

Considerations of the Influence of Jean Racine on Samuel Beckett's Plays

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Abstract: One of the characteristics of Samuel Beckett's plays is found in the structure and monologic lines. Beckett who made efforts to describe prosaic works felt some kind of tolerance for its expression after the war. But the essence of a peculiar monologic style by a first person narrator and the chaos created by words are inherited to his plays. Destiny with impasse in prose is converted into a play, *Waiting for Godot*. The symmetrical structure and monologic lines form two repetitive acts with no dramatic development.

The sluggish progression without vividly dramatic effect create a peculiar world which symbolizes a situation where people are placed in the depth of despair. On this point, it can be supposed that Beckett was influenced by Racine's plays, especially *Berenice*. In almost the same period in which he wrote *Godot*, Beckett re-read Racine's plays and comprehended the effect of the dramas. He thought that the essence of *Berenice* lies in the pre-destined fate and plain dialogue between its characters, or its non-vivid development. He must have applied these effects to his own plays. Dialogue consisted of monologic words, development without vivid drama and the pre-destined fate of people; effects which proved useful for Beckett's dramas for the present age. *Happy Days* reflects the undramatic drama of *Berenice*. Therefore, Winnie is the deformed character, consisting of Beckett's monologic expression.

Keywords: monologic lines, non-vivid development, preordained destiny, Racine, *Berenice*

1 Introduction: the background of writing plays

Concerning Samuel Beckett's novels, as Olga Bernal suggests, it seems true that the disruption of language had already begun in *Watt*.¹ Persistent and morbid permutations and combinations of words are especially remarkable and appeared in this work. Although feelings of collapse in semantic and logic consistency of language are inherited in his following novels, there are no works more peculiarly mysterious than *Watt*. Yet the traditional narrative form, and self-sufficient story could not sublimate *Watt* into superior literary work beyond itself. In *Trilogy*, Beckett developed his style of novels; in particular, he focused on the motif of disruption of language, and monologic style by a first person

narrator. As a result, the collapse of semantic logic appears in a more eminently sophisticated form in *The Unnamable*. The form of internal monologue was certainly effective in expressing such motif. Disruption of language and collapse of semantic consistency in the logic of words are originally generated in this work.

"...there were so many sins, the memory is so bad, the words don't come, the words fail, the breath fails, no, it's something else, it's an indictment, a dying voice accusing, accusing me,...the story of the silence that he never left, that I should never have left, that I may never find again, that I may find again, then it will be he, it will be I, it will be the place, the silence, the end, the beginning again, how can I say it, that's all words, they're all I have, and not many of them, the words fail, the voice fails, so be it..."

(*The Unnamable* 129-131)

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Synchronized feelings of collapse of words and existence of the narrator “I” are evidently described in *The Unnamable*. At those times, Beckett was evidently tired of the dilemma of expression by prose, though the apex of writing prose in this motif appeared in the last of the Trilogy. Most critics consider the period from the late 1940s to the early 1950s to be the most productive time for Beckett. *Waiting for Godot* (hereafter, *Godot*) was the result of his predicament.² An important point is that Beckett changed his expression to a more visualized method of ‘stage’ and ‘drama.’

James Knowlson’s suggestion is of interest: “The originality of *Waiting for Godot* lies in the concrete reality of the silence that has somehow to be filled. So the trapeze clowns must talk, swap hats, eat carrots, play games so as “so hold the terrible silence at bay.” The inspiration for such a use of silence could have come from an instinctive response to Strindberg’s or Chekhov’s theater, or from a philosophical meditation as to how Democritus’ “nothing is more real than nothing” could be rendered in the theater.” (Knowlson 343) The idea that “silence has to be filled” is associated with the essence of dialogue between two characters on a stage. The situation created by repetitive silence and words is characteristic of Beckett’s literary ideas after the war. This situation is closely related to his motif of ‘existence of human being.’ Agony between silence and words goes around in circles without any solution, compelling the narrator to utter something. Beckett himself pursued the motif of “silence that has to be filled with words” in prose works, especially in *The Unnamable* and *Texts for Nothing*. A remarkable feature of the motif appears in the voice of the narrator. “How many hours to go, before the next silence, they are not hours, it will not be silence, how many hours still, before the next silence? Ah to know for sure, to know that this thing has no end, this thing, this thing, this farrago of silence and words, of silence that is not silence and barely murmured words. Or to know it’s life still, a form of life, ordained to end, as others ended and will end, till life ends, in all its forms.” (*Texts for Nothing* 104) “That’s right, wordshit, burry me, avalanche, and let there be no more talk of any creature, nor of a world to leave, nor of a world to reach, in order to have done, with worlds, with creatures, with words, with misery, misery.” (*Texts for Nothing* 118)

