

CHAPTER-I

WAITING FOR GODOT

Waiting for Godot, (1948) was first performed in 1952, and made Samuel Beckett a cult-figure. It was a novel phenomenon. It had no story, plot, nor even characters as such. However, it showed Beckett's innate sense of the dramatic, which he effectively demonstrated in an alert ear, and quick pen. He creatively exploited the dramaturgy inherent in the corporeal¹ human presence 'there',² on stage, as an irrational existential condition. And, ofcourse, of the drama inherent in the constitution of language itself, the Beckettian oeuvre established him, a classic³ and master. His drama therefore, is more presentational than representational,⁴ and characteristic for its immediacy.⁵

Beckett is primarily concerned with presenting his own dark and bleak vision of life. But then, Impotence or Failure,⁶ or, a Non-ent⁷ can well be themes, however, it needs both commitment and artistic integrity to make art out of these profoundly intense existential experiences. Further, the collapse of language is always debatable, and the art required to show a language disintegrate needs imagination and creativity.⁸ The playwright's added interest was in the shape of thought,⁹ so that content and form were for him, two inseperables, making his oeuvre, be not about something, but that something itself.¹⁰

To begin with, then, let us not just locate commedia dell'arte, vaudeville, circus or music-hall conventions in *Waiting for Godot*; for these could hardly be the dramatist's single interests. Let us look instead for those salient features in this play's dramaturgy, as also in the four others in this study, that help shape his theme, and, in

reciprocation are shaped by it. Thus, an almost empty stage strikes first, and how, space and time in it, are effectively manipulated. There is only a tree, a country-road and a mound. On the mound sits a tramp struggling hard with his boots, and it appears quite an exercise. This is apparently commonplace and hardly extraordinary, but becomes unusually significant with the tramp's announcement that 'nothing was to be done'. That tangible stage-image sets the tone to the existential impasse of a futile Waiting. The spectators had already sub-consciously carried it over into the audience-hall from the play's announcement of it on the bill-boards. Dramaturgical strategy gives to Waiting, such immediacy, that it becomes phenomenal, and indeed, absolutely un-redeemable. The Wait is for a certain Godot. It lasts for the full length of the two Acts, or, the three stage-hours, for which the play performs, but Godot does not at all arrive. Drama makes Godot an absent-presence. Just what technique helps drama to take the shape of the Beckettian theme is the purpose of these textual analyses of the five plays considered in this study.

Estragon is at first the lone tramp struggling with his boots and regretting that there was nothing to be done. But he is joined by Vladimir, a second tramp who soon after enters and the two-some start the long ordeal of the futile Wait for an absent Godot. The context of such an existential bind is built up, through banal-talk and potent stage-images till, by the time the play ends in its oft characterized circularity, the spectator has had an intense experience of the trap of a purposeless Waiting, for an absent Godot who only promises but never arrives.

Trite and stale torso-movements on-stage, are deliberately calculated stylized movements and lend their own theatre to the drama of the existential trap-situation.

Thought is also dramatized as idle because Descartean pineal glands being non-existent, the Body and Mind are disjunct phenomenon, and cannot function together.¹¹ Therefore, Beckettian Man, as in this play, could just be a Validmirean mannequin, or, a Cartesian Centaur.¹² Moreover, thought being fruitless, jaded and common place corporeal actions were the most that a krapp-existence could contrive. Infact, both work-a-day torso-activity, and logocentricity help Beckettian dramaturgy situate, on stage what Grillet considers an intense presence-on-stage.¹³ It is human beings, just 'there' on the stage of the Universe itself. Later, we shall examine what Kalb has to say about this human presence 'there' and also sheer human corporeality as an existential predicament.

What the dramatist handles very effectively is the tension inherent in a language dynamic, so that even a spiritless conversation, if put through a rhythm, beat, silence or pause, can work dramatic wonders, making a metaphor redundant. In any case, metaphors implied metaphysical systems, and these for Beckett were anathema. The guilt of the human being was not only, that he was at all born, and lived, but also that he presumed even to have thought. Therefore, *Waiting for Godot* creatively exploits the drama innate to language. Thus if a repetition may emphasize meaning, and be the basis of a sacred ritual, the same repetition could also demolish a meaningful word, and make it a bare articulation that hardly meant anything. It is like Othello's:

Is he not honest?

Iago : Honest, My Lord?

Othello: Honest? ay, honest. (Act III, Sc III, p.98)

Or---

Othello: What dost thou think?

Iago : Think, my Lord?

Othello: Think, My Lord? By heaven he echoes me.
(Act III, Sc III, p. 98)

As an example from *Waiting for Godot* we can take the many repetitions of the word 'happy', and notice how a ritual can also be terribly devastating---

Vladimir: You must be happy, too, deep down, if you only knew it.

Estragon : Happy about What?

Vladimir : To be back with me again.

Estragon : Would you say so?

Vladimir : Say you 're even if it's not true.

Estragon : What am I to say?

Vladimir : Say, I am happy.

Estragon : I am happy.

Vladimir : So am I.

Estragon : So am I.

Vladimir : We are happy.

Estragon : We are happy. (Silence.) (Act II, p. 60)

The rhythm generated does not stop there. For one or two more beats, or a few more words can link the now meaningless word 'happy' to 'waiting', and make each articulation, take on the other's ineffectual colour. And therefore, after the Silence, Estragon continues:

: What do we do now, now that we are happy?

Vladimir: Wait for Godot. (Act II, p. 60)

Next is an example of a generated word rhythm, that destroys the meaning content of a Vision, as at other places, the solace of a Dream, a Story, or, even Nature:

Vladimir: You must have had a vision.

Estragon: (Turning his head). What?

Vladimir: (louder) you must have had a vision!

✓ Estragon: No need to shout! (Silence.) (Act II, p.75)

Language has a potential in its repetitions, beats and rhythms, as also when there is a Pause or Silence after speech. But first the rhythms, beats and repetitions---

Estragon: You gave me a fright.

Vladimir: I thought it was he.

Estragon: Who?

Vladimir: Godot

Estragon: Pah! The wind in the reeds. (Act I, p.19)

Or---

Vladimir: Before you go tell him to sing.

Pozzo : Who?

Vladimir: Lucky.

Pozzo : To sing?

Vladimir: Yes, or to think. Or to recite

Pozzo : But he's dumb.

Vladimir: Dumb!

Pozzo : Dumb. He can't even groan.

Vladimir: Dumb! Since when? (Act, II p. 89)

In these two examples, the 'Who?/Godot/Pah', and, 'dumb/Dumb, Dumb.../Dumb...' are the obvious rhythms. However, 'I thought it was he', began the movement which is actually rounded off in 'the wind in the reeds'. Similarly, 'He can't even groan' gives respite after the four 'dumbs', and the last 'dumb' is again rounded off by the beat, 'since when'. We shall consider the drama of Pauses and Silences as the analysis of the dramatic technique proceeds. There are in all about 113 Silences, of which 50 are in the first Act, and the rest in the second. This also includes the play's 6 Long Silences, that are 2, in Act I, and 4, in Act II. Indeed
 v Pauses, Silences, and even Long Silences, form as essential a part of the language dynamic, as do its articulated sounds in this Beckett play.

Therefore, what have been called 'language-games' are in fact a consciously worked out drama of the essentially scintillating medium called 'language'. Two more characteristics of the tension inherent in the playwright's language are, first the 'finale' with which each game, exercise, rhythm, or, set concludes: and, the second is the use, of what may be called, a 'pungent interrogative'. Given below are some language 'finales' from *Waiting for Godot*. As quoted earlier, 'No need to shout', concluded the theatric exchange on Vision. Similarly, 'Nor I' terminates the rhythm in the following language set. It begins after a Long Silence---

Estragon: Do you see anything coming?

Vladimir: (turning his head) What?

Estragon: (Louder) Do you see anything coming?

Vladimir: No

Estragon: Nor I. (Act II, p. 74-75)

In the same fashion, 'Ah', completes the following piece, but where else could it both thematically and dramaturgically end! This rhythm also starts after a Silence---

Estragon: Let's pass on now to something else, do you mind?

Vladimir: I was just going to suggest it.

Estragon: But to what?

Vladimir: Ah! (Act II, p.84)

The 'pungent interrogative' is taken to mean the use of the question-word, particularly 'What?', to deliberately dent whatever has been spoken immediately before, and shrivel it of most of its meaning. Thus---

Estragon: (despairingly) Ah! (Pause). You're sure it was here?

Vladimir: What (Act I, p.14)

Or---

Estragon: You're sure it was this evening

Vladimir: What? (Act I, p.15)

Or---

Vladimir: ...(Pause) Two thieves, crucified at the same time as our Saviour. One---

Estragon: Our What? (Act I, p.12).

Or---

Vladimir: One out of four. of the other three two don't mention any thieves at all and the third says that both of them abused him.

Estragon: Who?

Vladimir: What?

Estragon: What's all this about? Abused who? (Act I,
p.13)

Ofcourse, the 'pungent interrogatives' donot all begin with question-word questions, and of these also, there are many examples.

All this does not deny that language can be used to create confusion and uncertainty, which becomes worse confounded, if an overlap of sound, or meaning occurs---

Pozzo : Help!

✓ Vladimir: Time flows again already. The sun will set,
the moon will rise, and we away... from
here.

Pozzo : Pity!

Vladimir: Poor Pozzo!

Estragon: I knew it was him.

Vladimir: Who?

Estragon: Godot

Vladimir: But it's not Godot.

Estragon: It's not Godot!

Vladimir: It's not Godot!

Estragon: Then who is it?

Vladimir: It's Pozzo. (Act II, pp.77-78)

The confusion between Godot and Pozzo creates semantic ripples which the playwright exploits thematically to great advantage, for, as always in Beckett, the theme shapes the drama which in turn gives shape to his theme.¹⁴

One last example, to finally illustrate, how language dynamic, or, 'ontology', in its very nature and grain, supports the playwright's technique. Language, as language, written or spoken, is movement. It is full of potential drama, what with its pauses and silences. This is more so when language is 'spoken', for then voice-articulation becomes part of the exercise, and all words cannot be spoken at once. Moreover, voice has its tonality and therefore, an articulated word is itself potential drama. Consequently, figures of speech are not all necessary for this drama.

The tonality and rhythm of the 'spoken words' themselves communicate whatever is said. Again, silence is also a part of speech, for speech is more noticed when it is either well regulated, or, when it is preceded or followed by silence. A prolonged silence, or, a sudden stop, when there was the possibility of word-articulation, creates a greater potential for drama, and colours both the silence and the speech, that went before or after, with various overtone. Beckett excels in the ability to use both voiced articulation and silence, to create ambiguity, confusion and uncertainty. He was committed to this state of irrationality, and artistically manipulated the dramaturgy of the language medium to suggest how he felt, not about a particular character, but about the trapped nature of human existence, and its Non-ent predilection.

But now the example referred to in the preceding paragraph: in this example, the points to be noticed are the unspoken implications and how the language dynamic or tension helps generate these ambiguities---

Estragon: (despairingly) Ah! (Pause.) You're sure it was here?

Vladimir: What? (Act I, p.14)

That takes care of the security and sanctity of the concept of 'place', in the sense that a certain state of confusion is created about it. Let us begin again----

Estragon: (despairingly) Ah! (Pause.) You're sure it was here?

Vladimir: What?

Estragon: That we were to wait.

Vladimir: He said by the tree. (They look at the tree.) Do you see any others?

Estragon: What is it?

Vladimir: I don't know. A willow.

Estragon: Where are the leaves?

Vladimir: It must be dead.

Estragon: No more weeping.

Vladimir: Or perhaps it's not the season.

Estragon: Looks to me like a bush.

Vladimir: A shrub.

Estragon: A bush.

Vladimir: A---. What are you insinuating? That we've come to the wrong place? (Act I, p.14)

This quoted piece first berefts the 'object' of its identity. Now, the 'word' for an 'object', is no more than an articulated sound, with which ideas get associated. The reality 'there' has nothing to do with such empty articulations and irrational associations. By the time Vladimir reaches 'come to the wrong place' we realize that the earlier ambiguity created about 'place' is

dramaturgically driven home. But the quotation should be allowed to continue---

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.

Vladimir: You're merciless. (Act I, p.14)

It must be noted that this time the five 'he' repetitions, make the pronoun 'he', acquire material significance. They donot destroy its meaning as yet, because beat and rhythm, as well as ritual, can both be creative and destructive phenomenon.

