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MASTER THESIS

***WAITING FOR GODOT:*
THE ABSURD STORY OF THE SOCIALLY
AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY DESTROYED INDIVIDUAL**

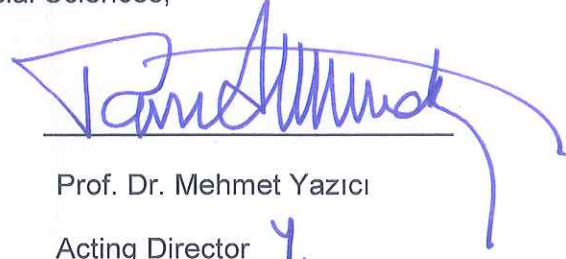
SEDEF KABASAKAL

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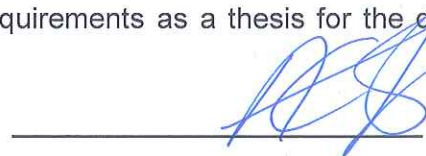
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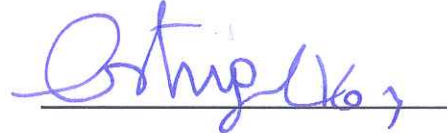
Prof. Dr. Mehmet Yazıcı
Acting Director 4.

I certify that this thesis satisfies all the requirements as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.



Prof. Dr. Aysu Aryel Erden
Head of Department

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts.



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ertuğrul Koç

Supervisor

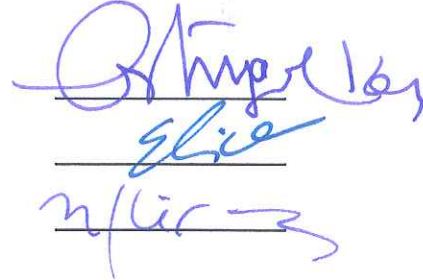
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Examination Committee Members

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ertuğrul Koç

Assist. Prof. Dr. Elif Öztapak Avcı

Assist. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kirca



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ertuğrul Koç
Assist. Prof. Dr. Elif Öztapak Avcı
Assist. Prof. Dr. Mustafa Kirca

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Name, Last Name : Sedef Kabasakal

Signature

: *S. Kabasakal*

Date

: 20.09.2013

ABSTRACT

WAITING FOR GODOT: THE ABSURD STORY OF THE SOCIALLY AND PSYCHOLOGICALLY DESTROYED INDIVIDUAL

KABASAKAL, Sedef

Master Thesis

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Samuel Beckett is one of the forerunners of the Theater of the Absurd, which emerged in the second half of the Twentieth Century. This theater and its playwrights portrayed the meaningless and psychologically traumatized situation of the individual in the new world order formed by the after-effects of the Second World War, and by the neo-capitalism. Originally written in French and published first in 1952, in the late Modernist period, *Waiting for Godot* includes, overtly and covertly, the themes of economic order, class structure, mental disorder, alienation, irrationality, and loss of identity. The work, helping originate the Post-Modernist viewpoint in the 1950s, centers on the interaction between economic order and individual psychology, and shows the distorted psychological states of the characters as the consequence of the war trauma, and the newly formed capitalist order. Through the four characters –Estragon, Vladimir, Lucky and Pozzo- Beckett describes the miserable condition of western society. Prophetic enough, Beckett's prototypical characters represent the types of individuals who have lost their perception of time, and the meaning of existence. Hence, for Beckett, western civilization in the future will consist of such types, and what we call "civilization" is but a deception.

Keywords: *Waiting for Godot*, The Theater of the Absurd, Capitalism, Psychology, War Trauma, Second World War

ÖZ

WAITING FOR GODOT: SOSYAL VE PSİKOLOJİK OLARAK BOZULMUŞ BİREYİN ABSÜRD HİKAYESİ

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Samuel Beckett yirminci yüzyılın ikinci yarısında ortaya çıkan Absürd Tiyatro'nun öncülerinden biridir. Bu tiyatro ve yazarları, İkinci Dünya Savaşı'nın etkileri ve yeni kapitalist düzen tarafından oluşturulmuş bir dünyadaki bireyin anlamsız ve travmatik durumunu betimlemiştir. Aslı Fransızca yazılan ve ilk 1952 yılında, geç modern dönemde yayınlanan *Waiting for Godot*, açıkça ve üstü kapalı bir şekilde, ekonomik düzen, sınıf yapısı, zihinsel bozukluk, yabancılaşma, mantıksızlık ve kimlik kaybı temalarını işler. Eser, aynı zamanda, 1950'li yıllarda ilk "Postmodern" bakış açısına örnek oluşturarak, alışılmadık bir şekilde, ekonomik sistem ve birey psikolojisi arasındaki etkileşim üzerinde durur ve karakterlerin bozulmuş psikolojik durumlarını, savaş travmasının ve yeniden şekillenmiş kapitalist düzenin sonucu olarak gösterir. Beckett, eserinde dört karakterle - Estragon, Vladimir, Lucky ve Pozzo – batı medeniyetindeki bireyin perişan halini tasvir eder. Beckett'in karakterleri, geleceğe de gönderme yapacak şekilde, zaman algısı ve kendi varlıklarının önemini kaybetmiş bireyler olarak karşımıza çıkar. Dolayısıyla Beckett, gelecekteki batı medeniyetinin bu tiplerden oluşacağını öngörürken, medeniyet dediğimiz şeyin de aslında bir kandırmaca olduğunu dile getirmektedir.

Anahtar kelimeler: *Waiting for Godot*, Absürd Tiyatro, Kapitalizm, Psikoloji, Savaş Travması, İkinci Dünya Savaşı

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INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, social breakdowns have led to drastic changes in human societies, and the Second World War, being one of the shattering impacts on both individual and society, has changed the whole course of human history. The war was a harsh experience for people from all nations, and it has brought about ends and new beginnings. The experience of war for the second time caused the total destruction of the previous paradigm. The loss of lives and the destruction of western civilization were tragic experiences, affecting not only the West, but all nations and societies because it was “the world’s greatest man-made catastrophe . . . [which caused]. . . a turning point in the history” (Lee, 1991, p.247). This “man-made catastrophe” resulted in losses in every sense of the word. Violence was incredible: The bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki killed hundred thousands of people, a tragedy which is still lurking in the collective unconscious of individuals. Although some survived death, they had to leave their hometowns. In addition, with the breaking of the war, a new and a more devastating social demolition occurred for

fifty or sixty million human beings lost their lives because of the war; about the same number were uprooted from their homes, temporarily or permanently. . . Bombing and the threat of bombing disrupted family life. . . Evacuation of children from threatened towns led to interrupted schooling and loss of parental care. (Parker, 1997, pp. 292-293)

Families and related social groups were the main victims of the battle. Suffering and death were not only physical, but also spiritual.

In fact, the Second World War not only renewed the shock of the First World War, but it was also more devastating in terms of the economic and psychological collapse of human societies. After the war, the economic system in Europe had completely broken down. There was the scarcity of food and other vital human needs. However, “civilians and soldiers thought of this disruption as temporary. They expected that when the war ended normal life would be resumed” (Lee, 1991, p. 249). After the war, however, “normal life” was never resumed. A new world was created, and the new paradigm was completely different from the previous one,

since war had already destroyed the beliefs of individuals for the institutions that formed, in Marxist terms, the base and super-structures of societies.

Through the experiences of the war for the second time, western individual faced up new disappointments about his “civilization” for it was the same civilization that had paved the way to Nazism, which had applied organized violence for the sake of “national socialism.” A divided western civilization (in accordance with their economic interests) was the finale of the previous *weltanschauung*, forming, in the process, great military alliances, and affecting the lives of all. “The military machines of the great powers moved men and women away from their homes. . . . Not only physical violence but also economic requirements changed relationships between nations, societies, and individuals” (Parker, 1997, p. 281). This chaotic situation caused people to lose their beliefs in institutions like government, economy, religion, law and justice, and paved the way for the loss of human and humane values. With deaths and poverty, social relations shattered due to the loss of moral values. All these caused a new establishment in the western societies because after the war, “there inevitably [arose] social changes with widespread effects” (Munton, 1989, p.1). Therefore, in the post-war era, the loss of belief in humanity was the reason for the changes in the newly emerging socio-economic and socio-moral environments.

Furthermore, with the loss of idealism and humane values, the individual turned into a being without emotions, but with passions for more material wealth, a sort of compensation for the post-war disappointment and spiritual lacunae. There, therefore, emerged a strong dependence on the capitalist economy where all means of relations are based on the money-oriented system because “capitalism . . . is not simply an economic system, but a kind of culture in which almost everything is subordinated to consumption” (Berger, 1995, p. 55). In such a system, the power belongs to the strong. The powerful rule and govern the powerless, who work for the powerful rather than work for themselves and “the result of this exploitation is *alienation*” (Barry, 1995, p.157) that makes the powerless introverted and detached. Working only to satisfy the needs of the powerful, the workforce of the powerless is thus assimilated. Since the powerless cannot adjust themselves to the hegemony of such a system, they come to feel as strangers, and this feeling causes isolation. That is why, living as a stranger in the post-war world, the individuals hardly adapted themselves to the new society which was different from the society they used to live in.

The alienated and alien-like condition of man affected the writers of the

1950s and 60s since it “reproduce[d] the sense of uncertainty felt by the writers themselves, [too]” (Munton, 1989, p.34). All these gave way to the emergence of the existentialist philosophy, which finally turned into Postmodernism, and replaced the modernism of the first decades of the Twentieth Century. In fact, existentialism and the ensuing Postmodernist Movement came as a reaction to the established standards, and

the fundamental philosophical assumptions of modernism, its tendency toward historical discontinuity, alienation, asocial individualism, solipsism, and EXISTENTIALISM continue to permeate contemporary writing, perhaps in a heightened sense. (Harmon and Holman, 1992, p. 370)

These burgeoning movements were, in a way, the successors of Modernism, but the viewpoint they supported was based on the instability of the age, and dealt with the instability of the social and individual beliefs, attitudes, and values.

The Theater of the Absurd, the precursor of postmodernist viewpoint, has borrowed from the existentialists such as Sartre and Camus, who were quite influential in the 1940s with their notion of the senselessness of human situation, and according to the existentialist viewpoint, there is “a sense of meaninglessness in the outer world, [so] efforts to act in a meaningless, ‘absurd’ world lead to anguish, greater loneliness, and despair” (Harmon and Holman, 1992, p. 186). Portraying western individual and his isolation in a world without order and meaning, the impact of the existentialists on the playwrights of the following decades is undeniable. However, existentialist works and absurd works differ in terms of form and subject-matter. Existentialist writers claim that “existence precedes essence . . . we and things in general exist, but that these things have no meaning for us except we can create meaning through acting upon them” (p.185). This explains the concept of finding meaning through action. On the contrary, absurdist believe that it is pointless to try to find a meaning for existence in the universe, and by extension, the world is devoid of meaning. Therefore, “the Theater of the Absurd strives to express the sense of the senselessness of the human condition and the inadequacy of the rational approach” (Esslin, 1968, p.24), and as absurdist writers, Samuel Beckett, Eugene Ionesco, Arthur Adamov, Harold Pinter, and Jean Genet were the new artists in the 1950s who highlighted the themes like alienation, lack of communication, decadence and corruption of humanity, and finally the meaninglessness and absurdity of human existence in their works.

The post-war western individual, degenerated and shaped by the after-effects of the Second World War, is the subject of the absurdist playwrights who started to question the traditional ways in relation to the dramatic shock of the battle. Having laid emphasis on the transformation of the old culture into a new one which was to be formed by the new capitalist world order, and by this system's dominant themes such as lack of communication, inactivity, loss of memory in relation to the ". . . senselessness of the human condition and the inadequacy of the rational approach" (Esslin, 1968, p. 24), these writers focused on the question of existence, and showed their reaction to the newly formed individuals and their social system. As members of European society, artists and writers of the age, too, have voiced in their works that western civilization was about to confront a catastrophic transformation. They demonstrated that the war had brought about psychological defects, dehumanization, and had finally created a cruel economic system.

Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* is a protest against the system founded after the war on the philosophical and the spiritual lacunae, and on the emerging new world order where there is no promise of salvation, where individual psychologies have already been shattered, where the healing of neither the system, nor the psychological defects is possible. When analyzed from the psychological viewpoint, the sense of being left and lost constitutes the aura of the work. Senselessness and selflessness are the dominant motifs used by Beckett to describe the new age and the new individual.

