

THE INFLUENCE OF NIKOLAI EVREINOV
ON THE EARLY THEATRICAL WORKS
OF SAMUEL BECKETT

By

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1977

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1979

Submitted to the Faculty of
the Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS
December, 1988

Thesis
1988
F597i
Cp. 2

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of the theatre, dramatic and literary influences from one period to a later period and from a particular genre to another have been both recognized and accepted. Menander's comic theatre recurs in the Roman comedies of Plautus, via character types and the form of New Comedy. Revenge tragedies of the English Renaissance contain characters and plots modeled after Seneca. Jonson's comedy of humours establishes a base for the Restoration comedy of manners. So too, early examples within a genre or period may often provide a pattern for later characters, plots, and other dramatic devices. The ideas of power and corruption, as well as the decadent, self-destructive characters of Marlowe are mirrored in the tragedies of Shakespeare and Webster. Etherege's *Sir Fopling Flutter* sets the precedent for fops of the later Restoration. The father-son conflict of David Rabe's Sticks and Bones owes much to the conflict in Miller's Death of a Salesman.

Influences can be direct and apparent, even to the point of blatant duplication; others may be subtle and indistinct, unconsciously appropriated by the writer who remains unaware of his debt to the earlier playwright.

Influences range from outright plagiarism to subconscious hints.

The works of Samuel Beckett have been associated with Dante, Descartes, Proust, Joyce, and others. Close associaton with James Joyce and family surely gave Joycean influence to Beckett's early novels and essays (1928-1940). Although Beckett's work was dominated by his involvement with Joyce, Beckett's greater exposure to literary influence came with his first move to Paris in 1928.

Leaving Ireland for the European continent provided Beckett with direct and obvious alteration for his life pattern, including the familial relationships which had theretofore dominated his activity. It also brought his first real awareness of other expatriate writers from various countries who had been drawn to Paris in the 'twenties. Among such personalities was the Russian playwright/director/theorist Nikolai Evreinov (1879-1953).

This thesis will examine the coincidental portions of the careers of Beckett and Evreinov, establishing the possibility - if not the likelihood - of the Russian's influence on the work of the Irishman. Subsequent notation of similarities in the plays of the two writers will show influence in terms of both structure and content. I believe the influences of Evreinov upon the work of Beckett are stronger and more direct than recognized by previous critical works.

British commentator Martin Esslin (1961) acknowledged "striking parallels" (p. 44) between Beckett's Endgame (1958) and Evreinov's The Theatre of the Soul (1911). Yet, Esslin discounted the influence which I find so telling, doubting " . . . that Beckett knew this old and long-forgotten Russian play" (p. 44). Other Beckett scholars cite influences from the obvious to the obscure, apparently accepting Esslin's quick dismissal of Evreinov influence which I believe goes even beyond Endgame's debt to The Theatre of the Soul.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Part I

Described as a "light-minded aesthete and apolitical formalist" (Golub, 1982, p. 15), yet called "Russia's only modern playwright" (Collins, 1973, p. xi), Nikolai Nikolaevich Evreinov gained notoriety in Europe through his avant-garde theories and plays written in the first quarter of the twentieth century. An enigmatic, elusive personality, Evreinov proclaimed that the theatre in life, not life in the theatre, was the true reality. In Evreinov's theories, the personalization of the theatrical experience held the utmost importance. Through his plays, he examined the self and its facets, and he reproduced on the stage a laboratory for analyzing the individual in a pluralistic society. The theatre was to Evreinov "something as essentially necessary to man as air, food, and sexual intercourse" (Evreinov, 1927, p. 6).

Evreinov's plays and theoretical writings reveal divergent interests and influences culminating in his idea of the "theatre in life," which developed from Evreinov's

alteration of the nineteenth century idea of monodrama. Originally, a monodrama referred to a combination of several scenes performed by a single actor, meant to display the abilities of the actor; but, Evreinov transformed the idea of monodrama to focus on the establishment of an experience on stage with which the spectator could identify and become a part. For the spectator to undergo this coexperiencing, the performance needed to concentrate on a situation

in which there is one central figure, and in which the central figure himself, the other characters, the set, the action are not to be considered as representing some objective reality, but as representing the central figure's varying subjective perceptions of himself and the world around him. (Collins, 1973, p. xviii)

To Evreinov, the soul could concentrate on only one concern at any given moment, and adding rival objects of concentration resulted in "the weakening of the soul's capacity for receptivity" (Sayler, 1920, p. 232). Mere words were inefficient in transmitting the object, for the audience came to the theatre first as spectators and then as listeners.

The concentration on the correspondence of the external action with the internal action of the acting character runs throughout Evreinov's theory. The "I" of the spectator can merge with the "I" of the acting character only through an identical experience which necessitates visualizing the grief or ecstasy as well as hearing the dialogue. The

stage, then, along with the actors, must externalize the internal realities of the central acting character.

Evreinov summarizes the monodramatic effect:

The cornerstone of monodrama is the living experience of the acting character on the stage dependent on the identical coordinate living experience of the spectator, who by this act of coordinate experience becomes a similar acting character. To convert the spectator into an illusory acting character is the important problem of monodrama. For this, there must be on the stage first of all only one subject of acting . . . because monodrama has for its purpose to present such an external spectacle as will correspond to the inner spectacle of the subject of acting. (Sayler, 1920, pp. 235-23).

Taken literally, the theory restricts both the playwright and the director. The play must exhibit a single central character involved in a single situation or dilemma. All other characters, the setting, and the dialogue must reflect the situation in which the central character is enmeshed. The director is charged with staging the play so that all elements of the production reinforce the singularity of the character and of the situation.

Negative criticism of the theory dealt mainly with the idea of coexperiencing (Golub, 1986, pp. 36-37). Those who failed to fully comprehend his theory accused Evreinov of eroding the aesthetic distance between the audience and the central character, of forcing the action of the central character to simultaneously occur with the spectator, and of taking the act of creation away from the artist, making it

the responsibility of the spectator. Other criticism denounced Evreinov for attempting to move the actors and the audience out of the theatre. For Evreinov, the audience and the actor were one, and the criticism that separated the two didn't consider the theory as a whole.

The next development in Evreinov's "theatre in life" philosophy, the "theatre for oneself," came from his views of man's theatrical instincts, man's "will to the theatre." As children, humans compulsively create roles for themselves and, with little more than their imaginations, transform their surroundings into whatever they wish. In The Theatre in Life (1926), a compilation of the earlier theoretical works The Theatre as Such (1912) and the trilogy The Theatre for Oneself (1915-1917), Evreinov defines "the theatre for oneself":

The art of the "theatre for oneself" is simply an improved or artistically improved edition of that practice in which each of us indulges (for the theatrical instinct is common to all of us) and which is usually defined by rather vague and sometimes not very complimentary expressions, as, for instance, "to play the fool," "to play comedies," "to feign this or that," "to play this or that role," "to watch the fight of two fools, or the quarrel of two lovers," . . . (p. 191).

