

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD IN WOODY ALLEN'S GOD

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ABSRTACT

Modern drama is described as a reaction to a sense of profound loss which brought about by loss of faith. So the modern dramatists, out of their response to such loss and to the breakdown of a God-centered universe make their drama to be critical analyses of a man who lives in the void and how such creature is shed by the death of religion. Hence, the modern drama whose hero lives in a scrap yard of meaningless memorabilia and searches for the real meaning of existence becomes an extended contemplation on existential rootlessness , as in Woody Allen's drama, particularly his *God* (1975) which is an existential masterpiece.

This study focuses on modern man's views toward the existence of God , the topic that has for generations been that of fierce and debate not only among the philosophers or the theologians but even among the artists who have not always been able to agree on God's Existence. Here-upon, the post-modern American dramatist Woody Allen (b. 1935) introduces his meta drama *God* to search for the answers that meet the humanity's questions concerning the understanding of God's existence which is linked with that of man's existence and how both are related to the absurdities of life.

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I think I have all the symptoms and problems that those people are occupied with: an obsession with death, an obsession with God or the lack of God, the question of why we are here. Answers are what I want¹ (Woody Allen)

The American screenwriter, director, comedian, actor, author and a playwright , whose career spans over half a century ,Woody Allen (Allan Stewart Konigsberg, b.1935) ,in his writings, looks for possible resolutions of the "issues" of existence, but he come mostly across philosophy. Allen has been drawn by Dostoevsky, Sartre, Kafka, Camus and others who have been indulged in the philosophy of existentialism. The latter focuses on the individual human being's experience of the meaninglessness of existence. And according to this view of its affiliates, that human beings are born free into a moral and metaphysical void. There is no plan for their lives, no definition for their essential being. They simply exist and they are free and responsible agents determining their own developments. Humans can passively remain in that harsh condition and can face themselves in the awful absurdity of their predicament, recognizing that they are alone and there are no rules that systemize their life.²

Actually, the anxiety that is produced by the awareness of horror of the meaninglessness and the dilemma of existence makes existentialism to be as much a literary movement than a philosophical development, as in the works of

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Samuel Beckett, Eugene Ionesco, Jean Genet, Harold Pinter and as in Woody Allen's writings that focus on the existence of God.

To comment on the existence of God one has to accept this fact, there is no greater issue is debated today than that of the probability of God's existence. As far as the argument of the Holy Scriptures, the divine inspiration is often claimed for features of religious texts, constituting evidence of God's existence or the validity of a religious doctrine. As in Christianity, God is an eternal being that creates and preserves the universe. And many Christians believe that God is imminent (God is with and within all things)³. And actually, in modern western societies, the concept of "God" is typically entails monotheistic supreme, ultimate and (in some sense) personal being. In Christian view which matches the classical theism that "God possesses every possible perfection, including omniscience, omnipotence and omnibenevolence"⁴. Some classically theistic philosophical approaches arrive at such perfections by beginning with a root concept of God such as

The prime mover or the uncaused cause. The ultimate creator, or a being that than which nothing greater can be conceived from which the classical properties may be deduced.⁵

God , from the orthodox understanding, possesses every faculty and every admirable attribute of man to an infinite degree (man being made in his image). On the level of intellect, God is infinite truth or wisdom; on the moral level, infinite goodness; on the aesthetic level, infinite beauty. God is usually held to have the properties of holiness, justice, omnipotence, omniscience, omnibenevolence, omnipresence and immortality. This is a general Christian view concerning God, but such image and such properties have not been reflected in Allen's *God*.