Different from the classical theater which uses logical discourse, plausible characters *and* decorum, Absurd Drama has an irrational address, and the characters depicted are the "shabby survivors . . . squirming and teetering" (Birkett, 1987, p.49) in an absurd paradigm. The term "absurd", coined by the critic Martin Esslin, depicts the meaninglessness of the new world, and the absurd situation of individual and humanity in the post-industrial period. A milestone in modern western literature, Absurd Theatre is a movement that has challenged the established literary forms after the 1950's. Therefore, beginning in the second half of the Twentieth Century, this form has started to have repercussions in Europe since "it bravely face[d] up to the fact that for those to whom the world has lost its central explanation and meaning, it [was] no longer possible to accept forms still based on continuation of standards and concepts that have lost their validity" (Esslin, 1968, p. 389). What makes Beckett and his absurd works different from the earlier ones is that Beckett, in his works, deals with the problem on *reason*, and lack of reason which totally

opposes the viewpoint of the Age of Enlightenment. Opposing the epistemological category of the age of Enlightenment in *Waiting for Godot*, “Beckett, in fact, challenges and problematizes formal realism, the mode of representation established by the Enlightenment epistemology” (Birlik, 2011, p.22). His characters are unable to use their intellect since they have lost their perception of time and discernment of existence in an incomprehensible paradigm, and they remain the same from beginning to the end.

Although *Waiting for Godot* was written in the late modernist period, it also includes the traces of the upcoming postmodernist world, and also criticizes this world. Dealing with the physical and spiritual destruction of the self, and thereby demonstrating the meaninglessness of existence in the new age, Beckett is prophetic about the future paradigm where life will have turned into an absurd mess. The two tramps, Estragon and Vladimir, with their shattered psychologies, (and also Lucky and Pozzo) are the universal figures representing the new postmodern capitalist world. The loss of hope and belief, and the loss of logic and propriety are frequently indicated through the forlorn characters in the work, and from Beckett’s viewpoint, this forlornness is a universal phenomenon, and as long as the system is capitalist, there will be no hope for man.

In the first chapter of this dissertation, I will analyze, despite Beckett’s and the following absurdists’ claim that western civilization has come to a stagnant phase, the progression of history through Hegelian and Marxist viewpoints, and the effects of the Second World War which have caused a philosophical and spiritual lacunae in the western civilization. I will deal with the destructive effects of the new capitalist order which emerged right after the war to create the new paradigm in which people are devoid of spirit and intellect. Beckett sees that cultural locus has already changed but not for better. Yet, this phase of history, if analyzed from Marxist perspective, is just a step towards the construction of a better paradigm. By referring to the work and to Beckett’s viewpoint, I will also point out how the capitalist system has undergone a transformation and assumed a more dehumanizing role (after the war) in creating individuals with no identities, and with no hope for salvation, forming, in the process, the mass man for its own needs. Hence, I will conclude the chapter asserting that the impact of the new socio-economic order on the individual is the reason of his psychological disorder.

In the second chapter of this dissertation, I will focus on the psychological effects of the Second World War on the individual psychologies which showed itself

in the form of neurosis. I will refer to Karen Horney, Elizabeth Roberts-Pedersen, Gerald C. Davison, John M. Neale, Henry Prather Laughlin, and Friedrich Nietzsche to explain war neurosis, abnormal psychology, and personality disorder. I will divide the personality disorder into two as “Dependent Personality Disorder” and “Conversion Disorder,” and attribute these to the characters in Beckett’s work. I will come to the conclusion that these disorders, caused by war and the post-war capitalist system, have already shaped the new individual and the new paradigm, and Beckett, in this sense, demonstrates in his work the hopelessness of the new civilization. Since the social structure is the product of the individual psychologies, and since the abnormal has already been accepted as normal, there is no way out for man.

In the third chapter of this dissertation, I will deal with the interaction between the capitalist economic structure and the forming of the individual psychologies. The two creating each other and furthering the already existing ill effects for the individual in a vicious circle, is the future of mankind. By referring to Beckett’s viewpoint, I will analyze the difficulty of surviving in the new world dominated by the capitalist order which has emptied man spiritually, which has taken man from the rational framework, and turned his life into misery. I will also focus on Beckett’s aim in composing such a work, and will come to the conclusion that what Beckett foresees for mankind is an absurd paradigm with no promise of any paradigmatic shift for better.

Finally, I will come to the conclusion and show how the socio-economic and psychological impacts of the Second World War and the new capitalism that have made the individual captured in a meaningless world, and how, as an absurdist playwright, Beckett depicts the post-war man and his economic, social, and psychological collapse. Through *Waiting for Godot*, I will analyze the deformation and the transformation the western individual has been exposed to as a result of the war, and what it already brought. Disagreeing with Hegelian and Marxist perspectives concerning the progression of history for better, but agreeing with the impact of capitalism on individual lives, Beckett’s world offers little hope. Putting the blame on the after-effects of the Second World War and the emergence of the new capitalist order, what Beckett depicts in the play is a world that has lost both the present and the future.

CHAPTER I

BECKETT'S ABSURDISM: THE IMPACT OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR AND NEW CAPITALISM ON *WAITING FOR GODOT*

From the viewpoint of Marxist argument, the economic system in any society constitutes the base structure which, by extension, forms the super-structure, or culture. Capitalism, having formed its super-structure in western societies in the nineteenth century, and having shaped the class stratification and conflicts among individuals, societies, nations and empires, played a significant role in the breaking out of the two world wars which crushed both social institutions and individual psychologies. The reaction to the insatiable demands of this destructive economic model, and to the consequent war came from a bunch of artists and playwrights, and Absurd Drama is the form of theater developed as a reaction against the self-destructive economic system of the post-war years. As the economic model has reduced individual (especially after the Second World War) to only a profitable unit, and discarded the ones who did not contribute to the system, Beckett and the following absurdists stressed in their works the “nothingness of man” in the new age, in the newly formed capitalist system.

The Second World War was a turning point in the history of the world, for it affected countries in all ways. The results of the war were not only the loss of lives, but also a kind of economic breakdown in the world, causing the collapse of the established paradigms. Therefore, human societies had to form new systems which “. . . had the effect of reorganizing international relations, decolonizing the colonies, and laying the underground work for the emergence of a new economic world system” (Jameson, 1991, p. xx). A kind of globalization having already been created with the “outward-orientated and transnational nature of economic activity” (Roberts and Hite, 2007, p. 6) and all nations exposed to “. . . fundamental social, political and economic change” (Moghadam in Roberts and Hite, 2007, p. 137), the new structure of human societies has thus been shaped in the post-war period.

The Second World War, the forming influence of the new world order, brought an immense destruction that had never been experienced in world history. Life after the war became worse. Experiencing the war for the second time, European nations faced new economic crises and scarcities which the “war [and] . . . its [economic] separations and instabilities” (Parker, 1997, p.285) caused. Therefore, the social structure has undergone a change, and caused people to lose their ethical and religious beliefs. This resulted in the collapse in social institutions, individual relations, and family ties which made the individuals question neither the system nor themselves. In such a structure, the powerful held the hegemony. The class which had the economic superiority and power ruled the weaker, causing both social and economic discrimination. Therefore, class differences became sharper, and the economic system has come to be dependent on constant production and consumption, forming also “the primacy of industrial production and the omnipresence of class struggle” (Jameson, 1991, p. 3). That is why, the Second World War gave rise to a new but cruel social model which was more devastating than the previous ones, shaping the individual in accordance with its new demands.

War, caused by capitalism, was a turning point for Europe. After the war, a new economic system dominated the Twentieth Century society and life style with materialism gaining more importance. Class oriented system became more apparent with this new form of capitalism which assumed the idea of economic dependence that “the latter things are . . . ‘determined’ (or shaped) by the nature of economic base’ (Barry, 1995, p. 158). With the dominancy of the neo-capitalist economic system, social institutions have been reshaped by the ruling group to consume more and more man’s energy for the purpose of transferring it to substances such as money and possessions, since “Capitalism subverts the individual’s needs and aspirations to the demands of an economic system which is controlled by, and works in the interests of, a few” (Bowles, 2007, p. 55). Hence, the individual in the system has had to work just to satisfy the requirements; he came to use all his energy and power to produce more, and to consume more. Moreover,

By making demands upon humans that are contrary to their nature, society warps and frustrates humans. It alienates them from their “human situation” and denies them the fulfillment of the basic conditions of existence. . . Capitalism . . . [tries] to make an individual into a robot, a wage slave, a nonentity, and . . . [it] often succeed[s] in driving the person into insanity, antisocial conduct or self-destructive acts. (Hall and Lindzey, 1978, p. 173)

Therefore, capitalist societies make individuals lose their humane values and just make them work for the requirements of the materialist system.

The new economic order emerged after the Second World War as a result of the “transform[ation] the Old Capitalism ... into a New Capitalism . . . [changing the previous] power relations” (Halal, 1986, pp.1-5). In classical capitalism, we have a moderately organized class division. However, in modern capitalism, this division became sharper, and even crushed the “petite-bourgeoisie”. Giving no chance to the weak, a new privileged class emerged, forming the “bourgeois ruling class”¹ and this new class formed “the modern bourgeois society that has . . . established new classes [in the process and] new conditions of oppression” (Freedman, 1961, p.11) after the Second World War. Material values turned into essential norms and became more important than the individual, and individual lost his humane values.

According to Marx,

The ideas of the ruling class are, in every age, the ruling ideas: i.e. the class which is the dominant *material* force in society is at the same time its dominant *intellectual* force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal has control at the same time over the means of mental production. (Marx in Berger, 1995, p. 46)

The dominating class has both the material and intellectual power, so there exists a dependency on substances, and in such an environment, the rest has to obey the dominant one's values. Hence, Marx suggests that the *changing economic model* itself creates the individual. Although the individual dominated by the capitalist economic system becomes more productive in the materialist sense, he is non-productive in creating for himself a personality for his consciousness is limited.

The Theater of the Absurd, in this respect, deals with social and individual neuroses² the capitalist system and its devastation have caused. It is, therefore, an expression of the interaction between the base (economic) structure and the formation of the individual consciousness. As Marx argues, “It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness” (Eagleton, 1976, p. 4). The consciousness of the individual is shaped by the culture he is born into. This culture

¹ The term is used for the person who “conforms to middle-class patterns of behavior and has middle-class values and tastes” (Berger, 1995, p. 47)

² A disorder of the mind in which a person suffers from strong unreasonable fears and ideas about the outside world, troubled relations with other people (Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture, 1998)

forms man's life, and determines his relations. Individual's consciousness in his/her culture is also dependent upon the social classes and upon the interaction among them.

In his *Waiting for Godot*, Beckett demonstrates the loss of reason in individual through his two main characters; Vladimir and Estragon. He goes a step further, and through the oppressor-oppressed relation between Pozzo and Lucky, he shows how neo-capitalism works, and how the system has degraded individual into the position of a slave. Moreover, Beckett argues that capitalism destroys the individual, and prevents him from thinking and questioning. For Beckett, a complete deterioration has taken place after the Second World War for the great devastation did not cause the collapse of the capitalist system, but strengthened its perverse practices, and finally the system molded into a grotesque form, and started creating deformed individuals.

In the work, Beckett demonstrates the situation through the dialogue between Estragon and Vladimir which shows that the post war individual is in struggle with life itself. Trying to fight for survival is a continuous 'battle' for them, and by extension, for individual:

ESTRAGON: [*Giving up again.*] Nothing to be done.

VLADIMIR: . . . All my life I've tried to put it from me, saying, Vladimir, be reasonable, you haven't yet tried everything. And I resumed the struggle. (Beckett, 2010, p. 5)

Showing through the two characters' dialogue that there is not an end to the struggle, Beckett depicts the post war individual who has had to strive more for survival. His characters in the play are allegoric figures who are trying to find a *meaning* in their lives waiting for a hope called, Godot. Spending their lives on a barren road with a tree and hoping to unite with Godot *soon*, Estragon and Vladimir try to pass the time when there is "nothing to be done" (p.5). They, in the course of waiting, meet the other three characters, Pozzo, Lucky and the Boy, who help them to *pass* the time.

The characters are obsessive, and Beckett uses objects to show the characters' boredom, for they always wear and play with them. This is presented through their appearance in the first place. The characters' boots and hats are paid special attention since they signify a kind of incompleteness ". . . two hats (exchanged), one pair of boots (substituted for another), one pair of trousers (falling

down), one rope serving Estragon as a belt (broken)” (Kenner, 1961, p. 149). Out of boredom, they play with these objects. Estragon continually plays with his boots. The stage direction says that “ESTRAGON *with a supreme of effort succeeds in pulling off his boot. He looks inside it, feels about inside it, turns it upside down, shakes it, looks it on the ground to see if anything is fallen out, finds nothing, feels inside it again, staring sightlessly*” (Beckett, 2010, p. 7). Vladimir does the same with his hat as “*he takes off his hat again, peers inside it, feels about inside it, knocks on the crown, blows into it, puts it on again.*” (p. 7). Boots and hats also have symbolic significance in the play. Boots refer to Estragon’s desire to go, move and proceed which do not take place in the course of the play. Hat is related to the mind and thinking ability which not only Vladimir but also Estragon lacks. In this case, boots and hat have also ironic meaning in the play. Moreover, the aimlessness of the characters thus indicated, the two forlorn figures are presented as the allegorical representations of the modern individual living in the post-war capitalist system. As the ones thrown into a strange world dominated by the capitalist order, Beckett’s characters do not have aims, jobs or values to make them feel that they are living beings. That is why, they attribute meaning to the objects to get rid of the meaninglessness that haunts their lives.

