advancement is the arrival of another dog.

There is repetition of dialogue and actions in both plays. For example, in *Waiting for Godot*, Estragon says, "Hurts! He wants to know if it hurts." Vladimir repeats the exact statement. Another dialogue, "Nothing to be done," is repeated multiple times by Estragon and Vladimir. In *The Last Metaphor*, there is a repetition of dialogue. Banka asks about the dead body and says, "Who is it?". However, in answer, Jugnoo repeats the same statement. In both plays, the characters repeat the questions or dialogues of other characters instead of providing meaningful answers.

The cyclical or repetitive actions are also a daily occurrence in these plays. In *Waiting for Godot*, the characters repeatedly perform specific actions. For example, Vladimir's act of taking off his hat, peering inside it, and putting it back, and Estragon's inspection and struggle with his boots. Their abrupt laughter and sudden silence, their act of walking to the extreme right on the stage and then to the extreme left, their constant pauses and act of reflecting on something, and their act of looking at the tree are constantly repeated in the play. Similarly, *The Last Metaphor* is full of cyclical and repetitive actions. For example, Banka's act of looking at the audience, Jugnoo's act of staring at the fire and pouring scent on the dead body, their monotonous act of going to the kitchen and then coming back and sitting again, smoking, throwing a log into the fire and their abrupt laughter which vanishes in silence are some cyclical actions in the play.

We also find some similarities between the settings of the plays. Both plays are set in isolated, monotonous, and secluded places. *Waiting for Godot* is set on a deserted country road, and *The Last Metaphor* is set in a concealed one-room apartment. Another striking similarity between their settings is that, throughout the plays, the settings remain essentially unchanged. *Waiting for Godot*'s second act starts with a stage direction. "Next day. Same time. Same place". Similarly, *The Last Metaphor*'s last act opens with stage direction. The setting of Act Three is the same as that of Acts One and Two.

Some events in *The Last Metaphor* also bear a resemblance to *Waiting for Godot*. The death of the dog and Jugnoo's efforts to bury it are significant events. In *Waiting for Godot*, these events are reflected in Vladimir's song about the dead dog and its friends' act of digging its grave. Jugnoo and Banka's reactions of fear and confusion upon hearing the knock on the door remind us of Vladimir and Estragon's state of confusion and fear in response to suspecting some sounds around them. After hearing the knock, Jugnoo and Banka both "rush to each other, sit in a huddled position up the stage, and stare at the door." Similarly, Vladimir and Estragon "... listen, Estragon loses his balance, almost falls. He clutches the arm of Vladimir, who totters. They listen, huddled together..."

Further, the characters' conversations in *The Last Metaphor* mirror some conversations between Vladimir and Estragon. Banka and Jugnoo discuss the dead body. Jugnoo claims that dead bodies communicate with everyone. In the answer, Banka says, "... None has spoken to me.". Jugnoo replies, "...You have never tried to listen to them." Banka and Jugnoo's discussion about the dead bodies' ability to speak refers to Vladimir and Estragon's conversation about the dead voices. As Vladimir says, "They make a noise like feathers."

Similarly, Banka and Jugnoo's discussion about their favorite cigarettes reflects Vladimir and Estragon's discussion about carrots and turnips. Jugnoo asks Banka for a cigarette but does not get his favorite one. Banka talks about his preference for a blue-colored packet of cigarettes. Similarly, Estragon asks Vladimir for a carrot but gets a turnip and radish instead. Moreover, Estragon talks about his preference for pink radishes, such as Banka. At the beginning of the second act, there is a dialogue between Jugnoo and Banka: "Banka: (Looking at Jugnoo) There you are! Jugnoo: (Staring at the fire) Here you are!" This dialogue echoes back to Vladimir's dialogue at the beginning of the second act. He says to Estragon: "... There you are again.... There we are again. There I am again."

The element of storytelling in both texts is also parallel. In *The Last Metaphor*, both Banka and Jugnoo tell different stories about their past experiences. Jugnoo recounts the story of the two boys who are brutally beaten to death by the police. He further retells his adventurous story of running from the police after the robbery. Banka tells the story of his father and brother's tragic deaths inside the wells. He also narrates the incident of his humiliation by the police and Jugnoo's father's insult by the police to Jugnoo. Likewise, in *Waiting for Godot*, Vladimir and Estragon tell each other different stories. Vladimir narrates the tale of two thieves and Christ's crucifixion. Estragon tells the story of an Englishman in a brothel. They are also reminiscing about their past lives.