To return to the quotation let us treat the whole quotation as one piece, that is, starting from 'Estragon: (despairingly) 'Ah'! ---to Vladimir 'You're merciless'. Is this just cross-talk; a hackneyed common-place piece? Or, is it a carefully manipulated ambiguity-creating exercise based on characteristics innate to the language phenomenon itself; the drama that is, of spoken articulation. Or, is it the ability to put an innocuous word or expression, just at the right place, to cleanse the previous voiced-sounds of their meaning-content! Ofcourse, there is always the advantage of a created context in the background which helps the innocuous acquire its sting. Therefore, this quotation has examples of

the least hurting speech 'And so on', 'Until he comes' or, 'And then the day after tomorrow'. However, just consider what they do to the words, which immediately precede them. Thus, 'And then the day after tomorrow' erases the meaning out of Vladimir's, 'We'll come back tomorrow', making the next day's Waiting also, a part of a time-old exercise, with Godot never caring ever to arrive. Similarly, 'And so on' stings the meaning out of 'Possibly', injecting the content of a 'Perpetually' in it, and also a 'Futilely'. Again the remaining example, 'Until he comes' devastates whatever point Vladimir has, and colours the expression, 'The point is ---', with the implication that since Godot has, till date, failed to arrive, he will not do so in the future also. Just three language jabs, apparently harmless, but appropriately placed, timed, and directed, knock the bottom off even the most well-intentioned meaning-content. Such is Beckettian dramaturgy, which has its pulse on the language-drama itself, and need not have recourse to figures of speech, to help make it a 'language of power'. That the effort suited the dramatist's theme also, was an added factor, given Artuadian doubts about language. The language is only apparently trite and stale. However, the creative manipulation of its essential dramatic nature, makes it profound and even an over-whelming experience. These, then, are some of the prominent features of Beckett's dramatic technique in *Waiting for Godot*.

To return to the play's outline, even as the two tramps Vladimir and Estragon wait, another two-some arrive. They are Pozzo and Lucky, a master and his servant. Their arrival is like some kind of dramatic relief to the tramps but it also serves to intensify and deepen the play's content. Then, Pozzo and Lucky after their extended presence on stage, leave the two tramps to their Waiting, and soon after, a Boy who is Godot's messenger, comes to inform that Godot will not come that day. The day ends. Night falls. The tramps want to

leave, they tell each other so, but donot move. That concludes the first Act. Act II begins with a lot of feverish activity made up of movement to-and-fro on stage and gazings into distances with eyes screened, as if somebody was expected. Godot had obviously, not yet arrived. A dog-song is also sung with the refrain 'And dug the dog a tomb'. Soon after, there is a repeat of the language refrain, spoken six times in the play, each time initiated by a different tramp, that is, either by Vladimir or Estragon---

Let's go./We can't./Why not?/Wer'e waiting for Godot./Ah!

And so, the two tramps have to continue their idle Wait, while Godot remains a perpetual absent presence. Act II has its similarities with Act-I, though the efforts of Vladimir and Estragon to pass time by desperately trying to bring in change and variety, paradoxically adds to intensify the boredom. They play language-games to ward off an eerie Silence. However, Godot still fails to arrive. Pozzo and Lucky enter a second time, the former blind, the latter deaf, and fall in a heap with Pozzo repeatedly calling for help, Soon after they leave again and the Wait continues. Estragon has dozed off, when the Boy of Act II comes to announce that Godot had sent word that he would not come that day also. Vladimir makes a hopeless lunge at the Boy who runs away and leaves the stage. When Estragon awakens, the two tramps can only talk of suicide. However, they cannot even hang themselves because they donot have a rope. Now it is night once more, and the moon casts a pale light. The tramps decide to leave, to come again the next day. They say so and yet again donot move; and, the curtain falls.

This is the play. This analysis will study how the playwright's strategies supply the empty Non-ent of a Waiting

as a concrete theatricalization to the stage, keeping in mind the fact that Beckett was profoundly impressed by the shape that thought takes. In fact, it was this deep interest in the shape of thought which made his form and content overlap and become one. However, let us begin with the conclusions of Jonathan Kalb who for his book *Beckett in Performance*, had viewed 70 or more Beckett performances and had even had interviews with the author. Kalb also includes conversations with some famous Beckett actors and actresses in his book. He concludes that Beckett plays, more particularly the later pieces, are text centred; that avant-gardists had best 'cease chasing Artaudian Windmills' and also 'cease fearing the bug-bear of logo-centricity, for one of their guiding spirits actually turns out to be a classic author'.¹⁵ Kalb insists that the avant-garde, due to its distrust of all forms of established language, has often run into 'the cul-de-sac of unspecificity and vagueness'. The critic describes *Ohio* *Promptu* and *Rockaby*, two later plays, as 'language structures of unprecedented beauty'. He observes that Beckett returned to language, though he understood 'the limitations of language articulated by Artaud and comprehensively projected by Hamlet (Words, words, words)'. Kalb also refers to a coincidence when he chanced upon seeing two Robert Wilson Productions, both within a week of each other. One was that of Müller's *Hamlet machine* and the other was of Wilson's own *Death, Destruction and Detroit II*. The latter was textless and became 'an unbearable four and a half-hour barrage of technical marvels', which 'embellished series of trite and over-embellished tableaux'. In contrast, he found Wilson's production of Müller's play, 'a simple, elegant, unforgettable correlative to certain discernible meanings'.¹⁶ Finally, Beckettian plays particularly the later ones, were found to contain the 'spectacle of actor in extremes', because according to Kalb, the playwright's theme is an existence 'there' on-stage, as a meaningless and futile

presence. Therefore, the physical predicament is the human figure's complete existential condition, and, speech, 'from these bodily conditions' is 'a vocalized aspect of them'. Under these circumstances, a Beckett actor or actress has 'to refine his or her physical comportment', in order 'to generate a corresponding mental state in him or her', and, offer 'a spectacle' as in *Biomechanics*¹⁷. Corporeality then, as existence on an empty stage, with accentuated physical posturings, attitudes, and movements, all as part of a 'presentational' dramatic exercise, and not a representational one only, with its text-centered theatre, was at the hub of Beckettian dramaturgy.¹⁸

To recount then, a near vacant stage, a hapless human presence, and body kinaesthetics; and, logo-centricity, in fact, the inherent tension within language itself bereft of all figures of speech, and, only as repetition, beat, rhythm or game complete with often a 'finale', or incomplete, as non sequitur; and, the pungent interrogative, Pauses and Silences; and, drama, as presentational more than representational, are some characteristic features of the dramatist's technique and shall be kept in mind, while analysing the dramaturgy of *Waiting for Godot*. These singular dramaturgic traits appear for the moment to be the playwright's primary interests, and if convention went in tow, it was the better for the convention! This is because, what Beckett was primarily committed to was to supply the stage with the Non-ent seen and heard as both human corporeality and language tension with their routine and work-a-day beat and rhythm, repetition and ritual, omission, and commission, and also their pauses and silences. This is because Beckettian dramaturgy had its own thematic and dramaturgic commitments, and for this the drama intrinsic to human corporeality and inherent in a language dynamic proved handy and effective instruments.

Let us see then how *Waiting for Godot* accentuates the existential predicament as a presence, 'there' and, makes it a part of the on-stage instituted circumstance of Waiting. As it has already been pointed out, Waiting and Godot, are two pronouncements that the spectator carries with him or her, over into the hall picked-up directly from the bill-boards, and the playwright's dramatic technique capitalizes on these announcements substantially. To begin from the beginning itself, Estragon sits on the mound, on an empty stage struggling and panting to remove his boots. There was nothing else to be done but that. Like measuring life out in coffee spoons, existence was reduced to a painful struggle to put on and put off boots. This is the first concrete stage-image of the existential predicament on stage. Then Vladimir enters with short stiff strides, for he has gall-bladder problems. He had heard Estragon speak and adds---

I'm beginning to come round to that opinion. 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. (He broods, musing on the struggle). (Act I, p.9).

Vladimir's 'stiff short strides', and the words he spoke, add a new dimension to the situation. Estragon was not alone in it. Vladimir was also one other, who had tried all life to distance himself from the awareness that life was irrational and only a purposeless predicament and therefore there was 'nothing to be done'. However, very painfully he had realized that he couldnot drive himself away from that awareness anymore. He was in it after a life-long struggle to keep out. And therefore the next telling stage-image is that of a two-some on an empty stage, beside a country road, near an almost leafless tree. Ofcourse they are just two tramps, but the 'All my life' part of Vladimir's words, and of his resumption of a struggle, and, of him trying to keep away by

being reasonable, because he has not 'tried everything', makes the situation, on stage, quite problematic, what with Estragon's 'nothing to be done', and, the spectator, having carried the words 'Waiting' and 'Godot', directly in. Were the two, doing nothing but waiting for somebody? Was it a Godot they waited for? The spectator is yet not sure. There is talk of a beating. Were these two alone? Were some people after them; particularly Estragon! Next, Vladimir imagines a suicide attempt for the two! But what has Man to do with Vladimir's walk up to the Eiffel Tower! What, in any case, was actually involved? Was it a general existential impasse, or, were these two only being overly sensitive! Estragon seems to suffer more. Vladimir still has platitudes to mouth.

- ✓ We should attend to the little things of life too, and Estragon is advised by Vladimir to button up his fly! All the while, visually and corporeally also, Estragon's struggle with the boots dominates the stage. Skeptic though he is, is Vladimir being used as a convenient platitudinizer, in Beckettian dramaturgy, to help contextualize, on stage, the Beckettian theme of a Non-ent, a Nothing Is, an empty void, in which Man exists, meaninglessly and without purpose, an abject, impotent aborted failure? After his own 'never neglect the little things of life', Vladimir muses over the word 'the last moment', which were a part of the complaint Estragon had churlishly thrown at him---

What do you expect, you always wait till the last moment. (Act I, p. 10).

That helps the dramatist introduce his theme --- 'the wait till the last moment', with Vladimir pondering over 'the last moment' part. However, the theme is a quiet introduction yet.

The boot and hat stage-business adds to the grotesquery. Infact, before the comic stage-business commences even a platitudinizer voices the pathetic existential bind---

Vladimir: Sometimes I feel it coming all the same. Then I go all queer. (Act I, p. 10).

The question is whether the tramps were being representational or presentational? They did establish the context of a potent presence on an almost empty stage, near a leafless tree, beside a country-road. But, what in any case, was Vladimir after, peering, feeling, searching inside his hat, shaking and putting it on again? And since he did not find anything inside, it is difficult to fathom why he is both relieved and appalled. He repeats the hat stage-business a second time, this time knocking on its crown also, as though to dislodge a foreign body, giving little or no hint as to what indeed was he after! Soon, he also voices Estragon's theme of 'nothing to be done'. Meanwhile, Estragon manages after effort to pull off his boot, and repeats Vladimir's hat-actions with his boot. He peers and feels inside the boot, and turns it upside down, shakes it, looks on the ground to see if anything has fallen out, feels inside again, and finding nothing, stares sightlessly before him. This is one more striking stage-image of a hapless and hopeless existential condition, for the tramps were being like magicians, trying to extract pigeon-truths from their hats and boots! There was no truth anywhere; at least not in a human being from 'top to toe' that is, from hat to boot, and therefore, Vladimir was immensely relieved as well as appalled. He was relieved because there was no ready recourse to a pigeon-truth; but he was appalled also, for, no truth was forthcoming either! That indeed was getting far too serious with tramp-business, because the boot was next aired, and, Estragon admonished by Vladimir for 'blaming on his

boots the fault of his feet. However, Vladimir couldnot stop himself from repeating his hat-business a third time, when he even blew inside before putting it on again. Then comes the first Silence, and Vladimir is observed in deep thought. The Silence as well as the deep thought posture is dramaturgically deliberate so that the spectator is compelled to take stock. The thought of a pigeon- truth came by way of an innuendo from the hat and boot stage-business. Did the two tramps find themselves bereft of truth? In any case, how had reason let Vladimir down? And this was despite his struggle, and his capacity to wait, and wait till the last moment! The tramps had been laughed at by the spectator; but the thought that they had some serious axe to grind could have discomfited him also. Thought and pigeon-truth were being cor-related and the rationale of human existence itself appeared at stake! The spectator's worst fears could have been confirmed! Vladimir next speaks of thieves and repentance, while Estragon regrets even his birth. But was Vladimir now adrift from a general to some specific truth, in order to help Beckettian dramaturgy test that at its anvil also? And what with Estragon's regret at being born, and also Vladimir's regret, voiced earlier, of there being no early suicides, was it the general human predicament that was being dramatized? Vladimir stifles a hearty laugh and his face gets contorted. He follows it up by a smile, grotesquely a-stretch from ear to ear. The smile is grotesque as well as frightening, and, the on stage 'there', a profound experience. Vladimir says that one dare not laugh any more, and Estragon speaks of a dreadful privation. Meanwhile, the 'nothing to be done' toll had tolled thrice in three pages of the text. Thus Vladimir and Estragon, in presentational fashion, stage the tramp condition of an existential quandary, because truthless and therefore rootless, reason and thought were reaching them nowhere. It was indeed a dreadful privation, where nothing was to be done. A laugh was

out of question and a suicide too late. The wonder of it was that a deft dramaturgical strategy had helped Beckett say it all. Just an empty stage, with a lone tree, a mound, a country-road and to be able to include in his sweep and range not only the grotesque, but also the void of a Cosmos, with the help of only two concrete stage-images of a sheer corporeal presence, and some banal words at the appropriate places, is quite a marvel of technique. Added to this is the repetitive hat and boot stage-business and, a thrice repeated, appropriately spaced one-line refrain of 'nothing to be done', and, one Silence. A further addition is the failure of reason and of struggle, and a potential suicide. There is also the regret at being born. Finally, the on-stage context of confusion and uncertainty, implication and innuendo, help dramaturgy shape the theme. Both theme and its appropriate dramaturgy by now, appear well on their way. The best of the drama inherent in the language dynamic or tension was ofcourse yet to come, but of that later; for the moment how drama debunks Grace and Redemption demands closer attention.

