

Repetition and Self -Interpretation:

Analytical Study for a Selection of Beckett's Early Novels and Dramas

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Abstract

As an expressionist, many humane portraits to reflect immobility, confinement, helplessness and the confusion of life and death are repetitively introduced in Beckett's early novels as well as in his drama. Characters as Watt, Murphy, Malone and Molloy have different names yet they could be namable as Beckett or stay unnamable as any anonymous. They live the same dilemma, face the same doom seek the same end. They are physically impaired. Their infirmity embodies the writer's infirmity and the whole contemporary generation to understand the world. Through them, he tries to imitate the self-conflict and determines the identity of the new man produced by the wars as being one of its victims. In his works, he depicts the body as a cell of soul, life as a tomb of ambitions and death as freedom though it is a fate and not a choice. Metaphorically, acknowledging this truth makes of death as a self- revolution, a release of pains and an invitation to a new creation and this is what his moral message all about not only addressing English or French people but all humanity



Repetition of themes, images, characters, words, and plots of all kinds in their similarity and opposition come cross in Beckett's writings to be a philosophy rather than a mere theme or technique. This study focuses on a selection of the writer's early novels with reference to some of his drama. The aim is to show how he has applied repetition of similarity and opposition as a theme, technique and philosophy to interpret the self confronting the most critical times of war and its deteriorations.

التكرار وتفسير النفس

البشرية

دراسة تحليلية لمجموعة مختارة من الأعمال الروائية والمسرحية الاولى

للكاتب الانكليزي بيكيت

قدم بيكيت باعتباره كاتب تعبيرى في اعماله الادبية الاولى الروائية منها والمسرحية صور انسانية متكررة تعبر عن الجمود والعجز واللبس بين الحياة والموت . تحمل شخصياته اسماء مختلفة مثل واط، ميرفي، مالون ومولوي وان كانت كلها تمثل شخص الكاتب حتى وان كانت مجهولة بلا اسم . تعيش هذه الشخصيات نفس المعضلة، تواجه الموت نفسه وتسعى للحصول على نفس الغاية. تعاني كل من هذه الشخصيات من عجز جسدي وبعجزها هذا فهي تجسد عجز الكاتب نفسه وعجز الجيل المعاصر باكماله في فهم العالم من حولهم . من خلال هذه الشخصيات، يحاول الكاتب محاكاة الصراع الذاتي و تحديد هوية الانسان الجديد الذي افرزته الحروب بأعباءه احد ضحاياها. فهو يصور في اعماله الجسد على انه سجن للروح، والحياة قبر للطموحات والموت حرية رغم انه قدر وليس اختيار . يريد بذلك مجازا ان يشبه الموت بالثورة على الذات المستكينة وتحريها من الام الماضي ودعوة للبحث عن هوية جديدة لخلق انسان جديد ؛ وهذه هي رسالته الاخلاقية ليس للشعب الانكليزي او الفرنسي فحسب بل للبشرية جمعاء ان تنوع تكرار المواضيع والصور والشخصيات والكلمات وتناقضها يظهر جليا في كتابات بيكيت ليس كفكرة او تقنية مجردة بل كفلسفة ونظرية . تركز هذه الدراسة على مجموعة مختارة من رواياته التي كتبها في بداية مسيرته الادبية مع الإشارة إلى بعض اعماله

الءرامآة والهءف من ذلك هو ءوضآح الطرآقة الآآ استعمالها الكاءب الآآرار المآشابه
والمآضاء موضوعاً وآآنآكاً وفلسفة فآ آفسآر النفس البشرآة وءءاعآاءها فآ مواآهة اآء
الظروف صعوبة على الانسان الآآ املآها علىه الءروب بكل اشكالها.

Repetition and Self- Interpretation:

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The common meaning of repetition as has been stated in Oxford dictionary is “the fact of doing or saying the same thing many times.”¹ Repetition, as defined by Steven Conner, is a central and necessary concept to understand the individuals and social beings and their representation. It determines and fixes our sense of our experience and representations of that experience. It is also the place where certain instabilities can be revealed.² Different types of repetition, theories and related philosophies will be introduced and applied to Beckett’s works later in this study.

In his works, Samuel Beckett showed a continuous preoccupation with uncanny repetition writing style. As an expressionist³, he devoted himself to explore the anonymous human types, the secret of the being and identity. His obsession with the repetition of the fundamentals as characters, themes, images, plots, settings, impulses, sounds and language suggested the difficulty of interpretation both in his drama and prose works. By writing about the fundamentals, he took himself and his

readers to the extreme limits of humanity and obliged them to look carefully at themselves at moments of crisis specially that of war. These moments of language failure, meaning collapse, and interpretation crisis were central to Beckett's work and to his philosophy of postwar art.