It is true that Allen in his writings searches for suitable and convincing answers for the existence of God and that of man, but it is equally true that Allen for the most part has avoided direct contact with the world of organized religion, as he asserts in his interview with Christian Century Magazine:

I don't approve of any of the major religious because I feel organized religion or social, political and economic organization in general. But religious beliefs and religious faith..that does interest me and I have full appreciation for the search for genuine religious faith that people go through.⁶

Interestingly, Allen follows many other modern dramatists who manufacture their plays round God or the faith in God. Some deal with the matter from the orthodox theism, some be as evolutionists and others were skeptics. In other words, the dramatization of human's search for God is not something new, but the newness is easily felt in Allen's *God*, since the latter's God is incorporated in different periods and various locations and its events take place in Athena's, approximately 500 B.C. Moreover, Willy allows for the play to not only discuss the existential dilemma that modern humans face, but also to marry the audience to the artistic work itself. Then, the play becomes a work that the audience not only view but are also a part of. This coupled with Woody Allen's proclamation

about God's existence puts the audience and characters spank dab in the same existential dilemma as Allen.

Allen's *God*, which is set in an empty Greek amphitheatre, is a one act play that flits chaotically back and forth between ancient and modern times. This play, which represents an example of meta drama, begins with a dialogue between a neurotic and sex-deprived playwright Hepatitis and a pathetic Greek actor Diabetes struggle helplessly to find an ending for their play, as they waltz catastrophically with the omnipotent. Their struggle is pondering the implications of God's existence as they try to find a way to conclude their play

ACTOR: Stop talking to the audience! I'm sorry I mentioned them.

WRITER: It's bizarre, isn't it? We're two ancient Greeks in Athens and we're about to see a play I wrote and you're acting in, and they're from Queens or some terrible place like that and they're watching us in someone else's play. What if they're characters in another play? And someone's watching them? Or what if nothing exists and we're all in somebody's dream? Or, what's worse, what if only that fat guy in the third row exists?⁷

These two characters are desperately discussing how to end their play, and such search for the play's end, in indirect way, attracts the attention of the audience to the end of man's life which is metaphorically also a circular play whose author is God.

ACTOR: Nothing . . . just nothing.

WRITER: What?

ACTOR: Meaningless. It's empty.

WRITER: The ending.

ACTOR: Of course. What are we discussing? We're discussing the ending.

WRITER: We're always discussing the ending.

ACTOR: Because it's hopeless.

WRITER: I admit it's unsatisfying.

ACTOR: Unsatisfying? It's not even believable. The trick is to start at the ending when you write a play. Get a good strong ending and then write backwards.

From the early beginning of the play, one can get that Allen's *God* is brilliantly constructed in a postmodern formula whose structure is really a deconstruction of

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common theatre structure. Instead of a linear , beginning , middle and an end, Allen employs a circular structure to his play. Actually, the two nameless characters who open the play end the play with the same conversation but now their names being mentioned. The characters, including Blanch duBois, Groucho Marx, Zeus and also the audience are peppered with metaphysical and philosophical questions. The conversation as well as the action skid along farcically until actor and writer reach the same, ultimate conclusion: there is no end ...nor beginning. In other words, the play ends with the opening conversation again, therefore; the audience are left understanding that the play itself is meant to be circular and go on forever.

HEPATITIS: What?

DIABETES: Meaningless. It's empty.

HEPATITIS: The ending.

DIABETES: Of course. What are we discussing? We're discussing the ending.

HEPATITIS: We're always discussing the ending.

DIABETES: Because it's hopeless.

HEPATITIS: I admit it's unsatisfying.

DIABETES: Unsatisfying!?! It's not even believable. (*The lights start dimming*) The trick is to start at the ending when you write a play. Get a good, strong ending, and then write backwards.

HEPATITIS: I've tried that. I got a play with no beginning.

DIABETES: That's absurd.

HEPATITIS: Absurd? What's absurd?

(BLACKOUT)

" **HEPATITIS:** Absurd? What's absurd?". The Absurd", in philosophy, refers to the conflict between the human tendency to seek value and meaning in life and the human inability to find any. In this context, absurd means "humanity impossible" and not "logically impossible". So absurdism is "a philosophical school of thought stating that the efforts of humanity to find inherent meaning will ultimately fail because the sheer amount of information, including the vast unknown, makes certainty impossible."⁸ Hence, Absurdism is very closely related to existentialism.