Alternative absurdity, the persistent act of telling a story with words and silence has frequently appeared in the work. Beckett began to write *Texts for Nothing* around 1952 (published in 1955); that was after he had finished writing *Godot*. As suggested by Webb, words in prose are no longer effective in describing a story for Beckett at the time.³ But, what Beckett described in *Godot* was fundamentally almost the same as that described in his prose works. Of course, the style of drama is completely different from prose, yet the essence is quite similar between them, that is, silence to be filled by words in the depth of despair. The condition is one of helplessness, hopelessness, and meaninglessness from which nobody can escape, but instead must resignedly accept the helpless destiny which is predestined in the start line. The first phrase of *Godot* symbolizes the basic idea of the play: “Nothing to be done.” The nucleus of the drama is the act of “waiting” for which the two characters, Vladimir and Estragon, is the condition of “nothing to be done.” For them, being alive and continuing to wait, (also suggesting their death) form the fundamental acts and purpose of this drama. Their dialogue is helpless and seems monologic.

Vladimir: We’ll hang ourselves tomorrow. Unless Godot comes.

Estragon: And if he comes?

Vladimir: We’ll be saved.” (*Godot* 94)

Their fate is certainly, or probably, death. Godot will never come. The play consists of two acts in which almost the same scenario — waiting for Mr Godot — is played out. The fate of the two characters, Estragon and Vladimir, is decided from the starting point of the drama. Repetitive condition, symmetrical structure of the acts, no vividly dramatic development, all of these were effective for the direction of the play after the war, which had progressively innovative effects on the 20th century dramaturgy. These are the most characteristic elements Beckett introduced into plays. As already indicated on numerous occasions, this was the first trial of such an approach in the world of drama, and nobody had imagined a play in which nothing happens on a stage. Within a symmetrical structure, comical and hopeless conditions are repeated. In terms of the elements of repetitive effect and non-vivid dramaturgy, Beckett may have referred to the plays of Jean Racine.⁴ There is a strong probability

that Beckett was greatly influenced by Jean Racine's plays. One important suggestion made by Beckett is common to his own idea on drama; "Racine," he maintained, "never elaborates the expression in this sense, never stands by the word in this sense, and therefore his plays are not 'poetical' i.e. undramatic, in this sense." (Knowlson 230) Beckett thought Racine did not adopt poetic expression, nor depended on poetic phrases in his drama, and regarded his works as 'undramatic.' What Beckett aimed at was what he recognized in Bram van Velde's paintings: 'inexpressive paintings.'⁵ Beckett thought that importance is based on a negation of traditionally literary ideas on plays. Racine's influence on Beckett is a hint for repetitive, Beckett's quiet drama by daily conversation. It is necessary to validate the influence more clearly.

2. The Effect of dramaturgy of Racine

Hugh Kenner suggests a point of interest associated with Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. "Substance of the play is waiting, amid uncertainty. ...Throughout much of the Agamemnon the audience is waiting, waiting for Agamemnon to be killed. The Chorus too is waiting till a doom shall fall, and Cassandra also is waiting for this to happen, and meanwhile is filling the air with predictions no one listen to....Beckett fills the time with beautifully symmetrical structures." (Kenner 33) "Symmetrical structures" are applied to two other works, *Molloy* and *Happy Days*. They are not completely symmetrical, yet both stories are divided into two parts with slightly different situations, and seem to have symmetrical structures.⁶

In both stories, the later situation in which the main characters are placed is adversely compounded. The fate of the characters (Moran, or Winnie) is worsened as if it were predestined. The development of the plots is similar to that of *Godot*, though the situation is worsened around Moran and Winnie because they are deprived of their physical functions. An important point is that the stories consist of symmetrical structure and feature monologic words and lines. Symmetrical structure has a 'repetitive' effect which dominates the hopeless destiny of people. The effect of 'repetition' has been suggested by many critics. Steven

Connor thinks that Beckett's repetition aims at hopeless series of repetitions. There is no primary and terminal meaning in the repetitive series. (Connor 127-8)⁷

The more words characters produce in their lines, the deeper they fall into an impasse where they can not avoid their hopeless destiny in the repetitive structure.