Beckett's pessimism , bleak beauty and dark comedy cannot be separated from human suffering brought out by the devastations of the Twentieth century; the darkest and most brutalized century in recorded history. Two world wars, the horrors of Stalin, the Holocaust of Hitler, the disastrous Great Leap of Mao, brutal colonial wars in Africa and the prolonged threat of atomic destruction during the Cold War surely framed Beckett's mind and people at that time. Beckett's adolescence in Ireland coincided with the Anglo-Irish War followed by the Irish Civil War. He visited Germany during the Fascist regime and partook in the struggle against Nazi power in Paris through the Resistance cells. These certainly generated an infecting atmosphere on Western culture as a whole and on the morals, values, beliefs and attitudes of the societies in which he lived and to some extent molded his creative intelligence.⁴

According to Jonathan Boulter, Beckett's novels, beginning with *Murphy* (1938) and *Watt* (written 1941–45; published 1953) and ending with the so-called second trilogy (*Company* [1980], *Ill Seen Ill Said* [1981], *Worst ward Ho* [1983]), were all about interrogating and deconstructing narrative form.⁵ Yet, his most significant writing, where the questions of language and the fundamentals of constructing a non-traditional narrative was mostly embodied in his first self- translation-



from French into English- "trilogy"⁶ of *Molloy* in 1951 , *Malone Dies as Malone Meurt* in 1951 and *The Unnamable as L'Innommable* in 1953

Unlike James Joyce, Gertrude Stein, Georges Bataille and other modern writers, surrealists⁷ and nouveau romanciers who presented repetition with a new centrality in their work, he concerned with repetition in all its forms; that made him the most unique writer in the twentieth century.⁸

The influence of this principle seemed to have acquired a particular power on painting, writing and film making in the cultural era that came to be known as postmodernism.⁹ It reflected the postmodernist's desire to recirculate the old or the already known. The relationship of originality and repetition, therefore, became an obsessive theme in philosophy, linguistic, sociology and other human sciences. Theories like Freud's psychological theory of compulsive duality of repetition as well as Jacques Derrida's and Gilles Deleuze's philosophical theories of the double nature of repetition and differences clarified the significant role of repetition in reinforcing the Platonic sense of essence and identity which became Beckett's obsessive theme later.¹⁰

In his essay 'Signature Event Context', Derrida confirmed the double nature of repetition.¹¹ He believed "if repetition requires something that is already fixed and finished, already constituted as an essence, then it is equally true that originality or essence can never be apprehended as such unless the possibility exists for it to be copied."¹² The idea that repetition must always repeat originality, must always



second was spiritual, founded on inequality, immeasurability, and dissymmetry.¹⁵

Psychologically, Freud's repetition compulsion of oppositions in his work *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* came to present new form of repetition by concentrating on the compulsive duality of oppositions.¹⁶ It was more than an opposition; Boulter said: it was "the experience of the uncanny ...the experience of anxiety that emerges when encountering something that appears simultaneously to be familiar and unfamiliar" as he suggested.¹⁷ It was the union of oppositions of death-derive and life-instincts, of pleasure and sadness, of affirmation and negation. They were "bounding together, depending upon and successively producing each other, and providing another instance of the complex junction of difference and repetition."¹⁸

Exceeding them all, Beckett presented texts with uncanny writing shape of repetition and oppositions making of self interpretation itself the most difficult task even for him as he referred to in the opening paragraph of *The Unnamable*

No matter how it happened. (It, say it, not knowing what.) Perhaps I simply assented at last to an old thing. (But I did nothing.) I seem to speak (it is not I) about me (it is not me). These few general remarks to begin with. What am I to do (what shall I do, what should I do?) in my situation? How proceed? By aporia pure and simple? Or by affirmations and negations invalidated as uttered (or



sooner or later)? (Generally speaking.) There must be other shifts. Otherwise it would be quite hopeless. But it is quite hopeless. (I should mention before going any further - any further on - that I say "aporia" without knowing what it means.)¹⁹

In *Time and Again*, he re-enacted Freud's conception of the union of affirmation and negation in the repetition compulsion. He attempted to "negate by means of the complex detours of affirmation, to efface by means of repetition."²⁰ As Molloy wrote: "this time, then once more I think, then perhaps a last time, then I think it'll be over."²¹ In *III Seen III Said*, he repeatedly produced Freud's duality of death and life in which death did not oppose pleasure but implied it by affirming life at the moment of death:

Farewell to farewell. Then in that perfect dark foreknell darling sound pip for end begun. First last moment. Grant only enough remain to devour all. Moment by glutton moment. Sky earth the whole kit and boodle. Not another crumb of carrion left. Lick chops and pasta. No. One moment more. One last. Grace to breath that void. Know Happiness. ²²

Finality in his works was often associated with structures of alternation as in *Watt* and *First Love*. The alternating repetition changed the tone from storytelling to desperate panic. Watching the diminishing light, Watt "covering the lamp, less and less more and more, with his hat, watching the ashes greyen, reden, greyen, reden, in the grate, of the range."²³ In *First Love* the cries were receding behind the narrator: " But as soon as I halted I heard them again, a little fainter each time,



