

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria

**Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Kasdi Merbah Ouargla University**

Faculty of Letters and Languages

Department of Letters and English Language



Dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the Master's Degree in
the field of English Language and Literature

Major: Literature and Civilisation

A Lacanian Existentialist Reading of Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot

Presented and publicly defended by

Khiat hana

Tabib Halima lamiss

Supervised by

Ms. Amina Khalfi

Jury

| | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Mr. Bencheikh Youcef | KasdiMerbahUniversity | Chairperson |
| Ms. Amina Khalfi | KasdiMerbahUniversity | Supervisor |
| Ms. Bahri fouzia | KasdiMerbahUniversity | Examiner |

Academic Year: 2021/2022



Dedications

The study journey ended. I am here thanks to Allah and my father and mother's prayers. Much thanks and gratitude to them. I thank my father and mother who supported me and brought me to this stage. I dedicate my graduation to them. Thank you, my dear parents. I also dedicate my graduation to my sisters, my brothers and all my closest friends and everyone who supported me and stood by me in the most difficult of circumstances.

Special thanks to my lovely sisters, Sara, malak, Chaima and Shaima Elin Attiaa. Much love and gratitude for their continued support and love for me. Thank you for being there when no one else was.

Hana

Thanks to Allah, my academic journey is almost over.

First, I dedicate my graduation to the one who supported me throughout my life, who never refused my requests, the one who has always been satisfied with me in this life, and in the hereafter. I dedicate this work and this graduation to my late beloved father; may ALLAH shroud his soul in mercy.

I also dedicate my graduation to the one whose supplications were the secret and the reason behind my success; my dearest beloved mother; the woman who has always been my strength and my refuge after ALLAH, and to my brothers and sisters.

Lamiss



Acknowledgment

*In the name of ALLAH, the Most Gracious, Most Merciful, All praise to Him alone, the Sustainer of the entire world. I shall pay my deepest gratitude to Graceful and Compassionate ALLAH the Almighty for granting me the power to pursue and to finish this work. We would like to express our deepest gratitude and give a very special thanks to **Ms. KHALFI Amina**, our beloved teacher, and supervisor for her great help, guidance, and support throughout the stressful period of the research. Without her, the completion of this dissertation would not have been possible. Many thanks go to the members of the jury members for bearing the trouble of reading this dissertation and for all the instructions, and knowledge they granted us throughout all the academic years. At last, we like to extend our appreciation to all the teachers at the Department of English at Kasdi Merbah- Ouargla University.*



Abstract

This study aims to examine the absurd thought in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (1953) which coincided with the emergence of intellectual productions associated with the human, cultural and social conditions during the twentieth century and that contributed in the intellectual revolution and the emergence of many different theatres such as the Absurd theatre opening the way to address unconventional ideas and beliefs, especially in the field of literary and philosophical theories. By applying the psychoanalytic theory of a Jacques Lacan (1901-1981), this study attempts to analyze the characters in the story as it examines the concept of language that Samuel Beckett intended to use and the important role his language plays in expressing the unconscious meaning in the text drawing, in so doing, its deceptive nature in a naïve mould. Jacques Lacan's linguistically structured theory is what will be a reference to signify how to link Beckett's hidden ideas with his dramas embodied on stage.

Keywords: Unconscious, Existentialism, Language, Symbolic, Real.



Résumé

Cette étude vise à examiner la pensée absurde dans *En attendant Godot* (1953) de Samuel Beckett qui a coïncidé avec l'émergence de productions intellectuelles associées aux conditions humaines, culturelles et sociales au cours du vingtième siècle et qui a contribué à la révolution intellectuelle et à l'émergence de nombreux théâtres différents tels que le théâtre de l'absurde ouvrant la voie à l'examen d'idées et de croyances non conventionnelles, en particulier dans le domaine des théories littéraires et philosophiques. En appliquant la théorie psychanalytique d'un Jacques Lacan (1901-1981), cette étude tente d'analyser les personnages de l'histoire tout en examinant le concept de langage que Samuel Beckett a voulu utiliser et le rôle important que son langage joue dans l'expression du sens inconscient dans le texte dessinant, ce faisant, sa nature trompeuse dans un moule naïf. La théorie linguistiquement structurée de Jacques Lacan sera une référence pour signifier comment relier les idées cachées de Beckett à ses drames incarnés sur scène.

Mots-clés : Inconscient, Existentialisme, Langage, Symbolique, Réel.

ملخص

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى معاينة الفكر العبثي في مسرحية انتظار غودو (1953) والتي تزامن ظهورها والإنتاج الفكري المرتبط بالأوضاع الانسانية والاجتماعية والثقافية في القرن العشرين التي ساهمت في أحداث ثورة فكرية وظهرت عديد من مسارح المختلفة مثل المسرح العبثي وفتحت المجال لمعالجة الأفكار والمعتقدات من خلال التطرق الى نظرية التحليل النفسي لجاك الغير تقليدية وخاصة في مجال النظريات الادبية والفلسفية لكان (1901-1981) تحاول هذه الدراسة تحليل شخصيات القصة حيث انها تبحث في مفهوم اللغة التي تعتمد صامويل بيكيت استخدامها والدور الهام الذي تلعبه لغته البسيطة في التعبير عن المعنى اللاشعوري في النص فترسم بذلك طبيعتها المخادعة في قالب ساذج. نظرية جاك لكان ذات البنية اللغوية هي ما سيكون مرجعا للدلالة عن كيفية الربط بين افكار بيكيت المستترة واعماله الدرامية المجسدة على خشبة المسرح

الكلمات المفتاحية: اللاشعور, الوجودية, اللغة, الرمزي, الحقيقي.



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Introduction

The Background of the Study

The sense of frustration and helplessness after World War I, as it spread rapidly around the world, also reached its end after World War II and destroyed the foundations of humanity again. The bloody war led people to reconsider several horizons, including historical, social, and cultural experiences. Here, the emergence of the Cold War (1947-1991) also contributed to the emergence of a state of pessimism and disappointment among people. These events have destroyed what remained of faith in the future of humanity, the human conditions in post-war times have pressured writers to question their existence, analyse themselves and their relationship with the outside world, and here it can be confirmed that it led to a deep crisis in ideas. Also, it can be said that it led to a review and re-evaluation of the traditional concepts that were considered as scientific values such as (God, man, social system, to the government); this was a result of an explosion point due to the emergence of many new philosophical ideas and trends that were formed and developed to reconsider the reality of the contemporary person. This process in literature that reflected the prevailing mental attitudes and philosophies among people who could not deny the banality of life encouraged the emergence of the Absurd literature.

The platform for a world view of the Theatre of the Absurd is based on existential philosophy and reflects the crisis of human ideas and ideas. The theatre of

the absurd show's reality as absurd, that is, devoid of inner meaning, cause and effect as well as goals and objectives. The existential philosophy which seem intermingle with it attempts to understand or rather represents what makes humans either absurd or existential through investigating actions and feelings that are related to the human being as a living individual in the labyrinth of the aimless life that everyone lives for, and every individual on earth has the right and complete freedom to choose the life he desires and the goal he seeks and lives for, and it is not the right of others to determine the choices of others.

Existentialism spread more after World War II (1939-1945) in France. several famous philosophers such as Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980), for example, gave it its impetus that helped it spread as a cultural fashion in the streets of Paris and other European capitals. The twentieth century and the post-war era mostly emphasised upon philosophy as being a theoretical system that explains the mind, behaviour, and culture through a structuralist and post-structuralist extension of classical theories (Macomber, 2007, p. 15). Here, the clinical, empirical side was mainly held by the experiments, the sessions that were popularised as they promoted understanding and studying the unconscious mind, and its secrets. This experimental analysis was initiated by the work of Jacques Lacan from the 1950s to the 1980s. Lacanian perspectives contend that the world of language, the Symbolic, structures the human mind, and stresses the importance of desire, which is conceived of as endless and impossible to satisfy (Marcus & Nicholls, 2004, p. 270). Accordingly, the social and psychological traumas forced writers, poets, and drama-

turges to embody life as meaningless and create a different kind of literary experience which is called the symbolic or the symbolic language (Marcus & Nicholls, 2004, p. 270). The psyche has become subject to science. Here, sexual trauma was Freud's first answer to this question claiming that our early fantasies about sexuality can be not only as significant as any real event and those hysterics suffer mainly from reminiscences, what he means is that they are bothered by memories of a traumatic sexual nature that cannot be admitted into culture. It is the unspeakable enigma of our earliest desire, in other words, that founds the unconscious itself (Marcus & Nicholls, 2004, p. 272). As inspired by the literary writings of the time, Lacan interpreted Freud's systems, and psychical shocks as linguistic because they can be expressed in the trickery of language. The unconscious is structured like a language is Lacan's most influential contribution to psychoanalysis as well as literary and cultural studies (Homer, 2005, p. 68). He intended to investigate how does the unconscious expresses itself through the signifiers and their relations to other signifiers. The focalization upon language was appreciable as it stood as the medium for the individual, as the means via which he/she expresses and articulates their pain, joyfulness, opinion and desires. verbal and written language does not manifest itself in words only; it is anything that is expresses as the discourse of the other (Homer, 2005, p. 68) as long as it carries out everyone's thoughts and translated what a writer wishes to convey, what a poet aspires to celebrate and what a figure on stage or on the page attempts to draw in words and expressions, in emotions and feelings.

1. The Statement of the Problem

The war left a lot of intellectual freedoms as a result of the many pressures that people experienced. Writers' doubts and reconsideration of certain beliefs and their discovery of the brutality of wars contributed to the huge explosion of many aspects of thought that appeared in abundance after the war and were considered by contemporary man's thinking, that is, a man in that period has awakened. ; he was not oblivious, so the emergence of what expresses the ideas of modern man was inevitable, and art took on a means of expression. Samuel Beckett's body of work was considered daunting in terms of the way it interprets human psychology on the one hand and social status on the other. In this study, the data of this theatrical play of characters and events will be studied and analysed under a psychological analysis perspective, extracting excerpts about existential features to discuss the content and intellectual style that was linked to the reality of war in that period in this play understanding, in this context, how was the absurdist thought appreciable in defining the psychology of the modern man, and the reasons behind such a somber expression and gloominess of thought and soul.

2. Literature Review

Waiting for Godot (1953) is a masterpiece in world literature for its multifarious thematic variety and diversity of meanings. For this reason, it has aroused a notable amount of controversial debates and critical discussions among the liter-

ary critics and theorists of the world. Therefore, there are so many books and dissertations composed of the works of Samuel Beckett, especially on *Waiting for Godot*.

Liljeström, Tatiana edited in her dissertation a C-essay entitled “Existential Atheism in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*” (March 2012) This essay consists of theoretical interpretations by different scholars on the author and the play under analysis, from several angles this essay aims to consider this play as an existential atheist play by providing evidence of the atheism in the play and interpreting them so this study attend to interpret the figure of Godot in play as a reference to the image of God, also it shows how are the existential principles of the French post-war and display how they're reflected in Beckett's abused play to discuss the way the key principles of existentialism are used in the interpretation of an absurd drama. Dan Ciba wrote a research paper titled “Deconstructing Consciousness:” *The Search for Meaning in *Waiting for Godot**” (2013). In this paper, he examines multiple theories that can interpret the play. But since existential and absurd theories contradict and blend together, the ideal, the director and the audience can't come close to the pivotal process of understanding this journey in and out of this play only through integrating the theoretical concept of deconstruction suggested by Jacques Derrida with the psychoanalytic theories of Jacques Lacan's symbolic language, in which Beckett's signifiers can be explored without the need to specifically define their meaning, Also, Derrida's consciousness of nothingness is a perfect counterbalance to Lacan's understanding of the unconsciousness. Although these theories seem counterintuitive, the semiotic and psychoanalytic parallels enable

deconstruction of the text and provide a framework to further explore its meaning. Additionally, P. Aliakbar & Dr. Elham .N wrote a research paper entitled “ Essence or existence? existential reading of Samuel Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot* (May 2019) where they indicated the elements of Christian existentialism in the play by analyzing the main characters “Vladimir and Estragon” in this case as the objects of Sartrean philosophy “ existence precedes essence”. Their study of this play shows how Vladimir’s character is distended from Sartre’s free will philosophy and it’s more consistent with Kierkegaard’s Christian existentialism, in general. The character of this play can’t be in Sartrean existentialism.