✓ Having tilled the stage alive to life's irrational existential condition, where no general truth was to be come by, though posturings of thought were many, a specific truth is tried at the anvil of drama. It is the truth of Christianity and the Absolutes that hold it together. It all begins very innocuously, the first thing after one of the Silences---

Vladimir: One of the thieves was saved. (Pause) It's a reasonable percentage. (Pause). (Act I, p.11)

This was on the Christian theme of Grace and Redemption. But before that, let us keep in mind the fact that Beckettian performers are reputed to have been left at

the posture of the last spoken word or sentence, during the entire period of an ensuing Silence. Right now, two Pauses punctuate the newly broached subject of Redemption; a strategical Silence has immediately preceded it. The earlier subject of a General Truth was dramaturgically manipulated a pigeon-truth, and innuendoed into an uncertain ambiguity. The meaning-content of Redemption is now brought under the shadow of the same 'pigeon-truth dramaturgy', hedged as it is between a Silence and two Pauses. The question of Redemption is broached slowly, with Pauses in between, for, it is a new area that is being tried. Or, was it because, an age-old religious tradition was under scrutiny, and too quick an Estragon reprisal, had made Vladimir cautious? At its start, the move is quiet and slow, till it picks up spring at 'Gogo', and, the pungent interrogative 'What?' alerts us to the subject introduced. 'One of the thieves was saved (Pause). It's a reasonable percentage. (Pause).' The effort to seek re-assurance compels Vladimir to spill the beans---

Suppose we repent . (Act I, p. 11)

This was like handing something over on a platter for deliberate assault, and Estragon is unsparing. He asks---

Repented what?

Vladimir utters an uncertain 'Oh!' and then reflects. Beckett appears to be marking time and his next step again has Vladimir play the role of the platitudinizer---

We won't have to go into details .

—
This is once again strategy, for Estragon is put in a position to strike back---

Our being born .

—

✓ That takes 'dramaturgical care' of Repentance and Grace, and also provides Beckett the opportunity to castigate even the idea of a human truth.

Not satisfied, the playwright has Vladimir forced into a hearty laugh, in order to make the laugh itself an occasion for having it stifled, and result in a facial contortion to help position on stage one more striking stage-image of the sad existential constriction on earth, seen, 'there' as a corporeal predicament. However, the piece is yet not complete. The movement becomes stuccato, and takes three strikes. First it is verbal---

Vladimir: One aren't even laugh any more.

Estragon: Dreadful privation. (Act I, p. 11).

Next, the opportunity is availed of to shape yet another powerful stage-image. A hearty laugh was prohibited, but a simple smile was not. And Vladimir stands smiling from ear to ear, but the smile disappears as suddenly as it had appeared. It was tragically grotesque all through, and, Vladimir's awareness that a hearty laugh was far different from a grotesque smile adds to the pathos of the existential bind that the tramps found themselves entrapped in. The piece ends with Vladimir's second pronouncement of the Estragon logo, 'nothing to be done'.

Beckettian dramaturgy is now well on its way. The Bible and the Gospels are the next targets; the context positioned on stage, was by now sufficiently profound to make the effort easy. It starts---

Vladimir: Gogo.

Estragon: (Irritably) What is it?

Vladimir: Did you ever read the Bible?

Estragon: The Bible --- (Act I, p. 11-12)

The rhythm of this small exchange is itself enough to put on the Bible a mark of interrogation; and also, on the possibility of it being ever read! Of course the maps of the Holyland were pretty. The picture of the sea had often made Estragon feel thirsty; and in any case, it was an ideal place for a honeymoon. So much for the Gospels. The rest is easy to manipulate creatively---

Vladimir: You should have been a poet.

Estragon: I was....Isn't that obvious. (Act I, p. 12)

The context deepens; drama makes itself discomfiting but profound and complex. It is indeed an existential plight but the spectator may yet not be in it. The sacrilege is set a move once more. The situation is made to worsen because Vladimir appears obsessed with the two thieves crucified along with the Saviour. Once again, strategy makes Beckett compel Vladimir to utter an easy platitude so that Estragon may dent its meaning-content with his sceptical interrogatives---

Vladimir: (Pause). Two thieves, crucified at the same time as our Saviour. One---

Estragon: Our What? (Act I, p. 12)

And later---

Vladimir: One out of four. Of the other three two don't mention any thieves at all and the third says that both of them abused him.

Estragon: Who?

Vladimir: What?

Estragon: What's all this about? Abused Who? (Act I, p.13)

Or, again, the rhythm begins---

Vladimir:Two thieves. One is supposed to have been saved and the other...damned.

Estragon: Saved from what?

Vladimir: Hell.

Estragon: I'm going (Act I, p. 12)

✓ Drama even settles the question of Heaven and Hell, and, its technique is relentless. It now picks to destroy serially. The Evangelists and their veracity are at its anvil. The rhythm sets apace. This time Vladimir is more cautious. He breaks off, pauses, hesitates, apologises and says, 'And yet.... (Pause).... how is it-- this is not boring you I hope'. (Act I, p.12). He puts the ball into Gogo's court. There were four Evangelists but why does only one record that one of the two thieves would be saved? Why don't the other three say anything about it? And, what after all was the principle that did not promise redemption to the other thieves? The veracity of the Evangelists, and, the Logic of Redemption are together put into turmoil by the episode of the thieves. That they were 'there or thereabouts' could not satisfy the question-asking-answer-seeking individual. Why believe only one Evangelist and not the others? Vladimir implores Estragon---

Come on, Gogo, return the ball, Can't you once in a way? (Act I, p.12)

Estragon finds this extraordinarily interesting. Next, the playwright generates a rhythm which at its end leaves everything very uncertain, and ambiguous; it is a confusion galore. The pungent interrogatives. 'Who?', 'What?', 'why', are appropriately spaced, and Beckettian theme gets its

dramaturgic shape. 'One out of four', is the theme and that initiates the rhythm---

Vladimir: One out of four. Of the other three two don't mention any thieves at all and the third says that both of them abused him.

Estragon: Who?

Vladimir: What?

Estragon: What is all this about? Abused Who?

Vladimir: The Saviour.

Estragon : Why?

Vladimir: Because he wouldn't save them.

Estragon: From hell?

Vladimir: Imbecile! From death.

Estragon: I thought you said hell

Vladimir: From death, from death.

Estragon: Well what of it (Act I, p. 13)

The 'Saviour' in 'him' is again put against a context of 'Who? 'What?', and 'Why?', of which 'The Saviour/Why?' is one illustration. What had hell got to do with saving was the innuendo, for, all one could be saved from, was death!

However, the rhythm initiated is yet afloat and Vladimir is made to make the disagreement among the Evangelists an obsession, drama using repetition to score a point---

Vladimir: But one of the four says that one of the two was saved.

Estragon: Well? They don't agree and that's all there is to it.

Vladimir: But all four were there. And only one speaks of a thief being saved. Why believe him rather than the others?

Estragon: Who believes him?

Vladimir: Everybody. It's the only version they know.

Estragon: People are bloody ignorant apes. (Act I, p.13).

Very unobtrusively, the rhythm also introduced a general reference to 'people' as a plant for a reference to the spectators, but of this more will be said later.

It is at this juncture that the playwright finds his theme and its drama sufficiently contextualized on stage to introduce the first physical actions of Waiting. Estragon is made to rise painfully, go extreme left, halt, screen his eyes, and gaze into the distance. Then he turns, and goes extreme right, halts, screens his eyes, and again gazes into distance. The physical movements on an almost empty stage add to the stage-phenomenon of Waiting. In conceptual terms, it is an irrational impasse, in which one just waits, and keeps up a jaded cross talk, and work-a-day torso movements. No truths can be come by, whether general or specific. A cramping uncertainty therefore takes hold. Illusions have become defunct. Why then ape others?

It is a sad predicament indeed, made more tragic and grotesque by Vladimir's desperate peer into Estragon's boots, though he immediately drops them in disgust and spits. Drama is now in full control. Enough of the context of a Non-ent has been supplied to the stage. Consequently, one torso-movement and just four words spoken two at a time, incorporate the audience into the action of the play: theirs too is an uncertain ontology! Just then, Estragon moves

centre-stage; he halts, and, with his back to the audience says---

Charming spot. (Act I, p. 13)

And, then he turns, and facing the audience comments--

Inspiring prospects . (Act I, p. 14).

That achieved, Beckettian technique finds it opportune to voice for the first time, the rhythmic refrain, later repeated five more times, on appropriate dramatic occasions to add to the many stage-images of the overwhelming Waiting---

--Let's go

--We can't

--Why not?

--We're waiting for Godot.

--Ah! (Act I, p.14)

It is a Waiting indeed. The refrain confirms it and associates the name of Godot with it. Waiting, had by then been shaped and positioned as an excruciatingly disturbing stage-phenomenon. However, Godot had yet to appear, and would now be a greater curiosity!

Henceforth, Beckett finds creative manipulation of the language dynamic itself sufficient to help the play along, language-game after language-game. For, by now, drama had effectively dented the smug certainties of Time, Place, Object and even Thought! And the pungent interrogative 'What?' was an effective instrument. However, new language rhythms are initiated to startle and shock smug priorities. A

question mark is put against the confidence of such concepts as 'place', and 'time', First, the idea of 'place' is disturbed---

Estragon: You're sure it was here?

Vladimir: What? (Act I, p.14)

Next, the certainty of 'time' is heckled---

Estragon: You're sure it was this evening?

Vladimir: What? (Act I, p.15)

Earlier on pp.27-29, a full-length quotation, broken up in two parts has already been given. It has a language rhythm which attacks the illusions of Place, Object, Waiting, and even Time, although Vladimir's protests go interspersed in between. Some of these protests are---

'What are you insinuating?' and -- 'You're merciless' and -- 'Nothing is certain when you're about'.
(A.I p.14)

The entire piece beginning with Estragon (Despairingly), Ah!...' and ending at Vladimir's 'You're merciless' illustrates how Beckett's primary instrument in *Waiting for Godot* is the tension inherent in the language dynamic itself. At this stage, reference shall only be made to how facile and innocuous expressions like 'And so on', 'Until he comes', 'And then the day after tomorrow' acquire sting, This is because the context supplied of an ineffectual Waiting, stage-image after stage-image has by now taken sufficient root, so much so, that this abstract phenomenon acquires a dramaturgy of its own. Therefore, because the context is in strength on stage, a piece like, 'And then the day after tomorrow' sucks the meaning out of 'We'll come back tomorrow'

insinuating that Godot will never arrive. Similarly, 'And so on' appears simple and work-a-day; however, it devastates the calm of 'Possibly', spoken earlier, insinuating a 'Perpetually', and a 'Futilely' in its place. 'Until he comes' also acquires colour and destroys the effort at the persuasion of a 'The point is...'. It can be noticed how 'he' repetitions actually institute 'a presence', instead of destroying it, possibly because these 'he' repetitions were spared the destructive force of a rhythm or beat. Thus we see once again how sheer language rhythm demolishes a meaning content. The following example shows how the 'time' of Godot's arrival is made uncertain---

Estragon: You're sure it was this evening.

Vladimir: What?

Estragon: That we were to wait.

Vladimir: He said Saturday, (Pause) I think.

Estragon: You think. (Act I, p. 15).

That rhythm then consumes the surety of 'time' as does the beat of 'I think/you think', the confidence also of 'thought'. Finally, it is to be noted how in both quotations, Godot is unobtrusively introduced, and Godot's association with Wait very quietly though firmly established. Further still, Estragon's rhythmic beats of the names of week days, in the ethos already established, questions whatever there remained of the certainty of both Memory and Time, when considered in the play's effective build-up of an ethos of a purposeless Waiting. The following is an example of a rhythm that begins with 'But what Saturday?' and makes the confusion about Time, Waiting, as well as Godot, worse confounded---

Estragon: (very insidious). But what Saturday? And is it Saturday? Is it not rather Sunday? (Pause). Or Monday? (Pause.) Or Friday?

Vladimir: (looking wildly about him as though the date was inscribed in the landscape). It's not possible.

Estragon: Or Thursday?

Vladimir: What'll we do? (Act I, p. 15)

It should be observed that 'But what Saturday?' is not the same as 'And is it Saturday'. However, both interrogatives question Saturday and topple it as an absolutely certain day of a week. There is potential drama in language itself. It has it inherent in it. ~~That is the way~~ language exists. Its creative use has here made uncertainty take on frightening proportions. The two tramps cannot now trust either Time, or Place, Memory, or Thought, and, ultimately, even themselves---

Estragon: If he came yesterday and we weren't here you may be sure he won't come again today.

Vladimir: but you say we were here yesterday.

Estragon: I may be mistaken. (Pause.) Let's stop talking for a minute, do you mind? (Act I, p.15).

It can be noticed however, that Godot has till now been mentioned by name only twice: once, in the play's refrain 'Let's go/We can't/Why not?/We're waiting for Godot/Ah!', and, earlier, when the spectator picked the name up from the bill-board! Only an uncertain 'he' gets repeated many a time as a Godot reminder. Ofcourse the Waiting has by now been so effectively positioned on stage, that each moment thereafter, is a constant Godot issue. This then is the way that the playwright establishes, dramaturgically, on-stage, an absent-presence, Godot!