"Winnie: ...Shall I myself not melt perhaps in the end, or burn, oh I do not mean necessarily burst into flames, no, just little by little be charred to a black cinder, all this ——visible flesh. (*Pause.*) On the other hand, did I ever know a temperate time? (*Pause.*) No. (*Pause.*) I speak of temperate times and torrid times, they are empty words. (*Pause.*) I speak of when I was not yet caught—in this way—and had my legs and had the use of my legs, and could seek out a shady place, like you, when I was tired of the sun, or sunny place when I was tired of the shade, like you, and they are all empty words. (*Pause.*)" (*Happy Days* 50)

Winnie in *Happy Days* speak of "empty words" in a torrent of lines. She, by herself, is tired of her own words and meaning. Monologic lines extend beyond her control, circulating as if there is no termination. In this drama, words are an empty and sterile source of expression for characters; the condition is similar to that of *The Unnamable* and *Texts for Nothing*. The impasse of meaning of words is a kind of trap formed from language. Vladimir and Estragon repeatedly wait for Godot, and Winnie continues to speak her own monologue. The state of mind, situation around the characters, monologic words, all these factors play a role as a kind of centrifugal power in the drama, developing the plots into unchangeable destinies.

Martin Esslin's suggestion is also useful for understanding the essence of Beckett's plays. "*Waiting for Godot* does not dramatize a story, but it dramatizes a state of minds, an emotion." (Esslin 173) Lines by Estragon, Vladimir, Pozzo, or Lucky in the play express their feelings throughout the development of the play. They are calm, irritated, resigned, furious, silent, or moralistic in turn.

"Vladimir: Was I sleeping, while the others suffered?

Am I sleeping now? Tomorrow, when I wake, or think I do, what shall I say of today? That

with Estragon my friend, at this place, until the fall of night, I waited Godot?... We have time to grow old. The air is full of our cries. But habit is a great deadener. At me too someone is looking, of me too someone is saying, he is sleeping, he knows nothing, let him sleep on. I can't go on! What have I said?" (*Godot* 91)

Vladimir can do nothing except waiting for 'Godot.' Helpless destiny is condensed in his monologic words. An unchangeable, repetitive situation is expressed through their monologic lines.⁸ On the other hand, Winnie in *Happy Days* continues her empty lines realized in her environment where she is embedded up to her neck in the mound, her eyes open, gazing to the front.

"Winnie: ...I used to think...(pause.) I say I used to think there was no difference between one fraction of a second and the next. (Pause.) I used to say...(pause)...I say I used to say, Winnie, you are changeless, there is a second and the next. (Pause.) Why bring that up again? (Pause.) ...Everything within reason. (Long pause.) I can do no more. (Pause.) Say no more (Pause.) But I must say more. (Pause.) Problem here. (Pause.) No, something must move, in the world, I can't any more. (Pause.) A zephyr. (Pause.) A breath. (Pause.) What are those immortal lines? (Pause.) It might be eternal dark. (Pause.) Black night without end. (Pause.)" (*Happy Days* 77-8)

Godot basically consists of lines of dialogue between characters. Estragon, Vladimir, Pozzo try to communicate together. Empty dialogue slowly progresses in the plot, even if they can not encounter Godot. Lines have the effect of noisy farce. Individual lines are sometimes melancholic and helpless. Winnie and her state is worse still. She cannot move and almost has no partner (Willie.) Gazing front, she continues to say something among many pauses. The unchangeable situation is like 'breath.' In the circulatory, changeless destiny, she recognizes 'happy days.' Beckett thought these factors are important for the drama of his age: 'undramatic' development, 'changeless' situation, and 'monologic lines.' It is supposed that he found them in the

plays of the 17th century, and what he found important in Racine's plays is applied to his own works.