In the course of their waiting, Estragon and Vladimir are introduced to two more characters. While Didi and Gogo are waiting on the country road, Pozzo and Lucky appear. Pozzo, the owner of Lucky, has already reduced him to the state of an animal. Lucky, an old servant, carries Pozzo’s things. He is not able to move properly. When he tries to speak, he just roars or utters meaningless sounds. He has been brought to the fair to be sold by his owner. Pozzo drags Lucky with a rope around his neck, and treats his old servant in a brutal way. Lucky obeys whatever his owner says:

POZZO: [*He jerks the rope.*] Up pig! [*Pause.*] Every time he drops he falls asleep. [*Jerks the rope.*] Up hog! [*Noise of LUCKY getting up and picking up his baggage.* POZZO *jerks the rope.*] Back! [*Enter LUCKY backwards.*] Stop! [*LUCKY stops.*] Turn! [*LUCKY turns.*] (Beckett, 2010, p. 20)

Despite being humiliated and dragged by Pozzo, Lucky was, once upon a time, a thinking man. Pozzo states this saying, “. . . [Lucky] even used to think very prettily once; I could listen to him for hours” (p. 36). To be able to think about something belongs to the past, and here Beckett shows that the oppressed individual, as a

result of the new power relations, has come to lack this ability: The system has ruined man's thinking and questioning abilities, and Beckett's characters are the symbolic figures revealing the conflict between the thinking rulers and the dumb ruled. Hence, Pozzo and Lucky are the characters used to illustrate how the system works.

The capitalist system exploits the individuals, and makes them lose their humanity, causing, meanwhile, violence and suffering. This finds expression in the characters' behaviors such as beating and humiliating each other. Therefore, beating the weak can be seen as normal in the play. Vladimir and Estragon treat Lucky in a brutal way, too. They are not aware of Lucky's suffering because they do not have the potential for empathy. They are pitiless and "inhumanity. . . [is shown] to be the key to survival" (Birkett, 1987, p. 20) in the play. The one who has the power survives on account of the weakness of the powerless. When Pozzo appears in the second act as blind and wants help, Estragon and Vladimir ignore him first, and then torture him. This is an exaggerated picture of the already existing situation so that the audience comes to understand the inter-relation between economic system and the individual norms and ethics:

POZZO: Help !

. . .

ESTRAGON: Don't mind him. Sleep.

[*Silence.*]

POZZO: Pity! Pity!

ESTRAGON: [*With a start.*] What is it?

. . .

VLADIMIR: It's this bastard Pozzo at it again.

ESTRAGON: Make him stop it. Kick him in the crotch.

VLADIMIR: [*Striking Pozzo.*] Will you stop it! Crablouse!

[*POZZO extricates himself with cries of pain and crawls away. He stops, saws the air blindly, calling for help.*]

VLADIMIR, [*propped on his elbow, observes his retreat.*] He's off! [*POZZO collapses.*] He's down! (Beckett, 2010, p. 79)

Beckett allegorically describes the capitalist world through Pozzo and through his interaction with the dumb characters who are the products of the system, and who have no emotions. These characters' insensitive and violent behavior stem from the establishment of the new capitalist system which ". . . has led [individuals] to cruelty and suffering" (Berger, 1995, p.70). Lucky represents the racked ruled; Pozzo represents the brutal ruler (or vice versa) oppressing the racked, and Vladimir and Estragon are the characters on whom the system has imposed its (un)ethical norms.

Beckett demonstrates the clash between the bourgeoisie and the working class; a kind of “. . . Marxian master and slave [relationship is shown] through the interdependence of Pozzo and Lucky” (Brater and Cohn, 1990, p. 102). Pozzo, dragging Lucky with a rope on his neck, represents a typical *master*. Lucky, who is being dragged, represents a typical *slave*. Expressing the class hierarchy through the two (despite the changing of their roles), Beckett shows that the working members always serve to their masters, and entertain them. Vladimir and Estragon want Lucky to do something to entertain them, and this is a chance for Pozzo to demonstrate his power over Lucky:

POZZO: . . . What do you prefer? Shall we have him dance, or sing, or recite, or think, or -
ESTRAGON: Who?
POZZO: Who! You know how to think, you two?
VLADIMIR: He thinks?
. . .
ESTRAGON: I'd rather he'd dance, it'd be more fun.
. . .
VLADIMIR: Then let him dance. (Beckett, 2010, p. 36)

As an allegorical figure representing working class, Lucky here is considered as a toy played by his owner. Pozzo asks him to dance and entertain both himself and the others. Lucky is in the service of the consuming society, not with his thoughts, but with his body. Estragon and Vladimir are surprised to hear that he *can* think. The capacity to think refers to the brain. Yet, in their relationship, Lucky is the body and Pozzo is the brain. Once upon a time, Lucky was the brain who is now ruled by the Pozzo, so “Lucky is not only a symbol of the exploited worker in a capitalist society, but also the tormented intellectual made ineffectual by that society” (Sternlicht, 2005, p.55). The change in Pozzo in the second act refers to the exchange of the power between the two. This shows that the superior master is in need of his slave. Pozzo gradually loses his strength so that he needs Lucky to guide him. Besides, “Pozzo and Lucky represent the relationship between body and mind, the material and the spiritual sides of man, with intellect subordinate to the appetites of the body” (Esslin, 1968, pp. 47-48). Pozzo wants to show these “appetites” with his articles and authority over Lucky. The rope around Lucky’s neck shows that Pozzo has the power to oppress the powerless. Hence, Lucky can be taken as representing the working class governed and suppressed by the bourgeoisie. Pozzo, dragging Lucky

with rope, represents the dominant class, and when analyzed from Marxist point of view,

Pozzo is a sadist, enjoying his power over his slave, Lucky, but he is also weary of the relationship. After all, a master is always tied to the slave who serves him. . . . Pozzo stands for capitalism exploiting the worker, Lucky. The derby or bowler hat enforces this consideration. Pozzo is all materialism, concerned about his baggage, his comfort, his food, his pipe, and his watch. Lucky has nothing but his hat and burdens. (Sternlicht, 2005, p.55)

The deformation in Lucky is the result of the destruction of the mind and rationality. Besides, Pozzo's authority cannot be questioned for he is too arrogant. When Estragon asks a question to Pozzo, he does not reply. When Vladimir reminds him the question, he feels irritated:

VLADIMIR: You're being asked a question.

POZZO: [*Delighted.*] A question! Who? What? A moment ago you were calling me sir, in fear and trembling. Now you're asking me questions. No good will come of this! (Beckett, 2010, p. 26)

Pozzo reminds Vladimir the class difference between them. He exerts his power by expressing his *superior* authority over them.

Beckett's two characters, Pozzo and Lucky are now passive, and their inactivity opposes the "active" capitalist system since the system requires working productive individuals and ". . . the logic of capitalism as a system, [is based] on the need to generate private profits [for] . . . enormous productivity" (Bowles, 2007, p.62). Yet, Beckett's Vladimir and Estragon are the forlorn ones because after being exploited and assimilated, they are now the ones made outcasts in the productive system. Therefore, Vladimir and Estragon's passivity is a form of resistance to the capitalist system, and "capitalism . . . is characterized by the exploitation [and in such societies] . . . class differences grow larger and larger" (Marx in Berger, 1995, p. 70), giving hardly any chance for the ones crushed underfoot. Beckett's characters, Lucky, Pozzo, Vladimir and Estragon, are unable to abandon each other, and they are interlocked in a strange hierarchy, forming the sort of relationship in the capitalist social order.

In such a structure, neither the dominating one nor the dominated is able to part. The weak are in need of a powerful ruler since they need to be controlled and leaded, and the powerful need them because without the existence of the weak,

they cannot enjoy the power in their hands. That is why, “all of Beckett’s pairs are bound in friendships that are essentially power relationships . . . Each partner needs to know that the other is there” (Pilling, 1994, pp. 71-72). They need one another to survive. “Each of . . . [the two] pairs – Pozzo – Lucky; Vladimir – Estragon . . . is linked by a relationship of mutual interdependence, wanting to leave each other, at war with each other, and yet dependent on each other” (Esslin, 1968, p.66). Estragon and Vladimir, despite their desire to part, cannot do it. They have nobody except one another. The dialogue between the two in the first act shows their interdependence:

ESTRAGON: [*Coldly.*] There are times when I wonder if it wouldn’t be better for us to part.

VLADIMIR: You wouldn’t go far. (Beckett, 2010, p. 12)

Vladimir is sure that Estragon cannot leave him. Moreover, in the second act, when Estragon is away, Vladimir says that “[he] missed [him, and] at the same time [he] was happy” (p. 54). Although Vladimir and Estragon do not have a master in the play, once upon a time they were working in the fields, and perhaps, they had their masters. Now since they have no work, they spend their time waiting. Within the class stratification in the capitalist system, they belong to a submissive group called tramps or mobs. As they have no master to take orders, they are now waiting for an unknown phenomenon, expecting, to some extent, a new master to be dominated by.

The characters’ interdependence, and the master - slave relationship in the play can be explained through Marx’s ancient communal stage “which is . . . accompanied by slavery . . . , [and] the citizens hold power over their laboring slaves only in their community” (Tucker, 1978, p.151). It is in this phase of historical progress that a class division between the masters (the citizens) and slaves occurs, and according to Marx, “The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles” (Marx and Engels, 1967, p .79). In Marxist viewpoint, there are other stages (following the “slavery” stage) which are related to the means of production in each paradigm, and production defines class relations in the system. In fact, the whole idea is based on the conflict between the haves and the have nots, the rulers and the ruled ones.

Having built conflicts among the characters, Beckett depicts them as numb and immobile, unable either to understand their situation, or their forlorn existence.

Estragon and Vladimir have been thrown away by the materialist system because these characters are no longer able to “produce” anything. They neither have jobs to work, nor belong to a social group. This makes them passive and unexpressive. Therefore, the characters’ silence refers to their passivity in the system. In the second act, Estragon and Vladimir try to make rhyme with the words and at the same time find something to speak about. However, their voices are often interrupted by their silence:

VLADIMIR: We have our reasons.
ESTRAGON: All the dead voices.
VLADIMIR: They make a noise like wings.
ESTRAGON: Like leaves.
VLADIMIR: Like sand.
ESTRAGON: Like leaves.
 [*Silence.*]
VLADIMIR: They all speak together.
ESTRAGON: Each one to itself.
 [*Silence.*]
 . . .
VLADIMIR: They make a noise like feathers.
ESTRAGON: Like leaves.
VLADIMIR: Like ashes.
ESTRAGON: Like leaves.
 [*Long Silence.*]
VLADIMIR: Say something!
ESTRAGON: I’m trying.
 [*Long Silence.*]

(Beckett, 2010, p. 58)

Their silence is either short or long, and what is indicated here is their passivity. Lucky’s silence is related to his dumbness. Therefore, in the play,

the pauses . . . are crucial. They enable Beckett to present: silence of inadequacy, when characters cannot find the words they need; silence of repression, when they are struck dumb by the attitude of their interlocutor . . . ; and silences of anticipation, when they await the response of the other which will give them a temporary sense of existence. (Worton in Pilling, 1994, p.75)

Silence pervades the whole play, indicating the meaninglessness of the characters’ existence. Waiting is their only occupation, suggesting also their expectancy for a new beginning, or salvation.

At the beginning of the play, by the tree, they check their place for waiting for Godot. They mention that their waiting will continue until Godot comes:

VLADIMIR: A - . What are you insinuating? That we've come to the wrong place?
ESTRAGON: He should be here.
VLADIMIR: He didn't say for sure he'd come.
ESTRAGON: And if he doesn't come?
VLADIMIR: We'll come back tomorrow.
ESTRAGON: And then the day after tomorrow.
VLADIMIR: Possibly.
ESTRAGON: And so on.
VLADIMIR: The point is –
ESTRAGON: Until he comes. (Beckett, 2010, p. 10)

This dialogue shows that Vladimir and Estragon will certainly wait for Godot until they meet Godot, and this makes their waiting “meaningful” for them.

Godot means both hope and savior for Didi and Gogo because “the arrival of Godot is the eagerly awaited event that will miraculously save the situation” (Esslin, 1968, p.49). To save themselves, Vladimir and Estragon need an end to their waiting.

