

God Virus and Quantum Mechanics: An Upheaval to Tom Stoppard's world in *Hapgood*

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Some names defy logic, syllogism, and Euclidian arrow; and in fact they prove it through these things in surprise. Tom Stoppard is not just a name that arose out of unfertile realm; he bears the indelible stamp not just on the British Dramaturgy and dramatic horizon but on the inner recesses of one's psychedelic and psychic landscape. Mind's potential to the mysteries of Nature, Existence or the Nature of Man is something to be absorbed in its total preview. Yet no concrete, tangible perception is easily understood. The whole history of Science and the religion is just at the fore front; and the mind has as scientifically dissected, the way to probe into the mysticism hovering all around.

This could be termed to be really precise and technical that to believe in anything without having travelled the mind's path is no less than just believing without anything at prior. Agnosticism is being scientific. It's only the trust which some people used to talk about; but scientific attitude also brings different truths and trusts that can neither be shaken nor broken, if arrived at in real terms. Tom Stoppard has endeavoured from his level best to understand God like existence through his plays- *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, *Jumpers*, *Hapgood*. But the giant of concepts, ideologies, philosophies concerning it remain the same way as they have been ever.

The place of Tom Stoppard (born on July 03,1937-) has a uniquely wide appeal in the contemporary theatre, since he often manages to combine comedy with social concern, farce with moral philosophy and sometimes absurdism with existentialism. The word "stoppardian" which is becoming part of our every day vocabulary stands for a well structured comedy with conflicting points of views, that mixes seriousness with farce and is filled with jokes and all kinds of word-play. He is an intellectual dramatist in the sense that he, like George Bernard Shaw, is interestingly in love with the plays of ideas. He is undaunted by any discipline no matter how abstruse or complicated; and ransack fields as divergent as moral philosophy and quantum mechanics for ideas and apologies.

Stoppard's life faced a number of vicissitudes that led him ask basic questions to find. The question is more important than the answer. If the true question is discovered, only then the real answer is worth is finding; otherwise the quest will be in vain. The God query, I don't know if it's the real question, has been haunting many sensitive souls. So is the case with this particular playwright. Here too the same arithmetic has been used as it has been corroborated since time immemorial. It has been only the tool of logic through which everybody has been giving efforts to prove the existence of God in order to prove the validity of his own existence. That he is not something thrown. There is synchronicity, no gap between the Man and the Existence. But despite all logics man is never found to have been satiated already. Tom Stoppard has used very modern tool- the quantum theory- to understand the human nature, God and the mysteries of the Universe.

The microscopic dissection of the plays reveals many truths. In one of the very famous plays of Tom Stoppard *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's loquacity may occasionally seem glib, but the play contains at the centre an affecting explanation of what death means. The master stroke is the creation of the Player, a world weary actor manager down on his luck because of the current vogue of child actors, and willing to stoop to any scurrility in order to make a living. By having him Rosencrantz and Guildenstern on the road to Elsinore and by making the troupe stow away after their play has displeased Claudius, Stoppard creates the circumstances for an ongoing debate about life as drama, a debate whose very theatricality persuades us emotionally as well as intellectually.

The main debate carried out has in fact been taken in one of the most excellent dramas of Stoppard *Jumpers* but it does not remain intact to that play exclusively. *Hapgood* in which the playwright has taken great effort in carving out the implications of modern physics in reference with the human behaviour has some traces of the God perceptions as well. The play is freighted with a sense of mysteries in the behaviour of electron which has not yet been understood if it is a wave or a particle. But so far as the understanding of what the humanity has been talking about God is concerned, the reflections are to be discerned in *Hapgood*. A sense of awe at metaphysical mystery seems inevitably if embarrassingly to impel Stoppard to an acknowledgement of transcendental divine mysteries. In *Jumpers* George advanced causality as an argument for the existence of God, claiming 'that if an apparently endless line of dominos is knocking itself over one by one then somewhere there is a domino which was nudged.' Reflecting a world of probabilities rather than certainties, *Hapgood* advances, at least in passing, an even more challenging theism. The play intimates the existence of God not so much *despite* as *because of* the lack of causality and epistemological certainty in the universe. The certainties of quantum mechanics may have 'upset Einstein very much' as Kerner says, because 'it spoiled his idea of God', which, as Kerner quickly adds 'is the only idea of Einstein's I never understood'. Einstein, says Kerner, 'believed in the same God as Newton, causality, nothing without a reason, but now one thing led to another until causality was dead'. (p. 49)