Influenced by Camus and Sartre and their concepts of “absurd and existentialism”³¹ which came into French writing in the late 1930s, Beckett developed a mood of nihilism through repetition of technique, language, plot, time, place, images, and characters in the sense of emphasizing human freedom as inescapable and part of his loneliness and alienation. In his early works, he focused on the struggle of his hopeless, habitual wandering characters to escape from habit though they were themselves enslaved by it. They subsequently repeated what early characters did and said. Watt like Murphy, they were psychologically unstable. Malone, for example, was a copy of Molloy, crippled, desperate and playful, just as Molloy was a copy of Moran. Therefore, all his characters, submitted to the same circular time continuation plot of life, death, and afterlife. They found themselves suddenly locked in an indefinite place (room), in the meantime (now), trying to set their minds free in a self-conscious meditation (journey) and back again to the same point where death and birth could be simply unified in one word; dust (nothingness). This dark diagnosis of the human condition which has been deeply reinforced in every play and prose of Beckett generated a comprehensive world view called “Beckettian.”³²

The room as a recurrent image whether place or space emphasized the theme of confinement showing man's helplessness and inability to move at hard times. However, whether the room was represented as a mother's room in *Molloy*, hospital room or madhouse room in *Malone Dies*, or as a jar in *The Unnamable*, or as a station in *Watt*, or as an



apartment or a cage as described in *Murphy* might metaphorically symbolize a mother's womb or earth womb(grave) or the author's mind; where life-instinct, death-desire and inner conflict took place. Hence, the journey as another recurrent theme would metaphorically sum up all humanities' life- death voyage from womb- to- tomb or, in other words, the recalling journey of life from -dust –to- dust.

Molloy was an old crippled man who found himself in his mother's room : "I'm in my mother's room. It's I who live there now. I don't know how I get there."³³ He started to collect his memory looking for an answer to how he got there following his nostalgia to his mother and his childhood. The opening line of *Malone Dies* confirmed that he was dying "I SHALL SOON BE QUITE DEAD AT LAST IN SPITE OF ALL"³⁴ not sure if he was in his room, his mother's, in a hospital or a madhouse room but he was there at that moment:" Present state. This room seems to be mine. I can find no other explanation to my being left in it. All this time."³⁵ While waiting for his death, he started to tell stories of people whom he met or thought he met; people who looked completely like him in a searching journey for himself. The voice in *The Unnamable*, was completely confused asking questions about his identity that became readers' everyday questions: "Where now? Who now? When now? Unquestioning."³⁶ Though he was the narrator of Molloy's, Malone's, Moran's, MacMan's, Mahood's, Murphy's, and Watt's stories , he himself was nameless and unnamable. His identity seeking journey was Beckett's own journey seeking his existence in the world of silence:



It will be I? You must go on. I can't go on. You must go on. I'll go on.
You must say words, as long as there are any - until they find me,
until they say me. (Strange pain, strange sin!) You must go on.
Perhaps it's done already. Perhaps they have said me already.
Perhaps they have carried me to the threshold of my story, before
the door that opens on my story. (That would surprise me, if it
opens.) It will be I? It will be the silence, where I am? I don't know,
I'll never know: in the silence you don't know. You must go on. I
can't go on. I'll go on.³⁷

The journey, therefore, was a timeless cycle of man's bodily reduction from a man into a corpse then into "a specter."³⁸ The transferring from a human into "a posthuman"³⁹ as Boulter argued, was one of the recurrent themes in Beckett's works; especially that of the *Play* represented by the three characters in urns and the trilogy of *Molloy*, *Malone Dies* and *The Unnamable*. Eliminating man into a voice, a specter, a ghost or a letter as A and C and decomposing the language into fragmented silence, shattered syntax and diminished grammars, determined Beckett's philosophy of "posthumanism"⁴⁰ as a means of self-interpretation at time of crises especially brought the circumstances of wars.

The opening paragraph in *Murphy* determined the inevitability of following a predesigned pattern ; Murphy's life and eventual death was a fulfillment course of a big scheme out of his will or choice; namely fate:

The sun shone, having no alternative, on the nothing new.