All in all, these research papers and studies have discussed the play in a very interesting, informative way. They are thought-provoking on the topic in different aspects, but no one has addressed or applied both the “existentialism theory and the Lacanian psychoanalysis” to the analysis and interpretation of the play. Regarding existentialism, this present work will study *Waiting For Godot* by Reconciling Views Between Existentialism and the Lacanian psychoanalysis showing, in so doing, Beckett’s cynical approach to language as an inadequate vessel that only serves the fantasy of a “universal hood” and how, instead of clarifying, it’s been giving us a fictive belief of reality.

3. Aim of the Study

In spite of the fact that Samuel Beckett has never written explicitly about the war, one of his most important post-World War II plays was written between
 In spite of the fact that Samuel Beckett has never written explicitly about the war, one of his most important post-World War II plays was written between (1947-

1948). *Waiting for Godot* (1953) as a play, for example, has been written as a reaction to the traumatic era and experiences of the war which transformed people's lives, and caused psychological, and mental issues. As life has radically been altered by the atrocities of the war, Beckett attempted to highlight this in the speech, attitudes and state of mind of his characters. Hence, in the chosen corpus, the mental state, as well as inner and outer conflicts, will be investigated by focusing on the unconscious of the characters, their relationships with each other and with themselves, and their understanding of life and its absurdity and uselessness.

Lacanian theory, for example, examines the function of analytic language by separating it into three distinct orders: The Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real. since Beckett uses symbolic words, the play could be interpreted by Lacanian symbolic language because there are semiotic and psychoanalytic parallels that enable the meaning to be explored in words or in images. This study aims at studying Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*'s play through a psychoanalytic and an existential analysis and specifically by examining *Waiting for Godot* via interpreting characters, language that underline the workings of their unconscious.

4. Research Questions

In a society where artists have taken art as their means of expressing and communicating their innovative ideas, the writer's pen has been taken as a weapon to spread his neutral ideas about society and as a steadfast force against beliefs and politics that have oppressed and overshadowed the life of the simple human being. Imagination, in this context, stood as the means of escaping from an unjust reality where writing about imaginary figures, aspiring for a better life, or predicting the

future euphemized the pain and aided them to cover their real feelings and their most awkward thoughts. This present dissertation throws light upon the character's behavior in relation to reality and their own interpretation of the world around them. Hence, it raises the following research question:

How can Lacan's theory achieve a comprehensive analysis of the characters' behavior in this play and analyse the language in relation to the characters' unconscious minds?

5. Hypotheses

Many writers have used literature to express their feelings, describe the atrocities of the war and speak against the flaws they witnessed in their society, it became a great means of expression.

6. Research Methodology

The present study examines Samuel Beckett's enigmatic and ambiguous characterization in *Waiting for Godot* (1953) by adopting the Lacanian interpretation of the unconscious where Jacques Lacan (1901-1981) defines the unconscious as a social phenomenon that is manifested in language and speech. Here, the artistic representation of the subconscious within the banality of Beckett's theatrical language, the charming amalgam of the existential dogma and the absurdity of life triggers one to attempt his hand to plunge into such a daunting piece of work.

In this regard, the current dissertation focuses on the study of *Waiting for Godot* (1953) in the way it measures Beckett's linguistic manipulation using what seems to be a meaningless language to a psycholinguistic secret that emerged in the

ambiguity of the characters and facts of this artwork. This play constitutes in its events a maze of hidden reality; better, It constitutes different types of characters that exist in everyday life and whose mood of existence is shut down because of the social milieu they are likely unable to fathom. His metropolitan upbringing contributed to his intellectual maturity as a dramatist, his vision was a spur by the wars and upheavals he witnessed and interpreted through his writings and characters (McDonald, 2006). Beckett's creative intelligence helped him construct a philosophical world that is filled with meanings of loss, frustration, and despair. Beckett accentuated that "we are trapped by our genes, by our upbringing or by our social conditioning than to the existentialist idea of absolute freedom" (ibid.). Here, he believed that man is thrown into existence and deluded to live and endure an absurd life that only leads to nothingness.

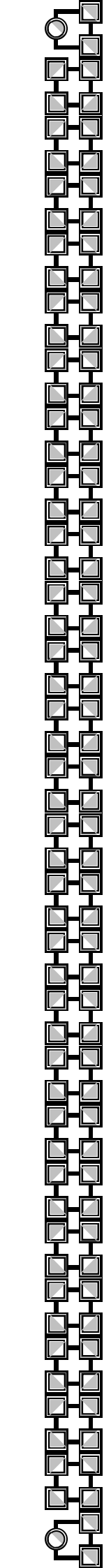
By adopting Lacan's psychoanalytic reading, and employing his three major Orders, namely, the Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real respectively, in the selected corpus, the work tries to decipher the ways in which his characters are puzzled in a senseless mood and an imaginative life that they created for themselves

7. Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation is divided into three chapters. Chapter one sheds light upon the socio-political and literary views of the twentieth-century writers and artists and the way they crafted their ideas and the way they interpreted and treated their subject matter. This chapter delves into the meaning of trauma, and existentialism and discusses Samuel Beckett as an existentialist writer. Chapter two is a

synthesis of the Lacanian theory of the unconscious and an examination of its characteristics and aspects of the Self and Other along with an understanding of the way the three Lacanian Orders function.

The remaining chapter is devoted to the corpus analysis by delving into the very essence of the playwright's ways of perceiving the world when shaping his figures of a complex mind and character. Chapter three attempts to analyze the Beckettian genius that is manifested through his many influences on the political atmosphere of his time. The conclusion shows how the reality that the characters pursue becomes a fantasy in the midst of the absolute fake and the obscured life.



**CHAPTER-I. Efflorescence of the
Literature Movement: A Historical and an
Intellectual Context**

Introduction

The world has witnessed many transformations in various fields, due to the dependence of the universe on different times. Each time I evoked a different reality with new ideas and events, and each century left a historical imprint that caused a certain change that occurred in the universe. Speaking of centuries, we are compelled to mention the twentieth century. As one of the periods that had a hand in radically changing the universe and human life due to all the events that accompanied this time in particular, the historic twentieth century began with the First World War in 1914 and ended seventy-five years later with the collapse of the Soviet empire in 1989. The short century marked the end of European Hegemony and the Rise of American Power and Influence Throughout the world, World War I constituted one of the most destructive wars in modern history. This brutal war reshaped the reality of the twentieth century into a bloody century.

What the wars left in that period changed many aspects of history and the intellectual and social life of individuals. The extent of the impact of the war on the reality of people emerged from aspects. Several methods were chosen by twentieth-century residents as a means of expressing and revealing what happened and the ideas that changed this war. The twentieth century opened wide horizons in various fields, and literature was one of these fields, as literature was a means of spreading knowledge and peace and extinguishing the flame of wars, as one of the most important artistic and intellectual movements that emerged.

In the twentieth century, as a unique means of expressing the reality of life and giving life to the words contained in books to be embodied by different theatres, such as the most famous of them in that period was the absurd theatre, which was distinguished by different visions and also as a drama in the theatre, which emerged in abundance in the twentieth century and gained wide fame for its embodiment of many creative ideas and contained theatres. In all its aspects of the character of the drama in all its forms and prospects, The ideal of this theatre and its concepts go back to the early poets who applied its idea for the first time in the arts between the 1920s and 1930s, it is called the avant-garde class, and at the same time it was undoubtedly strongly influenced by the horrific experience of the horrors of the Second World War, which showed the complete stability of any values, And it shakes the validity of any conventions, and highlights the fragility and lack of basic meaning of human life.

I.1. The Twentieth Century Literary Scene: An Overview

Literature is the mirror of life; this concept applies to the entire history of literature, and it is even more true in the modern era, which mixes so much between different matters of life. (Bennett, 2015, p.30). European life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the scene of violent intellectual movements, all directed towards solving the social problems that arose in that period of human history, due to the reaction caused by industrial progress in the economy and society. (Astro, 1990, p.9).

It was natural for literature to enter battle, and be a weapon of its effectiveness because the performers could not be isolated in their ivory towers, away

from the conflagration of conflicting classes and rapidly shifting situations and if they did their readers would walk away from them, seeking their own pain and share with them the thought of their problems. (Uhlmann, 2006, p.116). The more that happens, the more literature has been changing over the years.

During the Victorian era, for example, literature and its writers were distinguished by depicting the dark side of life represented in the gloom and social injustice in that era such as the novels of Charles Dickens, which embodied the lives of children that turned the cruelty of adults into hell. (Bennett, 2015, p.31)

The style of pessimism was also famous where writers adopted the tone and moodiness of darkness, and confusion. By the 20th century, literary writings took another dense and intense turn because they started to be influenced by the theories of thinkers such as Albert Einstein (1879-1955), Darwin, Freud and Marx; these intellectual leaders have profoundly changed the Western culture on different scales. (Uhlmann, 2006, p.39). Modernism and postmodernism movements have emerged as a radical break from 19th century Victorianism leading to post-modernism which emphasized self-consciousness and pop art respectively. (McDonald, 2006, p.133).

Modernism was not only influenced by the ideas of Charles Darwin, Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche among many others, but also it was affected by the cubism movement that was primarily a movement in the visual arts in the early twentieth century led by Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) and Georges Braque(1882-1963), who explored new forms of expression through an emphasis on sensible experience and fragmentation over linear planning. (McDonald, 2006, p.134). This

movement influenced modernist novelists and poets of the same time period such as Virginia Woolf and James Joyce, Gertrude Stein, and William Faulkner, who use Cuban elements in their writing to push the boundaries of the literary imagination. (Uhlmann, 2006, p.38). According to the pioneering developments in the social sciences, particularly the theories of Sigmund Freud: “Cubists were more concerned with the internal scene of the individual than the external scene of the objective world of the pre-Victorian period. The cubists’ exploration of the mind through visual arts led many writers to do the same through words and sentence structure” (Bennett, 2015, p.140).

I.1.1. The Twentieth Century Literature: Formal and Thematic Deflections

In a time where previous modes of writing had relied on logic and clarity to convey information, modernist writers tried to portray the thought as it happened, randomly and illogically. This method became known as the “stream of consciousness.” (McDonald, 2006, p.134). One of the great pioneers of this method was Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) and James Joyce (1882-1941). 20th-century literature is a diverse field covering a variety of genres. There are common characteristics that changed literature, especially in substance. Starting with individualism which was more interesting than society in modernism, in which modernist writers were fascinated with how the individual adapted to the changing world and the victory of the individual over obstacles. (Bennett, 2015, p.196). In other words, since the carnage of two World Wars profoundly affected writers of the period, the world was

becoming a more absurd place every day so modernist authors portrayed this absurdity in their works. Franz Kafka (1883-1924)'s *Metamorphosis* (1915), in which a peddler transforms into an insect-like creature is an example of modern absurdity and the mere nonsense that life symbolized at the time. Twentieth-century writers imagined reality with multiple layers, many of them hidden or in a sort of code. (McDonald, 2006, p.109). For example, the symbolism was not a new concept in literature, but the Modernists' particular use of symbols was an innovation. (Astro, 1990, p.24). They left much more to the reader's imagination than earlier writers, leading to open-ended narratives with multiple interpretations. Modernist writers expressed themselves in their writing as they reacted to the challenging accelerated times that they were experiencing themselves. These reactions were incorporated through their literary work whether it would be through painting, sculpture, or poetry. (Bennett, 2015, p.23). In poetry, there was a noticeable writing style difference in High Modernism writing and Low Modernism writing. High modernism writers used more formal language looking at their changing society and considered this era as a period of loss whereas low modernism writers used informal language with the traditional structure of poems. (Uhlmann, 2006, p.98). In prose, modernist writers expressed their opinions in their political views explicitly. (parker, 1953, p.45). In drama, the Modernism playwrights cleverly blended music and verse in an attempt to make a fresh and brand-new literary outlook. (Bennett, 2015, p.29). As far as themes are concerned, modernist writings revolved around sad ideas of loss and denial and they used this era as a period of experimentation in search for new forms of expression. In this regard, modernist writers projected morality as the

characterized aspect to resonate with the individual's gloriousness in the story. (McDonald, 2006, p.38) ...