The characters of Jugnoo and Banka are similar to those of Vladimir and Estragon. Vladimir and Estragon are two outcasts who are involved in futile waiting. They are helpless, starved, diseased, and vulnerable. Similarly, Banka and Jugnoo belong to the lower stratum of society, which is often characterized by misery and helplessness. Their

relationship bears a striking resemblance to that of Vladimir and Estragon. They are closely intertwined:

"Jugnoo: You are right. You can leave. Banka: I will not come back, Jugnoo. Jugnoo: Who asks you to?"

Banka: I love you, but you love this body...."

Sometimes, they get angry with each other but do not leave each other. For example, when Banka asks Jugnoo to dispose of the dead body, Jugnoo becomes angry and punches Banka. However, after some time, they start talking normally. They are a hope for each other. They depend on each other. As Jugnoo says to Banka, "...I felt alone as you left...." Vladimir and Estragon are inseparable and interdependent. As Vladimir calls Estragon his only hope. They often decide to part ways, but they cannot.

"Estragon: It'd be better if we parted.

Vladimir: You always say that, and you always come crawling back."

Banka's concern for his friend Jugnoo reflects Vladimir's care for his friend Estragon. Banka does not like his friend to be called a coward and a loser. He cannot hear his friend's insult and persuades his friend to come out of a state of helplessness. Likewise, Vladimir cannot bear his friend Estragon's insult and humiliation. He does not like Estragon's act of losing his dignity by asking Pozzo for bones and some money. Vladimir gets angry and says to Estragon, "We are not beggars!"

Another striking similarity between these pairs is their tendency to contradict each other. Banka and Jugnoo often contradict each other and end the discussion without reaching any particular conclusion. For example, they give different opinions about the sound of water. One says that it is coming from the sink, and the other says it is coming from the fire. At another moment, they call each other a coward. Moreover, Banka contradicts Jugnoo's idea of burying the body. There is a dialogue between them, which clearly shows their habit of contradicting each other. They clearly state that they disagree with each other.

Likewise, Vladimir and Estragon also have this habit of contradicting each other. They use different names for the same thing. For example, one uses the word 'bush' for the tree while the other uses 'shrub.' One compares the noise of the dead voices with leaves, while the other with ashes. Vladimir seems hopeful. However, Estragon often contradicts him with his hopelessness.

Besides these parallels between the structures and characters, there are common themes in *The Last Metaphor* and *Waiting for Godot*. These include uncertainty, time, death, humiliation, cruelty, helplessness, waiting, and the human condition in general. In *The Last Metaphor*, the theme of the uncertainty of time is quite prominent. Banka says, "Maybe it was quarter to nine or quarter to ten...". Jugnoo questions Banka, "Does your watch tell the correct time?" This uncertainty of time in the play creates confusion for the reader to decide about the period of the play. The entire action spans three to four days. However, Banka's statement about the dead body in the third act reinforces the uncertainty of time. He says to Jugnoo: "...You have been pouring water and scent for the last two months...".

Similarly, in *Waiting for Godot*, the theme of time's uncertainty is quite apparent. The characters seem clueless about time. As Estragon says: "But what Sunday? And is it Saturday? Is it not rather Sunday? ... Or Monday? Or Friday?". When Pozzo asks about time, Vladimir

says, "...seven o'clock ... eight o'clock...". In the second act, we find that there are few leaves on the tree, which seems impossible to happen in a single night. This change makes Vladimir and Estragon queer about the time.

Another parallel theme in these plays is the theme of death. In *The Last Metaphor*, death is a significant theme. The basic inspiration behind writing this play is the miserable death of the dog. The theme of death is treated in two ways. Firstly, the indifference of the world to the deaths of helpless creatures like the dog, the two innocent boys, Banka's father, and brother.