Murphy sat out of it, as though he were free, in a mew in West Brompton. Here for what might have been six months he had eaten, drunk, slept, and put his clothes on and off, in a medium-sized cage of north-western aspect commanding an unbroken view of medium-sized cages of south-eastern aspect. Soon he would have to make other arrangements, for the mew had been condemned. Soon he would have to buckle to and start eating, drinking, sleeping, and putting his clothes on and off, in quite alien surroundings.⁴¹

According to Boulter, the two first sentences in the opening paragraph of *Murphy* announced the major themes of determinism. The sun shines every day for having no 'alternative' but to shine is an inescapable fact of universe determinism. The six months of eating, drinking, sleeping, putting his clothes on and off determined the sense of systematic monotonous scheme. The echoing image of the cage "a medium-sized cage"⁴² again worked to emphasize the essential captivity of Murphy and of all human subjects within a preceded fated scheme. Surrendering to everyday astrological reading, quitting his job, tying himself naked to a rocking- chair suggested Murphy's frustration, infirmity and a desire for his own soon or later death.⁴³ Richard W. Seaver defined *Murphy* as "a novel of circularity, from birthmark to deathmark, from rocker to rocker, *Murphy* is very much the forerunner



of the remarkable series of works whose protagonists search endlessly for nonexistent answers, each embarked upon a journey that has no end."⁴⁴ Rubin Rabinovitz also asserted the metaphorical aspect of repetition in Beckett's works. He described the unifying or centering effect of repetition in *Murphy* to be: "like a leitmotif...the reiterated formula adds significance and intensity."⁴⁵ He believed that pairings and symmetries of repetition is what draw the novel into a balanced, aesthetic unity and that repetition is "the expression on the surface of the novel's hidden meanings."⁴⁶

In *Watt*, time repetition was more complicated. According to Seaver, Watt's quatrain construction was phenomenal. It was not in the expected order; beginning with the second not the first part then the fourth and not the third. He wanted by that to reflect the troubling sense of self disorder applied by the circumstances of the Second World War in 1941; the time of writing this novel. The novel opened with the hero departing on unknown journey and ended with buying a ticket to the end of the line. His journey was essentially an inner journey through an allusion landscape of the author's mind to Ireland with its stations benches, trains, buses and even milk sellers. Though considered as the funniest novel in the English Language, Beckett offered a bleak vision of pain and despair influenced by the dark events through which the world was passing during the Two World Wars. The searching quest for the real meaning of life became the main repetitive theme of Beckett's novels and dramas to come.⁴⁷



Being psychologically unstable, Watt mirrored the world instability, madness and anxiety at time of war. His name Watt as in What? depicted his inquiring character and his desire to find answers helping him to understand and interpret the crises of the world. Longtime of working as a servant to Mr. Knott which metaphorically stood for 'not' in negation affected his reasoning abilities and his language when starting to speak backward. His irrational interpretation of events, sabotaged language and satirizing logic reflected Beckett's and readers' anxiety to understand events exceeding their comprehension. As Boulter confirmed, *Watt* was a turning point in Beckett's career as a writer. The image of a mind confronting the limits of language – became Beckett's true task to translate 'nothingness' in words of insanity.⁴⁸

Molloy's inability as a writer who has "forgotten how to spell ... half the words,"⁴⁹ reflected Beckett's inability to be like other writers. His systematic reduction of language, human, and self- understanding suggested the new Beckettian genre of language pathology or in other words, "Derailment":⁵⁰

It was he told me that I'd begun all wrong, that I should have begun differently. He must be right. I begun at the beginning , like an old ballocks, can you imagine that? Here's my beginning. Because they're keeping it apparently. I took a lot of trouble with it. Here it is. It gave me a lot of trouble. It was the beginning, do you understand? Whereas now it's nearly the end. Is what I do now any better? I don't know.⁵¹



The feeling of loneliness and the absence of the other had left Molloy helpless, sitting still, motionless and unable to remember his mother's name or even know his name. Loosening of association, talking about unrelated topics, schizophrenic utterance and lack of connectedness in train of ideas apparently led him to thought disorder.⁵²

my name, Molloy. My name is Molloy, I cried, all of a sudden, now I remember... Is it your mother's name? said the sergeant. It must have been a sergeant. Molloy, I cried, my name is Molloy. Is that your mother's name? said the sergeant. What ? I said. Your name is Molloy, said the sergeant. Yes , I said , now I remember.⁵³

The relationship between mind and body was central and recurrent theme to resolving questions in Beckett's works. According to Knowlson in his *Damned to Fame*,⁵⁴ Beckett's two years of psychotherapy in London with Dr. Wilfred Ruprecht Bion in the early 1930's, might partially account for the thought disorder of his characters' minds and the stiling or stillness of his character's bodies. They may be physically impaired like the "virtually one-legged"⁵⁵ Molloy, the impotent-bodied Malone, "[t]here is virtually nothing it can do"⁵⁶ , or the total motionless Unnamable, "I do not move"⁵⁷; or they may restrict themselves in some way, like Murphy tied to his chair, or Watt self-imprisoned in Mr. Knott's house.