And therefore, the two tramps wait. This fact is sunk in for it is a Godot who has yet to arrive, and has to fail to do so also. Now, Estragon is prone to sleep. But who is not, when the Waiting is far too prolonged, and promises even to be perpetual, as in this case. Indeed the human ontological condition is a part of the Waiting-trap. Possibly, dramaturgical compulsions made Beckett put Estragon to sleep, because then, the playwright could single out the other tramp for the stage display of the Waiting torture. He could show Vladimir pace agitatedly, halt and gaze into the distance repeatedly, because then he felt more lonely, being awake and alone, and waiting. Also, being lonely he would find it necessary to wake Estragon, with three repeated calls of 'Gogo', who being thus woken up could provide the opportunity to be shown as restored once again to the horror of the situation of a futile Waiting. Again, the mention of Estragon's dream is yet another chance to demean the solace got out of this illusion. Later, the playwright will similarly put to the anvil, the illusions of Story, Vision and Nature, as earlier, he had literally dramatized out of their meanings the notions of Truth, Place, Time, Memory, and even Thought, as still earlier, of Redemption, Saviour, Evangelists, and the Bible. For this purpose, the technique shown so far characteristic of Beckett was a convenient instrument. It got its typical shape from the theme, and reciprocally, bestowed its shape to the Beckettian theme of an illusion-less Non-ent in which Silence was almost at a scream. The technique helped activate, ever so slightly, the meaning --content of these illusions, and bereft them of whatever significance they confidently boasted to have---

Estragon: ... (Despairingly) why will you never let me sleep?

Vladimir: I felt lonely.

Estragon: I had a dream.

Vladimir: Don't tell me!

Estragon: I dreamt that---

Vladimir: Don't TELL ME!

(Gesture towards the universe) This one is enough for you? (Silence) (Act I, pp.15-16).

Under the circumstances the spectator could hardly have the luxury of sparing himself out of the plight of humanity on stage, 'there', as a predicament, as one rarest of the rare exceptions. And for this he, or, she would need illusions about existence that are absolutely intact, a condition which would invite the charge of being inauthentic, smug, vegetable, or, even overconfident!

And, therefore, Man waits! He has waited for generations, infact, for all history, and according to this Beckett play, no Godot has till date ever arrived. What is worse, dreams were always personal nightmares. The Universe itself was irrational and just a dream; or, for that matter, was everybody's own personal nightmare. And in this, the spectator was also included. Human existence was futile to the core. Dramaturgic sabotage of illusions knocks the bottom out of every notion that could support a survival, be it corporeal, mental, religious or spiritual. And to do so Beckett exploits creatively the dramaturgy inherent also in the banal, mundane, and ordinary, demolishing with composure and even elan, and erases all meaning out of existence. He makes the reader or spectator feel intensely the metaphysical
 ✓ anguish of an Absurd existential impasse which is altogether irrational and futile. The sieve or anvil of his dramatic technique is the test of the authenticity of complacently accepted conventional paradigms. The following are some more

examples, and to begin with, let us repeat the example of the destruction of the meaning-content of Vision---

Vladimir: You must have had a vision.

Estragon: (turning his head). What?

Vladimir: (louder). You must have had a vision.

Estragon: No need to shout. (Silence) (Act II, p. 75)

Similarly, a verbal exchange activates an attempt to tell a story, and the very attempt is castigated when the short exchange concludes at 'STOP/IT!' Next an activated exchange on dream concludes its rhythm at 'DON'T TELL ME!' And, in similar fashion, the peace of a 'calm' is questioned by generating a small repetitious 'calm...calm...cawm'.

Having come this far, emotion also is put through the the playwright's anvil. Activated as a stylized stage-movement towards the object of emotion, and, accompanied through by words of reconciliation, with five Silences punctuating the dramaturgic stress, the climax is reached at a recoil. For, Estragon discovers that Vladimir stank of garlic! Thus, emotion, literally put through the anvil or sieve of dramaturgy, just rinses out. And the last Silence of the episode ensues to help this concrete stage-image of stylized emotional recoil sink in.

The two tramps even contemplate suicide, because the Waiting was now getting on their nerves, but then, in the pervading state of uncertainty what branch of tree would hold! And therefore it was safer to remounce all activity, and do nothing---

Vladimir: Well? What do we do now?

Estragon: Don't let's do anything. it's safer. (Act I, p.18)

Humanity was in sad plight indeed, and Beckett deftly controlled technique to pile nuances upon nuances to enhance the stage situation's traumatic ambiguities. Ofcourse all the while, the playwright's theme kept taking shape, the shape, very appropriately of a Non-ent; that is, a meaningless, empty void!.

When Godot is mentioned a second time in the play by name, the tramps decide to wait for Godot. Thereafter, with rhythmic repetitions of 'he' and 'his', Godot's decision making is dramatized. It is one of the few times that he receives overt, and extended dramaturgical attention. Though he has yet to arrive, the spectator is made aware of a presence, as overbearing as the Waiting, and as torturous too! Consequently, the slightest hint of a Godot, by name, reference, or, overtone, deepens the trapped Waiting situation. Gradually it becomes more overwhelming and unbearable, and very often, comically grotesque also. The playwright cannot resist exposing the process of Godot's decision-making itself. It is activated into a rhythmic ritual, and renders uncertain and very comic, all issues and all decisions, including Godot's own. It was an idle, and meaningless condition and, therefore, there could neither be an issue, nor, any decision, whatever. The beat generated exposes Godot and his decisions in any case---

Vladimir: I'm curious to hear what he has to offer.
Then we'll take it or leave it.

Estragon: What exactly did we ask him for?

Vladimir: Were you not there?

Estragon: I can't have been listening.

Vladimir: Oh...nothing very definite.

Estragon: A kind of prayer.

Vladimir: Precisely.
Estragon: A vague supplication.
Vladimir: Exactly.
Estragon: And what did he reply.
Vladimir: That he'd see.
Estragon: That he couldn't promise anything.
Vladimir: That he'd have to think it over.
Estragon: In the quiet of his home.
Vladimir: Consult his family.
Estragon: His friends.
Vladimir: His agents.
Estragon: His correspondents.
Vladimir: His books.
Estragon: His bank account.
Vladimir: Before taking a decision.
Estragon: It's the normal thing.
Vladimir: Is it not.
Estragon: I think it is.
Vladimir: I think so too. (Silence) (Act. I, p.18-19)

'I think it is/I think so too', concludes the ritual, and the Silence that ensues puts a dramaturgical seal of a language-game completed. The Silence also invites the spectator to shift perspective, and adjust to the discomfitting scenario contextualized on-stage. In an irrational existential situation, what could at all be the issue and whatever could be the decision! Alfred Jarry's *Ubu* and his divine procedures couldnot have been better dramatized, and better debunked. The bill-board spelling of

Godot indeed did the veil thin! The innuendo, capitalized on by the dramaturgy, could hardly be lost to the spectator. Nothing is certain about Godot's decision-making. He only postpones and shifts responsibility. The ridicule is taken to ridiculous extents. Even prayers and supplications were left unheard. If that was bad, then, that 'he'd see', was worse, and, that 'it's the normal thing' no better. Between the next two Silences the piled up implications destroy all rights and prerogatives. And as always, the technical procedure is the same: a minimum of a few related ideas are activated to a rhythm that has a four-fold effect. First, it establishes the immediacy of the experience. Second, it destroys meaning. Third, it creates confusion and uncertainty. Fourth, it adds to the already existent context of Waiting. As the generated dramaturgic rhythm works itself out, a de-stabilizing sets in---

Estragon: (anxious). And we?

Vladimir: I beg your pardon?

Estragon: I said, And we?

Vladimir: I don't understand.

Estragon: Where do we come in?

Vladimir: Come in?

Estragon: Take your time.

Vladimir: Come in? On our hands and knees

Estragon: As bad as that?

Vladimir: Your Worship wishes to assert his prerogatives?

Estragon: We've no rights any more? (laugh of Vladimir, stifled as before, less the smile.)

Vladimir: You'd make me laugh, if it wasn't prohibited.

Estragon: We've lost our rights?

Vladimir: (distinctly). We got rid of them. (Silence.)
(Act I, p.19)

It should be pointed out that 'And we?/I beg your pardon?/I said, And we?/I don't understand', is not just ordinary cross-talk. In the context, so far created, its overtones are frighteningly grotesque as well as tragic. So is the next sequence comic as well as disastrous, 'Where do we come in?/Come in?/Take your time./ Come in? On our hands and knees/As bad as that?' The playwright appears at a nibble, bit by bit, piece by piece, language-set after language-set. The slant is obvious, the ambiguity notwithstanding. The grotesque does the rest, the stifled laugh and the contorted face included. What, in any case, had a Non-ent to do with rights. They were best got rid off. And the generated rhythm does it perfectly!

Human corporeality takes over, though temporarily, from the spoken word. The tramps remain motionless. Arms dangle, heads sink in, and knees sag, and we have one more concretized stage-image of the existential plight. Godot, the absent-presence, lurks around also, mentioned either by name, reference, or innuendo. Ofcourse, the Waiting, reinforced by either human corporeality, or, the spoken-word adds fillip to this lurking Godot phenomenon, and becomes every bit an implied part of an uncertain Waiting. Sagging and motionless, Vladimir invites attention to something. 'Listen!' he says, and Estragon almost falls out of shock! He clutches Vladimir, who also totters. Huddled they listen, however no one appears, and they sigh and relax. There was opportunity in this to stage a timely dramaturgic dismissal of Godot, and it is not missed to be sure! Infact it appeared to have happened according to the playwright's plan,

which was already on its way when Vladimir was made to ask Estragon, 'Listen'---

Estragon: You gave me a fright.

Vladimir: I thought it was he.

Estragon Who?

Vladimir: Godot.

Estragon: Pah! The wind in the reeds. (Act I, p.19)

This is again comic, but it also has a rhythm generated that erases even the hapless illusion of a last-straw-Godot! Later, 'I could have sworn I heard shouts/And why must he shout?/At his horse', completes this language-set, but the Silence that follows, as well as the burden of the generated rhythm, together add to the context, now potent and powerful of a wasteful Waiting. The stage-business of hats, boots and trousers, as also of carrots and turnips, further sink human existence to its most trite and crass, added to which the metaphysical slant makes it a grotesque tragedy.

But though the tramps might dismiss the notion of a Godot, yet the haunting quality of a promise to the absent-presence that they will wait, as well as his own word that he will come, is what they cannot even get over. Therefore, they wait for Godot. However, Beckett has their ties with Godot dramaturgically activated in order to show them non-existent, that is, if snap they can---

Estragon: ... Ah yes, now I remember.

Vladimir: Well?

Estragon: (his mouth full, vacuously). We're not tied!

Vladimir: I don't hear a word you're saying.

Estragon: (Chews, swallows). I'm asking you if we're tied.

Vladimir: Tied?

Estragon Ti-ed.

Vladimir: How do you mean tied?

Estragon Down.

Vladimir: But to whom. By whom?

Estragon: To your man.

Vladimir: To Godot? Tied to Godot? What an idea! No question of it. (Pause). For the moment.

Estragon: His name is Godot?

Vladimir: I think so.

Estragon: Fancy that. (Act I, pp. 20-21).

That rhythmic exchange destroys whatever bond the tramps may have had with Godot. And once again, it is only a particular aspect, as in this case, just an articulation of words, is put through the dramaturgic sieve, as it were, and, by the time the initiated rhythm runs its course, the ties as well as the name Godot stand exposed completely! The last piece demonstrates an urge that the playwright appears unable ever to resist, the compulsion that is, to complete a generated rhythm, or round off a language game---

Estragon: His name is Godot?

Vladimir: I think so.

Estragon: Fancy that (Act I, p. 21)

On the face of it, this may appear simple, and even innocuous, but it can be terrible at hurting names and nomenclatures. In this case it is the name of Godot. This is

quite similar to an earlier urge at a rhythm he couldnot resist---

Estragon: You gave me a fright.

Vladimir: I thought it was he.

Estragon: Who?

Vladimir: Godot.

Estragon: Pah! The wind in the reeds. (Act I, p.19)

Through such language strategies, Beckett is able to
 ✓ work intensity into a Non-ent, as he sets out to shape in
 dramaturgic terms, a Waiting ---for Godot!

Now, just because Beckettian dramaturgy is so successful, the bleak state of human existence presented on stage, as the very thing itself, becomes a terribly intense experience, requiring a discomfitting re-assessment by the spectator of his own predicament. Ofcourse to Vladimir, existence was muck, so much so, that he found a struggle useless. He often ended up bored because there was nothing else to be done.