Racine's *Berenice* was first played in 1670. This 'simple' tragedy was criticized soon after its first performances. The main reason for the criticism was that this play lacks dramatic blood-drenched tragedy, nor a convincing vividness as a tragedy, meaning that it does not produce any dramatic catharsis. Racine who accepted the criticism responded to it with various rejoinders: he thought that overt blood-letting and death of characters are not necessarily the required conditions of a tragedy. He put importance on a simply synthesized plot as a constituent of the tragedy; that is, a simple plot is essentially important of the drama. Although he admits the scarcity of vivid reality in *Berenice*, he stresses that the importance lies in the poetic imagination and simple plot of this work which inevitably creates a certain impression on audiences. In fact, there were some positive critical reactions, and the play of *Berenice* succeeded in some ways, leading to a certain position of Racine as a playwright in the court.

In a way, *Berenice* was not a visual drama, but an 'auditory' drama. Racine avoided cruel and blood-soaked tragedy, and put importance on poetic words in *Berenice*. The words spoken by the main characters, Titus, Berenice, and Antiochus create a vivid space, despite there being no active and striking actions. In this case, vivid reality contributes not to true performance leading to a cruel and tragic ending but to dramatic words spoken by characters. The main plot has been pre-destined from the very start. The audience can assume that Berenice can not marry Titus. Antiochus can not obtain Berenice's heart. Titus has no choice but to declare 'parting.' This play is basically formed by a tacit agreement which means that there is no way for the realization of love of all the characters. Therefore, dramatic development is dependent upon lines on a stage, and upon their auditory effects on the story. Titus who loves Berenice is immediately persuaded by Paulinus' advice: "Rome, by a law that never may be changed, Admits no foreign blood to join its own, And will not recognize the offspring born From any marriage counter to its code." (*Berenice* 26) But Titus can not declare eternal parting, and uttered nothing in

front of her. Berenice believes the love of Titus is somehow confused by his 'silence.' Soon after, in Act Three, Berenice is startled by Antiochus.

"The Roman Empire will not trust a queen. You must separate, you leave tomorrow." (*Berenice* 46) Berenice who gets partially angry with him yet understands the situation that destines the ending of her love. However, her realization led to no dramatic action nor striking tragedy. The ending of this story is settled by calm and sensible words by the noble queen.

"Berenice: Stop, all too generous princes, stop.

In what a plight you cast me, both of you!
Whether I look at you, or else at him,
The image of despair is all I see.
I see only weeping. And I hear no word
That's not of pain and blood that must be shed....
Farewell, we thee shall serve the world as type
Of the most tender and unhappy love
That it could bear the doleful history of.
All's ready. They await. Don't follow me. For
the last time, my lord, farewell." (*Berenice*
69-70)

The tragic love of Berenice is concluded calmly by her own words. The two men, Titus and Antiochus are silently persuaded by her words. They are also an 'audience' for her sensible persuasion. Compared to *Andromache* in which the plot and lines are filled with violent words and severe emotion, those of *Berenice* are more calm and sensible. The plot of *Andromache* is certainly based on the tragedy of Troy. Andromache who can not forget everything associated with the fall of Troy unburdens severe admonishments to Cephisa in a hushed voice.

"Andromache: ...must I forget? My Hector's body,
shorn of funeral rites, And dragged in shame
around our city walls? Must I forget his father
at my feet, Clutching the altar spattered with
his blood?...Remember Pyrrhus coming,
eyes ablaze, Lit by the glare of our burning
palaces, Hacking his way across my brothers'
bodies, Dripping with blood and spurring on
the slaughter; Remember the victors's cries,
the cries of death, By slashing sword, by

suffocating fire; See me in all this horror, dazed
and lost" (*Andromache* 179)

It is certain that *Andromache*, *Phaedra*, or *Bajazet* are tragedies which form representative works of Racine, in that they are all blood-drenched tragedies with violent emotions and performances. In order to represent dramatic 'catharsis' on stage, a violent and blood-soaked tragic story is needed. And dramatic lines by actors and actresses enliven the drama.