The idea of physical impediment or psychological restraint had also carried over into Beckett's early dramas and continued in 1948 to tackle all the verbal principle stated before the war and ended in man's tragic infirmity.⁵⁸ In *Endgame* Hamm was bound in a wheelchair, Nagg and



Nell were kept in dustbins, and Clov was unable to leave Hamm despite his repeated desire to do so. In *Waiting for Godot*, Lucky was secured on the end of Pozzo's rope, Pozzo became deaf, Lucky dumb, and Vladimir and Estragon were unable to move on from the country road as they were apparently "tied"⁵⁹ by an obligation to wait for Godot. What the early dramatic characters most yearned for was freedom, like Victor in Beckett's play *Eleutheria*⁶⁰, "I have always wanted to be free,"⁶¹ and yet they were all physically or psychologically trapped in some way. In these plays the body, while unable or refusing to move, was still dominant, and made its presence heard even when it was invisible. For example, Beckett's first radio play, *All That Fall*, was full with noises of dragging feet, panting, gasps, and sounds of effort. In Beckett's subsequent plays, however, he gradually evacuated his dramas from people, reducing bodies and their actions to their minimum to create what Martin Esslin has described as a "theatre of stasis"⁶². Within these empty settings, of immobile, partially seen, or invisible bodies, voices were echoed repeatedly. It was as though Beckett had to still bodies and eliminate forms of traditional dialogue in order to get at what Watt described as those "other voices"⁶³ the ones that sounded in the head. Ruby Cohen believed that "verbal repetition served Beckett as music, meaning, metaphor."⁶⁴ It was a metaphorical device that may fuse life and art in unity. The refrains in *Waiting for Godo*, for example, served as a weaving metaphor. They form "a warp for the woof of less pervasive repetitive devices."⁶⁵

However, one of the most familiar repetitions observed in Beckett's works was the "pseudocouples."⁶⁶ The pairs of characters that feature his early plays and fiction, as Elizabeth Barry said, expressed his most well-known philosophical preoccupation with the doubling or "the burdensome necessity to be witnessed by another consciousness in order to sustain one's own existence."⁶⁷ Didi and Gogo, Hamm and Clov, Winnie and Willie were unhappy together but cannot leave one another. This mutual dependence "not with you and not without you,"⁶⁸ whereby the subject was never fully presented unless another was there became a pathological dilemma in his later work.

William Worthen argued that Beckett literalized his characters' dilemma visibly.⁶⁹ Similarly, Sidney Homan argued that Beckett's characters mutually mirrored themselves as they mirrored Beckett himself and the readers or audiences as well. They needed no commentary or interpretation to clarify the hidden or the allegorical meanings. Their simplicity embodied the simplicity of their physical form

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The double presentation of *Molloy – Moran*, for example, as two parts in one story suggested the duality of the two characters (Molloy as the fugitive and Moran as the detective) in one person to reflect Molloy's or in other words Beckett's and the whole generation's mental and physical disintegration. The reflection of Molloy's face in the water revealed the fragility of Moran's or Beckett's identity:

I tried again to remember what I was to do with Molloy, when I
found him. I dragged myself down to the stream. I lay down and



the first itself lost its own completion. Meeting the boy in the second act, for instance, repeated the similar meeting in the first act suggested an endless repetition:

Vladimir: I've seen you before haven't I ?

Boy: I don't know, sir.

Vladimir: It wasn't you came yesterday?

Boy: No, sir.

Vladimir: This is your first time?

Boy: Yes, sir.

Silence. ⁷⁷

This suggestion turned to be "a ghostly repetition," ⁷⁸ of situation as well as of time. Time repetition was expressed in the present tense which was not-yet a present (past), and the present that can never be fully until the arrival of Godot (future). In their endless waiting for Godot in act 1 and act 2 without showing up, Vladimir, Estragon and the audience seemed to be shut in a closed loop of time. The open-endedness of this situation, according to Berensmeyer, produced "circular closure by implying the possibility of endless repetition."⁷⁹

The circular repetition suggested the instability of the present due to the ambiguous ranging of past and future about it. The circular song of Vladimir at the beginning of Act 2 provided a model for this kind of repetition. The linear repetitions, on the other hand, indicated an



"entropic decline."⁸⁰ The abrupt blindness of Pozzo or muteness of Lucky in their reappearance in Act 2, was simply a manifestation of an inability to trace time, in this case the past "one day he went dumb, one day I went blind, one day we'll go deaf, one day we were born, one day we shall die, the same day, the same second, is that not enough for you?"⁸¹ It was this kind of repetition-with-decrease which Beckett seemed to insist on in his later plays like the gradual burying of Winnie in the earth, the slowing down of speakers in *Play*, the weakening of the auditor's gesture in *Not I* and the enfeebling of the woman's voice in *Rockaby*. This kind of linear repetitive pattern, according to Conner, seemed to retain the direction of time, stabilize the repetition, distinguish different stages of decline and put an end point unlike the circular repetition.⁸²

The double -structure in *Endgame*, on the other hand, was impressive. The unity of this play was foregrounded by repetitive devices. Repetitions of actions like Clov watching Hamm at the beginning and the end of the play, Hamm taking off and putting on his old handkerchief, and the verbal echoes in Hamm's first and last soliloquies, as well as the repetitions of words and phrases shared by Hamm and Clov, all together gave the play its identity.⁸³