I.1.2. The Impact of the World Wars on the Twentieth Century

Literary Scene

The Impact of the World Wars on the Twentieth Century Literary Scene

The beginning of the twentieth century was not stable in history as a result of the dynamic shifts in power and immediately thereafter the horrors of World War I shook the ears of the world because it radically changed the way people viewed the world. Intellectually, socially and politically, this was not an easy kind of transformation, and its results were not all positive, but the intellectual movement that followed the war was the strongest and most widespread, as it reflected the features of the war in the presented works. (Bennett, 2015, p.14). Literature was used as a means to express the bruises left by the war in the hearts of human beings. The war has changed many aspects of thought. Many artists and intellectual schools have contributed to the dissemination of a new type of ideas, most of which centred on human freedom and extricating him from his wrong beliefs. (McDonald, 2006, p.126). Therefore, it can be said that the messages of the new thought was in various forms of literature, including novels of all kinds and dramas that embodied a reality and took it out from the pages of books to be in the public eye and poems that dealt with the events of the war from several aspects. Thomas Hardy (1840-1928), a prolific British writer marked the end of century by his "By the Century's Deathbed", a poem he published on December 31, 1900, as the last day of the nineteenth century:

The land's sharp features seemed to be
The Century's corpse outleant,
His crypt the cloudy canopy,
The wind his death-lament.
The ancient pulse of germ and birth
Was shrunken hard and dry,
And every spirit upon earth
Seemed fervourless as I (Cited in. Abrahams, 2005, p. 1872).

By the dawn of the twentieth century, social conventions changed and many of the religious and traditional aspects related to human behaviour and conduct changed and weakened. The rapid transformation was mainly because the unprecedented revolution in technology, economics, science and thought. As a consequence, writers of the twentieth century “sought to create new forms that could register these profound alterations in human experience” (ibid., p. 1873). Here, these writers needed to refine their talents, and cope with the new changes by becoming more expressive and unorthodox. In this fashion, they were allowed to draw the hidden image that was attempted in analysis by philosophers, psychoanalyst, and visual artist in their own style, and interpretation. In so doing, they matched in their creativity scientists and inventors as they were themselves social analysts contributing in society and enriching its intellectual essence. In one of his prefaces, T. S. Eliot argued that it is in the poets sense of “depersonalization that art may be said to approach the condition of science as the mind of the poet is the

shred of platinum that catalyses change but itself remains inert, neutral, and unchanged" (ibid., p.1873)

Literature has reached a new maturity and rich diversity. After World War II, a new generation arrived with its different ethnic, regional and social character. (McDonald, 2006, p.13). This war provided with one of the most important developers and creators of the most influential in literature. It gave remarkable poets, and writers like Anne Frank [1],(1929-1945)., Hemingway (1899-1961). , Truman Capote(1924-1984), Elizabeth Taylor (1932-2011), Barbara Pym(1913-1980),Samuel Beckett(1906-1989),Salinger(1919-2010),Vladimir Nabokov(1899-1977), Jorge Luis Borges(1899-1986) and many other titans (Esslin, 1961, p.330). The traumas and post-traumas of both WWI and WWII resulted greatness, and showed another positive aspect in the human achievements. To say it another way, the calamities, hardships and atrocities of the world wars produced a genius body of work on the artistic, aesthetic levels that the world is analysing, studying and celebrating today.

1.2. The Twentieth Century Drama

Literature was used in the twentieth century, and especially after the First World War, as a means of expressing what happened and what was not in the twentieth century as previously mentioned. One of the ways that appeared in that period and flourished in Western drama that contained topics about human life and existence and discussed topics from political to revolutionary and philosophical fields, all related to man and his life, drama is one of the most important types in literature. Drama is a unique type in literature as it is the literary form designed

for the theatre. It is alone "is a complex art, in which author, actor, and theatre director all come together to produce the overall effect". (Bloom, 2008, p.31). Drama is a type of writing designed to be spoken by one or more characters on stage. In the play's script, stage directions often describe the appearance of a character or group and sometimes say what the character does. But other than that, the only description or narration that can be found in the play is spoken by the characters themselves. So, the play consists mainly of speeches - dialogues or monologues or both. Since plays are written to be seen and heard, and reading a play can never replace them.

One of the most important playwrights of the period, who knew the scope of drama, was George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950). He is one of the greatest playwrights in English literature. According to Shaw, "drama should revolve around philosophy and society and be concerned with politics as well". (Esslin, 1961, p.361). He tends to make fun of the audience rather than the characters in his plays' (McDonald, 2006, p.39). He also enjoyed showing the opposite of what the audience expected and believed in the power that compels people to appreciate life and struggle for reality (Esslin, 1961, p.362). His most important plays embody his philosophy about life, man and his experience with the hardships, wins and failures in society. Yet, his ideas were still as conventional and bound to their social and political standards of the era where he depicted stereotypical figures whose society, culture, and aspirations can either make them or break them. Influenced by his personal life, Shaw depicted human suffering and pain and stood as an icon to be

followed for the coming generations of dramatists similar to Samuel Beckett (1906-1989).

I.2.1. The Theatre of The Absurd

The Theatre of the Absurd is a group of plays about World War II produced by a group of playwrights (Esslin, 1961, p.18). The Theatre of the Absurd. Doodling is considered a tool for overcoming the psychological feelings that arose due to the conditions in which people lived at that time. Much of what was produced was an account of the reality of the war, leading to a massive explosion in the period. Emotions in various artistic fields, the most important of which was literature, especially the absurd theatre (McDonald, 2006, p.130), which remained popular in the fifties. The theatre of the Absurd is a term derived from an essay by French philosopher Albert Camus (1913-1960). (Esslin, 1961, p.19). In his book *The Legend of Sisyphus*, written in 1942, he first defined the human condition as meaningless and illogical (Esslin, 1961, p.19). The absurdity of the absurd. In *The Theatre of the Absurd* (Bloom, 2008, p. 30). Martin Esslin (1918-2002) also used the term in 1962 for the first time in his book *The Theater of the Absurd* (1961). Esslin states that the theatre of the absurd "strives to express the folly and inappropriateness of the human condition" (Astro, 1990, p.24).

The origins of the theatre of the absurd can be traced back to avant-garde experiments in art in the 1920s and 1930s (Bloom, 2008, p.30). At the same time, it appears that the theatre of the absurd was also a reaction to the disappearance of the religious dimension from contemporary life. It can be seen as an attempt to restore the significance of myth and ritual for our times, by sensitizing man to the

absolute truths of his condition, and by instilling in him a lost sense of cosmic wonder and primordial pain again. (Bennett, 2015, p.30). As a result, the absurd plays took on a very innovative and unusual form, the immediate aim of which was to astound the viewer and remove them from this comfortable and traditional life of everyday concerns. (Bennett, 2015, p.30). In the stale and atheist post-World War II world, such traditional artistic forms and standards that are no longer convincing and have lost their validity can no longer continue to be used, as it has been said that “absurdity will replace logic and reasoning when the war is over” (Pierre Schoen, 2009, p.45). The theatre of the Absurd openly rebelled against the conventional theatre. In fact, it was against theatre. It was surreal, illogical, conflict-free, and devoid of plot. (Esslin, 1961, p.20). The conversation seemed complete, and it was not surprising that the Theatre of the Absurd faced misunderstanding and rejection.

As stated earlier in this dissertation, Esslin used the term absurd to state that “the theatre of the absurd seeks to express the folly of the human condition and the inadequacy of reason through the exercise of rational and rhetorical activity” (Bennett, 2015, p.21). The absurdity of the absurd. In *The Theatre of the Absurd*. (McDonald, 2006, p.131) . This meaninglessness to human health began in World War II, so theatrical absurdities provided the basis for a logically inexplicable world. Life in a silly world. Additionally, the concept of human alienation in a guaranteed hostile universe and the method of absurd drama that the absurd is both a philosophy and a technique between theatre writers of the absurd similar to

Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (1953) and *Endgame* (1957) and Eugene Ionesco (1909-1994) 's *Bald Soprano* (1950) and *Rhinoceros* (1959). (McDonald, 2006, p.36). it is common that the absurdist philosophy aligns with the concept of existentialism. Existentialism is a philosophy that states that a person lives a solitary life and that his life is essentially meaningless, and therefore, trying to decipher any meaning or purpose in it is futile and futile (Bennett, 2015, p.20). The concept of absurdity has been associated with the name of the philosopher of revolution and the absurd. (Bloom, 2008, p.28). in his "The Myth of Sisyphus", Camus describes Sisyphus as a "hero of the absurd who teaches us the supreme devotion that casts out gods and lifts up rocks". (Esslin, 1961, p.360). This basic meaning of Camus and the concept of the absurd, and the absurd in general clearly goes with the idea of different, as it deals with the trinity of being, man and the universe from its absurd perspective. He argues that absurdity expresses a fundamental disharmony, a tragic incompatibility in our existence, arguing that the absurd is the product of a collision or confrontation between our human desire for order, meaning, and purpose in life, and the "empty and indifferent silence of the universe" Camus also stated that: "in the world of suddenly deprived of illusions and light, man feels strange ... This divorce between man and life, the actor and his environment, really constitutes a feeling of absurdity from human life that the theatre of the absurd took the basis of existential philosophy and combined it with dramatic elements to create a theatrical style. Camus presented a logically inexplicable world. Life in a word, absurd. The concept of human alienation in a hostile universe is the content and method of absurd drama. It must be born in mind that the absurd is both a

philosophy and a style. Some notable writers on the theatre of the absurd are Samuel Beckett; who also perfectly illustrates Camus's absurd concept in Sisyphus's myth. He says: "The world itself is not absurd or meaningless, but encounters nihilistic ideas that create meaninglessness in men" (Camo, 1965, p. 106). During and after World War II, Camus suggested the necessity of a return to rationality in a world that is not absurd in itself but where humans assume an absurd situation where the world does not give people what they are. The need, the need for true realism presented by Camus's absurdity in the post-World War II world as opposed to belief in illusion or non-acceptance of the absurdity of our reality, the theatre of the absurd with peculiar irony is also "a symptom of security" (McDonald, 2006, p.131).

Commenting, also, on the absurd, Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980) adds: "It is certain that Absurdity lies neither in man nor in the world; If you think of it separately, but since the dominant characteristic of man is being in the world, then absurdity is ultimately an inseparable part of the human condition." (Astro, 1990, p.76). Besides, the universe that does not provide any benefit to man, and the fate of mankind is centred in a world that does not care about people. The theatre of the absurd strives to express his sense of indifference to the human condition and the inadequacy of the rational approach by explicit abandonment. On rational evidence and rhetorical thought, Camus proposed solutions to coexist with the absurd state of man, where he prepared the decision to commit suicide as cowardice and an escape from the absurd life and that giving it up is not a real wealth and that life is meaningless and that existence is unreasonable, but Camus rebelled against

the absurd and the absurd in Life and existence, and thus this rebellion gives life a value. (Bennett, 2015, p.35). Camus's philosophy is a philosophy of challenge to existence and nothingness; for him, the simple solution is that “a person must retain the absurdity of this universe and accept it and coexist with it, as Sisyphus did when he accepted his fate with all courage” (Bennett , 2015, p.34). writers of the absurd theatre wanted to draw” . (Bloom , 2008, p.125). Since absurdity in Camus' view is an unavoidable and defining characteristic of the human condition, the only appropriate response to it is full and courageous acceptance: "Life can be better lived if it has no meaning.” (Esslin, 1961, p.20).

I.3. Samuel Beckett's Childhood, Education and Career

Every art has its own rhythm and every novelist has a life that has its own book with its own title. You cannot read a literary work of art without referring to the writer. This is one of the most important rules in analysing a work of art because the artwork is not just thoughts that prevailed in a writer's mind so he wrote them, but rather it is a glimpse into his private life, his thinking, his knowledge, and religious and cultural beliefs from which he created a life in his writings. Samuel Beckett (1906-1989), one of the most important playwrights who coloured the theatre and by stamping his name via his creative works.

Samuel Barclay Beckett on Good Friday, in the affluent village of Foxrock, south of Dublin. He was the second son of William and May Beckett, considered a famous Irish writer whose fields of writing varied between literature, poetry, novels, and plays (Astro, 1992, p. 35). The 1969 Nobel Prize in Literature praised him

for "the body of works which in new forms of fiction and theatre have transformed the want of modern man into his glorification" (ibid.). As a character who was known to be shy, sensitive, and generous with friends and strangers, he was kind to the privacy of refusing to have any part in the promotion of his books or plays (Astro, 1992, p. 39). in spite of the fact that he had spent most of his life in Paris and wrote in both French and English, his language and dialogue were in an Irish style because he was influenced by many of his Irish ancestors.