"Orestes: Ah, well, I die content, my fate fulfilled. Where
are those two who loved too well? To crown
my joy I need to drown in blood, theirs joined
with mine. I need to see them as I die: Too see
three warring hearts at last made made one. But
why this sudden night that wraps me round?
There's no way out... I'm shudderin...What
horror grips me? Heaven be thanked, now I can
see... Gods! All around me streams of blood!"
(*Andromache* 199)

Orestes' despair makes him speak this cursed monologue with misfortune. All fate of Andromache, Pyrrhus, Orestes, Hermione, is essentially cursed with the misfortune of Troy and Greece. Their dramatic lines symbolize typical tragedies, which contrasts with the more monologic lines of *Berenice*. Yet, Beckett who was not interested dramatic development in tragedies had paid attention to the essence of monologic effect of lines of words, and 'undramatic' development of repetitive plot.

Beckett takes notice of the importance of the auditory effect by lines, and repetitively pre-destined development of drama, leading to the 'symmetric' structure and changeless situation surrounding characters. Knowlson points out Beckett's approach to play properly. "He came to the conclusion that he approached Andromache with more understanding now than he had ever done before, "at least more understanding of the chances of the theatre today." His readings of *Andromache*, *Phédre*, and *Bérénice* may have focused his mind on the theatrical possibilities of monologue and of what could be done with virtually immobile characters inhabiting a closed world in which little or nothing changes....This daily diet of Racinian claustrophobia forced Beckett to concentrate on the true

essentials of theatre: time, space, and speech. It pointed him in the direction that made a tightly focused, monologic play like *Happy Days* or *Play* possible. And eventually it was led him to write the short monologues of the 1970s.” (Knowlson 383) Beckett’s re-understanding of Racine’s plays seemed to have occurred, soon after writing *Godot*, and before writing *Happy Days*. Although Knowlson’s indication related to Racine after the war is seen only in this part of his book, it seems certain that Beckett considered the effects of time, space and the monologues of Racine’s plays at this point. Time, for Beckett, passes simply, but certainly progress towards death. Space is limited, corresponding to the characters’ states and destinies. Vladimir and Estragon act around the tree; Winnie is buried in the mound. The shrunken space symbolizes the mind of people living in the 20th century, which is in contrast to a court or a castle of modern drama. Monologue is the most characteristic strategy which is inherited from Beckett’s prose works. Despair expressed through words of monologic lines is consistent in Beckett’s plays and other short proses after the war. Yet, Racine’s Berenice is a noble queen, and the words spoken by her, even though a little monologic, represent the traditional expression in the Racine’s age. In Scene Five of Act Four, Berenice who realizes her terrible fate speaks strongly to Titus.

“Berenice: Reign, the, cruel man, enjoy your glory!

I’ll plead to no more. I’d waited, to be certain,
Until that mouth that swore a thousands vows
Of love that must unite us for all time,
Should swear itself untrue before my eyes,
And order my eternal banishment.

I had to hear you in this place myself.

I’ll hear no more, and now farewell for ever....

How great my error, and how vain my cares!

Consoled for my departure in advance,

The wretch will hardly count the days I’m gone.

To me so long, to him they’ll seem too short.”

(*Berenice* 54-55)

Berenice with her noble spirit has already declared eternal departure at this moment. Time and space are reduced into a strained mind state of characters. Titus who flinched at her words cannot help but accept his own destiny.

There is no vivid action but dramatic lines by characters. Unavoidable departure is stipulated by the first encounter between Berenice and Titus, because ‘Rome’ can not accept any ‘foreign blood.’ This play obviously depends on the dramatic words of the lines delivered on stage, but the audience has to wait for the pre-destined fate of the departure of the characters. Absence of vivid dramatic development, conversely, emphasizes the lines of the characters.

In contrast to this, the lines by Winnie in *Happy Days* consist of her redundant and persistent voice, glad for a few words from Willie.⁹ Winnie’s voice is monologic, yet in quietly frantic manner, which is in stark contrast to the noble and dauntless voice of Berenice.

“Winnie: Oh you are going to talk to me today, this

is going to be a happy day! (Pause. Joy off.)