In monodrama, however, the spectator undergoes an identical experience with a character depicted on stage; in the "theatre for oneself" the spectator becomes the spectacle, utilizing all available external sources in producing his drama. When applied to a theatrical performance, the theory

allows for multiple viewpoints of a single reality, each spectator contributing to his own new experience of the moment.

Nature even provides examples of the theatrical instinct in the plant and animal kingdoms, in the form of mimicry. On the art of mimicry in nature in relation to theatre, Evreinov (1927) cites Hermann Groos:

The origin of artistic fantasy or playful illusion is thus anchored in the firm ground of organic evolution. Play is needed for the higher development of intelligence. At first merely objective, it becomes by means of this development subjective as well; the animal, though recognizing that its action is only a pretense, repeats it, raises it to the sphere of conscious self-delusion, to the sphere of enjoyment from a make-believe fight. And this is the very threshold of artistic production. (p. 17).

Having established that theatre exists in nature as well as in the imaginative playtime of children, Evreinov embarks upon a discussion of the many ways in which the theatrical instinct prevails in human life.

Each arena of life becomes to Evreinov a theatrical setting, to the point that such theatres exist as "The Erotic Theatre," "the theatre of military operations," "the anatomic theatre," and "the magic theatre," with a cosmic Stage Manager, Theatrarch, as the theatrical deity. All living things play their roles using different masks and garments befitting the theatrical setting and clothing the eternal spirit, the ego. In the end, after becoming

"perfectly trained in the cosmic series," the spirit "shall become His inseparable and worthy associate" (Evreinov, 1926, p. 131). In seeking oneness with Theatrarch, the spirit willingly accepts each new role in life; this willing acceptance of roles, compounded to include each member of an entire social unit, comprises the concept of the "theatre in life," where spectacle becomes as important to everyday life as it is in the theatre.

Evreinov's fascination with the psychological makeup of the self is apparent, especially in The Theatre of the Soul (1911). In this play the rational, emotional, and subconscious aspects of the self correlate with Freud's three major systems of personality. The superego becomes the rational aspect of the personality, continually engrossed in moral considerations of the actions of the other selves. The emotional self represents the id and its impulsive, pleasure-seeking mechanisms. As an arbiter of the opposing forces of the id and the superego, the ego acts as the subconscious part of the self, referred to by Freud as the unconscious. As the idea of the theatre in life developed for Evreinov, Freud's writings on dreams as the "bedrock of personality" (Hall & Lindzey, 1957, p. 59) and as "a pictorial realization of a subconscious wish" (Evreinov, 1926, p. 54) provided scientific qualification to Evreinov's theory.

In regard to his belief in man's "will to the theatre,"

Evreinov gave much credence to the philosophies of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and Bergson, who believed that man's life was destined to be controlled by his will. Nietzsche's and Bergson's optimistic view of the imaginative component of man's will especially intrigued Evreinov, for it directly correlated with his belief in the imagination as a key component of man's compulsion to theatricalize. A theatrical production was only successful if it allowed the audience to utilize its ability to imagine and, therefore, become a part of the production:

Both pure realism and pure symbolism are irreconcilable with the true nature of the theatre: the former, because it aims at a useless duplication of life (and to duplicate life does not mean to serve art: it means to kill art); the latter, because it is in its very essence hostile to the direct and straightforward enjoyment of the visual perception. Professing, as I do, the principle of idealized theatricality, I advocate the conventional realism, or stage realism, that is to say, the free imaginative creation of stage images which command belief to the spectator's receptive mind. (Evreinov, 1926, p. 148)

Evreinov maintained his attitude throughout his career, incorporating song, dance, and spectacle in his plays and writings and producing many operettas.

The most blatant example of Evreinov's determination to include the audience in the theatrical spectacle came with the mammoth staging in 1920 of his pageant/drama, The Storming of the Winter Palace, which consisted of almost ten thousand actors, workers, dancers, circus performers, and

members of the Red Army and the Baltic fleet. The extravaganza was performed in Uritsky Square, in Petrograd, in commemoration of the October Revolution. A number of other mass spectacles had been performed prior to Evreinov's production, each stressing the use of the spectators as a mass protagonist, meticulous attention to music, lighting, sound, and visual effects, and minimal attention to costumes and dialogue (Collins, 1982, p. 28). Through this production, Evreinov was able to realize the dramatization of his theories. Utilizing the audience as a singular mass protagonist provided a monodramatic effect of allowing the audience to fully participate in the drama. Evreinov also used actual participants of the October Revolution, which gave credence to his theatre in life concept.

Another important aspect of Evreinov's works was his preoccupation with death, not as the dreaded last moment of one's life, but as another theatrical realm of one's life. Observed from that perspective, he proposed the idea of "trying on death," that is, theatricalizing moments of death in various circumstances to the point of making death ridiculous. To this end, the buffoon became Evreinov's hero. The buffoon was the perfect character to laugh in the face of death:

The most impertinent challenge to Destiny is a Buffoon confronting Death.
A Buffoon who does not cease to be a Buffoon before the face of Death is a hero, nay, a superhero. To conquer the fear of Death in the

knight's armour and accoutrement is great. To conquer it in the Buffoon's cap is infinitely greater! For this is a triumphant victory of Man and a hopeless defeat of Death. (Evreinov, 1926, p. 283)

Evreinov's early one-act, A Merry Death (1908), brought the idea to the stage with the depiction of Harlequin facing death with his friends, Pierrot and Columbine.

Following The Foundation of Happiness (1902), his first successful play on the professional stage, Evreinov used his plays to convey his philosophy. His next play, The Representation of Love (1909), developed consecutively with the monodrama theory. The introduction to the play presents the theory just as Evreinov had presented it in public lectures in 1908 and 1909. The play's few productions, which Collins (1973, p. xiv) ascribes to its length and the production difficulties, led Evreinov to follow with the one-act satire, The Theatre of the Soul (1911). The play proved to be both a critical and box-office success and brought the attention of the western world to Evreinov and his theory.

During the next decade, Evreinov published in Russia the theoretical works which later became The Theatre in Life, and he exhibited the theories contained in those works through the plays The Chief Thing (1921) and The Ship of the Righteous (1924). The Chief Thing, the most successful of Evreinov's full-length plays and possibly his greatest play (Golub, 1986, p.77), prevails as the outstanding example of

the "theatre for oneself." Action as well as dialogue exhibit the basic tenets of the "theatre for oneself," and the circular structure supports Evreinov's belief that the content of theatre, not the result, is the most important consideration.