In terms of his relationship with his family, Beckett was very attached to his father and close to him and they often walked long distances together in the Dublin Wicklow hills, the landscapes that dominate Beckett's work ((Lawley, 2008, p.12). His father's premature death in 1933 have left a terrible absence in Beckett's life and given him "his central theme - the arbitrary, undeserved nature of human pain" (Lawley, 2008, p. 12). The author did not know how to handle the incident well and had to see a psychiatrist; he often suffered from panic attacks, anxiety, and depression (Lawley, 2008, p. 18). In 1933, such severity reached the point that he decided to go to London to seek psychological help. He underwent psychoanalysis for about two years.

As for his relationship with his mother, we can say that May Beckett was emotional and domineering at the same time, and her "brutal love" had a great influence on her son's development (Astro, 1992, p. 41). She had deep religious beliefs affiliated with Quaker's ideas. As for his family, it was of a religious nature, as it was a member of the Anglican Church in Ireland, she was forcing him to recite the Lord's Prayer kneeling every night. However, his fate made him look similar to

his mother. There is a play that clarified the extent of his relationship with Kate to his mother, or rather what applies to his feelings towards his mother, and it is the play *Krapp's Last Tape*, a one-act play produced in 1958, and published in 1959. With this character, Beckett recalls parts of his autobiography (Astro, 1992, p. 41).

From an educational and athletic point of view, Beckett attended primary school at Earlsfoort House in central Dublin. Then he went to Portora Royal School in Enniskillen, which is Oscar Wilde University (Astro, 1992, p. 52). In 1923, he joined Trinity College Dublin where he studied French and Italian. He excelled academically and was awarded a prestigious scholarship in Modern Languages at the end of his third year. He graduated in 1927, ranked first in his class, and earned a college gold medal. Beckett became an accomplished player in school and college, excelling in rugby and cricket as mentioned in *Wisden*, the cricketers' bible, as well as practicing tennis, golf, and boxing (Astro, 1992, p. 35). As for his career, his immersion in the Parisian literary scene had a profound effect on the young Irishman. On his return to Dublin, Beckett was unhappy to give a lecture at Trinity and resigned a little over a year later. He said he can't teach others what he's doing himself he hasn't learned yet (Astro, 1992, p. 61).

I.3.1. Samuel Beckett and World War II Trauma

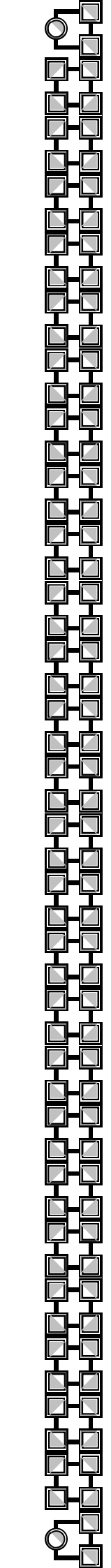
When the war was declared in September 1939, Beckett was in Dublin to visit his mother. He soon made arrangements to return to Paris, where he famously declared his preference for France at war over Ireland at peace. Dismayed by the treatment of his Jewish friends under Nazi occupation, Beckett became actively

involved in the resistance in Paris, primarily as an information processor. In August 1942, his cell was betrayed and more than fifty of its members were arrested and sent to concentration camps. Beckett and Susan narrowly escaped and managed a perilous journey to unoccupied France, where they lived out the rest of the war. While working as a farm laborer during the day, Beckett wrote his experimental thriller novel "Watt" in the evening. After the war, Beckett was honoured for his resistance activities with the Croix du Guerre and the Médaille de la Reconnaissance Francaise. With characteristic self-deprecation, he later dismissed his wartime activities as "Boy Scout stuff". Later in 1945, after a stint in Dublin, he returned to France by working as an interpreter and shopkeeper at the Irish Red Cross hospital in Saint-Lo, before re-joining Suzanne in Paris.

Conclusion

To sum up, one can say that war can only be seen as a negative criminal reference owing to its atrocities that changed centuries of human life. The twentieth century is considered the most important phase in human history because of the immense change which has been observed in all its fields. Yet, from the horrors of war, and its crimes, prominent developments emerged especially in the field of thought. This stood as a weapon for man to express extremist ideologies, beliefs and his /her opinions about war. Many literary works, both intellectual and theatrical, were related to the topics of war and their stories, as man chose words for expression. There are those who chose a theatre to embody a reality they went through as they portrayed the nature of the absurd life in a similar atmosphere that

was carried out by the absurd theatre. It formed a new link between man and the strange new art conveying a new thought in the fields of the theatre as it was an extremist thought for some and an expression for some others.



**CHAPTER-II. Psychoanalysis and
Existentialism: A Theoretical Growth**

Introduction

This chapter reflects slightly on the concepts of the theory of Sigmund Freud (1856 - 1939) and discusses Jacques Lacan (1901-1981) Psychoanalytic theory of the unconscious and its workings. As was invented and pioneered by Freud, psychoanalysis aimed at dealing with analysing and understanding complex human desires. Psychoanalysis was designed in context to see hidden structures within the individual. and work to explain and reveal the inner self. To succeed in his analyses and better comprehend the human mind and psyche, Freud needed to indulge in social and cultural fields in order to be able to link the dots, and interpret the human mind by reference to its context and on the basis of an existing background of the patient himself. As this chapter attempts highlighting psychoanalytic ideas and aspects, it mingles them with existentialist notions inspired from the Sartrean philosophy and ideology of existentialism.

II.1. Modern Psychoanalysis Between Freudian Innovation and Lacanian Genius

In his *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899), Sigmund Freud focused upon the way dreams are interpreted and understood. As a psychoanalyst, Freud managed to treat the human mind through analysing its secrets. He divided the mind into three parts: the id, the ego and the superego respectively. (Rennison, 2001, p. 29)

Freud pioneered to deal with the unconscious as being a system in mind which functions as a means of suppressing all desires. He suggested that “all mental processes were, very largely, unconscious and that the conscious, rational mind was only the tip of an iceberg” (ibid., p. 30). Apart from that aspect, he believed that man is mainly conditioned through their dark sides, and desires. The only power repressing their fantasies is social costumes, and values that would rationally band all sorts of action. According to Freud, the unconscious is the “result of repression” (ibid., p.30). He considered that it is a storeroom which is difficult to access (Rennison, 2001, 30). The creation of such daring a system in mind was due to different experiences Freud himself has been through during his childhood; he has attempted a self-analysis via subjecting his own dreams to be at scrutiny. The unconscious is only discovered; better, created to meet the unseen and the unspoken. It is “not a place that was ready to receive such a desire: it is produced, opened up, of this act of primary repression” (ibid., p. 31). The tripartite division exemplified by Sigmund Freud echoes the way the human mind functions. (Rennison, 2001, p.31). According to him, the “id is the mind we are all born with, a seething mass of wholly selfish desires and the impulses aimed at the immediate and complete gratification of those desires” (ibid., p.38). It is “the id” which is the driving force behind . . . the pleasure principle” (ibid., p38). Freud saw that the id is all the desires that are subdued and enacted reasonably when controlled by the second system represented as the ego. It is “the rational part of the mind, the part that reacts to the outside world and allows the individual to adapt to reality, to acknowledge the ‘reality principle” (ibid., P.39).

What is interesting about Freudian Psychoanalysis of the mind, as a pioneering survey, is not only these three systems, or the way they function identifying one another; rather, it is the way all these desires, when subdued by a higher law, manage to establish an outlet. Following Freud's same steps, Jacques Lacan, a French psychoanalyst, attempted his hand at reading and reanalysing Lacan was exposed to many types of criticisms that stemmed from a misunderstanding of the idea of analysis, as he analysed and read Freud's thoughts and was considered an analyst of Freudian studies (Homer, 2005, p.32). Therefore, Jacques Lacan analysed all those complex Freudian studies. His psychological philosophy was built on Freud's studies He reformulated concepts and even developed or changed most of them, such as that there is a kind of intellectual intertextuality in the famous trinity of Freud which is the ego, the super ego and the id. (Parker, 2008, p.174). ions.

II.1.1. The Freudian Subconscious and its Nature

The way Freud identified the subconscious has always been a controversial not because of the claim that the rational soul is subject to a much broader range of blind irrational instincts. (Parker, 2008, p.147), but because it demonstrated how the unconscious itself obeys its rules and logic and how it speaks and thinks (Evans, 1996 p.243).

As a way to revisit Freud's thoughts and theories, Lacan's version of the unconscious translated the fact that "the ego must not conquer the id" (parker, 2008, p.157). Better, Jacques Lacan and his theory regarding the structure and language of the unconscious has established a kind of intellectual phobia for some

psychoanalysts because he created a contradiction in saying that the unconscious is organized like language and considered the unconscious to be a signifier in itself while linking to psychoanalysis of language. Lacan borrowed the term signifier from Saussure (1857- 1913). According to him, “the signifier is the phonological basis of the sign is not the phonemic tone itself, but the phonemic form of this tone (Bailly,2009. P.25). According to Saussure, the signifier is the phonemic form that indicates the signified. (Bailly, 2009.P.27)..

II.2. Lacan’s Linguistic Unconscious

While Saussure points out that there is a mutual dependence relationship between signifier and signified, Lacan argues the opposite and claims that signifier advances the signified and produces it (Evans, 1996, p.215). The signifier is, first of all, a material base that has “no meaning within a closed differential system”, and the signifier without meaning is called according to Lacan “the pure signifier, where the priority is a logical priority and not a temporal priority” (Evans, 1996, p.213), and the system with a purely logical structure is the unconscious (Homer,2005, p.96). This claim constitutes a demolition of Saussure’s concept of the sign. From Lacan's point of view, language is not composed of signs but of functions. As a result of this, Lacan made modifications to Saussure's layout of the sign, which according to Lacan, the interrelationship involved and inherent in the signifier, and the line between the signifier and the signified represents the unit and after the modifications made by Lacan, -S- refers to the signifier and -s – to the signified, and thus, the two positions of the signifier represented by the capital letter and the

signified by the lowercase are reversed, which shows the priority of the signifier over the signified (Bailly, 2009.P.26.27) The line of fracture that Lacan left between the signifier and the signified “does not refer to the union but to the resistance imprinted in the meaning”. For Lacan, this layout is known as the “topography of the unconscious” (Evans,2005, p.211).

II.2.1. Lacan’s terminologies

II.2.1.1. The Self

It is a term present in Lacan's very early theoretical writings, and since 1945 it occupied a central place in his works (Homer, 2005, p.36). Lacan divides the self into three types of impersonal self, the purely morphological self, or the mental self. Secondly, there is the reciprocal self-equal with every other self and interchangeable with any other self so that it is recognized in parallel with the other, thirdly the personal self, which establishes its uniqueness through Self-recognition (Homer, 2005, p.37). In 1953, Lacan made a difference between the self and the ego and this distinction became one of the basic personalizations in his works and claims that the self is not parallel to the conscious feeling of doing actions and is nothing but an illusion created by the ego, but is parallel to the unconscious (Bailly, 2009, p.26). Lacan defined the subject as “what is presented by the signifier in front of another signifier, that is, the subject is the product of language, except for its linguistic and logical position” (Homer, 2005, p.116). To distinguish his definitions of the self, Lacan writes a broken line on the S symbol for the "divided self", to illustrate the fact that the self is essentially divided (Evans,1996, p.211).

II.2.1.2. Desire

Lacan's goal of psychoanalysis when speaking of desire, does not mean every desire, but of the unconscious desire, not because he does not consider conscious desire unimportant, “but because unconscious desire is what constitutes the central goal of psychoanalysis” (Homer,2005, p.15). Lacanian concept of desire in analytic clinic of psychosis. *Frontiers*). . For Lacan, desire is “the essence of man; it is simultaneously the heart of human existence, and the central concern of psychoanalysis” (Evans,2006, p. 38). Here, in his attempt to define desire as an unconscious aspect, he highly aligned it with the lack of something, and emphasised upon the idea of demand and need in his writings (Evans, 2006, p.38).

II.2.2. The Imaginative, the Symbolic, and the Real

The imaginative, symbolic, and real three systems theory constitutes the general structure of the various concepts and phases in most of Lacan's intellectual path (Parker, 2008, p.174). Lacan has used the term imaginary to refer to us to illusion, fascination, and temptation, and relates specifically to the relationship between the ego and the reflected image (Parker, 2008, p.174). The imaginary is a symbol of what is marginal, for the imaginary is far from being marginal because “it has projections that have a great influence on the real and we cannot put it aside and overcome it” (ibid., p.73). In this regard, “the ego and the counterpart represent the system of the bilateral exchange relationship and they are interchangeable with each” (Bailly,2009, p.21). This relationship is twofold in character between the ego and the peer, which is essentially “a narcissistic relationship”

(Easthope,1999, p.61). Narcissism is an additional distinguishing feature of the imaginary system and narcissism is always accompanied by a measure of aggression.