In absurdist philosophy, the absurd arises out of the fundamental disharmony between the individual's search for meaning and the apparent meaninglessness of the universe. And in the absurdist's comment on the defining absurd in the rational matrix, they claim that the absurd is that the eternal truth has come into existence in time, that God has come into existence, has been born, has grown up ..., has come into existence exactly as an individual human indistinguishable from any other human being. Here-upon, the absurd is a category, the negative criterion of the divine or the relationship to divine.⁹

Linking the absurdity of life with Devine has also been reflected in Allen's *God* that gags just prey on the gap between ordinary affairs and the immense issues by the employment of circular structure that lends itself into Allen's thematic statement on the existence of God. Actually, many expectations now are raised concerning the image of God and suddenly the audience who lives in modern era discovers that God is created, strangled to death. The "God" strangles on the machine that was to lower Him into stage. In fact, such introducing of a dues ex machine ending is an attempt done by Allen to rescue a difficult plot that matches the complicatedness of the issue itself, that of God's existence.

TRICHINOSIS: Something's wrong with the machine!
It's out of joint.

CHORUS: At last, the entrance of God!

(But he's definitely dead)

DIABETES: God . . . God? God? God, are you okay? Is there a doctor in the house?

DOCTOR *(In the audience):* I'm a doctor.

TRICHINOSIS: The machine got screwed up.

HEPATITIS: Psst. Get off. You're ruining the play.

DIABETES: God is dead.

"God is dead" DIABETES here reflects the image of the atheist who exists in modern era and who thinks that when he had gotten rid of God, he has freed himself from all that repressed and stifled him. Instead, he discovered that in killing God, he had also killed himself and his surrounded world, because without God the world would not exist. In other words, "death" is a term that exists in the dictionary of man's world since it is an experience that is bound to man, and such vocabulary never being linked with the existence of God. Man has to respect such fact, God who gives life to the dead and calls into existence things that don't exist.

Introducing God as "dead" in this play is related to Allen's interest to meet the modern audiences' yearnings who greet the presence of an onstage God with skepticism and also to link the existence of God with his death obsession. For Allen, death is an "issue" to use contemporary parlance (idiom), which should not

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be so passively accepted. He says "death is one of the few things that can be done as easily lying down".¹⁰ So in this play, the death that is bound to man is also experienced by God, but here, God, who is created and strangled to death, comes back alive again, only to be strangled again, to be resurrected again and so on. Actually such expectation concerning the resurrection of God is easily got by the audience due to the circular structure of the play. In general, the post modernists seek meaning by looking at the underlying structures that create or impose meaning, rather than the epiphenomenal appearances of the world. Hence from the linguistic framework of the play, one easily gets that Allen tries to bring God closer to human being and introduces Him as a person.

"God is a person", in the history of Christian theology, this type of view developed in connection with the attempts to understand relations among the "persons" in Trinity. God is understood by Trinitarian Christians as "God the Father", "God the Son" and "the Holy Spirit", an infinite Godhead of three distinct persons who is both within and beyond nature. Second, an idea of God as a person is latent within the understanding of God which begins with man's experience or awareness of encounter with God. Only the language of personal reciprocal relations between God and Man is found adequate, although allusions to God as person or personality may not be made explicitly and may even be rejected. In this second category, one may designate by the phrase, "a personally-related God". Third certain predominantly modern discussions, while essentially the second perspective, also speak explicitly of "the personality of God" but in a way that remains independent of the question of possible plural relations within God.¹¹

God was also described in metaphorical language derived from human relationships. Such language sought to express the biblical experience of God as the living God, or what we have called "a personally-related God", but such view is employed in different ways in modern era. The vast transformations of world-view which accompanied the twentieth century led to new perspectives and approaches to the discussion of the idea of God as a person.

In Allen's drama, the concept of God as a person is transformed to an explicit ascription of personality to God. In his play, *God*, the exaltation of man as a rational self-conscious individual produced a reversal of an ancient pattern instead of deriving man's personhood from that of God, man now conceived of God in man's own psychological image. Hence, Allen brings into his stage of this play Zeus, Father of gods, who is one of Greek's gods that were portrayed as humans.