The Chief Thing received numerous productions in Europe and several productions in the United States through the 1920's and 1930's. Pirandello, who considered Evreinov an ideological comrade because of their mutual consideration of life as a series of roles (Collins, 1973, p. xx), produced the play in Rome in 1924 as the only non-Italian play in a season which included the premier of his own Six Characters in Search of an Author. News of the play reached Paris and the United States through the Pirandello production. Productions of the Evreinov play were staged in the United States at Harvard and the Pasadena Community Playhouse and in France by Charles Dullin at the Theatre de l'Atelier.

To demonstrate the societal implications of the "theatre for oneself," Evreinov followed The Chief Thing with The Ship of the Righteous, the second play in what later became a trilogy ending with The Theatre of Eternal War. The strong emphasis on individualism inherent in The Ship of the Righteous prevented its production in post-revolutionary Russia, but the premier of the play at

the Polish Theatre of Warsaw in April, 1925, attracted the most zealous audience of Evreinov's playwriting career (Collins, 1973, p. xxii).

Because of increasing restrictions on artists by Russian censors, Evreinov left his homeland and traveled extensively in Europe, making a brief trip to America in 1926, where he participated in the Harvard production of The Chief Thing. Despite the success of productions of The Chief Thing in the United States, Evreinov returned to Europe to reside in Paris, where his plays and productions were especially well-received because of their avant-garde, often risqué, flavor and style. After 1930, Evreinov became a permanent resident of Paris, where he spent the remainder of his life writing, directing, and producing. During this time he wrote a comprehensive history of the Russian theatre, and he began his final work, The Revelation of Art, a compendium of his beliefs of the power of suggestion in art, unfinished at his death in 1953.

Though Evreinov's "theatre in life" position received minimal critical acceptance when first presented, he has more recently gained attention for his contribution to modern theatre (Collins, 1973, pp. xi-xii; Esslin, 1969, pp. 43-44; Golub, 1982, p. 21, 1986, pp. 212-220). His innovations - the use of different characters to represent the psychological aspects of a single character; the physicalization of a character or of characters through the

scenic elements; the inclusion of the audience in the dramatic action; the melding of theatrical elements into everyday life - seemed ludicrous to proponents of Realism. Evreinov's ideas developed concurrently with the rejectionist experiments in symbolism, expressionism, and surrealism, which also emphasized the dynamic processes of the unconscious mind, and his writings on crime as a by-product of the theatre appear a decade before Artaud's "theatre of cruelty." Golub (1986) suggests that the hero of The Theatre of the Soul "may represent one of the first casualties of the modern condition" (p. 47), for the audience sees the struggle occurring in the hero's mind in terms of modern psychology instead of through "Stanislavski's well-known sentimentalism" (p. 46). Considered in terms of this new thinking on his theatre and in terms of his popularity in France during the formative period of the absurdist movement, Nikolai Evreinov deserves attention as one of the pre-founders of the theatre of the absurd and, consequently, as an influence on the theatre of Samuel Beckett.

Part II

While Nikolai Evreinov was developing his theories of drama and writing the plays that would illustrate those theories, another writer was becoming initiated into the world in which he would gain a reputation as one of the most celebrated "absurd" dramatists of the twentieth century.

Samuel Barclay Beckett was born in April, 1906, to William and May Beckett, a middle-class Protestant couple from a small town near Dublin, Ireland. Beckett describes his childhood as ". . . uneventful . . . My father did not beat me, nor did my mother run away from home" (Bair, 1978, p. 14). Beckett's mother did, however, keep a tight reign on him and became even more domineering when he turned to language studies instead of entering the family business. A battle of wills between the two lasted until his mother's death in 1950. Consequently, Beckett's childhood and early adulthood experiences, though uneventful, provided him with many years of psychological torment and produced memories and psychosomatic conditions that would directly and indirectly influence his later writing.

Beckett's interest in drama developed when he moved away from home to Trinity College, Dublin, to study modern languages. Dublin, in 1926, contained many active theatres

and professional and amateur theatre groups. The diverse theatre of Dublin proved indicative of the appetite of the Dublin theatre-going public. The Abbey Theatre of the Brothers Fay, Lady Gregory, and their associates, produced mainly Irish nationalistic plays with Sean O'Casey as the most prominent playwright. Beckett liked O'Casey's work and was present at several of his opening nights. The Gate Theatre, where European experimental drama was frequently performed, and the Queen's Theatre, the home of melodrama, were two of Beckett's favorites, as were the movie houses which showed the newest Laurel and Hardy, Charlie Chaplin, and Harold Lloyd movies (Bair, 1978, p. 48).

Beckett became a member of the Drama League which met at the old Peacock Theatre, and he began to frequent the coteries of Dublin society. One such group, sponsored by the mother of one of Beckett's professors, was also attended by some prominent Dublin musicians, artists, and writers. Among this group were William Butler Yeats, Jack Yeats, Oliver St. Gogarty, and Walter Starkie, Beckett's Latin instructor at Trinity. It was through Starkie's lectures and enthusiasm for continental theatre that Beckett gained an avid interest in Pirandello and European experimental theatre.

Beckett's life was dominated at this time by his school work, his frequent excursions to the theatres and movies, and his even more frequent visits to the pubs of Dublin. In

September, 1928, after his graduation from Trinity and a brief stint as a French instructor, Beckett moved to Paris to become lecturer in English at L'Ecole Normale Superiere. The move to Paris thrust Beckett into a lifestyle much the same as his Dublin life had been, with one major exception: he was now more free of his mother's attempts to control his life.

From 1928 until 1930, when he returned to Dublin, Beckett's life in Paris involved experiences essential to his later development as a writer. Paris of the 1920's and early 1930's was a haven for artists and writers interested in modern artistic trends, including the French surrealist poets, Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Gertrude Stein, Sinclair Lewis, Elmer Rice, Isadora Duncan, Sherwood Anderson, Hart Crane, Edna Ferber, Ezra Pound, James Joyce, Luigi Pirandello, and Nikolai Evreinov. The Montparnasse/Latin Quarter area of Paris, known as the Left Bank, was renowned throughout the world for its inhabitants and their Bohemian, carefree lifestyles. The common conception of the Left Bank was of struggling artists reveling in their artistic freedom and artistic endeavors; but by the late 1920's, the area was losing some of its notoriety, and inhabitants. The Paris Tribune's chronicle of the era describes the Left Bank as mostly "not, so far as the Americans in it were concerned, a gathering place of free and distinguished spirits who were practising the arts"

(Ford, 1972, p. 33). Alex Small, in The Paris Tribune of April 6, 1929, reports his impression of the Left Bank:

To those with higher aspirations, Montparnasse meant something more profound. It was what they had imagined Greenwich Village to be . . . It was the free city to which the weary eyes of the anarchistic part of humanity had been aspiring . . . You did not have to put on side; you could be yourself . . . What [they] saw was not a company of sublime and liberated companions of Lucifer, fallen though ever so enlightened, but a gang of tawdry bums, who did not even have the courage to be frank about their uselessness, but had to invent transparent excuses, such as going to "work" next week or month. Few had any native talent even in conversation, and still fewer had the breeding and cultivation to put up the facade which takes the place of real ability. What had brought them to Montparnasse was a vague discontent with their former environment. They had in common their inarticulate restlessness. (Ford, 1972, p. 32)

Soon after settling in his apartment on the Rue d'Ulm, Beckett became a member of Joyce's circle of admirers and began living the life of a Left Banker. Paris life for the few true artists and writers included frequenting the sidewalk cafes for hours at a time discussing politics, literature, painting, and the local gossip about each other. Beckett was no stranger to the cafes visited by the more famous literary figures, and he quite often was late for his duties at L'Ecole Normale because of his late-night excursions (Bair, 1978, p. 66).

As part of his informal requirements associated with the lectureship at L'Ecole Normale, Beckett was to complete a scholarly essay suitable for publication. In preparation

for the assignment, he began reading philosophical works, including those of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and Geulinx, centering his attention, though, on Descartes. Beckett's interest in Descartes focused on the philosopher's reluctance to rely on the perception of reality that we obtain through our senses and resulted in his first published work, the poem "Whoroscope" (1930). "Whoroscope" condensed his readings on Descarte to ninety-six lines in order to enter a poetry contest, which Beckett won.

Beckett returned to Dublin in 1930, amid his parents' disapproval of "Whoroscope" (Bair, 1978, p. 105), to begin an obligatory position as a lecturer in French at Trinity College. Beckett, feeling very sure of himself after the publication of his first work (Bair, 1978, p. 106), devoted much of his time to writing and had several more poems published. He disliked his position as lecturer so strongly that he would often spend the night before class drinking himself into unconsciousness to be able to face his students, mostly "women, mooning about" (Bair, 1978, p. 122). Unable to reacquaint himself with life in Dublin and after suffering bouts with pleurisy and from intense depression caused by his mother's constant doting and nagging (Bair, 1978, pp. 135-136), Beckett resigned his position upon receiving his Master of Arts degree in December, 1931. He returned to Paris, where he remained until 1933, when the ill health of his father forced his

return to Dublin. Again he was subjected to his mother's domineering personality, resulting in severe outbreaks of boils and in deep depression.

On his family's request, Beckett sought medical advice and visited an acquaintance, Dr. Geoffrey Thompson, a resident physician interested in becoming a psychiatrist. Through Thompson Beckett developed an interest in the psychoanalytical theories of Freud and Jung, which would in later years infiltrate his writings. Following Bill Beckett's death in June, 1933, and after a long period of unexplained influenza symptoms and recurring outbreaks of huge boils on his hands, neck, and back, Beckett and Thompson were able to convince Beckett's reluctant family to send him to London for analysis. In January, 1934, Beckett moved to London to begin analysis with Dr. Wilfred Bion.

The analysis lasted for almost two years, interrupted by frequent visits to Dublin at May Beckett's insistence. Beckett's enlightenment concerning his relationship with his mother occurred after a year-and-a-half of uneventful therapy when he attended a lecture by Jung, who was presenting a series of lectures at Bion's clinic. The lecture concerned fragmentary personalities and the ability of unconscious segments of a personality to achieve a position of control over the conscious self, resulting in a schizophrenic condition. Jung used the poet as an example:

When he creates a character on the stage, or in

his poem or drama or novel, he thinks it is merely a product of his imagination; but that character in a certain secret way has made it itself. Any novelist or writer will deny that these characters have a psychological meaning, but as a matter of fact, you know as well as I do that they have one. Therefore, you can read a writer's mind when you study characters he creates. (Bair, 1978, p. 208)

At the end of the lecture, in response to a question about children's dreams, Jung told the story of a young girl who had very disturbing mythological dreams. Jung felt that the dreams were a premonition of an early death, and the girl had indeed died within a year. Jung then casually commented that "She had never been born entirely" (Bair, 1978, p. 209).

The entire lecture and Jung's remark caused Beckett to reevaluate himself and brought the analysis into perspective for him. He felt that the process of writing involved more than merely conjuring experiences and dramatizing events. He had already written a series of short stories, Dreams of Fair to Middling Women (unpublished), which was so autobiographical that he refused to submit it for publication, and to hear a noted psychiatrist speak of the writing process as an almost uncontrollable action manipulated by unconscious segments of the personality made Beckett wonder about his own compulsion to write (Bair, 1978, p. 210). He was also now convinced that he too had never been completely born, that he was an incompletely developed personality searching for his true self. His

inability to cope with social structures and to relate with groups of people, and especially with his mother, were results of his faulty birth. This revelation provided Beckett with a new psychological freedom that allowed him to satisfactorily end his analysis in the next few months.

The years of analysis with Bion and his own studies in psychoanalysis and psychology appear first in Murphy (1938) (Lyons, 1983, p. 5) and later, throughout Beckett's writing. His novels invariably recount the experiences of a central character as seen through the eyes of the character or through an unknown third person voice. And in each circumstance, the main character is involved in a quest to discover the meaning of reality (Webb, 1970, p. 16).

Murphy, started during the analysis and completed three years after the Jung lecture, reveals Beckett's newfound freedom of expression with its characters that emanate from the recesses of Murphy's mind. Watt (1953), written during Beckett's seclusion in the Vaucluse region of France during World War II, embarks on a journey to Mr. Knott's house, stays for a period of time, then leaves, all with no apparant motivation. The trilogy, Molloy (1951), Malone Meurt (1951), and L'Innommable (1953), also involves quests. In Molloy, which is divided into two parts, Moran writes the story of his quest for his mother. In Malone Meurt, Malone passes time telling himself stories while waiting to die. In L'Innommable, the Unnamable writes words as they come

into his head, with no regard to structure or meaning, resembling the unrestrained stream-of-conscious thought of the human mind.

The intensity and determination with which Beckett wrote the first two novels of the trilogy drained him; yet, feeling the compulsion to continue writing, the author impulsively turned to drama "to get away from the awful prose [he] was writing at the time" (Bair, 1978, p. 381). Three months later--January, 1949--the original French version of En Attendant Godot was completed.