Still Vladimir and Estragon live in hope: they wait for Godot, whose coming will bring the flow of time to a stop. . . They are hoping to be saved from the evanescence and instability of the illusion of time, and to find peace and permanence outside it. Then they will no longer be tramps, homeless wanderers, but will have arrived home. (Esslin, 1968, p. 52)

Their waiting to reunite with Godot means that they want to flee from being outsiders. Since they do not have a place in the system, they are preoccupied with the idea of being saved. Although there are some glimpses of *hope* in the play such as the salvation of “one of the thieves” (Beckett, 2010, p.8), in the first act and “the tree [having] four or five leaves” (p.52) in the second act, in general, the play holds a pessimistic view for the future, and for the salvation of the characters.

In the second act, when Pozzo and Lucky appear again, Vladimir and Estragon think that Godot has finally come. Vladimir's speech shows their staunch belief in the existence of Godot, and also verifies that they need to be saved:

ESTRAGON: Is it Godot?
VLADIMIR: We were beginning to weaken. Now we're sure to see the evening out.
POZZO: Help!
ESTRAGON: Do you hear him?
VLADIMIR: We are no longer alone, waiting for the night, waiting for Godot, waiting for. . . waiting. All evening we have struggled, unassisted. Now it's over. It's already tomorrow.
POZZO: Help!
VLADIMIR: Time flows again already. The sun will set, the moon will rise, and we away . . . from here. (Beckett, 2010, p. 73).

Vladimir is so attracted by the idea that Godot has finally arrived, for he hears neither Pozzo's request for help, nor Estragon's questions. In fact, Vladimir and Estragon's waiting for Godot refers to a sense of belonging to someone or somewhere, which means "home" for them. Their being homeless means that they do not have any social group, identity, or owner. They are presented as lumpens who are unconscious about their miserable existence and waiting. Vladimir thinks that they have "struggled" enough while waiting. However, their struggle is with time and to pass it. They also struggle with their meaninglessness existence. Therefore, Godot will not only save them, but also make their lives meaningful. Tomorrow is a kind of promise for Didi and Gogo, a promise to be reached. Hope is their mutual addiction because "the habit of hoping, that Godot might come after all is the last illusion that keeps Vladimir and Estragon from facing the human condition and themselves in the harsh light of fully conscious awareness" (Esslin, 1968, p. 58). Waiting for Godot keeps them unaware of the hopeless situation they are in. It is a kind of "job", a kind of escape for them from the mundane reality.

For Vladimir and Estragon, there is the belief that time will pass, and everything will change in a better way. As Pozzo says, Godot is the one ". . . who has [their] future in his hands" (Beckett, 2010, p. 26), Godot's coming will certainly save Didi and Gogo. That is why, the end of their waiting will be a salvation for them. However, Godot's continual delayed arrival is a foreshadowing for the two tramps showing that they have to wait more. After the Boy (who brings messages from Godot) comes for the first time, and tells that Godot will not be able to come "today", Vladimir comforts Estragon saying "Tomorrow everything will be better" (p. 50). However, this is a vain hope. Beckett wants to point out that the awaited arrival does not seem to come true. Tomorrow will not come although the Boy says "he won't come this evening but surely tomorrow" (p. 48). The Boy is late, and the arrival is delayed. Beckett shows that the expectation of Didi and Gogo for a better life, related to Godot's arrival, is a futile hope. Tomorrow never comes, and referring to our time, Beckett suggests that history will not progress to make things better.

Beckett's view is also in contrast with Hegel's "philosophy of history". Hegel suggests that history progresses, and as individuals "we must proceed historically" (Hegel, 1956, p. 10). In fact, "in actual existence Progress appears as an advancing from the imperfect to the more perfect" (p. 57). In the play, to proceed in time in a better way is not possible *and* desirable for the characters because they are like the

living dead, and as Vladimir says, “[they] are bored to death” (Beckett, 2010, p. 77). They just exist physically. They have no certain destination to go, and no home to reach. Vladimir and Estragon cannot even abandon the boundaries of a country road, which substitutes a home for them. Pozzo and Lucky come back as blind and dumb in the second act, and then they leave but for no place. They just “go on” (p. 86) aimlessly. In their absurd lives, they do not have any role other than waiting. Beckett’s characters’ passivity and immobility are also in contrast with the idea of progress in capitalist order. Since capitalism requires working and producing constantly, it, in a way, refers to progress. However, the characters in the play do not produce anything, and there is no progress in their lives. They are stuck to their absurd paradigm. Hence, Beckett suggests that waiting for tomorrow is futile because “the other day” will not bring any hope. Yet, he holds the idea that past was better, as Vladimir says, when they were “Hand in hand from the top of the Eiffel Tower, among the first [and they] were presentable in those days. Now it’s too late.” (p. 6). This speech shows that Vladimir and Estragon’s living conditions were better once upon a time, and Vladimir feels that life will not be the same anymore for them because “it’s too late.” Through Vladimir’s speech, Beckett indicates that the past before the war had some meaning, and offered the individual some sort of happiness. The characters’ memories related to the past indicate that time has brought them incapability, passivity, and unhappiness: They have already lost their present and future. In contrast with Hegelian and Marxist viewpoints in terms of progress, history does not proceed for the characters in *Waiting for Godot*.

Finally, *Waiting for Godot* is a work discussing the helplessness and hopelessness of the individuals living in the capitalist order. Although the characters attempt to create hope and seek help, the world is numb and dumb to their yearnings. Despite their struggle for survival, and despite the changing of their roles, nothing changes. Beckett’s picture is a dark one, showing that there is no way out.

CHAPTER II

WAR TRAUMA AND ABSURDITY OF EXISTENCE IN *WAITING FOR GODOT*

The Second World War shattered the psychologies of individuals. Exposed to violence and inhumanity, majority of people in the war countries suffered physically and mentally. Deaths, injuries, and devastations were the physical part of the suffering, and experiencing such a tragedy gave way to psychological traumas in the post-war individuals. As “studies of World War II survivors have found signs of serious mental disorders” (Bramsen and Mooren & Kleber in Nader and Dubrow, et al. 1999, p.201), it was apparent that war experience had already shattered individual psychologies causing the emergence of some mental diseases in psychology such as “Conversion Disorder” together with “Dependent Personality Disorder,” the sub-diseases of neurosis which emerge only after great disturbances such as war:

There have been many losses to regret. Husbands, sons, daughters, siblings, friends, or other important persons have died during the war. In addition, people . . . [had to] cope with the loss of houses, loss of expectations about the future, and loss of faith that the world is a safe place. (Eisenbruch in Nader and Dubrow, et al. 1999, p. 202)

Losses and wartime violence had already made individuals lose their humanity, assimilating them into a society formed by hopelessness, degeneration and perversity which created the “. . . picture of a disintegrating world that . . . [had] lost its unifying principle, its meaning and its purpose [as well as] . . . its rational principle” (Esslin, 1968, pp. 401-402). On account of the socio-economic and psychological depression after the war, and owing to the emergence of a new form of capitalism and its class conflict, individual relations in the post war era further deteriorated, making an already decadent paradigm more meaningless. The new form of materialism which totally ignored human personality and saw the individual as just a vehicle in the production of goods accelerated the decline of humane values. Since production and consumption are the essential phenomena of any

capitalist society, individuals are required to produce and consume in the system. The war, altering the previously established balance of the system, caused the class system to sharpen more due to the economic and hierarchical change in western societies, creating in the process marginalized groups, and forming the ground for the alienation of the individual from both society and himself/herself. Hence, the new or neo-capitalism of the post-war era has ruined man's natural perception mechanism. Being assimilated by the capitalist system and its greedy demands, individual psychologies have gradually collapsed and caused people to lose their personal and social identities.

On account of the deterioration in psychology and character, individuals' relations with their families and friends have increasingly deteriorated, and the "most difficult [concepts] to grasp . . . were and still are, the ruptures within communities, families, and even marriages" (Nader and Dubrow, et al. 1999, p. 200). This became apparent after the war. Having ruined the social interaction in society, the war made life more difficult for the individual to cope with since "[people] . . . have come to live in a new place, among unknown people without most of their relatives," (p. 202) and with no hope of re-establishing the previous world order. This resulted in isolation and *alienation*. Being strangers to their surroundings, and confining themselves into loneliness, individuals neither understood themselves, nor the others.

When a society changes in any important respect, as occurred when feudalism changed into capitalism or when the factory system displaced the individual artisan, such a change is likely to produce dislocations in the social character of people. The old character structure does not fit the new society, which adds to a person's sense of alienation and despair. (Hall and Lindzey, 1978, p. 173)

The change in the social and economic dynamics of the society is the reason for the change in human psychology and behavior, and for the new post-war individual, the case was no different. Man found it difficult to conform to his/her environment. As a result of this incompatibility, during and after the war, individuals experienced desperation and estrangement. They felt thrown into an alien world which was totally different from the one they used to inhabit, and there naturally appeared the feeling of "throwness . . . [which] is also used in the sense of being imposed upon by the world to the extent that people are alienated from themselves" (p. 324). That is why, individuals of the post war period were unable to cling to the world.

The alienation of individuals is not only limited with their environment; they are also alienated from themselves, the sort of alienation which makes them unable

to understand their own actions together with the actions of the others. The reason for this is the “weakness” in the individual since “life, unfortunately, has not been too kind to “selves” in . . . [the twentieth] century either –selves and persons have been literally fragmented, lives torn apart, people torn apart by torture, . . . threatened with ultimate extinction by . . .[the] war” (Simon in Smith, 1990, p.158). The damage in the inner world of the individual shows itself in his/her ruined relationships with the outside world. Hence, the new individual can be taken as “. . . disintegrated, deconstructed, shadowed, fragmented, submerged, unstable, and scarcely able to tell a coherent story,” (p.157) exposing people to the dilemma between “...self and... environment,” (Horney, 1992, p. 36) an impasse which has naturally affected human psychology.

In *Waiting for Godot*, Beckett points out the despondency of the post-war individual in terms of his being an outcast, and in terms of his dilemmas. He reveals that the individual has undergone an identity crisis after the war which eventually destroyed his psychology. He draws the picture of the hopelessness of man, a picture of “. . . the potential tragedy in the human situation” (Andonian, 1998, p. 97) which is the absurdity of existence in the post-war world. His characters are the *alien* figures deprived of ordinary life conditions, and they are the strangers in a strange environment. The world they live in is presented as a bizarre place with no meaning. However, what makes the characters’ situation absurd is that they have to go on living in this world with a fake hope. They cannot escape from the *nada* of their existence despite their efforts to create meaning. There is nowhere to go, and nothing to do.

The characters speak, but they seem to say nothing. The dialogue between Didi and Gogo, the two absurdly attached figures, is very suggestive of the nothingness of the individual in the new age:

VLADIMIR: We’ve nothing more to do here.

ESTRAGON: Nor anywhere else. (Beckett, 2010, p. 50)

Justifying their inescapable situation and their hopelessness, the communication between the two also reveals that they are aware of their present forlorn situation. Yet, they have no idea on what caused this desperation.

Not only Didi and Gogo, but also Lucky and Pozzo are the victims. Beckett expresses the psychological malaise, and the absurd existence of the post war individual through the four characters’ “bizarre” situations and behaviors. The

absurdity of their condition is an allegory for the absurdity of humanity since “the play seems, through the metaphor of the waiting tramps and the two travelers they meet on the road, to dramatize elemental human experience, to embody fundamental truths of the human condition” (Collins in Schlueter and Brater, 1992, p. 31) in the post-war era. Therefore, Vladimir, Estragon, Pozzo, Lucky, and even the Boy are the representative individuals captured in a meaningless world which, in effect, destroyed human psychology. Lacking mental health, they stand for both the individual of the “modern” period, and for mankind in general for Vladimir’s speech in the second act confirms this idea: “At this place, at this moment of time, all mankind is us,” (Beckett, 2010, p.76) says Vladimir, and through the character’s speech Beckett implies that the individual belongs to an absurd paradigm whose center is meaningless.

Beckett, through his characters, suggests that trying to survive in such a meaningless world leads to anomaly in individual’s actions and relations because “. . . people’s behavior- both normal and abnormal- is shaped by the kind of family group, society, and culture in which they live” (Feldman, 2011, p. 507). In the play, the characters represent the survivors of the post-war individuals without *home*. As there are no values such as family and a society or culture which the characters belong to, there is anomaly, and when anomaly occurs, the individual faces difficulty in his/her interaction with society. Abnormality shows itself in the daily life of the individual in terms of his/her inconsistent behavior types, and Robert S. Feldman defines such types as the “people who are unable to function effectively and to adapt to the demands of society are considered abnormal” (p. 504) and the individual is exposed to conflicts. In fact, “conflicts people experience in their daily interactions with others can promote and maintain abnormal behavior” (p. 507), and may result in abnormality in man’s attitudes. In this respect, Beckett’s world is occupied by “abnormal” characters for whom the *abnormal* has become normal. The meaninglessness of their lives has already paved the way for their meaningless existence, and they have come to accept this abnormal case as normal.