TRICHINOSIS: Zeus, Father of the Gods, descends dramatically from on high and brandishing his thunderbolts, brings salvation to a grateful but impotent group of mortals.

.....
ACTOR: Oh, Zeus. Great god. We are confused and helpless mortals. Please be merciful and change our lives.
(*Nothing happens*) Er . . . great Zeus . . .

Zeus was the father of gods and according to Greeks, "god was a power that represented a type of action and a kind of force".¹² Dramatically, throughout the classical drama, there was extensive evidence of the many ways of how the Greeks revered their gods. They sought to ensure that the gods were always content in order to keep a harmonious relationship with them. They knew that the gods were continuously present and could give guidance, hope and comfort if properly approached. To the Greeks, the interaction or the worship of the gods was not just a part of life, it was a way of life. So, being within the realm of classical gods and the way of life at that period, no one could ignore the passivity of gods towards the tragic end of the classical hero, Oedipus whose misery has not been absent in Allen's *god*.

CHORUS: And so Phidipides set out on his journey
bearing an important message for King Oedipus.

DIABETES: King Oedipus?

CHORUS: Yes.

DIABETES: I hear he lives with his mother.

(Effects: Wind and lightning as SLAVE trudges on)

CHORUS: Over deep mountains, through high valleys.

DIABETES: High mountains and deep valleys. Where did
we get this chorus?

CHORUS: At all times at the mercy of the Furies.

So why Zeus was passive towards Oedipus and never tried to give him any kind of help. The classical god who symbolizes power, guidance and salvation was idle with Oedipus' crimes of killing the father and marrying the mother. Or such passive behavior of god being justified as a matter of fate as been admitted by Oedipus:

OEDIPUS: That I was fated to lie with my mother,
And show to daylight an accursed breed
Which men would not endure, and I was doomed
To be murderer of the father that he got me.¹³

Truly, as Oedipus links his incest and patricide with fate, many others do the same and Allen considers this and in his *God* raises many questions concerning the fatal things or the definitive moments of man's life.

Fundamentally, some people think of certain subjects that are definitive moments in man's life like: birth, marriage, children, finding oneself at war, or being caught up in a natural calamity and even death as "an Act of God" or explained as "It's God's Will". While others justify these actions with the concept

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of fate and fatalism,¹⁴ which had very widely been accepted and taken quite seriously.

The notion of fate thrives in many cultures that do not appeal to the concept of God. It is fate ultimately; that explains why heroes like Hector and Achilles have to die. And Oedipus was fated to kill his father and to marry his mother. It is fate that replies such mournful questions as "Why me?" and "why should this burden fall on us, of all people, especially now?". Looking for answers for such questions, makes Woody Allen in his *God* to introduce other question that leads man to real puzzlement, "WENDY: You know how Fate is?".

Allen likes many philosophers gives the matter of fate somber attention. For him, the matter of fate or fatalism becomes a technical exercise concerning the notions of "time and truth". In other words, Allen tries to assert that it is a matter of understanding of the truth and the reality of the life that surrounds man who lives in specific time and era. So the misunderstanding of the real meaning of fate to be in spilt from what is called modality, necessity or causality is related to the real understanding of man of what is meant by reality.

DORIS: I don't want to cause any trouble.

WRITER: It's no trouble. It's just that we've seemed to have lost touch with reality here.

DORIS: Who knows what reality really is?

WRITER: You're so right, Doris.

DORIS (*Philosophically*): So often people think they grasp reality when what they're really responding to is "fakeositude".

As a discussion for fate and fatalism, recently, the belief in fate is wholly compatible with scientific outlook, but this does not mean that the scientific outlook is the only valid one or fatalism must itself be accounted for in terms of scientific outlook. In special focus on the differences that have to do with the relationship between God or gods and fate, or between God's Will and fate and how such differences can be analyzed in the context of "necessity", people are led to various philosophies.