As in *Waiting for Godot*, there was an insistent self-doubling in this play. Self-reflexiveness took place in Hamm's posturing grandiloquence, mimicked by Nagg's story, Clov's sarcasm at the audience's expense and the references to playing of all kinds, from Hamm's opening words to the explicit references to asides, existes and soliloquies. All these features induced consciousness of the stage as



simply itself and of the stage as a space of representation- even minimal itself. This, in turn, persisted a residual self-doubling- the stage representing itself as stage and as performance.⁸⁴

It was suggested to see *Endgame* as a play of demonstrating the necessary and inescapable continuation of repetition rather than as one kind of repetitive pattern seeking an end. The repetitive structure of time and again in *Endgame* presumed that time will not come to an end because there will be no full existence before that ending, and because fullness of being will always be one step further to the future. The present will fade " into its reconstitution in future repetition." ⁸⁵ Both Hamm and Clov may be on the point of leaving at the end but the end did not come leaving the passage of time open once and for all. As in *Waiting for Godot*, time continued to present itself in a circular repetition opening by that "the stage of time or the time of the stage." ⁸⁶

The double presence of text and performance made of the resemblance as one of repetition rather than identity. Beckett presented Hamm as an actor in the dying moments of the play. The actor who played Hamm's part cannot be the same actor whose part was represented by Hamm as playing. Despite the difference between the actor who spoke the words of the text and the character who repeated the words of his story, there was certainly close resemblance between the two. The closer the performance to its text, the more it reasserted the interior fold of its original repetition.⁸⁷

For theater to be a theater, as Conner put it, "it must be observed, must be staged in a particular place for a particular audience." ⁸⁸ This



residual doubling of performance and audience has been confirmed here in Endgame by Hamm's withdrawal from the stage at the end of the play. His words may reflect his "solitude but they show in their hesitations and gaps the awareness of a potential audience." The conventional 'we' in "there we are, there I am, that's enough . . . Good . . . Since that's the way we're playing it . . . Let's play it that way and speak no more about it," ⁸⁹ can help to confirm the existence of Clov on the stage and the audience's suspicion that this scene has been played out between them before. However, Hamm's last affectionate words "You . . . remain" suggested the presence of the audience who remained to watch him and acknowledged the necessity of the 'Other'. ⁹⁰

The main struggle, then, in Beckett's drama and its production was represented by the struggle between the two forms of repetition which have been mentioned previously; Deleuze's 'naked repetition', the one that gave an exact copy of its origin and the 'clothed repetition' the one that stood as reproduction or repetition -with-difference. It was this opposition that structured most criticism of Beckett and underlined most cultural criticism. He avoided himself the dangers of interpretative reproduction by limiting his authority of interpreting his own work. The only acceptable sort of interpretation was through transparent repetition or autologous doubling of the original work of art.

This mastering of repetition was more tangible in Beckett's works especially in theater. As a director, he needed to be able to control the play of repetition in the theater rather than the discrediting of interpretative repetition as in his novels. Directing his own plays offered



with God and belief in fate design and man's will which were completely discarded from existentialism.

While Beckett's beliefs were thought to be familiar with the meaningless or futility of life or, namely ideas of 'absurdity', he explicitly renounced any association with the Theatre of the Absurd or more particularly with the premises upon which the critical grouping was based; for him this term was too 'judgemental'. However, the success of his works associated with the post-war pessimism; one of the basic features of absurdity had a dominant impact on his works especially *waiting for godot*. Yet, the open -ended finale of his works left some space for hope to sneak in and that what took his works out of the road of real absurdity.

In his early novels, Beckett was so much fascinated with surrealism and mostly with its language experiment, insanity, discrediting of reality and "systematizing confusion." Believing in surrealism and having a personal experience with psychotherapy made Beckett live the experience of madness twice. This helped Beckett to develop a doubling presentation of conscious and unconscious, body and mind, place and time, essence and identity. His fascination with the real madness and not "simulation" ,as the surrealists Breton and Eluard put it, was the difference that led him to create new genre of language pathology written with a real "linguistic insanity" not with "Surrealist automatic writing" or simulated one. *Murphy, Molloy and Moran* made a good example.



Like Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud, Beckett countered Humanism and believed that the human subject is not self-producing or self-coincidental, but is, rather, produced by its culture (Marx), its language (Nietzsche), and its unconscious drives and instincts (Freud). Critical questions such of cause and effect or birth and death became dominant in his works seeking a better understanding of these forces.

Beckett, therefore, was a tremendous innovator and experimenter in whatever form he employed. This was one reason why he has been described as the 'last modernist.' He applied meaning for every meaningless in man's life. He believed that everything in life even death was designed and left freedom for man to choose either to surrender and suffer or revolt and change. The circularity of his texts suggested the continuity of life in a repetitive pattern and that man's infirmity or death will not stop or interrupt this continuity. The circularity of Beckett's works of novels and dramas together may simply represent the writer's, any man's, any reader's or audience's life with all its phases of ups and downs.