Through the depiction of the characters who demonstrate “improper” behavior, Beckett initiates a discussion concerning the “normal” and the “abnormal”. By defamiliarizing the familiar figures and abstract phenomena, he creates a satire of the “modern world” in his work. The characters’ interaction with the world is shown as broken due to their incapability to *hold on to life*. What is also ironically pointed out by the playwright is the question whether life is worth living or not.

Beckett's characters cannot adapt themselves to the world that has already changed. They are incapable of forming fulfilling relations. Estragon and Vladimir's waiting for Godot aimlessly is mainly considered a sign of abnormality since it is a futile hope which dominates all their lives, and which refers to someone or something non-existent. They are on a road waiting for something or someone unknown. When Pozzo meets them for the first time, he asks who this Godot is, and Vladimir says "a kind of acquaintance." In fact, "[they] don't know him very well", and "Personally [Vladimir] wouldn't even know him if [he] saw him" (Beckett, 2010, p.20). Having devoted their lives' aim to waiting, Didi and Gogo's only thought which creates a meaning in their lives is their *habitual waiting* and strong belief that Godot will come. Yet, Beckett indicates that Vladimir and Estragon's waiting for Godot is bizarre, a sign of abnormality. The inability of the characters to recognize absurdity in the play forms the dramatic irony, informing the audience of what is "normal" and what is "abnormal". Hence, the audience gets the chance to see absurdity personified through the characters, who, even in the last part of the play, still hold the belief that Godot will somehow come, and therefore go on waiting. They can hardly leave the place where they wait for Godot because going far interrupts their "purposeful" aim and belief:

ESTRAGON: Where shall we go?
VLADIMIR: Not far.
ESTRAGON: Oh yes, let's go far away from here.
VLADIMIR: We can't.
ESTRAGON: Why not?
VLADIMIR: We have to come back tomorrow.
ESTRAGON: What for?
VLADIMIR: To wait for Godot. (Beckett, 2010, p. 89)

Still keeping their belief about Godot's promised arrival, they thus form their *raison d'être*.

Abnormality is discernible in the characters' behaviors, too, and this can be deduced from the speech among the four characters in the first act. Although Estragon and Vladimir are not interested in Pozzo's actions, Pozzo wants to tell them something to attract their attention. However, he does not say anything "meaningful" for he always forgets his previous sentences:

POZZO: . . . But I see what it is, you are not from these parts, you don't know what our twilights can do. Shall I tell you? [*Silence*. ESTRAGON *is fiddling with his boot*

again, VLADIMIR with his hat.] I can't refuse you. [Vaporizer.] A little attention, if you please. [VLADIMIR and ESTRAGON continue their fiddling, LUCKY is half asleep. POZZO racks his whip feebly.] What's the matter with this whip? [He gets up and cracks it more vigorously, finally with success. LUCKY jumps. VLADIMIR's hat, ESTRAGON's boot, LUCKY's hat fall to the ground. POZZO throws down the whip.] Worn out, this whip. [He looks at VLADIMIR and ESTRAGON.] What was I saying? (p. 34)

With no unifying idea in the speech, and with no notion of the previously uttered words, the communication turns into a pile of disconnected words and phrases. In fact, these fragmented expressions do not make a communicative speech, and moreover, the others are not listening to him.

Lucky's long speech is also a sign of anomaly since it does not contain any meaning. It includes the random combination of words and phrases. There are many repetitive words which make the speech long but meaningless. Neither the beginning nor the end conveys any idea. The soliloquy is also the expression of the subconscious mind, and the words uttered can be taken as metaphors for Lucky's random flow of mind:

LUCKY: Given the existence as uttered forth in the public works of Puncher and Wattmann of a personal God quaquaquaqua with white beard quaquaquaqua outside time without extension who from the heights of divine apathia divine athambia divine aphasia loves us dearly with some exceptions for reasons unknown but time will tell and suffers like the divine Miranda with those who for reasons unknown but time will tell are plunged in fire whose fire flames if that continues and who can doubt it will fire the firmament that is to say blast hell to heaven so blue still and calm so calm with a calm which even though intermittent is better than nothing but not so fast and considering what is more that as a result of the labours . . . (p. 40)

Lucky's broken, fragmented speech, with references to religion since it includes the words such as "God", "divine", "hell" and "heaven", signify that the concept of God and religion have also been shattered in the post-war capitalist society. In relation to Lucky's incomprehensible speech, Estragon, Vladimir, and Pozzo's disconnected responses to his meaningless words signify anomaly and incomprehension. When Lucky finishes his speech, the others are just interested in "his hat" because they were not listening to him:

POZZO: His hat!
[VLADIMIR seizes LUCKY's hat. Silence of LUCKY. He falls. Silence. Panting of the victors.]
ESTRAGON: Avenged! [VLADIMIR examines the hat, peers inside it.] (p.42)

Lucky's absurd speech and the others' illogical and irrelevant responses demonstrate the psychological disorder of the characters. In fact, Lucky's words cannot be considered as a speech. Besides, the others are ignorant and unaware of what he is saying. The situation is bizarre. Moreover, it is related not only to Lucky's monologue, but also to the others' negligence of it, showing that logical communication through conversation is impossible. This impossibility sets one of the themes in the work, demonstrating the incongruity among the characters.

Beckett, through his characters, points out that the inconsistency the individual experiences in life is the initiator of psychological disorder, namely neurosis which has come to be defined as “. . . a manifestation of existential anxiety and pessimism . . . beset by overestimated difficulties to adopt a resigned attitude toward life” (Rattner, 1983, p. 159), and it is “a disease or debility of the nervous system” (Roberts - Pedersen, 2012, p. 410). Such diseases result in the breakdown of the individual's mental system affecting his/her social relations, which, by extension, influence the core of the community. The increase in the number of neurotic people gives birth to the emergence of a neurotic community, and shapes the culture in that way. In addition, “neuroses are brought about by cultural factors . . . [and] generated by disturbances in human relationships” (Horney, 1992, p.12). The disturbances give way to conflicts, and “CONFLICTS play an infinitely greater role in neurosis,” (34) making the individual unable to adjust to life. There occurs a struggle for the individual between himself/herself and his/her behaviors, disrupting his/her daily life and resulting in destructive effects for . . . “[neuroses cause] feelings of isolation, helplessness, fear and hostility (pp. 12-13). Isolation, despair, fear, and aggression dominate the individual's life. There, then, occurs a kind of struggle with life, but “every step in this struggle . . . makes the neurotic more hostile, more helpless, more fearful, more alienated from himself and others” (p. 18). Beckett's characters are such neurotic figures: Estragon, Vladimir, Lucky and Pozzo are all in a helpless situations, for they are alienated from themselves and the others. They have fears and sometimes they are violent.

To illustrate, Estragon suffers from “ten of them” (Beckett, 2010, p. 54) who have supposedly beaten him. At the beginning of the play, Estragon is back at their usual place of waiting after having spent the night in a ditch. Vladimir asks him whether he is beaten again:

VLADIMIR: And they didn't beat you?
ESTRAGON: Beat me? Certainly they beat me.
VLADIMIR: The same lot as usual?
ESTRAGON: The same? I don't know. (p. 5)

It can be deduced from the speech that Estragon is being beaten repeatedly. However, he is not aware of its reason. This is mentioned in the second act, too. When he comes back barefoot, Vladimir asks: "Why did they beat you?" and Estragon answers: "I don't know". He does not know why he is beaten, and he just says: "I wasn't doing anything" (p. 55). Although he suffers from violence, he is not capable of questioning its reason.

Vladimir suffers from Estragon's dreams and nightmares. He cannot stand listening to them. When Estragon sleeps, he has dreams, and he wants to tell them to Vladimir. For Vladimir, this is an unbearable situation. At the beginning of the play, Vladimir emphasizes this when Estragon wants to share his dream with him:

ESTRAGON: I had a dream.
VLADIMIR: Don't tell me!
ESTRAGON: I dreamt that-
VLADIMIR: DON'T TELL ME!
ESTRAGON: [*Gesture towards the universe.*]This one is enough for you? [*Silence.*]
It's not nice of you, Didi. Who am I to tell my private nightmares to if I can't tell them to you?
VLADIMIR: Let them remain private. You know I can't bear that. (Beckett, 2010, p. 12)

Estragon's insistence to tell his dream to Vladimir makes Vladimir irritated. He does not let Estragon speak. In the second act, when Estragon wakes up and starts shouting after having a nightmare, Vladimir tries to calm him down. He, again, stops him while talking about his nightmare:

ESTRAGON: Ah!
VLADIMIR: There . . . There. . . it's all over.
ESTRAGON: I was falling -
VLADIMIR: It's all over, it's all over.
ESTRAGON: I was on top of a -
VLADIMIR: Don't tell me! . . . (p. 66)

Vladimir avoids listening to Estragon's dream, for he is not eager to share his friend's fears. Moreover, Vladimir has already confined himself to his lonely

existence, and does not want to be disturbed even by the one who is always with him.

Pozzo suffers from Lucky's present existence although he desperately needs him. He does not want Lucky any more. In the first act, when he is talking about Lucky, he implies that he wants to get rid of him. That is why, "[he is] bringing him to the fair, where [he] hope[s] to get a good price for him" (p. 28). Pozzo's humiliating Lucky also shows that he hates him. He calls him "pig". However, Pozzo used to like Lucky once because "He used to be so kind . . . so helpful . . . and entertaining" (p. 31); but now he just wants to send him away. When Vladimir asks Pozzo whether he is thinking of "turn[ing] him away . . . such an old and faithful servant," (p. 30) Pozzo states that he cannot stand him anymore:

POZZO: [*Groaning, clutching his head.*] I can't bear it. . . any longer. . . the way he goes on. . . you've no idea. . . it's terrible. . . he must go. . . [*He waves his arms.*] . . . I'm going mad. . . [*He collapses, his head in his hands.*] . . . I can't bear it . . . any longer. . . [*Silence. All look at POZZO.*] (p. 31)

Pozzo's body language and his speech verify that he really suffers from Lucky's existence. He even thinks that he is going mad. This is a kind of torture for him.

Lucky suffers from Pozzo's continual orders, insulting words and whipping. Estragon and Vladimir, from time to time, mistreat Lucky. In the first act, Pozzo, Estragon, and Vladimir want Lucky to think. Pozzo also gives him orders to dance, to stop, and to "think". Lucky is forced to obey their commands. In addition, to be forced to think and speak makes Lucky suffer the most:

POZZO: Stop! [LUCKY stops.] Back! [LUCKY moves back.]
Stop! [LUCKY stops.] Turn! [LUCKY turns towards
auditorium.]Think!
[*During LUCKY's tirade the others react as follows:*
[1] VLADIMIR and ESTRAGON all attention, POZZO
dejected and disgusted.[2] VLADIMIR and
ESTRAGON begin to protest, POZZO's sufferings
increase. [3] VLADIMIR and ESTRAGON attentive
again, POZZO more and more agitated and groaning.
[4]VLADIMIR and ESTRAGON protests violently.
POZZO jumps up, pulls on the rope. General outcry. (p. 39)

Lucky is not able to think. Once upon a time, he used to think and now he seems to have lost this ability, and he is forced and treated violently. This gives him pain. Lucky's not being able to speak is due to the fact that he thinks that it is not worth

speaking. "He thinks he's entangled in a net" (p. 37). The situation he is in is inescapable, and there is nothing to talk about. His forced and disorganized speech refers to his unwillingness to find something to utter in such a meaningless world.

The characters' suffering is usually psychological, causing also their physical suffering, and the misery of the characters is related to the depression of mankind in the post-war era. Beckett, describing the forlorn situation of the European individual, points out a kind of general restlessness in the age. Through his characters, he demonstrates the psychological disorder and the subsequent spiritual lacunae in terms of the paradigmatic shift, and the chaos the war has created is seen as generating the symptoms of mental and behavioral disorders, and Beckett's characters do not have any desire to survive. Having just created a fake hope for themselves, Vladimir and Estragon's only aim is to meet their Godot. However, Godot's not coming from the beginning to the end of the play suggests that Vladimir and Estragon's aim is a futile one. Pozzo's aim is to sell Lucky and get rid of him. Although Pozzo wants to abandon Lucky, he needs him more because of his blindness. This relationship is based on need, not on friendship. Having lost all humane values, the characters' aimlessness becomes the aim in the play. Their mental breakdown makes them unaware of their condition, and they are repeatedly captivated by the bleakness in their environment formed of the slave-master relation between Lucky and Pozzo, and the visits of the Boy who comes to say that Godot will not come. Hence, Beckett's characters are the ones who have experienced a great change (or nihilism) in their lives which finally gave way to a psychological disorder. They are the neurotic individuals, and a neurotic is "the person who . . . has experienced the culturally determined difficulties in an accentuated form" (Horney in Hall and Lindzey, 1957, p. 179). And it is this psychological disorder that shows itself through "incompatibility of attitudes in relation to others" (Horney, 1992, p. 41). In the behaviors of Beckett's characters, one can find the symptoms of neurosis, and it is this illness that makes the characters recognizable and appealing.