Waiting for Godot was actually Beckett's fourth dramatic undertaking and his second completed dramatic work. While at Trinity College, Beckett had rewritten Corneille's Le Cid as a parody called Le Kid, which was the production for the annual drama festival. Several years later, an interest in Samuel Johnson was the basis for a four-act play concerning Johnson's love for the Mrs. Thrale of The Vanity of Human Wishes; but Beckett lost interest in the idea. After the war, Beckett wrote his longest play, Eleutheria (1947), a seventeen-character autobiographical drama which shows Pirandellian influence in its form (Lyons, 1983, p. 19). After numerous rejections of the play, due mainly to its expansive staging demands, Beckett again lost interest and returned to writing novels. The success of his subsequent plays, with their antithetical, simplistic stagings, caused Beckett to reconsider publishing

Eleutheria, and it has remained unpublished for performance purposes (Lyons, 1983, p. 19).

The triumph of Waiting for Godot came after four years of being rejected by publishers and theatres, and if not for the dedicated efforts of the play's first director, actor/director Roger Blin, success would have taken even longer. Unable to afford the production costs, Blin and Beckett submitted the play to the French government for a production grant. The grant was awarded, and the meager \$400, which partially accounted for the desolate set and lighting (Bair, 1978, p. 422), provided for the Theatre de Babylon production.

Even after Waiting for Godot's success, Beckett's main interest remained with novels; but Blin, after performing the play for two years, urged him to write another play, which became Endgame (1955). Within five years, three more plays were written: Krapp's Last Tape (1957); Act Without Words, I (1957); and Happy Days (1960). The psychological studies of isolation, desolation, loneliness, suicide, death, and the self, and the experimentation with dramatic as well as staging techniques prevail in varying forms and degrees. And just as Beckett developed his distinct prose style by incorporating the styles and philosophies of other writers into his early novels, the early dramatic works reveal structural and theatrical similarities to other playwrights and theorists.

Perhaps by mere coincidence or by unconscious application, or perhaps by more direct intention, Samuel Beckett's early plays include structural elements and ideas that can be traced to similar elements and ideas in the plays and theories of Nikolai Evreinov. An examination of the paths of the authors' lives will provide the greatest evidence of Beckett's introduction to Evreinov's works, with subsequent Evreinov influence upon the plays of Beckett.

CHAPTER III

THE PARIS CONNECTION

To say that Parisians loved the theatre of Nikolai Evreinov would be a slight understatement. Their attention had been drawn to Evreinov after the success of The Theatre of the Soul in Russia and after the attention critics gave his monodrama theory; but Evreinov's real success with the Parisians came after his move to Paris, for he exemplified much that was typical and expected of a Parisian during the 1920's, at least from the outside world's viewpoint. He became a Left Bank Bohemian, was an expatriate with a literary reputation, and was the author of two of the most well-received plays in Parisian theatres during the 1920's and 1930's.

Evreinov's plays received numerous productions in various Paris theatres, and accounts of Evreinov's activities were not uncommon in the daily newspapers (Golub, 1986, p. 204). The Chief Thing received more than 200 performances alone between its 1926 Theatre de l'Atelier production and its 1935 production at the Theatre de la Potiniere (Golub, 1986, p. 209), and The Theatre of the Soul continued to be performed at the avant garde theatres, like

Theatre 1932, well into the 1930's. Evreinov was every bit as much a celebrity to the Parisians as Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Joyce, and Stein were to the international set.

Along with his plays, the ideas relating to Evreinov's theatre received attention in the French press, and thus to Beckett. The December 21, 1924, issue of The Paris Tribune contains a selection from Geoffrey Fraser telling of activities at a local cafe. Among such recounted activities is a conversation between two men concerning the idea of the Ideal Woman and the Ideal Wife. The conversation suggests an allusion to the situation faced by the selves in The Theatre of the Soul. In the play, the man whom the selves represent is unable to attain either the ideal or the realistic image of his wife or a Songstress. Just as the image of the Ideal Woman (the Songstress) and the Ideal Wife are unattainable to the central character in the play, one of the men in the cafe decides that since "both of them [the Ideal Woman and the Ideal Wife] are ideal, they are both unattainable and therefore not worth discussing" (Ford, 1972, p. 16).

Though Evreinov "developed no new ideas as a director or a writer and did not modify to any significant extent his existing ones" (Golub, 1986, p. 207) after moving to Paris, he did remain very active in the theatre, including writing and staging several ballets and operas. He wrote a number of new plays, including the final play in his

theatre-in-life trilogy, The Theatre of Eternal War, and in 1934 he was named artistic director of a theatre venture called The Wandering Comedians. The venture was similar in operation to the Crooked Mirror Theatre in St. Petersburg, of which Evreinov was chief artistic director from 1910 to 1917. The Crooked Mirror opened on 6 December 1908 as an after-hours, new-style cabaret which was characterized as "a theatre of literary artistic parody" (Golub, 1986, p. 148). Evreinov joined the theatre at a crucial time in the theatre's development, and he was instrumental in its transformation into "a full-fledged theatre of parody and satire performing at regular hours . . . in more substantial premises" (Golub, 1986, p. 149). Following in the footsteps of The Crooked Mirror, which closed in 1931, The Wandering Comedians was "designed for a select audience, for an elite, for critics, for snobbish scoffers . . . and simply for merry fellows and wits of all types" (Golub, 1986, p. 205). The group, however, operated for only two seasons. After 1935, Evreinov was involved with the Society of Russian Artists, who staged a very successful production of The Chief Thing.

During World War II, Evreinov became the artistic director of the Theatre of Russian Drama in Paris, and he staged many plays by nineteenth-century Russian authors. The Germans took an interest in Evreinov during the occupation, partly because of his affiliation with the

Freemasons and partly because of the strict German censorship of Parisian theatre (Golub, 1986, p. 206). On one occasion, the famous actress E. O. Skokan was almost banned from playing a part in The Chief Thing because the Germans thought she had Jewish blood. After the occupation, he presented a nine-part series of lectures concerning his personal memories of many notable early twentieth-century Russians, including Stanislavski, Rimski-Korsakov, Gorky, and himself, and in 1945 he began writing Histoire du Theatre Russe (1947), his history of the Russian theatre from its folk origins to the pre-revolutionary period.

In 1928, during the height of Evreinov's notoriety in Paris, Samuel Beckett made his first move to the Left Bank. Beckett had not yet established any kind of name for himself as a writer, and he frequented the cafes that were the havens for the more famous literary figures, hoping to see them and to eavesdrop on their conversations. Though no specific examples have been documented, Beckett may well have overheard Nikolai Evreinov carrying on with the "merry fellows and wits of all types" who later called themselves The Wandering Comedians. They were part of the current literary/theatrical scene, and that scene was Beckett's self-imposed assignment. Yet, even without such direct eavesdropping, the name and theatrical ideas of Evreinov could not have escaped Beckett's sensitive ears or his inquisitive late night excursions. And though he did not

reside in Paris continually throughout the next decade, he continued to monitor Left Bank cafe society through correspondence with his friends and acquaintances and through dealings with publishers.