Human corporeality, was meanwhile always there, as sheer torso, an irrationality worked by a complex set of levers, which as an ontology could just not be got rid of! There were no pineal glands to save the situation. Consequently, Mind and Body were at a perpetual disjunct, and were made manifest as just Mentality and sheer Corporeality. In the play, there is next one more shock, the tramps hear a terrible cry, which makes Estragon drop his carrot. It could be Godot again, but again it was a disappointment. Hearing the cry, Estragon runs, but rushes back to pick up his carrot. Half-way he stops, and repeats this movement thrice, rushing in and rushing away and for the last time, runs in to

pick up his boots. The two tramps finally stand huddled, in fearful anticipation. Then somebody enters, a rope around the neck, and burdened with baggage. His name turns out to be Lucky. He is followed by Pozzo, his master, with a whip. Drama had keyed itself to a particular arrival, and the pair that arrives takes on a shade of that absent-presence, for whom the two tramps had waited in earnest. Once again Alfred Jarry's Ubu couldnot have done one better. It is the crack of a whip all through, and almost single-word commands, 'Up hog!', 'Up pig!', 'Stop!', 'Back!', 'Turn!', 'Closer!', 'Stool!' 'Whip!', 'Basket!', or, a warning 'He stinks!' Pozzo is a bad master, a garrulous talker, and a voracious eater; and he is self-conscious also, a star-performer, confident both about his idea of Place and sense of Time. Together with Lucky, his slave, he is full of an overwhelming awareness of his 'torso-presence'. So much for a Godot expectation, and a Pozzo arrival! Earlier, illusions, hall-marks, milestones, issues and decisions were rendered spurious. The Absolutes were shorn of their sanctity. Now, the personage of a divinity itself, as Pozzo, appeared to occupy centre-stage, a version of Man-in-God's image, a self-conscious tyrant-figure, who as earlier dramatized, just postponed decisions and couldnot promise anything! That was not all. Pozzo's posturings are made dramaturgically effective with the help of five Silences. Thus, he smokes a pipe and puts a hand to his heart and self-consciously sighs. His heart, he says, goes 'pit-a-pat', and after which a Silence ensues. Nicotine hurts, so he is cautious. He sighs and there is another Silence. He cannot sit down if he has stood up, and another Silence follows. He begs pardon; did Vladimir speak? Perhaps he didnot! Pozzo apologizes, and there is a last Silence, the fifth, and the impact of Pozzo's posturings (and Ubu's, as well as Godot's) have Beckettian drama take good care of them. Pozzo re-lights his pipe, the uncertainty about Godot's name adding to the confusion. Was it, Godet, Godot or Godin?

Also, the similar sounding Pozzo and Godot names keep the spectator conscious that there is an absent-presence, even while its name becomes a confusion worse confounded. But what of the way Pozzo had announced his own name and the three dramaturgical Silences that helped his self-conscious posturing then! In a terrifying voice he shouts 'I am Pozzo'. And a Silence ensues. Next, only the name 'Pozzo' is shouted, and another Silence follows. As if that didnot satisfy him, he continues, 'Does that mean anything to you?' And the last of this series of Silences concludes this dramaturgic piece. Beckett creatively employs, altogether eight Silences in this small theatric exercise, in order to situate on stage, a Pozzo, and through an obvious extension, a Godot-presence and even a deity-posturing. For the confusion between the two names is deliberate, what with the repetitions 'Bozzo...Bozzo', 'Pozzo... Pozzo', 'Ppozzo!', 'Ah! Pozzo... let me see... Pozzo...', 'It is Pozzo or Bozzo'. And, repeat as the tramps and Pozzo might the uncertainty is reinforced, at each repetition with Estragon having the last heave at the language game:

Pozzo...no...I'm afraid I... no...I don't seem to... .
(Act I, p. 22)

If there is any doubt of a God-Image, the context eliminates it, for, Pozzo very soon announces that he and the tramps are of the same species, 'Made in God's Image', as he says. Therefore Pozzo is Man, in Beckett's God-Image, and also, may be Atlas, the son of Jupiter. Pozzo is now God, now Man; now Man-God, now god-Man! Be that as it may, the self-consciousness of a star-performer is made by the playwright, the chief characteristic of Pozzo, so much so, that it provides the opportunity for a play-within-a-play. 'Is everybody ready?', 'Is everybody looking at me?', after which Pozzo sprays a vapourizer on his throat, clears it,

sprays again, spits, and announces a second time, 'I am ready. Is everybody listening? Is everybody ready?'. And, finally there is a shout of 'Hog!', which appropriately concludes the self-conscious posturing. That could be Ubu too, both Jarry's and Artaud's self-conscious cruelty. For Beckett, it is indeed dramatic technique all through, shaping the theme, because the playwright was always fascinated by the shape of a thought¹⁹

Again, Lucky the abject-slave, through reflected affinity, continues the drama of Man-in-God's Image idea, which for that matter, also shows up in the tramps-on-an-empty-stage-concretization. Lucky carries Pozzo's entire baggage, including the whip with which he is slogged. He has a rope around his neck, and responds to Pozzo's single word-commands, and develops the inevitable running sore. He was not bad looking though, but a trifle effeminate, with a slobber and goggling eyes. Here, four ideas overlap: the Pozzo-Godot confusion; Man-in-God's image; the grotesque and pathetic existential predicament of Man; and, Man's response to a deity. There is little confusion however about the play's thematic penchant for a Non-ent, and the corresponding strategy which gives that Non-ent, a powerful tangible shape. But then, to treat Lucky like that, was a scandal, though Pozzo thought Vladimir too severe. However, Pozzo had no answer to the five times repeated, 'You want to get rid of him?' Now who was that question addressed to? To a deity, Godot, or Pozzo? The five repetitions of the question quoted reinforce and reiterate the notion that even as Pozzo had no answer for Vladimir's five times iterated question, so did Godot have no answer why he did not get rid of the tramps, and instead kept them waiting perpetually, because indifference and ties don't go together. Why does not the deity, or whatever it is, get rid of Man? Why does it allow so much uncertainty and confusion to prevail? Pozzo appeared

unhappy with Lucky. He wanted to dispose him off, but he had no answer to the dramatic and stuccato, 'You want to get rid of him'. And so, Vladimir and Estragon get overly interested in Lucky. Ofcourse it seems to be a voluntary slavery! But that did not mean that Lucky did not ever weep, or, was never tired, or, never sagged. However, it was a self-inflicted slavery. Was it Man's too! Was Man too in a voluntary bind!? That aligned perfectly with Beckett's theme, because very few appeared to react to the futility of the pathetic existential impasse; and those that did, like Estragon, were often beaten up, and as now, even kicked! Indeed, 'people were bloody ignorant apes'.

But then what about the Man-aspect of Pozzo? For, Pozzo was smug, sure and confident, and he owned property, carried a whip, and a watch too. The latter kept him abreast with Time, and helped him keep schedule. However, Pozzo's regrets are not given the go-bye either. For one, Pozzo couldnot endure the way Lucky now behaved. Earlier. Lucky was very kind, helpful, entertaining, and a good angel. He even danced, and also 'thought'. However, Lucky apart, the twilight had enthralled Pozzo. Pozzo goes lyrical about the twilight, after which a Long Silence follows! Just before this, a Silence had preceded the play of hats, boots and whip, after which Pozzo had asked, 'What is your name?' and Estragon had replied, 'Adam'. Dramaturgic strategy repeatedly emphasizes these overtones, and they can hardly be missed. There was something basically wrong with Creation, for, Adam now found himself in quite a poignant quandary, caught as he was in a grotesque, existential trap.

Earlier, as Pozzo had complained, Lucky had danced, sung, recited, and even 'thought'. But now his 'thought' was an example of Alfred Jarry's 'Pataphysics'. It was full of cliches, appeared futile and a schizophrenic's word-salad!

The playwright's dramaturgy cashes on this also, and uses it in two ways. First, Lucky's speech is made to appear replete with cliches and is therefore apparently meaningless. It was repetitious and seemed just a heap of shouted though broken articulations. It was in fact a characteristic example of Beckett creatively using language-tension to show a whole language collapse. The second is such an original manipulation of the entire collapse that it helps shape the breakdown of a whole culture. Therefore, even a collapsed language, full of repetitious cliches, is so deftly manipulated and put to such creative artistic use,²⁰ that it disintegrates the concepts of God, Grace, Heaven, Hell, Theology, Research, Scholarship, and, Nutrition and Sports, all in a page and a half. Infact, very early in the play, the dramatist had dismissed the prospect of 'thought' itself, by just two language beats 'I think/You think'. Not only that, try as Vladimir and Estragon may, no pigeon-truth could be got out, either of a hat, or a boot. Poor Vladimir had struck its crown, shaken it, felt inside and even peered in, but there was nothing at all to be dislodged! Consequently, on p. 64, Vladimir announces, 'What is terrible is to have thought', and on p. 73, when Vladimir and Estragon play at being Pozzo and Lucky, the following language game takes shape---

Vladimir: Tell me to think.

Estragon: What?

Vladimir: Say, Think pig!

Estragon: Think, pig! (Silence.) (Act II, p.73)

The dramaturgy of the repetitions, the abuse and the Silence are obvious. All thought is innuendoed!

However, how contorted can thought become is best illustrated in Lucky's excruciating and torturous effort at it. Very obviously it has a dramaturgical method in its madness. It is almost 'a Scape-goat's Agony' and the scapegoat, is little better than a 'hard stool', trapped in 'The Net'. From the very beginning, the playwright had associated hat with 'thought'. Therefore, to make Lucky think, he had to be given his hat, and the thought dramatized, packed with the rhythm of repetitious cliches, apparently futile, and quite meaningless. However, as the almost shouted speech progresses, the imaginative manipulation of its language rhythms reveals creative effort in its method.²¹ The dramaturgy, to begin with, first dismisses the idea of a personal God by literally qua-qua-ing at it, and then ridiculing the thought of God as immortal and 'outside time'. The positive adjectives 'heights' and 'divine', carry negative implications when the nouns they qualify are apathia, athambia and aphasia. These nouns mean lack of feeling, insensitivity to suffering, and a loss of speech, respectively. Alfred Jarry's Ubu indeed! Thereafter, repetition of the platitude of 'calm, so calm, with a calm' followed by the qualified hope of 'which even though intermittent is better than nothing' destroys the solace of heaven, as 'plunged in torrent', and 'plunged in fire' demolishes the fear of hell. Repetition, modification, addition, variation, beat and rhythm are some of the ways in which language exists as a process. It is a creative dramaturgic use which enlivens a meaningless cliché and adds significance to a banal cross-talk. Thus Grace, 'with some exceptions' and 'for reasons unknown', 'but time will tell', and 'who can doubt it', leave little to the benefaction of any kind of Grace at all. These clichés are first just listed, and then are strung on to a thing held sacred, thus destroying its value-content through drama. For example, and to repeat, Western Scholarship and Research are debunked by

mouthing a profane 'aca-ca-ca-ca', followed by an irreverent 'anthro-po-po-po', because 'ca-ca' and 'po-po' have excrement associations. Next rhythmic cliches, piled one on top of the other, demolish the essential nature of all Scholarship, because this learning is shown to depend on wornout cliches like 'as a result of', 'established beyond doubt', 'labours of men', 'labours left unfinished', 'established as herein after', 'of the labours of Testew and Cunard', 'of Fartow and Belcher', 'man in short', 'man in brief', apparently repeated ad nauseam but not without artistic manouvre and plan. Set-articulations have just to be rhythmically repeated, at calculated intervals, and the entire edifice of Scholarship comes crumbling down. But what of Nourishment! Well, be what 'the strides of alimention, 'man wastes and pines, wastes and pines', 'for reasons unknown', and 'in|spite of' the 'strides of physical culture'. Thereafter, at one breath, and with no commas at all the Sports are named one after the other, 'tennis football running cycling swimming flying...'. There being no commas in between, even for respite, the sheer flow of the naming makes them redundant exercises. Consequently, Man continues to 'shrink and dwindle', 'namely, concurrently, simultaneously', and 'for reasons unknown' and 'inspite of', 'sports of all kinds'. It is word-salad alright, but only if looked at perfunctorily. It is in fact a deliberately creative use of language to announce both the collapse of thought, and its medium, the articulated or written, though over-used word. However, in the hands of a master artist, the disintegration and collapse, both of thought and language can be powerful and profoundly effective instruments of creative use. The broken rhythms and cliches through imaginative exploitation can render Western Religion, Thought and Culture, a futile play of sheer jargon. That worsens the Waiting!

Lucky's unfinished speech trails off into a stumbling halt, visualizing the earth as a place of great cold, great dark, an abode of stones, tears, rocks and skulls. And these expressions are interspersed with cliches associated with the earlier part of Lucky's 'exercise think'. These cliches include 'so calm so blue', 'for reasons unknown', 'the labours abandoned', 'left unfinished', 'alas alas', 'the tennis', 'in spite of', all telescoped into one shouted performance. What the earlier Vladimir-Estragon-Pozzo-Lucky torso-actions, the Silences and Pauses, the language-sets, their beats and rhythms together had contextualized, bit by bit on stage, is brought to a horrendous whole phenomenon of a futile Waiting through the one-and-a-half page long, shouted word-salad of Lucky's schizophrenia. Lucky's hat is the temporary answer, or, so Pozzo thinks, to stop Lucky from thinking, and his hat is seized. There is Silence, and Lucky falls. There is yet another Silence, after which Vladimir examines Lucky's hat and peers inside, but Pozzo seizes it and tramples upon it, announcing, 'There's an end to his thinking'. Pozzo also tightens his hold on Lucky, who totters, reels and sags. Finally, Pozzo leaves, along with Lucky, but not before repeatedly fumbling about for his watch. He had his regrets about beauty and the twilight, but he had to be sure about the tick-tick of his watch, because Pozzo couldnot afford to be uncertain about the certainty of Time, and, a time-table. Vladimir and Estragon lacked even that certainty. They could only wait for an uncertain Godot. Pozzo took time to lose his cool. Thus, the playwright could do just anything with language. He can repeat a cliché and make it stubbornly destructive. He manipulates the spoken word, or, a Silence, Pause, or, all three together, and wrecks the slightest effort at any kind of meaning. He subverts language, but cannot prevent himself from using the collapsed medium creatively. His drama is indeed logocentric and uses also banal torso-actions imaginatively to exploit

the drama of human corporeality. These two techniques together constitute this play's 'central experience'. They are the chief characteristics of his technique so far, helping him to shape his theme into intensely subtle drama. The following is one more example in which, through sheer single repetitions, Beckett makes Thought as well as Waiting two very traumatic experiences---

Pozzo: (normal voice)• No matter! what was I saying
(He ponders.) Wait. (Ponders). Well now
isn't that...(He raises his head). Help me.