While depicting the neuroses of the characters, Beckett goes a step further, and argues that the psychology of the individual is so disturbed by the outer effects that for the individual of the post war period, there seems to be no cure for his/her mental illness. What makes Beckett's characters incurable neurotic beings are their psychic dysfunctions, abnormal behaviors, illogical speeches, and vacillating emotions. Therefore, such neurotic individuals create discord in their interaction with life, and "the attitudes do not remain restricted to the area of human relationships,

but gradually pervade the entire personality. . . [Such behaviors] end by encompassing not only the person's relation to others but also his relation to himself and to life in general" (Horney, 1992, p.46). Causing lack of perception in the individual, this affects man's social identity and his/her ties with the others, creating in the process a new world where neurosis is the sole arbitrator, the source of absurdity.

In fact, the characters' situation is associated with a kind of insanity referring to the catastrophic effects of the war, and the chaotic state of the post-war era. Therefore, in the play "the spectator . . . confront[ing] with the madness of the human condition, is enabled to see his situation in all its grimness and despair" (Esslin, 1968, p. 404). The pessimistic picture of the individual presented by Beckett in the play is a general metaphor for the people of the modern period. Beckett also suggests that the society the post war individuals have to reside is a neurotic, absurd paradigm.

The term neurosis "might describe a single condition or a category of conditions with distinctive symptoms. . . Neurosis [is] also marked a degree of objective "madness" . . . revealed by a set of suggested symptoms occurring in a distinctive personality type" (Roberts-Pedersen, 2012, p. 410). It is a kind of disorder which destroys the personality. In addition, the neurotics have some symptoms, a set of attitudes and feelings:

Neurotics might be chronically anxious, obsessional and depressed, as well as physically compromised by . . . [some] problems such as . . . sleep disturbances (such as terrifying nightmares) . . . More extreme somatic symptoms – commonly described as "functional", since they had no apparent organic basis- might include paralysed limbs, blindness or loss of speech." (p. 411)

Neurosis is considered as a personality disorder since it is the combination of peculiar symptoms that damage the personality. It is seen as both physical and mental breakdown because neurosis destroys both the physical and the mental functions of the person. Body organs may have defects due to psychological problems.

In this way, Pozzo, Lucky, Estragon, and Vladimir are the suffering "psychological types", to represent the "general human situation" (Andonian, 1998, p. 99), referring also to the psychological pains of the post war period. Therefore, the audience finds the chance for identification with such types. Since Beckett's characters stand for the common psychological situation of the modern individuals,

there naturally emerges sympathy for the characters that are the symbols for the collective pains of mankind.

The destructive effects of the past and the life stages the individual has gone through affect the individual's psychology and leads to neurosis. War is the major reason whose effects have caused damages in the individual's psychology since "horrors and trauma of war lingered long after the guns stopped firing, forced [people] to suffer in isolation and silence" (Humphries, 2010 p. 531). Therefore, the Second World War, as a traumatic experience, caused psychological problems, and has remained as a permanent destruction in people's lives, setting the core of mental disorders. Beckett displays how tragic it is to live, in other words, to *crawl* in a world that has caused psychological *death* for its "survivors". That is why, "Beckett is *the* artist of deprivation and terminal depression, and [in the play] he has expressed his vision of desolation with unique power" (Alvarez, 1973, p. 5), drawing the picture of the miserable condition of the individual through depicting his disrupted psychology.

From Beckett's depiction, the characters can be traced as having the symptoms of "Dependent Personality Disorder" and "Conversion Disorder" related to neurosis in the post war era: While Estragon and Vladimir show "Dependent Personality Disorder", Lucky and Pozzo demonstrate "Conversion Disorder", which, in fact, stem from personality disorder, and this phenomenon can be defined "as long-standing, pervasive, and inflexible patterns of behavior and inner experience that deviate from the expectations of a person's culture and that impair social and occupational functioning" (Davison and Neale, 2001, p. 358).

"Dependent Personality Disorder" is a type of psychological breakdown, and the "people with a pathologically dependent personality are characterized by a concerted effort to get someone else to take the responsibility for their lives, usually associated with clinging behavior" (Klein and Gittelman, et al. 1980, p.512). This sort of behavior refers to being dependent on one another, and the one suffering from this disorder cannot sustain life without the existence of the other. That is why, dependent personality "refers to those who lack self-reliance and are overly dependent on others" (Davison and Neale, 2001, p. 370). Such types are often afraid of being alone. Vladimir and Estragon are the two dependent characters who cannot be separated from each other. They are in need of one another, and they do not have self-confidence when they are on their own. When Estragon spends a night

out in the ditch (but comes back to Vladimir), Vladimir is worried about him. He tries to talk to him. Estragon first seems angry, but later they embrace each other:

ESTRAGON: Don't touch me!
[VLADIMIR *holds back painted*]
VLADIMIR: Do you want me to go away? [*Pause.*] Gogo! [*Pause.* VLADIMIR *observes him attentively.*] Did they beat you? [*Pause.*] Gogo! . . .
Where did you spend the night?
. . .
Did I ever leave you?
ESTRAGON: You let me go.
. . .
[*They long look at each other, then suddenly embrace, clapping each other on the back.*] (Beckett, 2010, p. 53)

This scene shows how they are *glued* to each other. Estragon's childish response shows that he needs to be taken care of by his partner, and that is why, he does not want Estragon to leave him.

Another symptom of "Dependent Personality Disorder" is that the sufferer is "uncomfortable or helpless when alone, or go to great lengths to avoid being alone" (Sperry, 1995, p.79). Vladimir suffers from such a disorder for he is afraid of being alone. When Estragon sleeps, Vladimir wakes him up saying he feels lonely. In the first act, at the very beginning, when Estragon falls asleep, Vladimir wants him to wake up suddenly, saying that he feels lonely:

. . . [ESTRAGON *sits down on the mound.* VLADIMIR *paces agitatedly to and fro, halting from time to time to gaze into the distance off.* ESTRAGON *falls asleep.* VLADIMIR *halts before ESTRAGON.*] Gogo! . . . Gogo! . . . GOGO!
[ESTRAGON *wakes with a start.*]
ESTRAGON: [*Restored to the horror of his situation.*] I was asleep! [Despairingly] Why will you never let me sleep?
VLADIMIR: I felt lonely. (Beckett, 2010, pp. 11-12)

Without Estragon, Vladimir feels desperately lonely, and this fear shows his dependence on Estragon. Vladimir cannot bear being alone when Estragon is sleeping. In the second act, Pozzo and Lucky arrive again. Although they are there, Vladimir still feels lonely. As soon as Estragon falls asleep, Vladimir wakes him up:

[. . . *Silence.* VLADIMIR *goes towards ESTRAGON, contemplates him a moment, than shakes him awake.*]
ESTRAGON: [*Wild gestures, incoherent words. Finally.*]
Why will you never let me sleep?
VLADIMIR: I felt lonely. (p. 86)

There occurs anxiety for Vladimir. Feeling alone makes him anxious and insecure, typical symptoms of the dependent personalities whose “emotional and affective style is characterized by insecurity and anxiousness” (Sperry, 1995, p. 78). Therefore, Vladimir feels insecure and worried on account of his distress about loneliness.

Vladimir and Estragon are also dependent upon Godot, who is the expression of *hope*, who is making them wait for a salvation continually. At the very beginning of the play, Estragon and Vladimir question their “being tied” to Godot. When Estragon asks Vladimir “if [they]’re tied” [to Godot] (Beckett, 2010, p.17) or not, Vladimir tells him that they are not: “To Godot? Tied to Godot? What an idea!” (p.17). Although Estragon and Vladimir do not accept the idea, they are, in fact, dependent upon Godot, who stands for the awaited *savior*. Therefore, for Didi and Gogo, their waiting for Godot is a kind of dependence.

Furthermore, the “. . . anxiety, pathological depression, and nonspecific demoralization all promote dependent adjustments. Naturally, its victims are often . . . anxious or depressed”. (Klein and Gittelman, et al. 1980, p. 513) As victims of this disorder, Estragon and Vladimir are anxious about the boots, the time, each other, and mainly about Godot’s coming. When alone, they feel worried, and this sometimes makes them depressed.

Godot is the hope in Vladimir and Estragon’s lives as it is the phenomenon that will fill in the lacunae in their worlds. That is why, waiting for such a fake hope is the expression of their helplessness. Moreover, they are unaware that Godot is their own creation, their diversion from themselves, and in this sense, their situation is absurd and miserable. Besides, the act of waiting becomes more important than the arrival of Godot, and here Beckett forms the tragic irony in the work. The expected savior Godot’s not coming makes Vladimir and Estragon feel more anxious and depressed, affecting the psychological states of the dependent character whose “moods tend to be one of anxiety or fearfulness” (Sperry, 1995, p. 78). Feeling anxious, they continue waiting for Godot. However, waiting for something for the future is an addiction for Vladimir and Estragon which drags them to a hopeless state. Godot is both hope and anxiety for the future which makes them dependent beings. The two also know that they are not capable of leaving each other, even if they think about this from time to time. It would be *really too bad* for them:

ESTRAGON: [*Coldly.*] There are times when I wonder if it wouldn't be better for us to part
VLADIMIR: You wouldn't go far.
ESTRAGON: That would be too bad, really too bad. (Beckett, 2010, p. 12)

Estragon is afraid of being separated from Vladimir, and Vladimir knows that he will not be able to "go far". This dialogue also shows the other symptom of "Dependent Personality Disorder", which is the "preoccupation with fears of being abandoned by a person with whom one has a close relationship, and of being left to take care for oneself" (Girolamo and Reich, 1993, p. 59). Estragon and Vladimir cannot care for themselves when they are apart. The dialogue in the last part of the first act shows their incapability to abandon each other:

ESTRAGON: Wait! [*He moves away from VLADIMIR.*] I wonder if we wouldn't have been better off alone, each one for himself. [*He crosses the stage and sits on the mound.*] We weren't made for the same road.
VLADIMIR: [*Without anger.*] It is not certain.
ESTRAGON: No, nothing is certain.
[VLADIMIR *slowly crosses the stage and sits down beside* ESTRAGON.]
VLADIMIR: We can still part, if you think it would be better.
ESTRAGON: It's not worth while now.
[*Silence*]
VLADIMIR: No, It's not worth while now.
[*Silence.*] (Beckett, 2010, p. 51)

Beckett shows, through the inter-dependence of the characters, that dependency is the illness of people in the new social system. He suggests that people sustain dependent lives, and create prisons for themselves. In such prisons, individuals can leave neither each other, nor the place they are in, and this brings to mind Nietzsche's herd³ image meaning "a collectivity of humans. . . , a description of a plurality of animals [which] becomes a metaphor for human society" (Roodt and Siemens, 2008, p. 195). According to Nietzsche, people who belong to the herd lack individuality, and this prevents them from finding a way for life. Nietzsche, in his *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, refers to such group of people as a herd where "everyone is the same" (Nietzsche, 2005, p. 16). For Nietzsche, in this herd "He who seeks will himself easily become lost [and] 'all isolation is guilt' " (p. 54). The man in the herd cannot isolate himself/herself from the rest of the group. Leaving the herd brings fear and guilt, and this creates a sense of belonging and dependence for man.

³ Nietzsche uses this term for the people who are to live as groups and who are not able to live as separate individuals. (Nietzsche, 2005)

Nietzsche, in fact, defines the source of “Dependent Personality Disorder”, and shows this to be the illness of the productive societies where a social hierarchy (or interdependence) is established for the “well-being”. Individuals in such societies become dependent on the norms and values of that society, and they cannot separate themselves from the group which they belong to.

Beckett’s characters are the symbolic figures of a *post-war herd*, the mass men who cannot break away from their prisons. Estragon, Vladimir, Lucky and Pozzo are the ones who cannot *exist* without their partners. They do not have individual ideologies; the only ideology for them is to stay in their herd with their counterparts whom they are attached to. The characters have already accepted to live without thinking, out of instinct. They even consider losing their individual rights as “getting rid of them”. Even if they somehow acquire sparkling awareness, it immediately fades. When Estragon asks: “We’ve lost our rights?” Vladimir answers: “We got rid of them.” (Beckett, 2010, p. 15). In this way, Vladimir’s comment shows their indifference and acceptance in terms of living *inhumanly*.