Until the twentieth century, the idea that the universe is governed by "chance" has been almost ridiculous. As late as the mid-twentieth century, such a thought is widely considered "absurd". Camus and his followers try to make people follow their views and theories which emphasize only that life is meaningless chance and bases only on mere probabilities.

Interestingly, Allen in his play, *God*, discusses what has been mentioned earlier by Sartre and Camus that "life has no God given purpose, and that only man's choices and struggles give it meaning".¹⁵ In other words, Allen attracts the audience' attention to the following fact: how much further will man travel towards a godless society in which the superficiality of man and the creature becomes the center of the universe while the divine presence is driven deeper and

deeper into oblivion. Allen strives to make the audience realize that the fall of individual leads to the fall of all, so it is intended to make such a question raised by one of the audience, Doris, a sarcastic philosophy major who joins the writer and the actor and becomes part of the action:

DORIS: The basic philosophical question is: If a tree falls in the forest and no one is around to hear it - how do we know it makes a noise?

(Everyone looks around, puzzled over this)

ACTOR: Why do we care?

Highly philosophical issues and existential matters seem to be ongoing concerns for Allen but they are explored in his *God* comically and cynically. Allen by his marvelous style¹⁶ which is paralleled by sardonic humour, introduces fate allegorically i.e. fates come to the stage as a couple, **Bob** and **Wendy** who dressed like American tourists and search for someone to convey an urgent message to the king about definite essential and dangerous mission and this will be of an immense service for mankind.

(The FATES enter, a couple dressed like American tourists, wearing jazzy Hawaiian shirts; BOB has a camera around his neck)

BOB: Hi, we're the Fates, Bob and Wendy Fate. We need someone to take an urgent message to the king.

DIABETES: The king?

BOB: You would be doing mankind a great service.

DIABETES: I would?

WENDY: Yes, but it's a dangerous mission, and even though you are a slave, you may say no.

.....
WENDY *(Hands him an envelope)*: Take this message to the king.

DIABETES *(Proudly)*: Yesterday I was a lousy slave, never having ventured beyond my master's property. Today I carry a message to the king, the king himself. I see the world. Soon I'll be a free man. Suddenly human possibilities are opening up to me. And because of it - I have an uncontrollable urge to throw up. Oh, well . . .

Diabetes , the slave of the king , anxious about the nature of news that he carries, since at that time if the news is positive the messenger is going to be

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reward while if it is bad, the messenger will be subjected to death. "If the news is bad, I die", so he eagerly reads the message which is one word "Yes". It is a reply sending to the question that is raised earlier by the king and now all the attendants are looking to the question in order to understand whether the reply "yes" is something good or bad as a nature of news.

DIABETES (*Reads*): The message is one word.

DORIS: Yes?

DIABETES: How'd you know?

DORIS: Know what?

DIABETES: What the message is, it's "yes."

CHORUS: Is that good or bad?

DIABETES: Yes? Yes is affirmative? No? Isn't it? (*Testing it*) Yes!

Now the king received the message which is an answer sending to the king's major question of humanity towards the existence of God.

KING: Of course, I'm the king. What is the message? (*The GUARD draws a sword*)

DIABETES: The message is . . . ye-no - (*Trying to get an idea before spilling it*) no-yeah - maybe - maybe -

CHORUS: He's lying.

KING: The message, slave.

(*The GUARD puts a sword to DIABETES' throat*)

DIABETES: It's one word, sire.

KING: One word?

DIABETES: Amazing, isn't it, because for the same money he's allowed fourteen words.

KING: A one-word answer to my question of questions. Is there a god?

DIABETES: That's the question?

KING: That - is the only question.

DIABETES (*Looks at DORIS, relieved*): Then I'm proud to give you the message. The word is yes.

KING: Yes?

DIABETES: Yes.

CHORUS: Yes.

DORIS: Yes.

DIABETES: Your turn.

WOMAN (*Lisp*): Yeth.