Another happy day. (Pause.) Ah well, where

was I, my hair, yes, later on, I shall be thankful
for it later on.... (*Happy Days* 34)

Bless you Willie I do appreciate your goodness

I know what an effort it costs you, now you

may relax I shall not trouble you again unless

I am obliged to, by that I mean unless I come

to the end of my own resources which is most

unlikely, just to know that in theory you can

hear me even though in fact you don’t is all I

need, just to feel you there within earshot and

conceivably on the qui vive is all I ask, not to

say anything I would not wish you to hear or

liable to cause you pain, not to be just babbling

away on trust as it is were not knowing and

something gnawing at me. (*Pause for breath*)”

(*Happy Days* 38)

Winnie is peculiarly humble toward Willie, and pleased with curt words from Willie. What Winnie does is to speak empty words, and realize a moment of the happy day that is, in truth, not happy at all. Compared to Berenice’s words, those of Winnie go round and round and get nowhere. Her words are superficially directed at Willie, however, essentially are no more than a soliloquy within her mind. This style is almost equivalent to that of prose work, *The Unnamable* and *Texts for Nothing*. In Act Two, in the mound up to her neck, her words resonate:

“Winnie: What would I do without them, when words fail? (*Pause.*) Gaze before me, with compressed lips. (*Long pause while she does so.*) I cannot. (*Pause.*) Ah yes, great mercies, great mercies. (*Long pause. Low.*) Sometimes I hear sounds. (*Listening expression. Normal voice.*) But not often. (*Pause.*) They are boon, sounds are a boon, they help me...through the day. (*Smile.*) The old style! (*Smile off.*) Yes, those are happy days, when there are sounds. (*Pause.*) ...Reason. (*Pause.*) I have not lost my reason. (*Pause.*) Not yet. (*Pause.*) Not all. (*Pause.*) ...Ah yes, things have their life, that is what I always say, things have a life. (*Pause.*)”
(*Happy Days* 69-70)

The lines of *Happy Days* (of Winnie) are clearly more monologic than *Godot*. Those by Vladimir and Estragon are often monologic, however, their dialogue is not yet transformed into internal monologic soliloquy. Time and space are smaller, and there is no dramatic development. Words, the role of characters, plots, space and time, all are reduced into Beckett's dramaturgy in which he applied the influence of Racine's play to his own theories. Beckett continued to write more experimental expression in *How It Is* and other shorter prose works, or *Play* and other shorter plays. The common factor seen is the feature of monologue and expression of lines. Sentences lose syntactical adequacy. Lines by characters present a disconnected phase. The existence of characters and words almost lose their connection. In a way, all is almost lost into empty. Beckett's later works are filled with a rarefied sense of time and space of language.

3. Conclusion

It is certain that Beckett referred to Racine's plays, and applied some essence into his works. Among Racine's works, especially, *Berenice* with its characteristic plots and lines potentially affected Beckett's dramaturgy. Beckett who felt some limits to expression in prosaic works adopted monologic lines and undramatic development into his plays. As Beckett essentially put importance on the possibility of using language for his expression, it is natural that

monologic style by a first person narrator can be applied to lines of drama.

Superficially, the dialogue between Vladimir and Estragon in *Godot* is in comical expression, yet the fundamental tone of their voice is in monologic and pre-destined, dark destiny. Their repetitive and circulatory structure of the plays, *Godot* and *Happy Days*, are also characteristic of Beckett. Non-vivid development in drama is hinted at and derived from *Berenice*. Simple repetition based on plots without vivid development is applied to those works. But even with this repetition, the later act is more complicated. Vladimir and Estragon are in despair, waiting for Godot who never comes, and the two already know the condition. Winnie is buried up to her neck, not being able to move, and only continues her talking. Winnie's monologue is in fragmentary lines, taking on the appearance of insanity, suggesting her destiny in happy days.

Beckett when he wrote *Godot* and *Happy Days*, was in the period when he considered his change into playwriting more seriously. He had to have referred to past playwrights, and one of them, Racine, affected Beckett's creative ideas. Of course, the style of drama in the 17th century is totally different to that of modern plays. But Beckett at that time tried to create original dramaturgy. He hinted at Racine's plays in the course of creating his ideas for it. Although the influence is not so large, Beckett took account of the effects in some degree in his dramaturgy. Non-vivid development leading to undramatic development, monologic lines, repetitive structure, preordained destiny are the points Beckett applied to his drama. After *Happy Days*, Beckett wrote more innovative and avant-garde dramas like *Play* (1964), *Come and Go* (1967) or *Not I* (1973). In these plays, the degree of monologic style of lines for characters is developed ever more remarkably. The condition is similar to the transition from *How It Is* to *Ping* or *Lessness* in prose works. Beckett reduces the meaning of words (both in play and prose) into a form of state of mind. Silence, space and time, colors, respiration, all these effects surround the characters. In this sense, *Happy Days* is the last work that maintains a dramatic plot supported by Winnie's monologue. Winnie who continues to utter her monologic lines in insanity seems a deformed character of *Berenice*.