Although the road in the play symbolizes moving, the characters are stable, and cannot go away. In the course of the play, Estragon occasionally tells Vladimir to part. When Vladimir criticizes him or does not approve his behaviors, Estragon repeats the same words:

VLADIMIR: You are a hard man to get on with, Gogo.
ESTRAGON: It’d be better if we parted.
VLADIMIR: You always say that, but you always come crawling back. (p. 57)

Estragon keeps mentioning about separating. Vladimir, however, does not accept the idea. Although Estragon is eager to go, Vladimir reminds him that he will “always [come] crawling back”. In the last scene of the play, Estragon, again, talks about the same issue:

ESTRAGON: I can’t go on like this.
VLADIMIR: That’s what you think.
ESTRAGON: If we parted? That might be better for us. (p. 91)

The vicious circle about parting and coming together continues in the two acts. However, a kind of separation does not occur.

Another symptom of “Dependent Personality Disorder” is that dependent characters “have difficulty in . . . doing things on their own” (Sperry, 1995, p. 79).

Estragon has difficulty in trying his boots. Vladimir helps him put them on and off from time to time:

VLADIMIR: [*He picks up a boot.*] Come on! Give me your foot. [ESTRAGON *raises his boot.*] The other hog! [ESTRAGON *raises the other foot.*] Higher! . . . Try and walk. [ESTRAGON *walks.*] Well?
ESTRAGON: It fits. (Beckett, 2010, p. 65)

Here, Vladimir manipulates Estragon, who is also in need of Vladimir's warning about his trousers. At the end of the play, Vladimir warns Estragon to pull on his trousers before they attempt to go. However, he forgets this. Vladimir reminds him saying "Pull ON your trousers" (p. 91). Estragon cannot sustain his life by himself. He cannot maintain the basic needs which show that he cannot live on his own.

Meanwhile, Lucky and Pozzo, as neurotic characters, suffer from "Conversion Disorder" which

. . . refers to bodily symptoms that involve primarily the skeletal musculature and sensory functions . . . [such as] partial or complete paralyses of the arms, legs, or other body parts; . . . disturbances in vision and hearing, including partial or complete blindness or deafness; disturbances in speech, including complete mutism and aphonia. (Martin, 1973, pp. 30-31)

The effects of this psychological disorder result in bodily deterioration. The symptoms show themselves as disabilities in the individual. Pozzo's blindness and Lucky's numbness show that these two characters suffer from "Conversion Disorder". In the second act, Pozzo appears as blind. When Vladimir and Estragon do not notice his blindness and ask him whether he recognizes them, he says he is blind:

POZZO: Who are you?
VLADIMIR: Do you not recognize us?
POZZO: I am blind.
[Silence]
. . .
VLADIMIR: Since when?
POZZO: I used to have wonderful sight. (Beckett, 2010, p. 81)

Pozzo does not even remember when he went blind. When he is asked about it, he does not respond. He just states that he used to see well. It can be understood from his speech that he has experienced "a sudden loss of vision," (Davison and Neale,

2001, pp.161) a striking symptom of “Conversion Disorder”. When Vladimir asks Pozzo “. . . if it came on . . . [him] all of a sudden, he tells Vladimir that “. . . [he] woke up one fine day as blind as Fortune ” (Beckett, 2010, p. 83). It is discerned from his words that blindness has occurred instantly.

Lucky’s dumbness, in the second act, is a sign of “Conversion Disorder”, too. Pozzo states this when Vladimir wants Lucky to sing for them before they go:

VLADIMIR: Before you go, tell him to sing!
POZZO: But he is dumb.
VLADIMIR: Dumb!
POZZO: Dumb. He can’t even groan.
VLADIMIR: Dumb! Since when?
POZZO: . . . One day like any other day. . . (p. 86)

Lucky, as said by Pozzo, has lost both his hearing ability and utterance. Pozzo even does not know when he has become dumb. That is why, he says “one day”, “like any other day (p. 86). In addition, Lucky has become totally mute, called “*Aphonia*, loss of the voice” (Davison and Neale, 2001, p. 162) that is another sign of “Conversion Disorder”. He cannot speak and hear properly. Pozzo’s blindness and Lucky’s numbness have symbolic significances. Pozzo’s loss of vision and Lucky’s loss of hearing and speaking ability signify that there is nothing pleasant to see and hear in their world. Their lives in their absurd paradigm are in a vicious circle, leading nowhere.

Another symptom of “Conversion Disorder” is “helplessness; [which] may be contradictorily combined with certain imperiousness” (Laughlin, 1967, p. 239). Pozzo and Lucky are helpless because they need each other. Since one has lost vision and the other hearing, they can be seen as forming a symbiotic body. Pozzo needs Lucky to find his way, and Lucky needs Pozzo to be guided to go. Pozzo also needs Vladimir and Estragon because when they come again, Pozzo falls down and cannot stand up. Pozzo shouts “help” for a long time. Vladimir and Estragon get him up. Then once they are talking, Pozzo says: “Don’t leave me!” (Beckett, 2010, p. 86). He is in a miserable situation showing feeling of helplessness and desperation. He falls to the ground from time to time in the course of the play. After he and Lucky slip, Pozzo wonders whether Lucky is hurt and at the same time he *orders* Vladimir and Estragon to have a look at him:

POZZO: Go and see if he's hurt.

VLADIMIR: We can't leave you.

POZZO: You needn't both go.

VLADIMIR: [To ESTRAGON.] You go.

...

POZZO: Yes yes, let your friend go, he stinks so. [*Silence.*] What is he waiting for?
(p. 84)

Pozzo gives orders and commands them arrogantly although he is in need of their help. This shows a sign of "imperiousness". Here, he is the domineering force and the one who decides for the others. His arrogance is due to the helpless state he is in.

Vladimir and Estragon's and Lucky and Pozzo's dependency on each other, Pozzo's blindness and Lucky's dumbness all refer to the psychological disorder the characters have gone through, and through the characters in the play, the audience comes to understand that human beings in the post war era have come to suffer from neuroses and the related disorders. The individuals are all helpless for there is no escape from such psychological imprisonments. Beckett displays the psychological state of the post war individual (or neurosis) which, in psychology, can be grouped as "Dependent Personality Disorder" and "Conversion Disorder; the two neurotic disorders that stem from traumatic experiences.

As a traumatic experience, the effects of the war can be considered as the reason for physical (bodily) deterioration leading to psychological disorders in the individual. Since Beckett's characters are the individuals who *remained alive* after the Second World War, they have mental defects on account of the war. Therefore, Beckett in *Waiting for Godot* displays not only economic and social, but also psychological deterioration of the western individual. Beckett's characters are the representatives of the "survivors" of the war, who are the true losers. In the work, the four characters are waiting for a savior and salvation. Beckett, through Estragon, Vladimir, Lucky and, Pozzo, depicts the post war individual who has undergone a psychological change, and who is in need of a savior due to the desperation and hopelessness the war has brought.

CHAPTER III

ECONOMY AND PSYCHOLOGY INTERWOVEN IN BECKETT'S "ABSURD" PARADIGM

What greatly forms and deforms human psychology is the socio-economic structure in any society. As the economic model forms the superstructure which, by extension, paves the way for constituting individual personalities, poor or rich social class conditions have come to influence individual psychologies. Capitalist system, assuming a new tonality and permeating more and more into individual relations after the Second World War, has altered both the previously established social structure and individual relations, creating in the process the new powerful and powerless classes, and designing for the majority (or the oppressed people) a life style in which the meaning for existence is lost, and a world where people live out of instinct. Having shattered individual psychologies, and loosening man's ties with his fellow creatures, the system (capitalism) has created neurosis, and become the major influence on man, causing his psychological collapse.

Capitalism is based on the production and superiority of material values which destroy the humane values to make people the "slaves" of the system. The ruling bourgeois class holds the hegemony by imposing on society its own ideology, and discriminates people by classing them as the owners of the means of production, and as the ones working for those owners. The working class serves to the production need of the system, and the bourgeoisie consumes what has been produced by the working classes. Exploiting the power of the working class and also assimilating the same class for material ends, bourgeoisie makes the system work. Hence, in a capitalist society, humane values such as justice and equality are no longer the pillars unifying the individuals. Instead, there appears the distinction between the haves and have nots, and the have nots are usually the ones living with shattered psychologies.

After the destruction the war caused, for the individual of the West, the capitalist system multiplied the difficulty of living, for "life [had] definitely changed and [would] probably never be the same anymore [in the post war era]" (Nader and

Dubrow, et al. 1999, p. 202). Man's gradual loss of his own social identity came to be denied by the system, and "the vast majority of individuals, who make up the ranks of wage-earners, [have come to be] denied their humanity . . . [leading them] to alienation" (Bowles, 2007, p. 70) including the alienation from the concept of reality, and from himself. The psychological and social disorders of the post war period have thus created despair in the "modern" individuals who, as "victims of alienation. . . [have come to see] themselves only as commodities . . . [suffering] grievously, both physically and psychologically" (Berger, 1995, p.50).

Beckett in *Waiting for Godot* describes this forlorn situation of the modern individual through his characters' disrupted psychologies, which are the results of the socio-economic collapse of the post-war era. Beckett presents in the work the "images of entropy in which the world and the people in it are slowly but inexorably running down" (Worton in Pilling, 1994, p.69). He draws a pessimistic picture of the world where people cannot live as they used to. It is a world devoid of meaning, and the characters' awkward condition is a metaphor for the situation of humanity in general.

What Beckett shows is not only the miserable condition of man, but also the impossibility of coping with such an oddity. Hence,

Waiting for Godot [draws the audience's attention] to the fullest statement of the problem that has bedeviled Beckett, as it bedevils nearly everyone else: how do you get through life? His answer is simple and not encouraging: by force of habit, by going on desperate boredom and pain, by talking, by not listening to the silence, absurdly and without hope (Alvarez, 1973, pp. 86-87).

Beckett's characters' returning always to the same place, the country road, and their waiting are the habits which give birth to suffering, boredom, and despair. In time, their habits make their existence more and more meaningless: waiting and returning to the same place gives them pain more than aim, and it brings hopelessness instead of hope. Vladimir, Estragon, Pozzo, and Lucky are not able to deal with the world they live in because their attempts usually fail, and "failure is the inevitable outcome" for them (Worton in Pilling, 1994, p. 73), creating frustration, and a desire to escape from a world dominated by the idea of usefulness. Living as tramps, without houses, jobs, or families, the characters reject the system. Yet, rejection does not mean a rational stance against the system. Since they do not belong to such a world, their attempts are vain for they have already been stuck on a road where they "spend their lives".

In the first act, Estragon and Vladimir want to do something to pass time. Their solution to their waiting and boredom is *to hang* themselves:

VLADIMIR: . . . What do we do now?

ESTRAGON: Wait.

VLADIMIR: Yes, but while waiting.

ESTRAGON: What about hanging ourselves? (Beckett, 2010, p. 13)

Hence, *waiting* is the major problem in their lives, and they want to give an end to this torture by committing suicide. Yet, they cannot be successful in hanging themselves. When they mention suicide, they do not dare, and they decide to not “. . . to do anything . . . [because] it’s safer” (p.14). At the end of the play, they again talk about hanging themselves, but they do not have a rope, and the cord they find breaks. They postpone the suicide until “tomorrow” when “. . . [they] can bring a good bit of rope” so that “[they would] hang [themselves] tomorrow” (p. 91). As tomorrow will never come for the characters, they will not be able to kill themselves, and will go on living their miserable lives. Although “suicide remains their favourite solution, [it is] unattainable owing to their own incompetence” (Esslin, 1968, p. 56), and it is this incapability and powerlessness that constitute the dejected, the gloomy atmosphere in the play. Passivity and ineffectiveness gradually give way to a sort of claustrophobia; although they try to get out of the monotony, they are almost always entrapped by the very monotony.

In Pozzo and Lucky’s relationship, the owner-slave bond is symbolic in terms of suggesting how capitalism works, and how the system produces only meaninglessness. Creating individuals whose lives consist of habit and habitual interdependence, Beckett’s world is a replica of the world in fifties. As no change takes place in the lives of the characters, they can neither find an end, nor a way to continue to their lives. Since “the routine of *Waiting for Godot* stands for habit” (Echlin, 1968, p. 58), Beckett implies that habit prevents individuals from moving on, and “habit is a great deadener” (Beckett, 2010, p. 87).

In the play, waiting does not come to an end; neither with death nor with salvation. Hence, the characters must go on waiting for what will never come. Presenting a pessimistic picture, Beckett implies that the situation the characters are in will gradually deteriorate. That is why, the “. . . two acts [are] enough to suggest that Vladimir and Estragon, Pozzo and Lucky and the Boy, will go on meeting in increasingly reduced physical and mental circumstances” (Worton in Pilling, 1994,

p. 70). Their present situation is the foreshadowing for a worse life in and through the future. Beckett shows that there is not much hope for a better world for humanity. His self-deceptive, hopeless characters symbolize the individual of both the present and the future who have already fallen victim to the economic system and who, therefore, lack both intellectual capacity and psychological health.