The Symbolic appears as the Law of the Father. Additionally, he considers that structures of society are symbolic” (Rabaté, 2003, p.72). When Lacan talks about the symbolic function he makes it clear that his concept of the symbolic system owes much to Strauss’s (1829-1902) anthropological work, from which the term "symbolic function" is adopted”. (Parker, 2008, p.175). Lacan borrows specifically from Strauss the idea that “social existence is structured by specific laws regulating kinship relations; yet, he does not equate the symbolic system with language in a simplistic equality. He believes that “language engages the real and the imaginary dimension along with its symbolic dimension. (Evans,1996, p.218). Hence, the symbolic dimension of language is “the signifier and the elements in this dimension do not have a positive existence, but their pure existence is governed by the strength of the mutual difference between them” (Evans,1996, p.218)

II.2.3. The Symbolic, Language and Society

Shifting from the Imaginary to the Symbolic signifies that the child enters the language and accepts the rules and dictates of society. (Homer,2005, p.60). Those laws and restrictions that control his desires and rules of communication. To say it differently, by recognizing the name of the father, one can enter into the society of others, and can abide to its rules, norms and restrictions. In his definition of the symbolic, Lacan attempted at generalizing this concept to encompass diverse aspects which are identified as the other. Consequently, the Symbolic Order refers to any system which denies the existence, the completeness and wholeness of the

self, and imposes, as manifested in society, language, parents, school or any other higher system, rules and chuckles on the imaginary breaking in so doing its unity and power.

The real is not set from now on opposite the imaginary only, but it is placed in what is through the symbolic; it is not as the symbolic, “built with concepts of opposites, as a contradiction between existence and non-existence "in the real there is no non-existence”(Evans, 1996; p.186). While this symbolic “contradiction between existence and nothingness indicates the continuing possibility that something may be missing in the symbolic system” (Parker,2008, p.176), the real is always present in its place, which is the "impossible" (Homer,2005, p.112), According to Lacan , the Real is “unimaginable, it is not possible to include it in the symbolic system. It is not accessible by any means. It is this quality of resistance to encoding and impossibility that bestows on the real; its shocking and distinctive character as it indicates a state of nature from which we are forever separated by our entry into language” (Evans,1996, p.186)..

II.3. The Interpretation of the Lacanian Unconscious

Lacan focused on the human being and in particular on his relationship to language. Lacan identified three stages of ego development: the l'hommelette stage, the mirror stage, and the symbolic stage. The l'hommelette stage is the stage in which the child has no idea of existence as a being in the world. This lack of self-knowledge is a moment of complete bliss, which he calls “primal oneness” (Easthope, 1999, p.89). Once the primordial union with the mother is removed, the

child enters the imaginary realm of separate existence as a soul. (Easthope, 1999, p.110). Although the child has an initial exit from the union with the mother in the imaginary or mirror stage, his self is not yet fully developed as an individual (Easthope, 1999, p.180).

The child knows and does not fully know about his separate existence. He sees his own reflection in the mirror and acquires a false idea of himself (Eagleton, 1996, p. 16). The illusion of the mirror stage leads this child further into the symbolic stage, where he finds himself in need of a position, an identity, on his own. Here he enters the world of difference and contrast. To say it another way, “A child of six to eighteen months identifies himself in a gestalt of his mirror image” (p. 102). While motor control is still insufficient, “the child can comprehend the coherent images that make up the whole” (ibid). He now distinguishes between him and him and him and the father. However, with this realization alone, the child cannot tear himself apart and enter the world of symbolic signification which will provide him with communion with his primeval days, as well as an arbitrary position on his own.

II.3.1. The Oedipus Complex

According to Lacan, the lost happiness of the infant, the union with his parents of the opposite sex, is kept in mind, which always makes him long for a happy past (Lacan 1969-70, pp. 87-140) This desire is known as the Oedipus complex (Lacan 1969-70, p. 113) . in other words, Lacan's mirror stage is “the formative beginning of the subject of thought, although it is part of the imagination” (Murfin & Ray, 1997, p. 316). It represents the position of the ego (Murfin & Ray, 1997, p.

316). Better, the mirror stage has narcissistic self-indulgence. It is also “the beginning of the "I", the subject of thought that can be expressed” (ibid., p. 316). To develop this model for a child's journey toward independence, Lacan relies on the post-structuralist concept of separating words and their meanings (Nasr, 2021, p. 21). For post-structuralists, language is by nature “incapable of conveying any message in a successful or unique way” (ibid., p. 21)

Likewise, the Lacanian model provides “an undecidable and ever-changing position of the subject in the linguistic world” (Nasr, 2021). Just as meanings are arbitrarily derived from expressions; humans have arbitrary attitudes. So, the human subconscious is based on language. First, because if the state of the mirror phase, the ego is produced under the intervention of the semantic system. Second, because the whole life of the ego, the separation from the mother, will be a symbolic presence like the signifier in the language system. When supposed or separated? the child is an identity, this realization is achieved through language. Therefore, perception through non-referential language puts the subject in an uncertain position. The subject that is developed in a linguistic case must be a symbolic dimension. The themes that emerge in linguistics necessarily share the tragic fate of post-structuralist sites. Lacan's conception of the human self after the symbolic stage lends insight into the creation and consumption of works of art as archetypal ways of expressing imperfect alternative characters. The concept of "I" that has developed over time is inseparable from the "other". This process can be seen in the mirror as it gradually begins (Peck & Coyle, 1993, p. 187). The desire thus created tries to be fulfilled by creating a state in which the ego is fully assimilated with the object it

desires, but loses this state with the advent of the symbolic stage. Pre-Oedipus desires are fulfilled through artistic creativity. In imaginary. It is the bridge of language that runs across the real ego and the alter ego. This attempt on the infant side replaces Lacan's Freud's paradox. But for Lacan, this is just a of a person. But literature for Freud is like a dream

II.3.2. Through the looking glass: the mirror stage

The mirror stage thesis is one of Lacan's most famous theoretical contributions, and perhaps more famous than his famous treatise on the unconscious, which he described as being formulated like language. The mirror stage states that children are able to recognize themselves in a mirror or other symbolic medium that stimulates cognition. Initially, Lacan suggested that the mirror stage should be part of an infant's development from 6 to 18 months (Evans, 2005, p. 147). A moment in an infant's life, but rather a permanent subjective structure or a model for an imaginary order.

II.4. Existentialism

Existentialism is a branch of philosophy and literature that symbolizes and aims to create an original way of existential life in itself (Macomber, 2007, p. 25). The term existentialism was first used in the early 1940s in reference to the naming of the work of Simone de Beauvoir, Jean-Paul Sartre, and other Parisian writers who focused on their work about the nature of human existence (Macomber, 2007, p. 24). Existentialism has brought new concepts and unprecedented ideas. It was a philosophical movement that emerged in Europe in the Nineteenth century that

dealt with the condition and state of human beings. This philosophy integrates man and the meaning of his existence. It emphasises the individual's realization of his helplessness in the world as he can take an appropriate action to decide his destiny, and this may be through the indifference that emerges from rebellion against several aspects against humanity, beliefs, and traditions (Macomber, 2007, p. 26). To search for his true self regardless of what surrounds him, he has to make a decision characterized by a unique thinking capacity as questioning about the purpose of life and the purpose of his existence.

II.4.1. Jean Paul Sartre and His Humanistic, Existentialist View

Jean Paul Sartre (1905-1980)'s famous rhetoric of "existentialism is a humanism" (Macomber, 2007, p. 30), he believes that "Man is not something else, but what he means, it exists only insofar as he is aware of himself, and therefore is nothing but the sum of his actions" (ibid.). This means that man will find his existence when he is fully aware of himself and what he has done. Regarding human existence, Sartre also stated that human existence is not original, but was built by his choice and commitment: "Man makes himself, there is no willingness; he makes himself by choosing his morals". (ibid., p. 31). He claims that morality or goodness is subjective based on a person's choice and point of view; the way a man maintains his commitment is also important to show his presence. Thus, the core and heart of existentialism is "The absolute characteristic of free obligation, by which every man realizes himself in attaining a kind of humanity an obligation to be understood always, no matter who and no matter what age and its effect on the relativism of a

cultural pattern may result from this absolute commitment (Macomber, 2007, p. 32).

II.4.2. Existentialism and Literature

Existentialism was not just a philosophical platform, but it also attracted existential thought, novelists, and playwrights. Paving the way for a great representation of philosophical ideas in art reinforced by the fact that there is a reciprocal relationship between literature and philosophy, Existentialism is a movement that can be “understood through existential phenomenology. Moreover, this is a type of literature closely related to the Second World War” ((Marcus & Nicholls,2004, p. 110). To say it differently, the Existentialists were famous for depicting their tendency to portray human suffering and anxiety in a world devoid of meaning. They focused on human behaviour in those miserable conditions. Their goal was to talk about human freedom and the freedom to define his identity and his essence.

Existentialists represented philosophy through literature. Their special interest in the infractions of war and its effect on man is what is most prominent in their work. Better, they "focused their attention particularly intensely on the Second World War especially, the appearance of the war in a historical sense above all else showing “the human condition as a symbol of madness, confusion, and frustration as a theme in their work" (ibid., p. 115). Literature was been chosen as an existential method to convey its ideas because literature as an art is one of the most powerful ways that contribute to the expression of human creativity; conveying its philosophical ideas through plays, novels, and short stories.

II.4.3. Jean-Paul Sartre's Existentialism is Humanism”

Sartre changed the concepts of existentialism and redefined it as a Christian existentialism relating it to the “people of the Catholic faith” (Macomber, 2007, p. 44); those who believe that man has an authentic human existence where he has the freedom to choose what he is in his life (Macomber, 2007, p. 44). Existentialism is more than a complete essence, and what all existentialists have in common is that "existence precedes essence" (Macomber, 2007, p.45). It is considered the first principle of Sartrean existentialism; it means that human beings exist first, that is, they are born and aware of their lives before they become what they are. Here, Sartre considers that Man is the one who creates his essence. Man, in the beginning and “his fixation towards existence is not a thing, an unknown thing and a completely blank page” (ibid., p. 46). He has been thrown into an indifferent world. He is in a desperate situation and he has to choose and do without any reference. Sartre points out dramatically that if God does not exist, then this equation becomes completely inverse (Macomber, 2007, p. 46).

Essentially, human beings are creatures that create their own essence. Man is a project that possesses a subjective life instead of being something like moss, and by talking about the point of eternity in existential philosophy that is subjectivity and, in this fact, there is only the truth of Descartes, “I think, therefore I am.” (cited in. Macomber, 2007, p. 32). It is the absolute truth of peoples, and all theories that begin with man outside the scope of his awareness of himself are theories that hide the truth, existential theories give dignity to man and do not treat

him as a thing. Existentialists want the human world to be based on a set of distinct values that are paradoxical to the material world.

II.4.4. Sartre and Lacan

Lacan and Sartre have the same view of humanity as a being defined by a structural deficiency in relation to both thinkers. This is a type of psychological analysis that revolves around the nature of the human being and about his basic experiences such as sadness, despair, and anxiety and the ability to self-determination and the longing for meaning, most of the methods used in existential therapy focus on the patient's bearing and his conviction of responsibility for his actions and behaviour and facing what he escapes from, as well as his conviction freely to choose and dive into the entity that suffers from problems that were chosen to be in; meaning that the individual is the one who chose this suffering. The psychotherapist helps the patient to realize his choice and get out of this suffering by his own will. Existential psychological therapy relies on ideas derived from existentialism as a philosophy such as that the human being is responsible for his personal choices and that choices are what make the individual distinctive and help him make meaning of his life and as the first step to accept his situation and recognize his responsibility in the kind of life in which he lives, he is aware and reconciled with anxiety, which is considered as a characteristic of human life, so he must reconcile with this kind of experience and for the types of experiences he is going through, whether sadness or joy, to be able to live a stable life.

Conclusion

To conclude, one can note the amount of the development of thought in the fields of literature and science was due to many factors that contributed to creating an intellectual revolution, especially with regard to the development of both psychological and literary theories that accompanied the twentieth-century period.