On the other hand, we also see the characters' desire to die and to get rid of their grief-stricken lives. As Banka talks about his family history of dying inside wells, he says, "Next, it is my turn." The rope symbolizes death. Banka says this multiple times: "This rope can help." It indicates his desire to escape his life.

In *Waiting for Godot*, death is an important theme. It seems that the characters are waiting for death to release them from their monotonous and boring lives. At the end of both acts, Vladimir and Estragon decide to bring a rope with them to hang themselves the next day. Estragon says to Vladimir, "The best thing would be to kill me..."

Humiliation and cruelty are important themes in both plays. In *The Last Metaphor*, human beings are humiliated, beaten, and murdered mercilessly. The two innocent boys are beaten to death by the police. The police stripped off their clothes and slapped them. Jugnoo's father is humiliated and insulted by the police. The police drag him and spit on him. Banka was ruthlessly beaten at the police station. However, no one can resist this cruelty.

In the same way, in *Waiting for Godot*, Lucky is humiliated and tortured by Pozzo. He calls him insulting names like a pig. His cruelty towards Lucky is reflected in his statement: "...The truth is you can't drive such creatures away. The best thing would be to kill them." However, there is no active resistance against this cruelty and exploitation.

Waiting and helplessness are also parallel themes between *Waiting for Godot* and *The Last Metaphor*. In *Waiting for Godot*, Vladimir and Estragon wait for Godot, who is their only hope. However, Godot does not come to an end. They are entirely helpless and miserable regarding this futile waiting. They are trapped in monotonous and absurd situations. As Estragon says: "Nothing happens, nobody comes, nobody goes, it's awful!". Sometimes, they ask God for help, as Estragon says, "...God pity me!" However, they do not receive any help to escape the misery of futile waiting. Similarly, in *The Last Metaphor*, Jugnoo waits for some divine help to bury the dead body. He seems completely helpless in the play. He prays to God and says, "...No one can save us." There are some signs of hope for him, like the arrival of rain and the other dog. However, in the end, the dead body is still unburied. His act of throwing various things into the fire also reveals his hopelessness and despair.

Another important theme of the human condition, which is often miserable, is also reflected in both plays. In *Waiting for Godot*, the characters are portrayed as helpless,

starving, diseased, and miserable. As Vladimir says, "One daren't even laugh anymore...". Vladimir has issues with his kidneys and Estragon with his lungs. They do not get proper food and live on carrots and turnips. They are deprived of shelter. The human condition presented in the play can be described in Estragon's words as "Dreadful privation. The same misery of human beings is reflected in *The Last Metaphor*. Banka and Jugnoo are forced to rob people because of their poverty. They are running from the police. They cannot sleep and cannot eat properly. Banka describes the state of his body as "...Starving ribs...".

Conclusion

In conclusion, Ali's *The Last Metaphor* bears several parallels to Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. *The Last Metaphor* has a substantial influence on *Waiting for Godot*. The play's setting, characterization, structure, and some significant events bear a resemblance to *Waiting for Godot*. Both plays share structural elements such as cyclical events, repetitive actions and dialogues, storytelling, and monotonous settings. The characters Banka and Jugnoo strongly resemble Vladimir and Estragon. Various major themes of *Waiting for Godot*—including the uncertainty of time, death, humiliation, cruelty, helplessness, the futility of waiting, and the human condition's miserable nature—are also reflected in *The Last Metaphor*. Both texts employ existential themes and use Absurdist techniques to explore the human condition. These intertextual echoes not only highlight the dialogic relationship between the two plays but also underscore Ali's innovative utilization of the Absurdist tradition. Finally, this study affirms that Ali's *The Last Metaphor* not only replicates Beckett but also reconfigures his influence into a culturally and contextually distinct dramatic expression. Thus, the intertextual correspondence positions the two plays within a continuous intertextual dialogue.

Future research on other contemporary South Asian plays and canonical Western works is recommended to deepen readers' understanding of cross-cultural literary dialogues and to examine how global literary traditions like Absurdism are reimaged within non-Western contexts to reflect local cultural and philosophical concerns. Additionally, studies employing interdisciplinary frameworks—such as postcolonial theory and cultural studies—are also recommended, particularly in the analysis of Ali's *The Last Metaphor*.

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