Through Thomas McGreevy, the former lecturer at L'Ecole Normale and a fairly well-known Irish poet, Beckett met James Joyce, and he quickly settled into a routine in which he would arise to tutor students in the early afternoon, perform various functions for Joyce, and visit the cafes to "work." Much of Beckett's time was spent running errands for and reading to Joyce, and some of Beckett's first writing projects were done at Joyces's request. Beckett became so mesmerized by Joyce and his following that he began to dress like Joyce and to mimic Joyce's mannerisms, particularly Joyce's use of silence when confronted by an embarrassing situation or by embarrassing questions.

During breaks from his school duties, Beckett sometimes spent time with his cousins in Germany, and he would make any excuse possible to avoid going home to Ireland. Usually, he would spend his time in the Joyce household; but, as time and the relationship between Beckett and Joyce progressed, Joyce's daughter, Lucia, began to show increasing interest in Beckett. Unable to cope with Lucia's erratic behavior and afraid that Joyce would become angry if he did not show an interest in Lucia, Beckett gradually began to spend less time with Joyce. Instead, he spent more

time in the cafes, drinking and "working." Were Evreinov's ideas and activities part of such "work?" The likelihood is strong.

Through his dealings with Joyce and McGreevy, Beckett made contacts with various editors, writers, and publishers. His projects for Joyce resulted in various Beckett publications. An essay about Joyce, "Dante . . . Bruno . . . Vico . . . Joyce," and his short story, "Assumption," appeared in the June, 1929, issue of transition in Paris. The following year, a poem, "For Future Reference," was included in the June transition, with "Whoroscope" receiving publication in August. In September, 1930, Beckett returned to Dublin to assume a position at Trinity College.

Between 1930 and 1938, Beckett resided in Dublin, Germany, London, and Paris for various reasons, including the deaths of his father and his cousin Peggy Sinclair, with whom he had been infatuated. He began to publish poems, essays, and short stories fairly regularly, though still not receiving enough compensation to support himself or to establish a solid literary reputation, but the eventual settlement of his father's estate brought Beckett a 200-pound annual inheritance. A reputation was beginning to build, though, for The Paris Tribune of April 7, 1931, refers to him as "another Irish poet now among us," and the publication of his Proust (1931) is announced (Ford, 1972, p. 140). By 1937 he had permanently moved to Paris and had

published a collection of short stories, More Pricks Than Kicks (1934), and a collection of poems, Echo's Bones (1935). He had begun and abandoned his first novel, Dreams of Fair to Middling Women, and his first completed novel, Murphy (1938), had been accepted for publication.

The war years in Europe helped to undermine the meager literary reputation that Beckett had started to build. Beckett and his live-in companion and wife since 1961, Suzanne Deschevaux-Dumesnil, whom he had met after moving to Paris in 1938, were determined to keep their apartment in Paris, even though the Germans were advancing on France. Like Evreinov, they felt that the German occupation would not nullify Paris as a literary workplace. Later Beckett-Dumesnil involvement with a French Resistance group, however, forced a hasty escape from Paris in 1942 to the South of France where they remained until 1945. During this period of seclusion, Beckett wrote the substantially autobiographical Watt, his last novel originally written in English. Watt was first published in English in 1953, the year of Evreinov's death.

From 1945 until 1950, Beckett underwent drastic changes in his personality and in his writing. He returned to Paris via Ireland and a job with the Red Cross, but with no real income and the stoppage of his inheritance payments due to the impounding of funds in Ireland, Beckett returned to Ireland. For the next several months Beckett drank heavily,

practically lived in the pubs of Dublin, and engaged in notorious casual sexual encounters (Bair, 1978, pp. 349-350). This activity continued until one evening when Beckett had a revelation in which he realized the direction that his writing should take. Just as the Jung lecture in 1935 had had so great an effect on his understanding of his psychological self, this sudden revelation allowed Beckett to understand that his writing needed to come more from deep within himself and that his experiences should be used as he perceived them.

At this same time Beckett began writing first drafts in French and then translating to English, and he began the task of translating his English works into French, with Murphy being the first. The next few years of writing produced Eleutheria, the trilogy, and En Attendant Godot, the works which establish the "Beckettian" writing style. Only after the initial 1953 production of Godot and after almost a decade of opposing critical appraisal, however, did Beckett's writings begin to gain real critical acclaim. It would be interesting to know if Evreinov had attended the production of Waiting for Godot before his death that year and to know his reaction to the play. Had he recognized similarities between Beckett's play and his own?

Establishing Beckett's familiarity with Evreinov and his plays becomes easy when dated biographical data of each is examined. Though no account exists of any meeting

between Beckett and Evreinov, it would have been almost impossible for Beckett to have remained ignorant about the Russian. Evreinov was an extremely high profile figure during the 20's and 30's, and he remained active in the Paris theatre scene until his death in 1953. Beckett and his wife were avid theatre-goers and were surely knowledgeable of Evreinov and had probably seen productions of his plays. Beckett's involvement in auditions for and rehearsals of Waiting for Godot before the January, 1953, production preceded Evreinov's death by at least a year and would have presented other opportunities for Beckett to become knowledgeable of Evreinov or his plays and possibly for Evreinov to become knowledgeable of Beckett. With this information in mind, the similarities that exist within the works of Beckett and Evreinov can be better realized.

CHAPTER IV

BECKETT, THE THEATRE OF THE SOUL.

AND BEYOND

While Esslin (1961) and Golub (1986) have recognized that Samuel Beckett's Endgame contains similarities to Nikolai Evreinov's The Theatre of the Soul, the actual extent of the similarities has never really been examined. Esslin presents several possible relationships, citing the similarity of the set in Endgame to the inside of a man's head and the possibility of Hamm and Clov representing different sides of a single personality. Esslin further admits that Beckett's pairs of characters - Hamm and Clov, Vladimir and Estragon, Pozzo and Lucky - have been interpreted as being elements of a single personality or as personalities with whom Beckett has had relationships. Those types of relationships appearing in Beckett's plays suggest a knowledge of Evreinov's definition of monodrama, where the characters, the set, and the action represent the subjective perceptions of the central character and not some objective reality. However, the extent of Beckett's debt to Evreinov goes further than a mere knowledge of monodrama and

is not limited to Endgame and character pairs of Waiting for Godot.