By the affirmative response of the word "yes", the existential matters are optimistically resolved, but the characters are redeemed through an embracing of the zany absurdity of life. Now the characters think about their own existence whether they are chained by God or they have absolute freedom. In other words, they try to discuss their own real limitation of their existence in this life.

DIABETES: I know what you're thinking, a little reward for your faithful messenger - but our freedom is more than enough - on the other hand, if you insist on showing your appreciation, I think diamonds are always in good taste.

KING (*Gravely*): If there is a god, then man is not responsible and I will surely be judged for my sins.

DIABETES: Pardon me?

KING: Judged for my sins, my crimes. Very horrible crimes, I am doomed. This message you bring me dooms me for eternity.

DIABETES: Did I say yes? I meant no.

GUARD (*Seizes the envelope and reads the message*):
The message is yes, sire.

Allen in his *God* tackles one of the major issues in the modern highly dogmatic time, the issue of God's existence which is dramatized here in a comic style. Allen believes that "the ideal thing is to be funny and also say something significant".¹⁷ Hence in this comedy, *God*, he shows how fates laugh at man according to his misunderstanding of his own real being. As a fact, Allen finds laughter exists in all of life, even sex which is the base for man's existence in the earthly world becomes another fertile field for jokes. Man as a rational creature is supposed to enlist sex with the other areas that help him to understand his own existence and also that of God.

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(In the background a brutish man enters)

STANLEY: Stella! Stella!

HEPATITIS: There is no more reality! Absolutely none.

*(GROUCHO MARX runs across stage chasing BLANCHE.
A MAN in audience rises)*

MAN: If anything's possible, I'm not going home to Forest Hills! I'm tired of working on Wall Street. I'm sick of the Long Island Expressway!

*(Grabs a WOMAN in the audience. Rips her blouse off,
chases her up the aisle. This could also be an usherette)*

HEPATITIS: My play . . . *(The characters have left the stage, leaving the two original characters, the author and actor, HEPATITIS and DIABETES)* My play . . .

Actually, the authentic dilemma of modern man that he is unable to understand what is meant by reality. Really, modern man is unable to comprehend the real identity of his being as a rational creature and he lives in a rational universe. Such misunderstanding of man for his own being makes him unable to discriminate between "chaos", which is viewed by him as the absence of undue restrictions and an opportunity to exercise one's rights and powers, so it is the ability to stand alone and unsustained by anything else, and "freedom" that he seeks in his existence. In other words, modern man tries to substitute freedom which his own right in living with the chaos which is a state of utter confusion or disorder and it is a total lack of organization that is philosophically, supposed to have preceded the existence of the ordered universe.¹⁸

WRITER: Diabetes, what you're suggesting is chaos!

ACTOR: Is freedom chaos?

WRITER: Is freedom chaos? Hmm . . . That's a toughie.
(To the audience) Is freedom chaos? Did anybody out there major in philosophy?

Concerning the philosophy, modern man's searching for the meaning of freedom, is part of his searching for a reply that answer his question about his own existence and about his true nature as a man. It is also yes-no question like that raised earlier by the king. In additional words, the modern man does not merely fail to understand God's existence, rather, even his own existence and its real value.

ACTOR: We're in the middle of a play. Who is she?

WRITER: In five minutes the Athenian Drama Festival begins, and I have no ending for my play!

ACTOR: So?

WRITER: Serious philosophical questions have been raised. Do we exist? Do they exist? (*Meaning the audience*)
What is the true nature of human character?

Human nature which refers to the distinguished characteristics including ways of thinking, feeling and acting, that humans tend to have naturally,¹⁹ is absent from the comprehension of modern man. Being in modern era and indulging in humanistic cultures, one easily notices that people pursue many things that are already existed in them, but they are unable to find them or get their meaning. Man searches for the real meaning of his being and also for the universe where he lives. Consequently, Allen tries to help Man in such search by raising this view concerning the reality of man as a rational animal and he is supposed to live in a rational universe.

WRITER: Human beings don't behave that way. It's not in their nature.

ACTOR: What does their nature mean? We're stuck with a hopeless ending.