Estragon: Wait!

Vladimir: Wait!

Pozzo : Wait! (Act I, p. 41).

Pozzo next tries concentration, because he wanted to think, ponder. He and the two tramps therefore remove their hats simultaneously, take their hands to their foreheads, and posture as if to concentrate. A little while later, a Silence also ensues. After this bit of dramaturgy, all three doff their hats, and the Waiting gets a fresh permutation when Estragon says, 'Nothing happens, nobody comes, nobody goes, it's awful'. It was after this that Lucky's speech, discussed earlier, followed, but not before the word rhythm of 'Give him his hat./ His hat?/He can't think without his hat/Give him his hat', was emphasized to profound advantage followed by Pozzo's single word commands, 'Stand./Back./Think pig!/Stop!'. And as Lucky is about to begin, Pozzo's shouts, 'Back!/Stop!/Turn!/Think!'. Meanwhile the Wait had remained perpetual; and so had Thought remained futile, the Obligation to express a nagging bane.

While Pozzo stays, more single-word rhythmic exchanges occur. It all begins as usual after a Silence, and Estragon initiates the first 'Adieu' rhythm, which Pozzo and Vladimir repeat, the adieus coming one after the other as almost a

beat. But there is a Silence and nobody moves. Then the second, three Adieu-rhythm starts. It ends in 'Thank yous'. and 'Not at alls' and one new beat of a 'Yes, yes/No,no./Yes,yes/No,no'. Another Silence follows. The ceremonies were complete, the trap of Waiting for an absent-presence couldnot be escaped! For the moment, the Adieus notwithstanding, Pozzo just appears unable to leave. He says so and the piece is rounded off with Estragon's very apt---

Such is life (Act I, p. 47)

The implication is clear. Even the self-conscious, over confident Pozzo is unable to depart, and will come back in any case, despite his single-word commands to Lucky to move on. The two tramps shout their Adieus again to Pozzo, and, the latter finally leaves hurling commands at Lucky and Adieus at the tramps. In any case Pozzo and Lucky would return later, one blind, the other dumb! That much for a master-servant relationship, and as much for a Creator-creature rapport! As for Pozzo's godly posturing, and Lucky's voluntary slavery, the less said the better, for, on their return both fell in a heap and the tramps, while helping them get up, fell on them and piled the futile heap higher!

After Pozzo and Lucky had left there was a Long Silence. In the prolonged quiet, spectator-participation, now as Vladimir, now as Estragon, now Pozzo, now Lucky, should be the foregone effect of the dramaturgy practised so far on the Beckettian stage.

Meanwhile, the Vladimir-Estragon two-some are unable to leave. For, such indeed 'was life'. They wait the arrival of the uncertain absent-presence, of whom they know very little, and whose name itself sounds strange to them. Pozzo and Lucky had helped pass the time, for when one waits, time is often

the precipitating key factor, and the already over-bearing silence becomes eerie and overwhelming.

The Long Silence was almost immediately followed by the famous rhythmic refrain, repeated twice in Act I, and four times in Act II. It is always at the most crucial dramatic junctures. Right now, Pozzo had left, the Silence had ensued, and a little after, is the second use of this reputed refrain, 'Let's go./We can't³/Why not?/We're waiting for Godot/Ah!'. With this, another poignant beat was added to the Waiting trap-situation. Earlier too, the first use of this refrain was effective. It had come after the three-beat strike of 'nothing-to be-done' and, after the dramaturgically worked implication, that there was no Absolute either. It had followed after the specific truths of Christianity, had had 'anvil, or, sieve dramaturgy' question their veracity. It was after Time, Object, and Thought had also been demolished in similar fashion. The play was then ripe for voicing its most important refrain which along with 'Nothing to be done', toll add accretions to the phenomenal Waiting being staged as a grotesque existential condition 'there' on stage. Similarly, for the second use of the 'Let's go...' refrain, the situation also appeared ripe enough, and the spectator was also included. It is after Estragon is brought centre-stage, and, with his back to the audience, made to say, 'Charming spot', and then made to turn around, face the spectator, and say, 'Inspiring prospects'. Immediately after follows this refrain 'Let's go/We can't/why not?/We're waiting for Godot/Ah!'. Quite plainly it was not the sad plight of a Vladimir-Estragon existential quandary only! The spectator had been made a participant too. Such is the playwrights' strategy.

And so the Waiting continues. To pass time the tramps try to play language-games, and put up a little conversation. It is a part of the 'that's the idea series'---

that's the idea let's contradict each other

that's the idea let's abuse each other ;

that's the idea let's make-up--- (All in Act II)

However, these are futile efforts to pass time, for, the tramps may contradict, abuse, or make-up, futility sat like a burdensome pall on their shoulders, nay, indeed over all existence. This futility of existence bereft of illusions was overwhelming. Meanwhile, Estragon's foot hurts, he hobbles. But then a messenger arrives. It is a boy, and he is from Godot. One striking feature of this episode is its series of seven Silences, that occur after very brief exchanges. The other feature is the Boy's rhythmic, 'Yes, sir./Yes, sir./No, sir./Yes, sir.' answer. The boy had been there while Pozzo and Lucky were on stage. What is worse is that a boy had come the previous day too, and had brought the same message: that Godot would not come that day. The Waiting was indeed perpetual! This was the implication. Man had waited in the past. He shall even wait in the future. Therefore, this day also yet another 'Boy' had arrived to excuse Godot's absence. Two 'Yes, sir./Yes, sir./No, sir./Yes, sir.' rhythms, that are the Boy's answers to Valdimir's impatient, queries are each followed by a Silence. The second rhythm runs thus---

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

Boy : I don't know sir.

Vladimir: You don't know me?

Boy : No, sir.

Vladimir: It wasn't you who came yesterday?

Boy : No, sir.

Vladimir: This is your first time?

Boy : Yes, sir. (Silence.) (Act I, p.50)

The exasperated Vladimir moved by the 'Yes, sir' beat puts the blame on language---

Vladimir: Words, words. (Pause). Speak.

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

Vladimir: Is that all?

Boy : Yes, sir. (Silence.) (Act I. pp. 50-51)

This is not only grotesque. It is also heart-breaking. But did the Boy have a brother? More anxious enquiries are made. However, the Boy has recourse only to the 'Yes, sir./No, sir' answer. After the interview, the Boy leaves.

Night comes on. The moon sheds a pale light on stage. The Wait had been day-long, excruciating and illusionless, and, nothing had come of it. Vladimir's 'It wasn't you who came yesterday?' to the Boy implies that this wasn't the first day of the tramps' Wait. They had waited in the past too. Act II shall show them wait yet another day. Therefore the Wait shall continue, endlessly, in the future also. And when, at the end of each Act, they want to go, and donot move, it becomes the repetitive culmination each time of a trap-situation. Human corporeality was then the characteristic feature of a basically pathetic and irrational ontological condition, the being 'there', a presence merely, with the 'talking I', keeping up a thankless obligation. Nobody came. Nobody went. It was all a perpetual Wait, that

had gone on for generations, all history included. To be born appeared itself a guilt to Estragon. And Vladimir had even pondered the idea that Man should have committed suicide long ago; it now being too late, even for a suicide!

Estragon wants to leave barefoot; however though Christ had done it, Estragon could not ---

Vladimir: Christ! What's Christ got to do with it?
You're not going to compare yourself to
Christ!

Estragon: All my life I've compared myself to him.

Vladimir: But where he lived, it was warm, it was dry!

Estragon: Yes, And they crucified quick. (Silence.) (Act I,
p. 52)

The uncertainty was excruciating. The two tramps decide to part. That too invites dramaturgy, for they donot leave, 'It's not worthwhile now'; and, after this a Silence ensues to lend emphasis. Vladimir repeats 'No, it's not worth while now'. Another Silence follows, it is the last of the fifty Silences in Act I. The Silence is an appropriate dramaturgical culmination, though temporary, to the perpetual Waiting, and while the Silences of this particular piece last, the echo is that it was not worthwhile at all -- the Waiting, that is, for an absent-presence that always failed to arrive.

The stage is now set for the drama of the metaphysical anguish to reinforce itself because Act II is almost similar to Act I. This gives the impression of a persistent cycle. It is a Waiting, day after¹day, with Godot never ever fulfilling his preceding day's promise, on which, like the day previous to that, he only sent a Boy to inform, that unable to come that day, he will come on the next. Act II very

appropriately begins with a dog-song and a lot of kinaesthetics on stage, both contributing thematically as well as dramatically, to shape the discomfiting Non-ent experience of an excruciating impasse. It is a condition of just being 'there', doing nothing, indulging in banal corporeal action and small-talk, only to ward off an eerie Silence. Such is the pathetically grotesque existential plight of Man, and he was entrapped in it history deep! In Act II, Vladimir enters very agitated. There is nothing on stage except Estragon's boots and Lucky's hat. The tree on the country-road had sprouted a few leaves. Human corporeality with pathetic torso-actions, now controls the drama. Vladimir's restlessness ends in a long halt near the tree, and then all of a sudden, feverish movement takes hold of him. He halts before Estragon's boots, picks up one, examines it, sniffs inside and is disgusted. However, he puts the boot down carefully. Next, he walks across the stage thrice; each time he comes and goes, and halts, shades his eyes and gazes into the distance, both extreme left and extreme right. While in Act I, the exercise of a futile Waiting, was built up, on stage, piece by piece, in Act II, it appears accentuated right from the start. Vladimir halts at the end of the third movement across the stage and bursts into a loud song. Apt as drama, and thematically proper also, it is a dog-song, with a refrain that Vladimir repeats five times---

And dug the dog a tomb-(Act II, pp. 57-58).

But that is not all, because drama enters into the way the song is sung. Vladimir begins loudly with, 'A dog came in --' but having begun too high he stops, clears his throat, and resumes. Thrice in the course of the song, he stops, broods and then resumes making the ritual a part of the dog-

song theme. The song has a couplet repeated four times also---

Then all dogs came running

And dug the dog a tomb.(Act II, p. 57).

In this song, a cook had killed a dog because it had stolen bread from the kitchen. Ritual repetitions from the dog-song reinforce the theme of a futile existential predicament trapped in the Time-flux. Time's treadmill went on like a meaningless song, and dogs ate out of turn, and were killed, and were buried endlessly. 'Such is life,' Estragon would have concluded. Similarly faceless humanity slogged on, in a dreary landscape, living out the ritual that keeps repeating itself endlessly also.

After the song, Vladimir becomes silent and even motionless, but then follow physical movements on stage, which are even more furious than those that preceded the dog-song. As mentioned earlier, the kinaesthetics too is a part of Beckettian dramaturgy, because the ontology of the human being is ultimately the body. Existence precedes essence, but this also tantamounts to eliminating essence altogether. Body movements on stage, in Beckettian theatre, have been known to be deliberate, calculated and even graceful. And so, Vladimir halts before the tree, moves and halts before the boots. He walks across the stage repeatedly from end to end. And at each end he halts and gazes into the distance, eyes shaded. The idle Waiting-phenomenon takes on more accretion in this theatric exercise. Vladimir's feverish body movement, is contrasted with Estragon's, who is made to enter slowly, head bowed. The stage-business of a meeting ensues, initiated by Vladimir's 'You again', and, Estragon's 'Don't touch me'. Calls of Gogo donot impress Estragon who ritually repeats 'Don't touch me', and, follows it up by, 'Don't question me

Don't speak to me! Stay with me'. All, the while, he stays head bowed. Vladimir asks Estragon to look at him, and is violent. However, Estragon doesnot respond. He only regrets the day, and is relieved that another day was done with. He ends with a final 'For me it's over and done with, no matter what happens'. Be it Vladimir's quick, across the stage movements, each ending in a gaze into the distance, or, be it Estragons bowed-head regrets, the Waiting predicament picks up on-stage concretions. And after this ensues the 'there' dramaturgy itself, accentuating once more the human torso's corporeal stage presence. However, the reaction is graded as joyous, indifferent, and then gloomy---

Vladimir: Now... (Joyous.) There you are again.
 (Indifferent.) There we are again...
 (Gloomy). There I am again. (Act II, p.59)

Time is now ripe for the sabotage of the word 'happy' through sheer repetition. Or, it is not that it may be called a creative dramatization of a language collapse. However, the fact of the matter is that repetition, beat and rhythm constitute a ritual, and Beckett's use of ritual to demolish, puts a question mark on the nature of ritual also---

Vladimir: You must be happy, too, deep down, if you only knew it.

Estragon: Happy about what?