Beckett's debt to Evreinov lies in the use of the stage as an exhibition of the interplay between various aspects of a single human psyche. All remaining elements which connect the two authors' works, including the ideas of man's isolation in his own mind and the voluntary and involuntary isolation of subcultures of society from the remainder of humanity, revolve around this staging concept. Evreinov's theatrical presentation of this concept made his short one-act The Theatre of the Soul popular with audiences. On stage in front of the audience was a huge replica of the chest cavity of a man, complete with moving heart and lungs. Inside the chest, where the soul was believed to lie, were the aspects of the self - S1, S2, S3 - respectively representing the rational, emotional, and subconscious elements of the psyche. A Professor explains to the audience that this representation of the self comes from "the researches of Wundt, Freud, and Theodule Ribot and others" and goes on to explain that the soul is depicted in the chest because that is what "the author of the present work believes" (Evreinov, 1973, p. 25).

The three selves interact in the play during a situation involving the man they represent. The man, who is married, is infatuated with a Songstress and is trying to decide if he should leave his wife for the Songstress.

Images of the wife and of the Songstress appear as characters in the man's psyche: one is a beautiful idealization; the second is an aging, grotesque realistic image. S1, the rational self, struggles to convince the man to stay with his wife by presenting the realistic image of the Songstress, while S2, the emotional self, tries to convince the man to go with the Songstress by presenting the realistic image of the wife. The images of the wife and Songstress begin fighting, but the fight is stopped by S1 slapping the Songstress. S2 becomes angry and strangles S1. S2 then throws himself at the Songstress' feet, saying "You are now the ruler here! My queen!" However, the Songstress replies "No, no, I'm not yours . . . I was just teasing." S2 goes to a phone and tells the brain to get a pistol out of the man's pocket. S3, the subconscious, who has been asleep through the entire incident, awakens in time to hear a loud shot (which during the production caused a huge hole to open in the heart and red streamers to pour through), as the stage darkens and S2 falls to the floor. A Conductor enters and leads "Mr. Subconscious" to a place called "Newville."

This ingenious combination of turn-of-the-century psychological theory and broad scale staging technique presented a theatrical event that intrigued and entertained European audiences. The use of the three selves correlated with the then novel concept of the division of the mind into

separate but interrelating parts, later termed the id, ego, and superego by Freud in The Ego and the Id (1923); and Evreinov's satirical portrait of the interaction of the selves surrounded by the huge breathing lungs and the beating heart effectively utilized theatrical technique to present this innovative idea.

To Esslin, the connection between Endgame and The Theatre of the Soul is "unlikely" (p. 44) because Evreinov's play "is a purely rational construction" while Beckett's play "springs from genuine depths" of the human psyche. Esslin, however, does not consider, though he does present extremely plausible relationships, that Evreinov wrote his play before World War I when the personality theorists - Charcot, Freud, and others - were in the early stages of their investigations. Evreinov's depiction of the soul as the keeper of the facets of the personality indicates the newness of personality theory. Beckett, on the other hand, wrote Endgame long after the pioneering efforts of Freud, Jung, and others in psychology, who had replaced the soul with the psyche. Beckett's own life had been full of psychological torment and introspection before the writing of Endgame, and he was well-schooled in later theories of personality development.

Yet, Beckett's real connection with Evreinov does not begin with Endgame. Endgame is merely a refinement of Beckett's bio-psychological introspection, using Evreinovian

staging technique, that begins with Waiting for Godot.

In Waiting for Godot, Beckett presents a glimpse into a human mind in a much more sophisticated manner than may have been possible for the idealist Evreinov when he wrote The Theatre of the Soul. Beckett presents the four main characters - Vladimir, Estragon, Pozzo, and Lucky - and a boy through the course of the play. Through their dialogue and interrelatedness these characters represent his desires, needs, fears, expectations, and confusion concerning life, humanity, and society. Their physical actions and conditions reflect Beckett's own physicality, complete with running sores, boils, and a variety of ailments. These characters would be likened to Jung's conception of fragmentary personalities, who he felt inhabited the mind of a poet or writer and could become so real and vociferous that they could develop egos of their own. The stage on which these personalities perform/exist remains the same throughout the play: a country road - an isolated stream-of-consciousness - with no beginning and no end. Where Evreinov exposes to the audience the soul existing in a physical part of the body, Beckett exposes the psyche in the nonphysical, indeterminate expanse of the mind, indicating man's isolation in his own mind.

Vladimir and Estragon, who refer to each other respectively with the diminutives Didi and Gogo, expose elements of personality which remain constant in the human

condition. To pass the time while waiting for the mysterious Godot, about whom they know very little, they fabricate activities - word games, exercising, telling stories, imitating Pozzo and Lucky - and philosophize about, among other topics, religion, committing suicide, and the human condition. They await Godot because when he arrives they will be "saved"; yet, they cannot not wait for him, for then they would be punished. Their struggle to escape their situation reflects, according to Jungian personality theory, the ever-present struggle of the aspects of the personality to obtain synthesis and to form an integrated personality.

Pozzo and Lucky, conversely, reveal aspects of personality which invade the stream-of-consciousness when the personality undergoes extreme stress from the demands of society or some other external source. In their first encounter with Vladimir and Estragon in Act I, Pozzo wields a whip - the power of external demands on the personality - with which he "drives" Lucky, attached to him by means of a rope encircling Lucky's neck. On Lucky's neck Vladimir and Estragon see the boils and running sores caused by the rope, reminiscent of the boils and sores which plagued Beckett during times of stress, and Lucky carries Pozzo's luggage - a coat, a picnic basket, a stool, and a heavy bag - suggesting the baggage imposed upon the personality by the demands of society. In much the same way that a part of the personality succumbs to society's demands, Lucky obeys

Pozzo's commands, leading the way for the unexplainably blind Pozzo on their second encounter with Vladimir and Estragon in Act II.

The boy appears twice during the play, each time with a message for Vladimir and Estragon that Godot will not come until the next day; and, each time he appears he does not remember having seen the two on a previous occasion. The appearance of the boy emphasizes the cyclical structure of the play: in Act I, Estragon and Vladimir wait for Godot, encounter Pozzo and Lucky, get the message from the boy that Godot will not arrive, and then decide that they should leave but remain as night falls. In Act II, Estragon and Vladimir wait for Godot, encounter Pozzo, who does not remember meeting them, and Lucky, receive the message from the boy that Godot will not come, and decide to go; but, they remain motionless, as night and the curtain fall. The two acts resemble each other, supposedly representing two different days, though not necessarily following one another, and the dialogue and actions of Vladimir and Estragon indicate that each "day" is, has been, and will always remain the same. This perpetual succession of "days" suggests the stream-of-consciousness of the mind, a never-ending series of thoughts, desires, needs, fears, passions, anxieties, and expectations. These thoughts take form in fragmentary personalities and exist as ego-entities in the mind, reminiscent of Evreinov's ideal and realistic

images.