WRITER: As long as man is a rational animal, as a playwright, I cannot have a character do anything on stage he wouldn't do in real life.

ACTOR: What if the universe is not rational and people are not set things?

Modern man, like any character that participates in Allen's *God*, looks for the meaning of life, the subject that has been of much philosophical, scientific and theological speculation through history. The meaning of life is deeply entrenched in the philosophical and religious conceptions of existence, social ties, happiness, consciousness, and borders on many other issues, such as value, purpose, ethics, good and evil, free will, the soul, what is after death and the existence of God.

Fascinatingly, the association of the meaning of life with the existence of God is quite creatively expressed in Allen's *God*. In the latter, Allen makes an effort to stress that in a Godless universe human life is nothing more than a bleak and meaningless experience. If there is no God, then human life is absurd. That is, if one believes that God is dead or does not exist, then one must agree to this consequence: human existence has no purpose, no value, no meaning, at bottom, human existence is empty.

DORIS: But without God, the universe is meaningless. Life is meaningless. We're meaningless. (*Deadly pause*).

WRITER: I'm depressed.

ACTOR: What's bothering you?

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WRITER: I don't know if I believe in God.

DORIS (*To the audience*): I am serious.

ACTOR: If there's no God, who created the universe?

" **Who created the universe?**". Man is the only creature in the universe who asks who I am? Why is this? What is a man? Does God exist?...and many other questions. Such inquiry nature of man, particularly about the existence of God, is mirrored in Allen's *God*, and it is mingled with doubt.

ACTOR: If there's no God, who created the universe?

WRITER: I'm not sure yet.

ACTOR: Who do you mean, you're not sure yet!? When are you going to know?

Allen 's audience are puzzled in his *God* which is a mere assemblage of random ideas. In this play, the audience, who described as thinking people of modern scientific era, are torn between the doubt and the truth out of raising various investigatory questions. The latter imbue the audiences' investigations for the understanding of God's existence. Drama is by its nature investigatory, and it presents characters and actions in special employment, thereby encouraging an audience 's engrossment in onstage happenings. Allen and other modern dramatists may use a variety of devices which remind the audience that it is seeing a play: omniscient narrator, play-within-a play, expressionistic symbolism, circular structure, reflexive drama, Brechtian alienation techniques, ...etc. Such devices often heighten the audience's critical attitude, making it more thoughtful in interpreting, qualifying or accepting what is said or presented.

The presentation of Allen's *God* by using postmodern formula adds more to the question of humanity's understanding of God's existence. So the audience are looking a solution for the existential dilemma, just like Becket's characters, in his *Waiting for Godott*, who during the entire play carry on trivial conversation while waiting for a third man to arrive, who never does. Humans' lives are like that, Becket is saying: "we just kill time waiting for what, we don't know".²⁰ Man finally knows he is alone in the indifferent immensity of the universe. Thus if there is no God, then life itself becomes meaningless. Man and the universe are without ultimate significance.

Admitting that there is no strictly scientific argument which proves that God exist or that does not exist, they base their belief in his existence on a consideration of moral problems. God ought to exist in order to satisfy the demands of moral experience. Humans may therefore regard His existence as one of the "postulates of practical reason". William James in his celebrated essay; "The Will to Believe", states that belief in the existence of God is a valuable belief and since there are no facts which contradict it, humans have a right to

accept the belief as true. Value, no less than consistency with known facts, is a criterion of truth.²¹

As a matter of truth, keeping oneself occupied with relentless research to answer the questions that dig deep in the existence of God or of that of man or even of the universe results in a apparent awareness that everything in the universe, its order, each living being and structure which is a component of a plan, a product of design. In reality, in every detail the infinitely varied world, man finds his Creator, God, the owner of everything in the whole universe, introduces Himself to man through the flawless design of His creation. Everything surrounding us, the birds in flight, our beating hearts, the birth of child, or the existence of sun and other plants in the sky, manifest the power of God and His creation. And what man must do is understand this fact, the existence of God is obvious.