Jacques Lacan's psychological theory, which was inspired by his analysis of Freudian studies has produced and contributed in forging a new path to study the psychology of the unconscious. For Lacan, the unconscious is structured like a language, and it is a faculty in the human brain which has got the ability to metamorphose and change nature by reference to every situation. It is a pioneering study that not only kneaded together the missing dots of the previous studies but also it challenged the Freudian theory of the biological aspects, and built on its basis new aspects, new orders and new dimensions which defined man within his scope of existence and identified with his absence and embraced his peculiarity when needed.



CHAPTER-III. Godot Resists

Symbolisation: Beckettian Characters in Context

Introduction

This chapter analyses *Waiting for Godot's* characters. It addresses the ways in which Samuel Beckett created characters with special mentalities and special names. As a part of the ambiguity of his play, Beckett invented an amalgam of thoughts and beliefs. Samuel Beckett's mysterious play has been apt to different readings philosophically; the most eminent Irish playwright wrote *Waiting for Godot* in French in 1949 and then translated it into English in 1954. This play has been performed as a drama of the absurd with astonishing success in Europe, America, and the rest of the world in the post-second world war era.

In spite of the fact that this focal play has been anatomized by several philosophical theories, movements and approaches such as existentialism, modernism, postmodernism, and postcolonial theories and has always been notorious for its complexity, ambiguity and contextual depth, this present dissertation attempts to read this play via the Lacanianism theory of the unconscious where the Imaginary, Symbolic and Real stand as the corner stone to carry out this analysis by focusing on the characters, their relationship to themselves, to each other and the world around them as existential beings drowned in their delirious mental states and unable to bridge the gap of the reason behind them waiting for someone who does never show up .

III.1. Synopsis

Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* was published in French under the title *En Attendant Godot* in 1953 and later translated by Beckett himself into English in 1954. The sub-title for the play is "Tragic Comedy in Two Acts". The play has two acts: act one begins in a strange and quiet atmosphere. In other words, one doesn't see anything happening, and there is always uncertainty everywhere and no one is doing anything important. The place is a road near a leafless tree where two men are standing next to it, one named Estragon (GoGo) and the other Vladimir (DiDi) waiting for a mysterious person named Godot and while they are waiting for Godot, Estragon tries to remove his shoes and Vladimir looks here and there and Estragon grumbles that "Nothing to be done". Vladimir agrees, and then they spend time talking about various topics, including how they had spent the previous night and talking about religion and the Bible, and when they became desperate and tired of waiting, they decided to hang themselves from the tree and then backed out, a man named Pozzo appears, who Estragon thinks is Godot, but he is not him. He had a servant named Lucky with a rope around his neck, treating him like an animal. Pozzo tells them that he is on his way to the market where he intends to sell Lucky. A grumble or no, Vladimir asks Lucky to entertain them while waiting for Godot to arrive and also asks him to think. Pozzo tells him that he can't do it without his hat. After that, Lucky, Pozzo and Lucky leave. After their departure, Vladimir remembers that he saw them and knows them before, and after discussions and manoeuvres with Some of them a boy arrived with a message declaring

that Godot would not come today after all but would come tomorrow Vladimir and Estragon decided to leave, but they remained there, motionless.

The second act of the play begins the next day, and the strange thing is that the tree bears fruit and grows leaves overnight, which indicates a longer time than this. Their hat is Lucky and in the end Vladimir takes Lucky's hat and throws his hat and starts pretending to be Lucky and they play the role of Lucky and Pozzo and then they fight and curse each other to pass the time and sometimes Estragon asks Vladimir what they are waiting for and he tells him we are waiting for Godot, Lucky and Pozzo come back again but not the same What they were yesterday, Lucky can no longer speak, Pozzo is blind, and when they meet Estragon and Vladimir, he does not remember that he met them the day before When Lucky and Pozzo fall to the ground, Vladimir and Estragon try to help them, and they end up falling as well. After this, Lucky and Pozzo leave and Vladimir and Estragon return to normal, waiting for Godot. The boy comes again and informs them again that Godot would not come today but would come tomorrow; the boy left and both Estragon and Vladimir decided to hang themselves in desperation from waiting in vain with Estragon's belt but all that happened was his pants fell off, they decided to leave but they don't do what They say and stand still, waiting for the person called "Godot".

III.2. Vladimir and Estragon and their Metaphoric Friendship

The relationship between Vladimir and Estragon is the relationship of the body and the mind, and complementarity between them as if it were part of one

soul, one complementary to the other. This is how Estragon sees his nature in Vladimir. In other words, he sees the ideal qualities of Vladimir complimenting him. On the same ground, Vladimir pictures his relationship with Estragon as perfect and whole. In other words, he sees the completeness between them as if each half is complementary to the other. Vladimir sees in Estragon his intellectual perfection and idealism, and Estragon sees in his strength and greatness in the character, and charisma of the philosophical Vladimir:

ESTRAGON:

Taking off my boot. Did that never happen to you?

VLADIMIR:

Boots must be taken off every day, I'm tired telling you that. Why don't you listen to me?

ESTRAGON:

(feebly). Help me!

VLADIMIR:

It hurts?

ESTRAGON:

(angrily). Hurts! He wants to know if it hurts! (Waiting for Godot,1, L.1-20, p.3).

Estragon and Vladimir fall into the so-called specular image. According to Lacan, their relationship stems from mirror image of each other. Both Vladimir and Estragon in this context see the reflection of each other's bodies in the mirror, the image of oneself which is simultaneously oneself and OTHER (the 'little other')

(Evans, 1996, p. 196). Better, it is by identifying with the specular image that either Vladimir or Estragon begin to construct their EGO in the MIRROR STAGE". (Evans, 1996, p.193). They see the reflection of one another in terms of completeness and fullness. Because they both feel at ease conversing with one another, expressing their dumbest ideas or most clever, extremist thoughts, both Estragon and Vladimir respectively seem to be "captivated by the specular image: this is the basic reason for the power of the imaginary in the subject, and explains why man projects this image of his body onto all other objects in the world around him" (ibid.).

III.2.1. The Subjectivity of Vladimir and Estragon

According to Lacanian analysis, both Estragon and Vladimir are considered subjects. moved from being an ego to being a subject. Yet, unlike Estragon who has always been portrayed as drowned in his naivete as a type of person who accepts life as it, Vladimir is different in the way he moves from being an ego, and a master in his imaginary and his own individual, separated thinking into a subject to his symbolic. Vladimir is forced to express his philosophical ideas and religious indifference to his specular image, Estragon. He is unable to express himself or incarnate his knowledge in that absurdist society. So, in the way he seems desperately waiting for Godot, he seems hopelessly aspiring for the arrival of Godot to grant him freedom from his social Symbolic order and from his social malaise. Vladimir wishes that the appearance of Godot can solve his questions, and give him permission to show himself as "the Cartesian subject, who appears at the moment when doubt is recognised as certainty" (Evans, 1996, p. 198). In this context, Vladimir is transformed into a fragmented being, "a subject as that which is represented by

a signifier for another signifier; in other words, the subject is an effect of language” (ibid.) because he is controlled by the symbolic and he is under the power of his surroundings (Evans, 1996, p. 198).

III.2.2. Pseudo-couples, Oedipal Complex and Homosexuality

Waiting for Godot consists of 6 male characters assembled in pairs, Vladimir, Estragon, Pozzo Lucky, the boy, and his brother. There are no female figures in the play. To explain Beckett’s embodiment of such personalities, one has to refer to his relationship with the women around him, especially his mother. Samuel Beckett was known for his love and attachment to his father, as a consequence of a similar admiration, he has hoped to become a quantity surveyor like his father (Lawley, 2008, p. 10). As for his relationship with his mother, it was a love-hate relationship. Beckett's mother, May, was 35 when she gave birth to her second son. She met her husband Willie at the Adelaide Hospital, where she worked as a nurse and was recovering from pneumonia. In 1900, they married and within a year, his mother was strong, moody, aloof, and a devout Protestant (Astro, 1992, p. 23). Beckett considered himself an atheist. There was always some kind of difference between him and his mother, with whom he did not agree, and she did not support him in his career. He also considered that his mother was forced to give birth to him because of their relationship (Astro, 1992, p. 23).

There is no doubt that Beckett’s childhood traumas and the deprivation of motherly affections have left some serious psychological bruising and inspired him to re-invest those repressed memories and pain in his artistic masterpieces. Referring back to the play at hand, one believes that Beckett suffered from an Oedipus

complex himself, and he struggled to finally shift into loving himself or his mother-like figure women. The queer relationship can be interpreted in Vladimir and Estragon, which is classified as a pseudo-couple relationship. The relationship of the two characters is formed from their differences (Lawley, 2008, p. 15). Vladimir is the thinker Estragon is busy with my body. Vladimir is the mind; Estragon is the dreamer. Their relationship is characterized by a pseudo-couple relationship, this type of relationship is considered one of the worst types because it is free of commitment between the two parties, just like Beckett's relationship with his mother Mary.

In fact, Samuel Beckett was attached to his father from a young age. He saw in it the man who aspires to be it. His attachment to the past memories brought him together with his father to the point that he became depressed when he died. So, he explained that his parental relationship formed the so-called Oedipus complex, which usually consists of the attraction of a child from his father of another sex, (Homer, 2005, p. 64). In Beckett's case, one can attach it to the fact that he has fallen into the so-called castration complex due to his lack of sexual discrimination between his mother and father. (Evans, 1996, p. 22). It can also be said that the attachment and desire of a child to his mother is natural, but Beckett's traumatic experience with his mother led to him loathing her and blaming her about the miserable childhood he has suffered because of her. As a way for him to find completeness, the castration complex was passed on to his father due to their closeness as well.

Freud argued that the castration complex is closely related to the Oedipus complex, but that its role in the Oedipus complex is different from that of a boy and a girl. In the case of the boy, the castration complex is the point of exit from the Oedipus complex, its final crisis; Because of his fear of castration (often provoked by the threat), the boy returns his desire for a mother, thus entering a period of latency. In the case of the girl, the castration complex is the entry point into the Oedipus complex; It is her discontent with her mother, who blames her for being deprived of the penis, that has prompted her to redirect her sexual desires away from the mother to the father (Evans, 1996, p. 22).

The Oedipus complex predicted the person in a kind of homosexuality that we can observe in Samuel Beckett's play, where, as previously said, it consisted of only two characters by specifying 6 characters, divided into two, Vladimir and Estragon Pozzo, Lucky Boy and his brother, and the absence of an ethnic sense made this play and the relationship of characters by defining as a kind of homosexual haven. There are some overtones in his play that were evidence of an intimate relationship between the characters; the relationship that he created between characters that made them appear as one part that cannot be separated similar to Vladimir and Estragon who can be interpreted as a pseudo couple (Lawley, 2008, p. 49). like Samuel's relationship with his mother, and the castration that led him to transit into a male or a father like figure for affection, he depicts Vladimir and Estragon as dependent couple where one complements the other. In act one, they are separated for a moment, they feel lonely and get afraid of separation and neither of them wishes to be apart from the other:

VLADIMIR: I'm glad to see
you back. I thought you were gone forever.

ESTRAGON: Me too. (Waiting for Godot,1, L.1-11. P. 2).

. ESTRAGON: (coldly) There are times when I wonder if it wouldn't
be better for us to part.

VLADIMIR: You wouldn't go far. (Waiting for Godot,1, L.1-11, p. 9)

In the interpretation of the play, we can classify this as a Quasi-Marital Relationship, where Vladimir is seen as the masculine persona while Estragon is seen as the feminine persona. The relationship between the two represents and symbolizes a marriage. They often bicker, they embrace and they depend on each other as a married couple would. Although “homoerotic desires exist between Vladimir and Estragon, they are not blatant homosexuals” (ibid., p. 51).

III.3. Estragon, the Absurdist Mood in Motion

Estragon is the other main character in the drama. His figure is depicted as one who depends on others to live according to what the writer described, i.e., He is a weak person who merely follows the course of life or what is required of him without discussing or opposing the order of life in which he is placed. Estragon represents the absurd life or absurd truth, his personality type is that of having no purpose in life, lost and exiled. He feels lonely and needs a companion who can tell him what to do with his life:

He gives up, exhausted, rests, and tries again.

As before.

Enter Vladimir.