Insisting on being amazed by the metaphysics of reality, Stoppard aligns himself with the awe which Kerner expresses towards 'all the mystery in life' which 'turns out to be this yet continuous, body and mind, free will and fate, living cells and life itself; the moment before the foetus. Who needed God when everything worked as billiard balls?' (pp. 49-50) Einstein has expressed his idea on religion as: 'the word God is for me nothing but the expression and product of human weaknesses, the Bible, a collection of honourable but still primitive legends which are nevertheless pretty childish. For me the Jewish religion like all others is an incarnation of the most child superstitions.' Hence we see him finding it impossible to believe in a God who threw dice and continued to believe 'in the same God as Newton'. But Stoppard implicitly embraces a more difficult prospect, to accept that 'quantum mechanics made everything finally random' and yet affirm the existence of God. If Einstein refused to believe in a God who threw dice, Kerner says, 'He should have come to me, I would have told him, "Listen, Albert, He threw *you*- look around, He never stops." ' (p. 49) Kerner implies that the wholly unpredictable uniqueness of the particular individual constitutes evidence for the existence of the divine. The arguments recall Stoppard's suggestion in *Jumpers* that the existence of a perfect infinite Creator is evidenced by the rationally inexplicable heights of His Creation. Is the creation of an Einstein a rationally

calculable probability? Even the mathematics argues against it. The unlikelihood of such a 'chance' recalls Stoppard's rejection of the hypothesis 'that, given enough time, some green slime could write Shakespeare's sonnets'. 'That strikes me as possible, but a very long shot', Stoppard counters, 'why back such an outsider?'

For Stoppard, it's unacceptably reductive to suppose that life can be reduced to 'an either-or'. The mystery of explaining of how light can be both wave and particle becomes an image for the mystery of delineating the boundary between body and mind or between free will and fate. It's unacceptably reductive to say that one is either this or that, instead of being *both* this *and* that. In *Hapgood* the join is between happenstance and some overarching sense of enduring values. The indeterminacies of the subatomic world are reflected in the ambiguities of human identity, the presence of different 'selves' within the single self. Despite these mysteries, the play intimates that there are enduring values to be apprehended, that beyond whatever may hap there is that which is good.

Indeed the use of the first name in saying that God threw Albert points to a number of implications of the theology of personhood which the play at least throws out for consideration. Michael Billington's recognition of 'Stoppard's hint that there are, in the end, values worth preserving: that democracy is better than dictatorship, that love is a possibility and that...children anchor one in the real world' begins to spell out the values implicit in the play. However, what the play affirms is not only democracy, love and the importance of children, but, at a more fundamental level, the absolute value and the worth of the individual human being. Just as Kerner may regard the electron with amazement and awe despite the impossibility of penetrating its mystery, so the play leads us to view the individual person as being of ultimate, non-negotiable worth despite the impossibility of penetrating the mystery of the individual self.

Even in the play *Jumpers* the playwright has taken great effort in proving the existence of God through using many technical dramatic complex devices. And finally the play remains a philosophical puzzle, for the tool used by the atheistic pivotal character was the same by the counter argumentative character. The focus on these issues bring one point very much clear: nothing becomes clear and conspicuous unless logic is given in respect to regardless of anything. The word 'God' is heavily used and sometimes gives impetus to the other extreme by great thinkers. Speaking on Friedrich Nietzsche, Osho said: *"I hate the word 'God'. And I would hate it more if somebody refined the concept of God, because lies have to be destroyed! And you can't destroy them unless you hate them. All you love for God has to be completely destroyed."* So far as I opine, creating an object like God and then trying to justify His existence is futile. The basic question remains the same. Can man not live without God? Is there no possibility that he becomes simple and live life here and now without words that run in emptiness and becomes stuffs of great discussion and debate?

Friedrich Nietzsche seems to be right in his condemnation of man for his lack of creativity in not being able to produce a better concept of God than the Christian one—which he regards as the sickest, the most decrepit, which he calls "this pitiable God of Christian monotono-theism." But Nietzsche makes one thing categorically clear that it's nothing but a concept. Then why is there any need to improve upon a concept of it and get bothered about it at all? In any way it will rather become a better lie or better fiction. "Man is certainly not creative, but creativity should not be concerned with God. His creativity should be concerned with making a better world, a

better society, better literature, better poetry, better paintings, better sculpture, and better human beings. A better God is not needed; a better God will be more dangerous”.

Ultimately it remains, for me, within the periphery of human rationalization in conformation with the scientific discoveries. It's all about logic; and logic is something which can be given in anything's favour. The great philosopher Osho has demolished all the chains made by the humanity in reference with God. He says God is like tomorrow which appears to be but in real terms it exists not. People would have been more happy if there would have been no religion. “Religion is the cause of all problems,” says Gwyneth Paltrow, “I don't believe in organized religion at all. It's what separates people. One religion just represents fragments, it causes war. More people have died because of religious conflict than any other reason.” Man is afraid of living alone. Hence he tries to find many things in his support. And one of the most exploitative words in this respect given to humanity is the word God. The subtle study of the Stoppard's plays also reveal one truth that the playwright somehow or the other is making much effort to prove the existence of God even if it appears syllogistic. But in subsequent terms, there's no truth as concluded. Truth is in relation. Only the relativity is the truth which is the search of the great mind Einstein. And there is no need to give name of God to the things that defies our understanding.

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