END NOTE

¹ *Oxford Advanced Learning Dictionary*, 2004 ed.,s.v. "repetition."

² Steven Conner, *Samuel Beckett: Repetition, Theory and Text* (oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd.,1988) ,p.1.



³ Expressionism is a German movement in literature and other arts which was at its height between 1910 and 1925 –that is the period just before' during, and after World War I. Its central feature is a revolt against the artistic and literary tradition of realism, both in subject matter and in style. The expressionist artist or writer undertakes to express a personal vision- usually a troubled or tensely emotional vision- of human life and human society. Though suppressed in the early 1930s, the influence of this movement continued on English and Amrican , as well as European, art and literature. For more information see, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 6th ed.,s.v."Expressionism,"by M.H. Abrams (N.Y.: Harcourt Brase College publication, 1993), pp.62-3.

⁴Ronan MCdonald, *The Cambridge Introduction to Samuel Beckett*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006),p.,23.

⁵ Jonathan Boulter, *BECKETT: A GUIDE FOR THE PERPLEXED* (N.Y.: Continuum International Publishing Group,2008), p.81.

⁶ They were published together in English as *Three Novels* (1959).

⁷ Surrealism tends to emphasize the unconscious over the conscious mind and to practice spontaneous, automatic writing in which the supposed wellsprings of creativity are tapped without reference to the world of reality. See Benjamin Keatinge, " Beckett and Language Pathology," *Journal of Modern Literature JML* 31, no. 4 (Summer 2008): 87.

⁸ Conner.,p.2.

⁹ *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 6th ed.,s.v."Expressionism,"by M.H. Abram

¹⁰ Conner.,p.3.

¹¹ Jacques Derrida, 'Signature Event Context', in *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. Alan Bass (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1982), pp.309-30.

¹² Conner,p.3.

¹³ Ibid.,pp.3-4.

¹⁴ Donald F. Bouchard ed., 'Theatrum Philosophicum' review of *Difference et Repetition* in *Language, Counter -Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Oxford: Basil Blackwell,1977), pp.342-3.

¹⁵ Ibid., p.370.

¹⁶ *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, first published in 1920, reprinted in *The Standard Edition of the Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, trans. James Strachey, Vol. 18 (London: Hogarth Press, 1955)

¹⁷ Boulter, p. 82.

¹⁸ Conner,p.9.

¹⁹ Samuel Beckett, *The Unnamabl in Thomas Adams* (ebooksclub.org_The_Unnamable.pdf ,2011), p.3

²⁰ Conner,p.9

²¹ Samuel Beckett, *Molloy (Part I)* in Richard W. Seaver, ed, *Samuel Beckett ,I can't Go on I'll Go on: A Selection from Samuel Beckett's Work* (N.Y.: Grove Press,1976), p.213)

²² III Seen III Said,p59, quoted in Conner.,p.11.

²³ Beckett,*Watt*, p36.

²⁴ Conner,p.10.

²⁵ Beckett, *The Unnamabl* , p. 103

²⁶ John Fletcher, *ABOUT BECKETT: The Playwright and the Work* (London: Faber and Faber limited, 2006),p.69

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Bruce F. Kavin, *Telling It Again and Again: Repetition in Literature and Film* (Ithaca and London: Cornell Up,1972), p.33, p.141.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Existentialism or the Literature of the Absurd, which took hold in Europe during the forties and fifties, and to which Beckett is sometimes (though not always appropriately) allied. Existentialism comes in many guises and, possibly more than any other philosophical movement, has a popular and simplified, even caricatured image. The term is generally used to refer to a philosophical movement associated with a number of post-war French thinkers, principally Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus, which places the individual or the self at the

and asks questions like these: How does the human *subject to* rather than the *master of* language? How does the subject negotiate its relation to the drives that Freud posits? How can the subject free itself, if at all, from the cultural forces of capital, ideology, and religion, forces which precede and exceed the subject's experience?... See Boulter, pp.13-14.

⁴¹ Samuel Beckett, *Murphy* in Richard W. Seaver, ed, *Samuel Beckett, I can't Go on I'll Go on: A Selection from Samuel Beckett's Work* (N.Y.: Grove Press, 1976), p.23.

⁴² Richard W. Seaver, ed, *Samuel Beckett, I can't Go on I'll Go on: A Selection from Samuel Beckett's Work* (N.Y.: Grove Press, 1976), p.24.

⁴³ Boulter, p.86.

⁴⁴ Seaver, p.23.

⁴⁵ Rubin Rabinovitz, *The Development of Samuel Beckett's Fiction* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1984), p.74.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p.76.

⁴⁷ Seaver, p.p.xxxi-i.