Vladimir: To be back with me again.

Estragon: Would you say so?

Vladimir: Say you are, even if it's not true.

Estragon: What am I to say?

Vladimir: Say, I am happy.

Estragon: I am happy.

Vladimir: So am I.

Estragon: So am I.

Vladimir: We are happy.

Estragon: We're happy. (Silence.) (Act II, p.60)

This debunk of the meaning content of 'happy' is also linked to the torturous trauma of the futile Waiting, because Beckett appears to be under somekind of a compulsion to let an initiated language rhythm run its full dramaturgic course, and culminate it at a Wait for Godot, and, in a groan---

Estragon: (Silence). What do we do now, now that we are happy.

Vladimir: Wait for Godot. (Estragon groans) (Silence)
(Act II, p.60)

One striking feature of what ensues is that Beckett is found using Vladimir as a convenient platitudinizer, his scepticism notwithstanding! It gives Estragon, and therefore Beckett, the opportunity to destroy what little remained of smug complacency. Examples from pp. 60-62 of the play (Act II,) would suffice to illustrate the point, more so, if all Vladimir platitudes, spoken one after the other are put together, and opposed individually to the demolition that Estragon subjects each to. The over-all technique is to peel off conceited self-confidence piece by piece, to accentuate the *meaninglessness and futility of the existential Non-ent*, and intensify the experience of a perpetual Waiting. Here are some examples of Vladimir's platitudes followed immediately by Estragon's demolitions, his, attacks on his companion's platitudes being in serial order---

i) Vladimir: Things have changed since yesterday.

ii) Vladimir: We'll see when the time comes.

- iii) Vladimir: Do you not remember?
 - iv) Vladimir: The tree, look at the tree.
 - v) Vladimir: Do you not recognize the place?
 - vi) Vladimir: Yes ofcourse it was yesterday.
 - vii) Vladimir: Calm yourself, calm yourself.
 - viii) Vladimir: But we were there together, I could swear to it! Picking grapes for a man called (he snaps his fingers)...
-

Change, memory, recognition, and reminder, are of no avail and Estragon drubs away against each Vladimir platitude. His sceptical attacks are given below in serial order also---

- i) Estragon: And if he doesn't come?
 - ii) Estragon: Everything oozes.
 - iii) Estragon: You dreamt it.
 - iv) Estragon: Was it not there yesterday?
 - v) Estragon: Recognize! what is there to recognize. All my lousy life I've crawled about in the mud! And you talk to me about scenery!
 - vi) Estragon: And here where we are now?
 - vii) Estragon: You and your landscape. Tell me about the worms!
 - viii) Estragon: It is possible... I didn't notice anything.
-

A Silence follows after the long exchange and with Vladimir's platitudes demolished by Estragon's scepticisms, the Waiting becomes more and more agonizing. Vladimir complains that Estragon was a hard man to talk to. But then they are incapable of suppressing their 'talking I-s', being

under a constant urge to keep expressing, though there was nothing to express, and no medium of expression either. They succumb to the urge, if only to put away an eerie and dreadful silence. What ensues is the lyricism of which Beckettian language, even in its state of 'collapse' is often capable; it also contributes its own dramaturgic bit to the play's theme and shape. The theme now is 'dead voices', and the way they are oppressed to converse. The 'talking I' whispers even after death! The Estragon-Vladimir exchange has five movements, each punctuated by a Silence, and at the conclusion of the rhythm generated, is a Long Silence. Beckett could even work common-place language and make it perform at the level of music. It appears that the 'dead voices' also need to keep up a whisper, and may be, a Wait too, because even death may bring no respite and the existential quandary could continue even after life---

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)

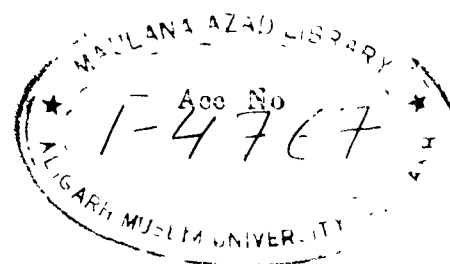
Vladimir: Rather they whisper.

Estragon: They rustle.

Vladimir: They murmur.

Estragon: They rustle.
(Silence)

Vladimir: What do they say?



Estragon: They talk about their lives.

Vladimir: To have lived is not enough for them.

Estragon: They have to talk about it.

Vladimir: To be dead is not enough for them.

Estragon: It is not sufficient.
(Silence)

Vladimir: They make a noise like feathers.

Estragon: Like leaves.

Vladimir: Like ashes.

Estragon: Like leaves. (Long Silence.)
(Act II, pp. 62-63).

After each lyrical piece is spaced a Silence, and after the whole comes a Long Silence. Just two exchanges are allowed in between this Long Silence, and, the one that follows immediately after. The exchange being significant both for theme and drama , Long Silences at either end need to cup it. The exchange is very short but extremely poignant and profoundly close to the tramps' existential plight---

Vladimir: Say something.

Estragon: I'm trying. (Long Silence) (Act II, p.63)

Vladimir's anguish after this prolonged Silence is almost at a burst---

Say anything at all!

Whereupon Estragon, no less desperate asks---

What do we do now?

And Vladimir's answer comes as the lone alternative---

Wait for Godot. (Act II, p.63)

To this Estragon's reply can only be an 'Ah!'. And there is Silence. The entire exercise is a part of a language game---

Vladimir: (in anguish) Say anything at all! (Long Silence)

Estragon: What do we do now?

Vladimir: Wait for Godot

Estragon: Ah! (Silence) (Act II, p.63)

After this Silence, the fact that they cannot even sing out of a fear of starting all over again receives dramaturgic treatment. A song would mean joy, which in an existential strait, is out of place, and even alarming---

Vladimir: This is awful.

Estragon: Sing something.

Vladimir: No no! (He reflects) We could start all over again perhaps. (Act II, p.63)

Yes, a song would begin it all over again and given the trauma of existence, why take the risk. Also, it is always the start that is difficult. Where to begin from, is never an easy decision. The language-game ends with Estragon saying 'True'. A Silence ensues. Then Vladimir asks for help and gets the answer 'I am trying'. And, there is yet another Silence. Beckettian dramaturgy appears to leave nothing to chance. The ritual of the repeated Silences institutes a disquiet, which becomes all the more alarming because two human beings appear under a terrible pressure to keep up an inane conversation. They cannot afford to sing, to think, to

say or even to help, and yet the 'talking I' is kept at constant speech.

To pass time the tramps agree to contradict each other, ask questions, talk of nature, and say that the most terrible thing ever was 'to have thought!' Long Silences ensue and the Waiting goes on. Each Silence is deafening and the Waiting becomes a torturous trauma. Dramatic technique had shorn existence of all illusions, and had made it an empty void. It was reduced to a Non-ent, and the reduction positioned on stage, as an intense condition 'there'. Infact, Estragon had gone on blathering, about nothing in particular, for the last half century! The Waiting was therefore perpetual and the two tramps were not a strange stage phenomenon. Man had waited for generations, all through history, and Being was an idle, purposeless Waiting!

Trouser-and-boot stage-business ensues, and as usual, the trite exchange of words that precedes it, has its anguished twinge because there is a complete breakdown of meaning---

Vladimir:Where are your boots?

Estragon I must have thrown them away.

Vladimir: When?

Estragon: I don't know.

Vladimir: Why?

Estragon: (exasperated). I don't know why I don't know!
(Act II, p.67)

After this, is the first of the four repetitions of the famous Waiting for Godot refrain in Act II, 'Let's go/We can't./Why not?/We're waiting for Godot/Ah!' However, as usual they donot leave. Next the raddish, turnip and carrot

stage-business follows, adding its own concretization of a futility to the Being-theme. Bored to death, Estragon goes to sleep. He lies in a foetal posture which adds to the prolonged Waiting, the idea that existence from its birth was an aborted condition. Earlier, the 'dead voices' too were supposed at a whisper. Estragon wakes up with a start. He had dreamt himself falling. Time is ripe for Beckettian dramaturgy to make a quick repetition of the Waiting refrain once more. It is the second in this Act. 'Let's go./We can't./Why not?/We're waiting for Godot/Ah!' and yet again, they donot move.

Now comes the turn of the stage-business of Lucky's hat, which, along with Estragon and Vladimir's, makes the hats three in number. The hats are exchanged rhythmically, after adjusting one on the head, and passing the extra one to the next partner. This is comic. But the fact that the hat had been associated till now, time out of number, with human thought, what physically transpires as movement, for all spectators to see and empathise with, is the positioning on-stage of an Alfred Jarry ridicule, 'Pataphysics'. That is, thought was futile, and therefore, metaphysics, a redundancy. The movement of the three hats is calculately rhythmic, and the rhythm can be gauged from the stage-directions and then followed-up as a display on stage. Each time, it is a matter of adjusting the third hat on one's own head, be the hat one's own, or, belong to one of the other two. Ofcourse, the tramps do it in right earnest, like circus artistes, yet the theme of the occasion is that hats fit differently, and, for Beckettian purposes of the moment, Lucky's hat is more important as a presentational correlative to the dramaturgy of thought. Lucky's hat sat over the head of the schizophrenic, whose word-salad was creatively exploited to disintegrate the traditional mores of Western thought, religion, research and sports culture.

This is quite in order, thematically as well as dramaturgically, because if thought itself was futile how could even your own hat, or for that matter, any hat adjust. At the end of it all, Vladimir moves his head coquettishly and stands like a mannequin. Hugh Kenner considers Beckettian *dramatis personae* a kind of a Cartesian Centaur, where the Body and the Mind just donot adjust with each other.²² In any case, Vladimir is as yet not sure about hats, particularly Lucky's and peers into it, shakes it, knocks on the crown and puts it on again. However, he was not as appalled as he was earlier, just because nothing whatever had even now fallen out. Infact, he had taken a liking for Lucky's hat, or, was it for its schizophrenic's word-salad, which was the only kind of thought and language possible in a Being-impasse, and in any case, and to Beckett's advantage, contributed effective drama to the already accentuated Waiting exercise!.

To continue to pass time, the two tramps next play the roles of Pozzo and Lucky, the most important exchange out of which is the sequence which is a short permutation on the regular dramaturgic debunk of the human effort at thought, after which only a Silence could ensue---

Vladimir: Tell me to think.

Estragon: What?

Vladimir: Say, Think, pig?

Estragon: Think pig. (Silence) (Act II, p. 73)

The Silence that ensues makes the Waiting more and more excruciating. Estragon is soon taken up by a 'They're coming'-syndrome, and desperately wants to hide. He writhes, pants, and falls. That over, Vladimir again positions himself extreme right and scans the horizon once more. Similarly,

Estragon positions himself extreme left, screens his eyes, and, scans the horizon. And together, they display an actual act of a Waiting. It is grotesque as well as pathetic. There is a Long Silence and the Waiting goes on. The language-game is still Beckett's forte, as is the display of a sheer, on-stage corporeal presence, 'there', Waiting. Scanning of horizons is thus followed by a language-set which has the rhythmic finish of a 'No./Nor I' finale, and at its completion ends in a Silence---

Estragon: Do you see anything coming?

Vladimir: (Turning his head) What?

Estragon: (louder) Do you see anything coming?

Vladimir: No.

Estragon: Nor I. (Silence.) (Act II, pp.74-75)

Now, since time had to be passed, a conversation on standing-at-ceremony is the next game played by the tramps. It is a grotesquely futile effort, and is also poignant for the same reason. Ceremony is thoroughly demolished by the time the game ends, when one tramp calls the other a 'Punctilious pig'. Next the comfortable illusion of a Vision is destroyed, even as earlier, the content of Dream, and Story, and Nature, were dramaturgically bereft of their meaning. Likewise, Belief, Place, Truth and Object were literally rinsed as if through a dramaturgic sieve. In the process, a Waiting; an absent-presence Godot; abject corporeality 'there', on stage, in futile idleness; Silence; and, 'talking I-s' apparently at constant conversation, were the only accretions left on an otherwise empty stage. The exercise-demolish, had always the same strategy. An exchange, or, two, activated some part of the meaning-content of each illusion, and the ensuing dramaturgy then literally sucked and shrivelled the illusion of its entire meaning, reducing

it to a mere voiced-sound. An illustration will not be out of order. There is the example of 'vision' on the anvil of dramaturgy wrecked of its meaning---

Vladimir: You must have had a vision.

Estragon: (turning his head) What?

Vladimir: (louder) You must have had a vision!

Estragon: No need to shout! (Silence) (Act II, p.75).

Similarly 'nature' is shorn of its solace, and, also destroyed is determined resolution, as the erasure takes its course---

Estragon: We should turn resolutely towards Nature.

Vladimir: We've tried that.

Estragon: True. (Act II, pp. 64-65)

Or, consider how the platitude of avoiding a look is disintegrated---

Vladimir: A charnel house! A charnel house!

Estragon: You don't have to look

Vladimir: You can't help looking.

Estragon: True. (Act I, p.64)

Or, to have thought is itself rendered a trauma--

Estragon: Well? If we gave thanks for our mercies?

Vladimir: What is terrible is to have thought. (Act II, p. 64)

Or again, while still at the thought dramaturgy, what is re-iterated as a significant part of the existential bind,

is that though thought is idle and ineffective, there is no escape from it either. This becomes obvious from the three dramaturgic repetitions of a French phrase, which means 'What would you?' ---

Vladimir: Oh, its not the worst, I know.