With Endgame, Beckett continues the concept of portraying, through characters and setting, separate but interrelated aspects of the human psyche; however, with this one-act, written at the request of Roger Blin (Bair, 1978, p. 447), Beckett more consciously devises the relationship of the characters between themselves and with their setting. The play takes place in a shelter (bomb? fallout?), where Hamm, blind and confined to a wheelchair, and Clov, partially crippled, eke out an existence as the survivors of some terrible holocaust which, from their dialogue, has apparently ravaged the remainder of society. Two ashbins contain the vestiges of Hamm's parents, Nagg and Nell, who can do no more than stick their heads and hands out from the bins. Throughout the play, the interplay, in dialogue and action, between the characters defines the limitations and the extents of their relationships; and the characters' reliance on the sanctuary of the shelter defines its role as the storehouse of the essence of each of the characters.

The existence of Hamm and Clov revolves around their mutual dependence on each other. Hamm orders Clov to move him about the room, to be his eyes and his link with the outside world, which Clov can see through two windows, positioned on left and right side of the stage high enough for Clov to need a stepladder to reach. Clov must obey Hamm if he wishes to continue his existence, for Hamm possesses

the key to the cupboard which contains the last known uncontaminated food supplies. Their interdependence, however, is deeper than a mere physical dependence, for just as Vladimir and Estragon rely on each other to pass the time while waiting for Godot, Hamm and Clov keep each other occupied through a variety of activities while awaiting the end: Hamm must be positioned exactly in the middle of the room when not being taken for strolls along the walls - "Hug the walls, then back to the center again." (Beckett, 1958, p. 25); Clov continuously straightens things - "I love order. It's my dream." (Beckett, 1958, p. 57); Hamm, an author, recites from his stories as Clov is impelled to listen; Hamm inquires repeatedly for reports on the outside world, whereupon Clov must climb the ladder and survey the world outside the shelter; Hamm and Clov unendingly discuss their existence and the dependence they have on each other.

The presence of Nagg and Nell provides additional sport for Hamm, who chides them - "Quiet, quiet, you're keeping me awake." (Beckett, 1958, p. 18) - and forces them to listen to his soliloquies and stories in return for the promise of "pap" and a "sugar-plum." Nagg and Nell speak very little during the play and have only one short exchange of dialogue between them, in which Nagg tells a story to Nell and recounts the circumstances of their engagement. Through the play, the two become decreasingly responsive to Hamm and Clov until near the end of the play when Nell appears dead

to Clov when he opens her lid, and Nagg responds unintelligibly when Hamm calls out to him.

Structurally, the relationships in Endgame - Hamm with Clov, Hamm with Nagg and Nell, Hamm and Clov with the outside world - suggest the elements of the psyche of an individual. Hamm's relationship with Clov appears similar to the interactions of the id and the ego. Just as the id functions as the source of mental energy and expression for the whole of the mental apparatus and impels the ego to action, Hamm impels Clov to do his bidding from his wheelchair, the seat of man's primitive drives. Hamm is the only source of energy for Clov, holding the key to the food reserves, and Clov must do Hamm's bidding or die. As the ego, Clov acts as Hamm's link with the outside world, giving reports on the conditions outside; and, just as the ego seeks to integrate and arbitrates between the elements of the personality, Clov attempts to bring order to the inner world of the shelter.

Nagg and Nell, the parental figures which help compose the superego, are an unremitting source of guilt and anxiety from their ashbins, compartments of the mind:

HAMM: Scoundrel! Why did you engender me?

NAGG: I didn't know.

HAMM: What? What didn't you know?

NAGG: That it'd be you. (Beckett, 1958, p. 49)

Their imminent demise, however, illustrates the lessening influence of the superego on the id as the ego matures, and

the placing of the lids on the ashbins acts as the ego repressing the source of guilt and anxiety:

HAMM: Have you bottled her?
 CLOV: Yes.
 HAMM: Are they both bottled?
 CLOV: Yes.
 HAMM: Screw down the lids. (Beckett, 1958, p. 24)

In relation to Beckett's life, each of the characters reflects an aspect of his developed/developing personality. Beckett's unrelenting drive to express himself through writing is seen in Hamm's wish for others to listen to his story:

HAMM: It's time for my story. Do you want to listen to my story?
 CLOV: No.
 HAMM: Ask my father if he wants to listen to my story.
 CLOV: He's asleep.
 HAMM: Wake him. (Beckett, 1958, p. 48)

Clov is Beckett's social self, observing society from the inside and forced to deal with the pressures exerted on the personality by society:

I say to myself - sometimes, Clov, you must learn to suffer better than that if you want them to weary of punishing you - one day, I say to myself - sometimes, Clov, you must be there better than that if you want them to let you go - one day. But I feel too old, and too far, to form new habits. (Beckett, 1958, pp. 80-81)

As the superego, Nagg and Nell represent the external pressures on Beckett's life in the form of the

parent/authority figure. Their diminishing presence through the play suggests the receding vestiges of parental influence on Beckett following the death of his mother in 1950 and the subsequent reduction in anxiety Beckett projected in his associations with others (Bair, 1978, pp. 457-458).

The concepts identified in Evreinov's play - the existence of multiple facets of a single personality and the exhibition of the interaction of those facets through staging technique - reach maturity in Beckett's plays. What begins as structural similarity in Waiting for Godot, with the characters acting as fragmentary personalities of the psyche and the setting working as a solitary, isolated human mind, becomes in Endgame a much more complex representation of the structure of the human personality and its habitat. The characters assume psychological roles which paradoxically imply the workings of a single persona belonging to an unidentifiable, universal human personality. Concurrently, the resemblance of the setting to the inside of a human skull identifies the brain as the home of the psyche and reinforces the idea of the isolation of the mind, a situation universal to the human condition.

Just as Evreinov's characters, portrayed through turn-of-the-century concepts, present the interactions of the aspects of the soul, Beckett's characters, conditioned through later twentieth century psychological

interpretations, portray the complicated interactions of the mind. Beckett, however, injects self into the veins of the characters and emerges with an embodiment of his psychological tensions and the psychological tensions inherent in the human condition. Some critics confine themselves to these textual interpretations. Yet, The Theatre of the Soul and Endgame cannot be compared solely in dialogue and characterization, for each contains visual and visceral elements essential to eliciting the desired catharsis. Each must be envisioned in its consummate incarnation - as a stage play; and, the comparison of the two can only be made by comparing the lives of the two authors and similarities within their works as has been done herein. Through this comparison Samuel Beckett's debt to Nikolai Evreinov has been proposed, and another facet of modern theatre's debt to Nikolai Evreinov has been presented.

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VITA ²

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