Beckett used Racine's ideas for his own works in somewhat effective way.

Notes

- 1 Olga Bernal who thought that the language cracked in *Watt* first suggests how a human in the present age keeps identity, if language itself is ruined, because a human is an existence which never stops expression through language. Beckett always points out this question as a motif for his novel. (Bernal 10-27)
- 2 Beckett tried to write this play while he was writing *Malone Dies* (from Oct. of 1948 to Jan. of 1949). After he finished writing the play, he dealt with *The Unnamable*.
- 3 "Words, the vehicles of man's ideas, no longer seem to fit reality." Webb thinks that, in reality, words are useless for communication in *Godot*. Dialogue between persons goes round in circles, and silence between communication strengthens the absurdity of the act of waiting. The condition progresses more intensely, and in *Happy Days*, Winnie delivers her lines in more monologic style. Words basically lose reality and reliance of meaning.
- 4 In the biography written by James Knowlson, it is not certain that Beckett was much influenced by Shakespeare. There are some who affected Beckett literarily in the pre-modern times like Dante, Samuel Johnson, Descartes, Vico, Milton, or Racine. He was supposed to have been considerably affected by them. Beckett studied French literature in his youth, and later when he was a teacher in *École Normale Supérieure*. The fact that he was influenced by Racine is indicated by Knowlson. "As in the plays of Racine, which Beckett had lectured on a few days before and which he had very much in mind while he was planning the structure of his narrative, something has "taken its course" and the characters are brought to a preordained ending." (Knowlson 197)
- 5 Suggestion on Bram van Velde's painting is supposed to reflect Beckett's philosophical ideas for literature, and is referred to by critics many times. "Inexpressive expression" was considered to be common conception associated with art and literature for Beckett and Bram van Velde.
- 6 Molloy seeks his mother in the first plot, and Moran is ordered to find Molloy in the second one. Winnie continues her talking, buried in her waist in a mound in the first act, and continues again in the second while she is buried in the mound to her head. Albeit not complete repetition, *Molloy*, *Godot*, and *Happy Days* have similar repetitive structures.
- 7 Connor thinks 'repetition is the sign of redemption, the guarantee of memory and destiny, but in Beckett's plays, we are deprived of the sense of priority or finality' due to

repetitions. 'Beckett's theatre leaves repetitive possibilities to extend arbitrarily and uncontrollably into the future beyond the play.' (Connor 121-3)

- 8 Esslin suggests Beckett's poetic essence in the lines. 'Beckett's attempt, to dramatise an emotional state, the feel of an experience, is, strictly speaking 'lyrical theatre'—for emotional states, feelings, are precisely what lyrical poetry deals with. Except that, Beckett is not just dramatizing a fleeting emotion like the elation of seeing nature in springtime, or being in love, or lonely or unhappy—subject matter of lyrical poetry—he is trying to capture the basic experience of being 'in the world', having been thrust into it without a by-your-leave, and having, somehow, to come to terms with 'being there' *Dasein* itself, in Heidegger's sense.' (Esslin 173) In respect to expression of "emotion in basic experience," Esslin's suggestion is important, because such elation, emotional description appear in the lines of *Happy Days*, or other works. Emotion in monologic words is important on stage and creates a universal state of mind among people, which is the essence of Beckett's dramas.
- 9 Willie only speaks his lines of a few words in all acts on stage. He utters a blunt words like "Opening for smart youth" "Yes" "It" "Eggs" which are squalid and suggestive. The existence is also contrasted to that of Titus who is thoughtful and sensitive to Berenice's voice and words. The relationship between Winnie and Willie presents a striking contrast to that between Berenice and Titus.

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