The characters' not having a clear sense of time is indicative of their isolation from an organized world. Though developed as opposing characters to the clock-work system of capitalism, Vladimir, Estragon, Lucky, and Pozzo are the ones most affected by the system itself for they have lost the concept of chronology in a world where sequence of events and time are highly significant. Their denial of the past and their attachment to the future occupy the present time, and the characters are hardly aware of the passing of time. Only "the sun sets, the moon rises" (Beckett, 2010, p. 89). They cannot remember the place and the day.

Estragon and Vladimir try to find out the notion of the time and place to make the world meaningful for themselves:

ESTRAGON: We came here yesterday.
VLADIMIR: Ah no, there you're mistaken.
ESTRAGON: What did we do yesterday? . . . In my opinion, we were here.
VLADIMIR: [*Looking around.*] You recognize the place? (p. 11)

Vladimir does not remember whether they were there the day before. It can be deduced from their speech that they are not certain where they were yesterday. In the play, there is also a sign of timelessness mentioned as *stop of time* reflected through the dialogue between Vladimir and Pozzo:

POZZO: . . . [*He consults his watch.*] But I must really be getting along, if I am to observe my schedule.
VLADIMIR: Time has stopped.
POZZO: [*Cuddling his watch to his ear.*] Don't you believe it, sir, don't you believe it. [*He puts his watch back in his pocket.*] (p. 33)

Here, Pozzo cannot check the time with his watch which has already stopped. Stopping of his watch is rather symbolic referring to the stopping of time mentioned through Vladimir's words. Pozzo, Lucky, Estragon, and Vladimir are all lost in timelessness. They are there, on a country road, just "to wait, endlessly, and to be afraid of the watch stopping when the watch has already stopped" (Elam in Jeffers,

1998, p. 35). For them time seems to have stopped and they are stuck in a timeless paradigm.

Loss of time is related to the characters' other mutual shortcoming: Loss of memory. This loss is a way for the characters to get rid of their traumatic memories, and the tragic effects of living in the post war capitalist world. Therefore, by forgetting, Beckett's characters find a way to flee from the agony of the painful past events.

They do not only have a problem about remembering the time. At the same time, they cannot remember each other. In the second act, Pozzo does not remember meeting Estragon and Vladimir *yesterday*. He does not recognize them:

VLADIMIR: And you are Pozzo?

POZZO: Certainly I am Pozzo.

VLADIMIR: The same as yesterday?

POZZO: Yesterday?

...

POZZO: I don't remember having met anyone yesterday. But tomorrow I won't remember having met anyone today. (Beckett, 2010, p. 85)

Pozzo has forgotten that he has met them the day before. He also does not remember when he turned blind, and when the others ask how it happened, he just says that "[he doesn't] know. (p. 83). He also adds that he will not remember anything tomorrow. Pozzo does not also remember that he was bringing Lucky to the fair to sell him. Vladimir tries to remind him this, but Pozzo just wants him to "let [him] go" (p. 85). He avoids listening to him. Estragon suffers from the same loss of memory problem. He even forgets that they tried to hang themselves. Vladimir tries to remind him this by showing the tree:

VLADIMIR: . . . Do you not remember? We nearly hanged ourselves from it. But you wouldn't. Do you not remember?

ESTRAGON: You dreamt it.

VLADIMIR: Is it possible that you've forgotten already?

ESTRAGON: That's the way I am. Either I forget immediately or I never forget. (p. 56)

Estragon cannot remember anything, even his attempt to commit suicide. He cannot remember Pozzo and Lucky, and it is Vladimir who, again, makes him remember. He confuses the names, the places, and the people. Estragon does not remember visiting Mackon country, but Cackon country, saying that "[he] was never in the

Macon country” (p. 57), and insists on not being in Macon country despite Vladimir’s effort to correct him. Moreover, in the second act, Estragon does not remember what happened to his boots when Vladimir asks about them. He says he does not know, and “[he doesn’t] know why . . . [he doesn’t] know” (p. 63).

The reason for the characters’ forgetfulness and loss of memory can be linked to the traumatic experiences they lived in the past since “. . . extreme traumatization occurs when the elimination of some members of society by others is aimed at the destruction of the individual, his sense of belonging to the society, and his social activities” (Becker in Nader and Dubrow, et al. 1999, p. 202). Beckett’s characters are allegorical figures representing the post-war individuals who have been defeated by the war and the capitalist system, and exposed to lose their identities. Therefore, Beckett demonstrates the emergence of a new individual shaped by the new socio-economic system which has naturally affected his psychology.

Beckett, through his characters’ memory defects and absurd behaviors, underlines that being unaware of time, place, and the people also refers to forgetting the agony and pain of the war in the modern society. The characters do not *remember* the past because “the most important, often painful, events of the past that are repressed and buried, usually with neurotic consequences” (Birkett, 1987, p. 41) cause the loss of memory. The loss here is used symbolically to suggest why the characters cannot live in the present time. Their numbness, the result of the loss of memory, is both the natural consequence of their loss of memory, and a defense to protect themselves from the past and the present.

Forgetting the past pains and inhibiting their fears related to the present world are the symptoms of *repression* which is defined as a kind of defense mechanism in psychology. Freud describes it as “the process of preventing unacceptable thoughts, feelings or urges from reaching conscious awareness” (Freud in Buss and Larsen, 2010, p. 280). Beckett’s characters’ unawareness and forgetfulness constitute their defense mechanism for they try to get rid of their fears and traumas of the past. Here, repression occurs “for the purpose of avoiding the unbearable psychological pain” (Erdelyi, 1985, p. 220), and by repression, they find a way to reject the trauma of the war and its economic and social consequences.

The characters in *Waiting for Godot* stand for the post war individual whose psychology has been ruined by the destruction the Second World War brought about. Being exposed to suffering from sordid social and economic conditions, the

individual has naturally come to lack mental health. In the post-war Europe, “living circumstances . . . [were] hard . . . , so difficulties with coping with war experiences [led to a breakdown in the individual psychology] (Nader and Dubrow, et al. 1999, p.202). The result of the war trauma created a new individual, a *mass man* formed by the economic and psychological disruptions of the war. A new type of person marked by characterlessness when compared to the individual of the past paradigm, such an individual is the outcome of the Second World War and its depression, and the neo-capitalist social order.

Finally, Beckett in *Waiting for Godot* suggests that the majority of people in the future will consist of one type, a mentally destroyed mass-man, who will form, with his/her psychological defects, the future world. This individual will contribute more to the already existing capitalist order. A vicious circle will finally be created: As the absurd individual will always be mute and absurd, questioning nothing, capitalist system will gain more and more power to crush more the same individual. Hence, absurdity forever.

CONCLUSION

The Theater of the Absurd, differing from earlier conventional literary genres, emerged in the second half of the Twentieth Century. This theater portrays the new individual and his moral, spiritual, and intellectual lacunae due to the after-effects of the Second World War. With no plot or story to tell, and with characters showing no personality traits, what has been expressed in these works is the meaninglessness of existence which constitutes the main theme of the works of the Absurd Theater. Having been influenced by the devastating effects of the war which shattered the existing "meaningful" paradigm, and which paved the way to a totally different, hopeless paradigm, the absurdist writer Samuel Beckett demonstrates in his work the forlorn situation, the psychological deformation of the post-war individual who passed through the economic, social, and psychological crises, and who has come to encounter a new world where capitalism in its new form is the sole option, the single denominator for mankind.

Waiting for Godot is one of the pioneering absurd plays displaying the hopeless state of the individual in the post-war world. From beginning to the end, Beckett addresses the issues of moral, intellectual and philosophical decay in relation to the loss of values and creeds. Suggesting in the work the decreasing belief in God, and the increase in human misery together with lack of communication, he puts emphasis on the meaninglessness of such an existence, if this can be called existence, at all. He suggests that in the new paradigm, man, having already lost his human and humane faculties, has turned into a being without character and identity. Beckett also demonstrates that the modern individual is to live an aimless life, for this new individual, lacking reason and emotion, does not attempt to change his life. He just waits for a divine intervention to change everything. Since what belonged to the individual before the war (including thinking and the ability of questioning) has been swept away by the war, the new order is a total disaster for the individual, and for the writers of the age like Beckett and the absurdist following him.

For Beckett economic, social and psychological impacts of the war affected all individuals in all ways. After the war, a new capitalist system emerged and

developed new methods to enslave the individual both physically and spiritually. Suggesting that there will be no third group other than the oppressing bourgeoisie and the oppressed working class, and sometimes their roles changing, there is no way out for man. No matter who is in power, the values of the class in power will create the paradigm. Numb and dumb, the new individual will always be subject to the rules of the materialist society.

Beckett's characters in the play are the discarded figures by the system. In fact, Vladimir, Estragon, Lucky, and Pozzo are all victims. They are the isolated individuals who can neither understand the world they live in, nor themselves. Self-centered and traumatized, they are anyone and everyone. As symbolic representations of the modern individuals who have lost their "meaningful" existences, the characters are all waiting for something to happen, something to change or restore their lives.

Beckett's picture of humanity suggests decadence, and he has his reason to suggest such depravity of the individual. As the work demonstrates the post-war conditions, Beckett pays attention to the distortion of individual psychologies. Through his downtrodden characters, he illustrates how tragic it is for the individual to live in a world without meaning. His characters' unawareness of their absurd situation is also ironic, indicating the impossibility of a meaningful existence, construction of an identity, and the existence of a reconciled psychology. Beckett's characters stand for the people who still suffer from the war trauma, so they are the representative figures for the neuroses war has caused. When analyzed through the scope of modern psychology, Vladimir, Estragon, Lucky, and Pozzo demonstrate signs of "Dependent Personality Disorder" and "Conversion Disorder". As the sufferers of "Dependent Personality Disorder", the couples--Vladimir and Estragon – Pozzo and Lucky-- sustain *dependent* relationships. They cling to each other and are unwilling to separate. They feel anxious, worried, and insecure when alone. They cannot act without the existence of the other. Estragon - Vladimir and Pozzo - Lucky's interdependence refers to their inability to abandon the other, and to exist with the help of the other. Through the four characters, Beckett reveals that the individual of the era is to live as dependent on someone or something, lacking courage and identity. This dependence, as an illness, demonstrates the psychological malaise war created. From Beckett's viewpoint, war and the subsequent social system have caused the emergence of passive and immobilized people who have lost their ability to act, think, and question.

One of Beckett's pairs, Pozzo and Lucky, can be taken as suffering from "Conversion Disorder", which is the physical impairment that stems from a traumatic experience. Pozzo's sudden blindness and Lucky's dumbness are the signs that these two characters, as the forlorn survivors of the war demonstrate "Conversion Disorder"'s symptoms. Their loss of physical health also verifies that they are devoid of mental health. Through the characters' sudden paralysis, Beckett again displays the physical breakdown related to the psychological traumas. He shows that the individuals of the post war era are no different from the dead; their existence in the world is meaningless.

Beckett's characters' disrupted psychologies emerge as the consequence of the social and economic chaos of the Second World War. His characters are the losers, sufferers, and victims defeated by the war. They are the representatives of post-war individual who has submerged into despair when there is no aim to live. According to Beckett, the miserable situation of the individual is related to a kind of tragedy in terms of *existing* in the new world. In *Waiting for Godot* Beckett suggests that the world the contemporary individual has to inhabit lacks meaning and purpose. In such an atmosphere, it is absurd to have a single hope to reach a better future since the society consists of deformed and therefore absurd individuals. He draws a three dimensional picture of the individual and his society. Through Beckett's point of view, the audience gets the idea that the economic, social and psychological impacts of the war are inseparable factors from one another, and they are the reasons of the post-war western man's spiritual and mental collapse, and the collapse of his civilization. Therefore, *Waiting for Godot* can be considered a work expressing the idea that the societies of the future will be shaped by the new capitalist system with absurd individuals, and with a "civilization" in which there will hardly be any moral and intellectual pillars.

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APPENDIX

CURRICULUM VITAE

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Surname, Name: Kabasakal, Sedef
Nationality: Turkish (TC)
Date and Place of Birth: 13 April 1980, Bornova
Marital Status: Single
Phone: +90 232 712 60 34
E-mail: sedef.kabasakal@yasar.edu.tr;
sedefkabasakal@hotmail.com

EDUCATION

Degree	Institution	Year of Graduation
MA	Çankaya University, English Literature and Cultural Studies	2013
BA	Çankaya University, English Language and Literature	2001
High School	İzmir Kız Lisesi	1997

WORK EXPERINCE

Year	Place	Enrollment
2004 - Present	Yaşar University School of Foreign Languages	Instructor
2001-2004	Çankaya University Preparatory School	Instructor

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English (Advanced), German (fair).