⁴⁸ Boulter, pp.97-9 , p. 107. See also "Beckett and Language Pathology," Benjamin Keatinge, *Journal of Modern Literature JML* 31, no4, (Summer 2008) ,p.92

⁴⁹ Seaver, p.213

⁵⁰ "Derailment" is still considered, in modern day psychiatry, fundamental to formal thought disorder. In derailment, the speaker slides from one topic to another without sequential logic, and this "loosening of associations" leads to the apparently meaningless juxtaposition of unrelated topics. This lack of connectedness in the train of ideas gives the impression that there is no clear, teleological thread to the schizophrenic's utterances. The "word salad" or "schizophasia" that results can amount to complete incoherence, when words and sentences are so jumbled as to be completely incomprehensible to the listener. Neologisms or made up words may be



prominent. The patient may adopt a tone of “empty philosophizing,” in which speech is bombastic but vague and imprecise while at the same time being verbose and pseudo-logical. This “poverty of content” results in formulaic and pompous speech. Other abnormalities can include mutism or aphasia, monotonous delivery tone and a phenomenon known as “clanging,” where the speaker leaps from word to word on the basis of rhyme or phonological similarity rather than logical sequence; in Benjamin Keatinge, p.90.

⁵¹ Beckett, *Molloy* in Seaver, p.213

⁵² Keatinge, p.90.

⁵³ Beckett, *Molloy* in Seaver ., p.234.

⁵⁴ James Knowlson, *Damned to Fame: The Life of Samuel Beckett* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing plc., 1997), pp.175-181.

⁵⁵ Beckett, *Molloy*, p.34.

⁵⁶ Beckett, *Malon dies*, p.171.

⁵⁷ Beckett, *Unnamable*, p.268

⁵⁸ Nothing connected with war or with the Resistance in France was directly mentioned in these works. He successfully transformed and strengthened his experience into canned disaster, hermetic loneliness and abstract horror. See Nade_da Mosusova, “SAMUEL BECKETT AND MUSIC,” An Absurd Essay about the Idea of Musicality and Musical Form in *Samuel Beckett’s Short Pieces– Influences and Possibilities*. An earlier version of this article was presented at the International symposium “Beckett in the 1990s” in The Hague, (8–12 April 1992).p.115.

⁵⁹ Beckett, *Waiting For Godot*, pp. 20-1.

⁶⁰ Eleutheria (personification of liberty in Greek) was written in French in 1947. The American edition, published in 1995 by Rosset's new company Foxrock, in an English translation by Michael Brodsky himself a novelist and playwright. Beckett later recycled the name "Krap" (with two Ps) for his play krap’s Last Tape. Wikipedia, s.v. “Eleutheria”. (URL: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elleutheria_\(play\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elleutheria_(play))) retrieved on December 20, 2012.



⁶¹ Knowlson, p. 147.

⁶² Martin Esslin, ' *Mediations. Essays on Brecht, Beckett and the Media.*' (London: Abacus, 1983) ,pp.117-124.

⁶³ Beckett, Watt, p. 27.

⁶⁴ Ruby Cohen, *Just play: Beckett's Theater* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1980), p.105, p.193.

⁶⁵ Ibid

⁶⁶ "One's Own Company: Agency, Identity and the Middle Voice in the Work of Samuel Beckett" Elizabeth Barry, *Journal of Modern Literature JML* 31, no 2,(Winter 2008), p.,123.

⁶⁷ Ibid

⁶⁸ Ibid.,p., 130

⁶⁹ 'Beckett's Actor', in *Modern Drama* 26:4 (December 1983), p.240.

⁷⁰ Sidney Homan, *Beckett's Theaters: Interpretations for Performance* (London: Associated University Press, 1984), p.49

⁷¹ Samuel Beckett, *Molloy*, The Grove Centenary Edition. Volume II Novels (N. Y.: Grove Press, 2006),p. 140.

⁷² Conner, pp.116-7.

⁷³ Conner, pp.116-9

⁷⁴ Alian Robbe-Grille, "Samuel Beckett, or Presence on the Stage," in *Snapshots and Towards a New Novel* (London: Calder and Boyars, 1965),p.126.

⁷⁵ "The Uneventful Event," Vivian Mercier, in *Irish Times*, 18 (February 1956), p.6.

⁷⁶ Quoted in Conner, p.119.

⁷⁷ Beckett, *Waiting For Godot*, pp.47- 8.

⁷⁸ Conner, p.120.

⁷⁹ "Twofold Vibration": Samuel Beckett's Laws of Form,

Ingo Berensmeyer, in *Poetics Today* 25, no. 3,(Fall 2004), p.479.

⁸⁰ Conner, p.121.

⁸¹ Boulter,p.37.

⁸² Conner.p.121.

⁸³ Ibid. p.122

⁸⁴ Ibid., pp.123-4.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p.123.

⁸⁶ Quoted in Ibid, p.124.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p.125.

⁸⁹ Quoted in Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

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