ESTRAGON: (giving up again). Nothing to be done. (Waiting for Godot, 1, L.1-1. P. 2)

At this stage of noticing differences between characters, one can say that the writer has classified two characters to be the type that exists in real life, i.e. two different types of human states that exist in any society; Vladimir is a type of person who is educated and has a philosophical curiosity about his reality, and Estragon, unlike the first, is normal, he does not care about what is outside his scope, cares about his life and accepts it as it is. Vladimir is a person whose topics dealt with religion the society:

VLADIMIR:

It'll pass the time. (Pause.) Two thieves, crucified at the same time as our Saviour. One—

ESTRAGON:

Our what?

VLADIMIR:

Our Saviour. Two thieves. One is supposed to have been saved and the other . . . (he searches for the contrary of saved) . . . damned.

ESTRAGON:

Saved from what?

VLADIMIR: Hell. (Waiting for Godot ,1, L.1-8. P. 5)

Often times in the play, Estragon is crafted as an extension to Vladimir as he denies any rivalry with him. He is Vladimir's specular image and mirror stage as he describes the type of banality that Vladimir wishes to conquer and preach.

Estragon does not completely separate himself from society; he was part of it because he talks about what surrounds him on social philosophical topics, which means that he is still part of that society and agrees with it. Here, Estragon is the embodiment of the world as it is in the way he was coping with its absurdity, and incarnating to the extent to which life, at that time was reduced to simple, unidealistic beliefs and thoughts. Estragon is in a state where he introjects the symbolic (Evans, 1996, p. 91) where his character and actions are extracted from society itself. As the absurdist mood enrobes him, he introjects “the signifier because the introjection is always the introjection of the speech of the other Introjection thus refers to the process of symbolic identification” (ibid.). as the outside world envelops his identity, he identifies with it and engraves its reality in his actions.

III.4. Pozzo’s Deceitful Imaginary

Pozzo is depicted as an authoritarian character in a personal drama with arrogance and abuse of power in his dealings with his servant Lucky Pozzo, a character who suffers from what is called obsession with power (Lawley, 2008, 44). He is unable to admit his reality and believe that he needs to be educated in order to be in high places in society. Pozzo is arrogant where he draws a picture for himself about his reality, while the reality is different from what he thinks, in particular about himself and his attributes, and that is in the presence of both Vladimir and Estragon.

Both Vladimir and Estragon witness the legendary entrance of Pozzo and his enslaved subject Lucky. In his God-like image, and as a consequence, “Vladimir

and Estragon are instantly diverted and terror-struck, drawn out of their worrisome waiting into the fabulous display of calculated self-presentation” (ibid., p. 45). The deceitful image that Pozzo represents about his self and his status creates a milieu that is governed by the Law of the Father or the symbolic.

The symbolic stage began when he entered on Vladimir and Estragon, naturally as an arrogant character. Vladimir and Estragon were expected to know him as an important figure in society:

POZZO:

I present myself: Pozzo.

VLADIMIR:

(to Estragon). Not at all!

ESTAGON:

He said Godot.

VLADIMIR:

Not at all!

ESTAGON:

(timidly, to Pozzo). You're not Mr. Godot, Sir?

POZZO:

(terrifying voice). I am Pozzo! (Silence.) Pozzo! (Silence.) Does that name mean nothing to you? (Silence.) I say does that name mean nothing to you?

ESTAGON:

(pretending to search). Bozzo. . . Bozzo. . .

VLADIMIR:

(ditto). Pozzo. . . Pozzo. . .

POZZO:

PPPOZZO!

ESTAGON:

Ah! Pozzo. . . let me see . . Pozzo. . .

VLADIMIR:

Is it Pozzo or Bozzo?

ESTAGON:

Pozzo. . . no . . . I'm afraid I . . . no . . . I don't seem to . . .

Pozzo advances threateningly. (Waiting for Godot,1, L.1-19, p. 20)

The fact that Vladimir and Estragon did not know him broke his ego and made him subject himself to the reality of life, but this of course did not change his arrogance towards Vladimir and Estragon, but rather deliberately showed them his power and his place, as he felt that Vladimir threatens his ego because of this latter's thoughts as an educated person fitting the qualities of a person of a high status.

Pozzo seems in his sanctuary, in the society wherein he belongs. The way Vladimir judged him with his gaze and with his opposing opinions created a difference. As difference and absence reign in Pozzo's condition, his fullness and immediacy of the imaginary brings an alienating incompleteness and distance (Homer, 2005, p 43). In other words, the fact that he entered the Symbolic which was represented in Vladimir and his principles, led him emerge from that ideal image that he has made of himself, which he sees in himself.

Pozzo submits once again to the reality that he has always rejected. Here, as a subconscious reaction, he tried to alter his behaviour by changing his views and his position in front of Vladimir and Estragon, as they stood as a symbolic which “is the realm of the Law which regulates desire in the Oedipus complex” (Evans, 1996, p. 204). In this regard, Pozzo’s greed to power is paralysed and his arrogance and celebration of himself has proven deceitful especially when the System of the Other ban him from his most joyful desires of enslaving and subjugating people:

VLADIMIR:

After having sucked all the good out of him you chuck him away like a . . . like a banana skin. Really . . .

POZZO:

(groaning, clutching his head). I can't bear it . . . any longer. . . the way he goes on . . . you've no idea . . . it's terrible . . . he must go . . . (he waves his arms) . . . I'm going mad . . . (he collapses, his head in his hands). . . I can't bear it . . . any longer. . .

Silence. All look at Pozzo.

VLADIMIR:

He can't bear it.

ESTAGON:

Any longer.

VLADIMIR:

He's going mad.

ESTAGON:

It's terrible.

VLADIMIR:

(to Lucky). How dare you! It's abominable! Such a good master! Crucify him like that! After so many years! Really!

POZZO:

(sobbing). He used to be so kind . . . so helpful . . . and entertaining. . . my good angel . . . and now . . . he's killing me. (Waiting for Godot,1, L.1-14, p. 26).

3.4.1. Pozzo's Blindness Is Return of the Repressed

Pozzo's animalistic, unethical behaviour in society has been rejected by Vladimir because it was symbolised as an act of tyranny. Consequently, Beckett adopts a didactic tone in his absurdist play where he portrays a different unexpected destiny for both Pozzo and Lucky as master and slave respectively. In act II, Pozzo and Lucky appear again. Yet, this time, they are different as they have reaped the fruits of their actions.

From a humane point of view, Pozzo has committed a crime against a human being, and in the end he gets a punishment that suits him. Pozzo appeared a blind person while Lucky is still under his control and also silent:

VLADIMIR:

I'm asking you if it came on you all of a sudden.

POZZO:

I woke up one fine day as blind as Fortune. (Pause.) Sometimes I wonder if I'm not still

asleep.

VLADIMIR:

And when was that?

POZZO:

I don't know. (Waiting for Godot, 1, L1-12, p. 45)

In his silence, Lucky was the enemy of himself and the enemy against the freedom of speech and expression. He is against intellectuality in community. Further, with Lucky and Pozzo entering as blind and dumb respectively, Beckett deliberately depicts the realities of the twentieth century life in their figures and their behaviours. The way Pozzo was blind in Act II, takes one to reconsider the fact that in act I, Pozzo was blinded to reality by his arrogance and power. On an equal footing, Lucky's dumbness in the second act shows that he was able to articulate the truth and stand for himself and as he refused and submitted his destiny to his master, his muteness has become real and permanent. In Lacanian psychoanalysis, the way Pozzo and Lucky have been engraved in act II can be interpreted as "Imago" (Evans, 1996, p85). It is a situation that emphasizes the subjective determination of the image; in other words, it includes feelings as well as a visual representations. In this scene, "images are specifically images of other people" (Evans, 1996, p85). Beckett used it in the form of a picture that represents their true identity. By looking at it, one will know their human nature and also deduce the moral behind their punishment :

VLADIMIR:

It's Pozzo.

POZZO:

Here! Here! Help me up! (Waiting for Godot, 2, L.1-9, p.70).

From a Lacanian point of view, Pozzo's exposure to blindness explains how Pozzo was convinced that he is in his mirror stage thinking that he is a master, and his actions and behaviour is in alliance with that of the social order. Unfortunately for him, the opposite appeared, because the Law of the Father, The Social Order rejects this type of behaviour. Pozzo's narcissistic image falls and his desire to harm humanity and distort the image of society turns fragmented. When Vladimir, as a Social Law, spoke and manifested against his actions in words., Pozzo and Lucky enter what is called the Real, which resulted in a psychological trauma that affected him physically as he lost his sight and emotionally as he has become broken, distorted and feeble unable to see, control and order others. In Pozzo and Lucky's unfortunate karma, their real is represented in the trauma they encounter after such a calamity where their most repressed fears and phobias have come true and become concretised through their state and reality.

III.5. Lucky and His Fragmented Soul

Lucky is a follower and a slave to Pozzo. His entrance in Act one, shows his pain and torture; in contradiction to Pozzo's enjoyment in bragging about having him as his dimension and servant as he ties him with a rope around his neck and forces him to carry the heavy bags. Lucky is obliged to abide to Pozzo's teachings like a mute and helpless slave; he executes without discussion, lowering his head, following orders:

Enter Pozzo and Lucky. Pozzo drives Lucky by means of a rope passed around his neck, so that Lucky is the first to enter, followed by the rope which is long enough to let him reach the middle of the stage before Pozzo appears. Lucky carries a heavy bag, a folding stool, a picnic basket, and a greatcoat, Pozzo a whip.

POZZO:

(off). On! (Crack of whip. Pozzo appears. They cross the stage. Lucky passes before Vladimir and Estragon and exit. Pozzo at the sight of Vladimir and Estragon stops short. The rope tautens. Pozzo jerks at it violently.) Back!

Noise of Lucky falling with all his baggage. Vladimir and Estragon turn towards him, half wishing half fearing to go to his assistance. Vladimir takes a step towards Lucky, Estragon holds him back by the sleeve. (Waiting for Godot, 1, L.1-30, p15)

This is what came under the eyes of Vladimir and Estragon, but the most affected one by the situation was Vladimir, when he noticed his behaviour in Pozzo in the treatment of Lucky, was very nervous, and his emotion was as if he was the one being tormented:

VLADIMIR:

(exploding). It's a scandal!

Silence. Flabbergasted, Estragon stops gnawing, looks at Pozzo and Vladimir in turn. Pozzo outwardly calm. Vladimir embarrassed.

POZZO:

(To Vladimir). Are you alluding to anything in particular?

VLADIMIR:

(stutteringly resolute). To treat a man . . . (gesture towards Lucky) . . . like that . . . I think that . . . no . . . a human being . . . no . . . it's a scandal! (Waiting for Godot, I, L.1-34, p. 20, 1).

The scene that Vladimir came to see put him in a kind of trauma as if he witnessed himself tied to the rope as a slave and in the mercy of his society which prevents his thoughts as a thinking person and deprives his curiosity in discussing the foundations of life and his presence in the universe. He imagined himself just like Lucky who stopped talking because of the rope around his neck. The knot of rope made both Vladimir and Lucky be muted in life because of the superior power controlling their intellectual freedom. Vladimir's shock happened because of the combination of imagination and the symbolic that made him enter into a kind of trauma.

The transference of Lucky's situation to Vladimir's imagination represents the Real. Better, the way Lucky was subjected to Pozzo's mistreatment in front of Vladimir's eyes made him enter the Real partly and not completely the thing that caused changes in Vladimir's behaviour this is on the one hand. On the other hand, Vladimir's shock may be somehow logical in some way because Pozzo's behaviour towards Lucky was morally and socially unacceptable. Also, Lucky's silence allowed a person like Pozzo to enslave his thoughts, his body, his freedom and his life. Here, it is undeniable that Lucky's silence makes him a participant in this crime paving the way to people such as Pozzo to feed on his kindness and build the foundations of an imposing mentality.

III.6. Godot's Boyish Voice

Vladimir and Estragon spoke for a long time and grew tired as they waited for Godot, the important and ambiguous character in this play. Another character appears in the play known as the boy. His character seems to have raised the hopes of both Vladimir and Estragon, carrying a message from the famous Godot himself informing them that the expected Godot will not come:

Boy:

(in a rush). Mr. Godot told me to tell you he won't come this evening but surely tomorrow.

Silence. (Waiting for Godot,1, L.1-9, p ,42)

This anonymous figure in the play, added a new type of discovery about the life of Vladimir and Estragon:

When you complete this character, you have pronounced the real names of those characters BOY:

(off). Mister!

Estragon halts. Both look towards the voice.

ESTRAGON:

Off we go again.

VLADIMIR:

Approach, my child.