It is true that the existence of God is obvious, but what is also obvious is that, Allen's *God* does not tackle the existence of God as a belief or as a truth, and it is not meant to be as intellectual argument that introduces knowledge concerning God rather to be as a reflection of bizarre of human life. Whether it is the absurdity of God or Zeus or whether it is the boredom or the sex deprivation among the actors sitting in the hall or whether it is the final desperate cries from the protagonist as he realizes man cannot control his fate. Finally, in Allen's *God* the audience acquire an inner meaning themselves, that the shock of reality is polished and profound.

NOTES

¹John Baxter, *Woody Allen: A Biography*, (London: Harper Collins, 1998), p.13.

²Ken Kelley "A Conversation with Real Woody Allen" in E. Kapsis and Kather Coblents (eds.), *Woody Allen Interviews* (USA, University of Mississippi, 2006), p.25

³Ted Peters, *Models of God*, (New York: Springer scene and business media , 2007), p.62

⁴Shandn L. Guthrie "Evidences for the Existence of God" www.evidence_existance_god\22-kj_123566.com accessed on 22-1-2012.

⁵Ibid.

⁶John Dart "Woody Allen, Theologian" in *Christian Century Magazine* (jan-22-29-1977), www.christian_century.org_223541\kl.com accessed on 17-2-2012.

⁷Woody Allen, *God*, www.woody_allen.com accessed on 17-10-2011. All the textual references for Allen's *God* in this study are related to this edition.

⁸Nathan Oak hander *The Absurd and Absurdity* , 2nd ed. (New Jersey: prentice Hall, 1996), p.114.

⁹Ibid, p,120.

¹⁰Kelley, p.32.

¹¹Herbert C. Wolf , *An Introduction to the Idea of God as a Person in Journal of Bible and Religion* Vol.32. No.1.(Jan, 1964), Oxford University Press, www.Jstor_org.com accessed on 23-2-2012.

¹²Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), p.57.

¹⁴Robert C. Solomon *On Fate and Fatalism in Philosophy East and West* vol. 53, no. 4 (Oct. 2003), (university of Hawai'i Press) www.jstor.org.com accessed on 17-1-2012, pp.356-389.

Solomone, out of his attempt to discriminate between fate and fatalism, states that fate is not the same as fatalism , although most conception of the former imply the latter" fate is the explanation, and fatalism is a doctrine." (Solomon.p. 377)

¹⁵Oakhander, p.122.

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD IN WOODY ALLEN'S GOD

¹⁶Hafliaje Sawarsesa, *Woody Allen's God: A Play within A Play*, (Bangalore: Agency DNA, 2010), p. 34

Allen's marvelous style is mirrored in this play, *God* by his linking of the ancient with the modern times and also in his typical characterization. His major characters are the actor Diabetes and the playwright Hepatitis who belong to ancient Greece, and even Allen himself appears as a character on the stage who also ask some of the audience to be joined in the action of the play as in the character of Doris. Moreover, characters from other plays like Tennessee Williams ' *Street Car Named Desire's* blanch DuBois appears to be included in the cast of Allen's characters of his meta drama, *God*. In other words, Allen marvelous style reminds the audience with Pirandelloian confusion in creation the world of drama.

¹⁷Partick Berkeley "Woody Allen play God an Existential, post modern masterpiece"
www.patrick_berkeley.suit101.com accessed on 17-12-2011.

¹⁸Harper Collins, *Collins English Dictionary: Complete & unabridged* .10th edition(London: William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd, 2009), s. v. "Chaos" .

¹⁹ - [Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki) en.wikipedia.org/wiki s.v. "human nature" accessed on 22-1-2012.

²⁰Loren Eisely " man-time relation in modern drama"www.modern_drama_time\kj-22\lm.com accessed on 22-1-2012.

²¹Charles H.Patterson *Can Man Know God* in *Journal of Bible and Religion*. Vol.20.no.3 (Jul.1952),(Oxford University Press) pp.180-5 www.Jstor_org.com accessed on 23-2-2012.

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