Enter Boy, timidly. He halts.

Boy:

Mister Albert. . . ?

VLADIMIR:

Yes.

ESTRAGON:

What do you want?

VLADIMIR:

Approach!

The Boy does not move.

ESTRAGON:

(forcibly). Approach when you're told, can't you?

The Boy advances timidly, halts. (Waiting for Godot, I, L.1-8, p. 39).

As both Vladimir and Estragon chose to get out of this reality, the boy appears by the end of the day to symbolise voice of reality and a preaching voice of reason. In other words, one can assume that the little boy is the voice of Godot himself, who shows up to settle down the matter for both men and to remind them of their purpose in life. Additionally, the boy appears as a personified conscience to strengthen Vladimir and Estragon's cause, and to re-enforce that their reality of waiting for a mysterious being has to be fulfilled by them being patient. So, the verbal letter that the boy delivers is communicated in a code of words. The mediated element between the two men, and Godot contributes in creating the bond needed for the ultimate imaginary identification between them as if the boy is incarnated as a beguiling, deluding figure to lure Vladimir and Estragon to wait and aspire for him to come the coming day.

III.7. The use of names in Waiting for Godot

Beckett uses different names for the character of Vladimir in the play; from Didi to Vladimir to Albert. Each name differs in meaning, but the choice of names was not accidental but rather coincident with the characteristics of the character. Vladimir at some point in the story is called Didi by Estragon. So, Beckett uses pseudo-names in order to symbolise aspects related to everyone's personality, growth and reality.

Didi seems to be an almost a universal name for a child or things related to a child. In English, Didie (diddy, Diddie or _Dydee) is babyish and it means "diaper". In Ireland for example, Beckett's home town, the Didi is the nipple, and the woman's breast (O 'Nan,2014, p12). In the story, Didi and Vladimir are one person representing one reflex, meaning that Vladimir is Didi in the mirror stage which in Lacanian analysis, Didi, as a baby from six (06) to eighteen (18) months goes through what he called the mirror stage. This means that at this stage that occurs before he develops a sense of his own self, he sees his mother's reflected image and identifies with the reflection.

With the development of himself, Didi changes himself with the change of time. He creates another day for himself under the name of Vladimir; a character who is able to reason, question life and interrogates others. Besides, it builds theories about people's personalities. Vladimir wanted to be in Pozzo's social standing. Vladimir's character was shaped to be an image of flawless idealism and to be educated enough to grow to a respectable level in his idealist community that he created himself under the name Vladimir corresponding to his imaginary.

This is a type of personality that may create illusions for a person about himself, despite his view of himself, but he sees the same image that he presents to others. His idealism may be a cover for him or as an arm of protection that he uses to avoid falling into psychological traumas or to not encounter the weak and imperfect side of his personality that he avoids. Surprisingly, he is called Albert. As Albert's name appears in the play, when Estragon called on him, Vladimir quickly responds to him. Here, what was hidden by Vladimir under his idealism appeared. Albert came to put Didi and Vladimir as characters under the control of reality. Vladimir keeps avoiding the name Albert as it disturbs him; this name maybe related to some sort of repressed fears, hidden secrets that Vladimir witnesses and survived once his name was Albert. This name bothers him as it reminds him of an unpleasant episode in his life; an episode that he is subjugating, burying under his new personalities of Didi and Vladimir because it is a Symbolic; a name that society, in its laws and chuckles identifies him with, and any connection between Vladimir and Albert will lead to an unavoidable psychological shock.

The character who accompanied Vladimir Estragon is nicknamed Go-Go. The character of GoGo, as he mentioned before, is the second half of Vladimir, the second face of humanity that exists in man, "body and mind" in relation to the name Go-Go (O 'Nan,2014, p15). The word GoGo can be from the English verb, go; used in the indirect command frequently by GoGo in "Let's go" to which Diddy replies, "He can't." "we are waiting for Godot." (O 'Nan,2014, p12). In this case, Vladimir's side appears with a desire to go, i.e. by another saying that there is a

part in Vladimir between him and himself that wanted to leave and not wait anymore, but again he convinces himself that he has to wait here as if he is in a struggle between himself and himself in his desire to wait. He continues to think about why he is there and what he is waiting. In spite of the fact that his useless waiting causes him physical fatigue, he finds himself eager to see the mysterious Godot, and obliged to wait with his friend.

III.8. Godot Resists Symbolisation: Existence is an Absence

The play “Waiting for Godot” consisted of six characters, the sixth character is Godot, whose presence was not glimpsed and did not appear in any way, while Vladimir and Estragon waited for him patiently without questioning his absence. Everyone reading or viewing the play, questions the reason behind Godot’s absence on stage. In fact, Godot's character raises several questions, but the most appreciable one is what if Godot came, what would happen, what would change for the Vladimir and Estragon?

Godot's presence could have been explained by the things in his play as he would reveal the hidden truth to these two characters Estragon and Vladimir with the long wait there was no sign of him coming, the desire to wait that Samuel Beckett reflected in the characters were so strong that they could not be just go without meeting Godot. Samuel Beckett's desire to emphasise upon the act of waiting explains his own waiting for his own Godot. In other words, Every person has his own Godot in this life; a desire of waiting that can be related to hopes and dreams to happen.

In an alternative scenario, Godot can be religiously related to God Himself in spite of the fact that Beckett has openly stated that he was not refereeing to God in his play (Astro, 1992,75).

Going back to the characters of Estragon and Vladimir and their waiting for Godot, who is difficult to recognize as he Godot was not embodied in any character or form in the play with may be interpreted as what Jacques Lacan defined to be “impossible to symbolise, the impossible thing at the heart of the subject” (Evans, 1996, p. 85). In the sense, Godot is impossible to be embodied, whether in codes, in pictures or in symbols. It is impossible for one to create his existence and the only way for him to exist is in his absence. Thus, the absence of Godot makes the existence of others possible whereas his presence may have a negative impact on the characters. Because Godot will reveal things that Estragon and Vladimir will not bear as their imaginaries and Symbolic order will clash and the trauma happens. This is one of the reasons why Godot did not attend. He may embody internal fears and desires. Once they are released, the normal living system will be shaken. Estragon and Vladimir have been attributed to the stage of mirrors, so their entry into the Real stage will expose them to traumas that affect the mind, so seeing the presence of Godot will cause an absence as:

The Real is located beyond the symbolic. Unlike the symbolic, which is constituted in terms of oppositions such as that between presence and absence, ‘there is no absence in the real, . . . as it is simply opposed to the realm of the image, which seems to locate it in the realm of being, beyond appearances: the real emerges as that which is outside language and inassimilable to symbolisation. It is ‘that

which resists symbolization absolutely' or, again, the real is the domain of what-ever subsists outside symbolisation (Evans, 1996, p. 162).

III.9. The Unconscious is Structured like the Language of Waiting for Godot

Samuel Beckett's play *Waiting for Godot* is one of the simplest plays in terms of language and dialogue, although simplicity is one of the things that are considered the most beautiful in art, but it is also one of the things that intrigue the human mind into posing questions about the reason behind the use of this plain English.

The simplicity of Samuel Beckett's language can be interpreted as deliberate and strategically crafted. Better, it was not just slipping of the pen or an undervalue of the artistic use of language. Beckett's language carries a secret behind the simplicity of the words used as he employed the language as a means to express the reality of absurd life and the condition of the hopeless, unpassionate man. Language in the play, is not the key to communication. Instead, it is only used in the exchange of meaningless words between characters. The language that Beckett used in *Waiting for Godot* does not develop into something comprehensible or comprehensible, but rather empty and vague that has left the audience confused. Vladimir and Estragon don't really talk about the important things but the conversation they have is always short and interchangeable:

VLADIMIR:

I felt lonely.

ESTAGON:

I had a dream.

VLADIMIR:

Don't tell me! (Waiting for Godot. 1, L 1-2, p. 15)

In that period, Samuel Beckett's pen expressed the miserable life, his words and the nymphs used had hidden meanings, a language different from what he wrote, letters that carried internal facts for man. His use to repeat an example was to explain the idea that the absence of any progress and change in their lives. The play *Waiting for Godot* ends in the same way it began "Nothing to be done". According to Lacan, this is what is called the language of the unconscious where the everyday speech becomes tricky and manipulative as it is extracted from the unconscious. This language that manipulates meaning, carries the aspects of a meaningful language which is coded in secrets. In other words, Beckett's language and style is from this perspective we can admit that Psychoanalysis is, much like Modernist literature, set itself the task of finding a language to articulate the muted malaise of the modern soul but in a deceitful manner where meaning seems absent and connection to the character, their surroundings and their aspiration seems unbridged because of the inconveniences of their speech. In the way the unconscious is structured like a language, Beckett's absurd tone prevails in the play via the language which was structured to meet the socio-political, cultural and intellectual scene as well as the disturbances of the age. Beckett's playfulness with words and meaning is what Lacan identifies as:

La linguisterie which is the side of language that linguistics ignores. It refers to those points in language when meaning fails and breaks down; it is the science

of the word that fails. Better, it is the ‘linguistricks’, which serves to emphasize the playfulness of the unconscious and the way it is always trying to trip the subject up, playing tricks on conscious thought (Homer, 2005, p. 69).

Conclusion

This chapter is an analytical study of Samuel Beckett’s play via Lacan’s psychological theory by focusing upon characters by applying the psychoanalytic theory which is based on the Symbolic, the Imaginary, and the Real. The study elicits new meanings via the study of the language used by the playwright and the characters in terms of personality and beliefs. In the play *Waiting for Godot*, includes several meanings which expressed the idea of the absurdity, the complex ideas and thoughts through shedding light on the theory of the unconscious as structured as a language.



General Conclusion

The development of literature in the artistic arena has spread and led to many intellectual changes which have also been the result of the horrific human conditions of the twentieth century. These episodes left multiple shocks on humanity and changed the patterns of human thinking due to wars that raised new questions about the human being and his livelihood and plunged him into a kind of psychological illnesses.

Artistic works dealt with the representation of that sort of reality and as a consequence, the absurd theatre identified with such atrocities by depicting life and the human intellect to be useless, and dumb. *Waiting for Godot*, is to this day considered as one of the most important plays in the theatre of the absurd, as it posed questions about human existence and the life in general. The Absurd, as a movement or as an ideology, has no meaning most of the time. Yet, in its meaninglessness, it carried out secret meaning and hidden messages.

The intellectual schools discussed the human being and his freedom from regulations or authorities that invaded his world and the moral controls that stood in the way of his exploration of the truth. Sartre, as an existentialist for example, considered that human is free and has got the desire to explore and to be responsible for his existence. To deeply emphasise on human existence and expression, the Freudian and Lacanian schools of psychology also emerged and attempted investigating the nature of the human mind and human behaviour. Freud as a pioneer of the psychological school has presented several concepts and therapeutic methods.

His study of consciousness and the subconscious as a cerebral continent within the subconscious of the human mind and explaining all behaviours that are unacceptable to humans was such a revolutionary scientific leap in the Modern world.

As for Lacan, the concept of psychoanalysis has been developed in terms of language here the unconscious and all its workings were recognised as linguistic and not only biological. His theory of the unconscious has been always adopted to analysing literary texts from a psychoanalytic perspective. Lacan's significance lies in the way he could develop and improve on Freud's work. More importantly, his three orders known as "the Imaginary, the Symbolic and the Real" has defined and outlined one's understanding of psychoanalysis. What is rather alluring, is the interest of writers in his theory, and the way they managed to foster his thinking and apply it to their thoughts and their characters.

In this dissertation for instance, the attempt to understand Beckett's absurdist characters, absurdist style has been carried out through the psychoanalytic theory that Jacques Lacan developed. This dissertation focused upon the characters, their speech, their thoughts, their actions and behaviours in relation to themselves as an imaginary, in relation to the world as the other or as the Symbolic and in relation to the Real as the truth that Beckett wanted his readers to understand and make sense of. In other words, the idea of the unconscious is structured like a language does not signify language only in its rules, and regulations; it is the language of life, it is the meaning that was stripped from life and which only existed in the minds of the intellectual people of the time or in the traumatic mind of the neurotic. The psychological reading of this play has explained that Beckett himself

was an extension of his characters, and every word or meaning they articulated stemmed from his unconscious; his structured unconscious which displayed simple language, and banal style of writing and a plain setting to reflect back the true reality of life, and to be able to refer back and see the true mirror which displayed calamities, atrocities and hardships that burdened the intellect and disturbed the mind and soul .



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