Estragon: What?

Vladimir: To have thought.

Estragon: Obviously.

Vladimir: But we could have done without it.

Estragon: Que voulez-vous?

Vladimir: I beg your pardon

Estragon: Que voulez-vous?

Vladimir: Ah! que voulez-vous. Exactly. (Act II, p.65)

Time still sits on the tramps as a heavy burden, and therefore to somehow pass it away, physical exercises are tried. But Estragon stops, because he is 'tired breathing', which, given the context, is a very significant remark. The tramps do the tree and stagger. Then before Pozzo and Lucky enter again, the tramps scream for God's pity, literally hurling dramaturgy at the notion of a benevolent creator. Estragon's 'On me! On me! Pity!, On me'! is a calculatedly shouted rhythm; it is a deliberate re-iteration that leaves little sanctity to the notion of a divinity and its grace. A deity or creator is an obs session with Beckett, who appears always ready to destroy or ridicule the idea and invents various situations to discomfit the meaning out of the notion.

When Pozzo and Lucky enter a second time, one is blind, and the other dumb. They stagger and fall, and, lie in a heap

on stage. The Pozzo-Godot confusion is capitalized on once again. The rhythm starts with a Vladimir platitude---

Vladimir: Time flows again already. The sun will sit,
the moon will rise, and we away...from here.

Pozzo : Pity!

Vladimir: Poor Pozzo!

Estragon: I knew it was him.

Vladimir: Who

Estragon: Godot.

Vladimir: But it's not Godot

Estragon: It's not Godot?

Vladimir: It's not Godot.

Estragon: Then who is it?

Vladimir: It's Pozzo. (Act II. p. 78)

And still later, there is the surprise at the star-performer's blindness. Pozzo, sure and self assured, and very much Man-in-God's Image, is, of all things a blind wreck---

Vladimir: ...(Silence) I wonder is he really blind.

Estragon: Blind? Who?

Vladimir: Pozzo.

Estragon: Blind?

Vladimir: He told us he was blind.

Estragon: Well what about it?

Vladimir: It seemed to me he saw us.

Estragon: You dreamt it.

Later, the confusion about Pozzo, as was the uncertainty about Godot, is manipulated dramaturgically and is shown to be under mounting pressure---

Estragon: ...Are you sure it wasn't him.

Vladimir: Who?

Estragon: Godot.

Vladimir: But who?

Estragon: Pozzo.

Vladimir: Not at all! (less sure) Not at all! (Still less sure) Not at all. (Act II, p.90)

A little earlier Lucky, the blind star performer's schizophrenic, is shown dumb, silencing even the word-salad of his thought, the ritual of 'dumb/Dumb!/Dumb/Dumb' culminating in the beat 'since/when' has already been pointed out---

Vladimir: Before you go tell him to sing!

Pozzo : Who?

Vladimir: Lucky.

Pozzo : To sing?

Vladimir: Yes. Or to think. Or to recite.

Pozzo : But he is dumb.

Vladimir: Dumb!

Pozzo : Dumb. He can't even groan.

Vladimir: Dumb since when? (Act II, p.89)

This makes Pozzo furious, but Beckett had found it effective drama, both as theme and as technique. Vladimir had doffed Lucky's hat aspiring to the latter's schizophrenia.

However, the dumb silence of a schizophrenic adds a cummulation to the theme of a Being-trap where schizophrenics loose the power even to groan. This is put into the play in characteristic Beckettian fashion to express a predicament, 'dumb/Dumb!/Dumb.... Dumb since when'.

Now, the self-conscious star-performer that Pozzo was, had become blind and must repeat his call for help as many as thirteen times. Also, the Waiting-refrain, 'Let's go./We can't./Why not?/We're waiting for Godot./Ah!', is given its third re-iteration in Act II, though as usual, the two tramps still donot leave. Pozzo is now sheer corporeality, and his torso is made to writhe and groan, and beat the ground, and call for help. Helped up, he leaves along with the dumb Lucky but not before he and Lucky, and the two tramps, fall into a dull heap on each other. Vladimir's famous epiphany is of significance next, with its overtones of a Shakespearean soliloquy. Was he sleeping when the others had suffered? Or, was he sleeping now? What will he say tomorrow, of today? Will it be that together, they had waited for Godot till the fall of night!? And, that Pozzo had passed. But then, what of its truth? Vladimir echoes Pozzo in 'astride of a grave and a difficult birth' and 'put down in a hole, lingeringly'. Hamlet-like he goes on. 'We have time to grow old', he says, and then, 'The air is full of cries...', and that 'habit was a great deadener'. He speaks of somebody seeing him, of thinking that Vladimir too sleeps like Estragon at that moment, and, therefore too knows nothing. Vladimir can bear it no longer, and after a Pause complains the he 'can't go on'. Next, after yet another Pause, the two Pauses accentuating his plight, he says that he doesnot know what he has said! It is indeed a Being-impasse of a Nothing-is, a Non-ent, where there can be no certainty, much less any illusion. Modern tragedy as Raymond Williams visualizes has its own flavour, and this is one example indeed of its tragic pathos. Within a created context

language 'dramaturgy', or, the drama inherent in work-a-day speech, whether voiced, or, as Pause or Silence, or, as repetition, beat or rhythm, can be given power and profundity, even though made bereft of all metaphor. Language still has the potential, if exploited creatively, to institute high quality drama.

To get back to the play which is now almost near its end, we find Vladimir moving feverishly on stage. He comes to halt, extreme left, and broods. The Boy of the second Act enters, as Godot's next messenger, because it is obvious by now, though tragic also, that Godot himself will never arrive and will remain content sending messengers only. The range and throw of the implication can be frighteningly sacrilegious: messengers were all that Godot had ever sent! He had never himself cared to put in an appearance. Fundamental queries had gone unanswered. What was existence all about? What was death? What happened after death? Why were body and mind made into the disjunct of a Cartesian Centaur? Why couldnot reason explain, faith answer and language communicate? What was Truth? Why the deafening Silence? Why the perpetual murmur of a 'talking I'? Why, in any case, the need to express? The sweep covers history, religion and what not! From grotesque comedy, the play transforms itself to a pathetic tragedy.

And then the Boy of Act II enters. He halts, and there is silence. Pathos was by now already writ large on the stage, and the grotesque also superbly incorporated. Ten Silences punctuate the drama of the Boy's presence on stage, till Vladimir's sudden lunge at him. As at the close of Act I, the dominating language rhythms are once again of, 'No, sir./No, sir./Yes, sir.', or 'Yes, sir./No, sir./Yes, sir, Yes, sir'. Vladimir's questions give direction to these rhythms. Did the Boy recognize Vladimir? Did he come yesterday? Did he

have a message? Will Godot come tomorrow? What does Godot do? Does he have a beard? Did the Boy have a brother? Amidst repeatedly spaced Silences the Boy answers. He can at best say that Godot will definitely come the next day. Therefore, the Wait has to continue, and the Boy's arrival was just one other ritual. Vladimir's lunge at the Boy is both comic and desperate. It ends the 'No, sir./No, sir./Yes, sir.', and a 'Yes, sir/No, sir/Yes, sir/Yes sir' rhythm, each of which was supported by a conclusive Silence. However, while the rhythms last, entire human existence, past, present and future is accentuated, as at stake, and Vladimir's desperate call of 'Christ have mercy', once again an appertune moment for Beckettian irony, heightens the drama, preceded and succeeded as it is, by Silences. Earlier, the only message that Vladimir could send to Godot, was to ask the Boy, to tell Godot, that he had seen Vladimir. But then, was the Boy sure that he had seen Vladimir! And, in sheer desperation, Vladimir lunges at the Boy, who escapes and a Silence ensues.

The play is about to end. Its refrain of 'Let's go./We can't./Why not?/We're waiting for Godot/Ah!', was repeated for the last time when the blind Pozzo lay on the ground calling for help. After the Boy messenger leaves, six more Silences, spaced to intensify the drama end the play. They accentuate the spectator's new awareness of a prolonged Waiting, with no questions answered to satisfaction. Being was an aborted disjunct, a mentality-corporeality conglomerate!

Estragon, who has been asleep while the Boy was there, wakes up. Language dynamic is again exploited, to emphasize, that Vladimir couldnot tell Estragon, for sure, if he had been asleep. The uncertainty and confusion are oppressing. It is a poignant human plight. Mentality had lost axis completely, not that it was ever of anyworth. A Silence

ensues. The tramps talk again of leaving. However, they cannot afford to go far, for the next day again, they must return to wait for Godot. Another Silence ensues. The poignancy was becoming pathetic. The tramps have to continue their conversation. Godot had not come, and night having arrived, it was too late. Shouldn't they drop Godot altogether? But this they could not do, for then Godot would punish them. It was a trap situation. Man waited and Godot never came. If Man had walked away, he would have been punished! The overtones are obvious. Drama was now-keyed to an intensity. There is yet another Silence. The play is being rounded off and Waiting could be carried away by the spectators to their homes, and, to their individual existential predicaments also! The tramps look at the tree, and, one calls it a willow, the symbol of grief, but neither tramp is sure. Still another Silence follows. The situation was almost agonizing. Shouldn't they commit suicide? And yet, how could they, because they did not even have a rope! The next Silence becomes traumatic. Could not Estragon's belt serve as a rope? It is rejected, as too short. Could not Vladimir hang on to Estragon's legs? But who then, would hang on to Vladimir's? The innuendo is obvious. A serial suicide was visualized, however grotesquely, for all mankind. Or, was it, that the spectator was put into the smug category of the Pozzo of the first Act, and, the two tramps, were just two of the few, that felt terribly the irrationality of all human existence. In fact, everybody was in the Being-trap, though most still chose not to commit themselves. They stood apart, away and aloof. Some were even aggressive and beat up Estragon occasionally! The spectators now witness the trouser stage-business. Estragon's belt is anyhow tried. When it is removed Estragon's trousers fall. Trousers now take over from hats and boots. Or, was it done to reveal what a human being ultimately was-- a bare, two-forked animal! The tragic and the grotesque appear to co-

exist, because laughter, minus the throat-sound can be frighteningly bizarre. Vladimir had to stifle many laughs and contort his face several times; in the process, Estragon's trousers must fall. The tramps try suicide with Estragon's belt. It is actually a cord. It is short, and, when the tramps pull, it breaks. The two almost fall, and even the attempt at suicide is found 'not worth a curse'. Vladimir says as much, and a Silence ensues to help sink that in. They decide to bring a rope the next day, which implies that Godot, as was his wont, may not come the next day either. But, would they be saved if Godot came? That too remained speculation. Meanwhile, Vladimir takes off his hat for the last time. Incidentally, it is Lucky's. As earlier, he peers and feels inside, shakes it, knocks it, but still no pigeon-truth is forthcoming. Once more, neither appalled, nor surprised, he puts it on again. To repeat, Lucky's hat, had with it, the association of schizophrenic thought, the only kind of thought that was possible under the circumstances. And, Estragon's fallen trousers had revealed the bare two-forked animal, that Man was. Vladimir asks, 'Well? Shall we go?' and Estragon answers, 'Yes. Let's go'. However, the tramps donot move. But how could they; had not the dramaturgy of an entire play all along effectively convinced the spectators, that the tramps couldnot!

To conclude then, vaudeville, music-hall, and commedia dell' arte couldnot ever have been Beckett's single or central interests, because his primary aim was to shape a Non-ent committed as the playwright was to his particular vision of life, bleak and dark though it may have been. It was a world-view in which all absolutes and all illusions had collapsed, including, those of Thought, Reason, Languages, Story, Dream, Vision, Truth, and even Nature, Faith, and Religion. The 'integrated' human being is actually found to be a disjunct mentality-corporeality conglomerate, because

pineals being absent, there was no link whatever, between Mind and Body. Therefore, to repeat, thought was futile, and, human corporeality a prime condition in an irrational existential situation. Again, mentality and corporeality being disjunct, there is no psychology, and no motivation, and hardly any character. Under the circumstances, stage-directions become very important. Also, because the Irrational is the dominant experience, Pauses and Silences acquire great significance. In fact, a Beckettian Silence is often deafening. Furthermore, the obligation to express being perpetual, a 'talking-I' must keep up a murmur, even if it be to ward-off a frightening quiet. Moreover, utterance or voiced-sound being unable to identify objective reality, the banal acquires a pathetic human tinge. With the banal becoming human, and the obligation to express perpetual, despite a language collapse, existence has to be logocentric. Under these circumstances metaphor will be anathema, though trite and commonplace expression would acquire significant metaphysical slant as well as, become intense drama. The final discovery for the audience, would be that there is a tension inherent and innate in the language phenomenon itself, which helps creatively manipulate even its stereotypes to subtle quality drama. This, along with a disjunct mentality and torso-corporeality, help Beckett shape the play to suit his theme of a Nothing-is, making form and content so integral to each other that each *is* the other. Again, Beckettian drama being more presentational than representational, it situates on stage, an irrational corporeal presence 'there', which is not about something but the *something* itself. The stage, through its sparseness, assists the drama create the context of a near-void. On this empty stage, the playwright institutes, through deft dramatic stage-images, and, a live language dynamic, the abstract

notion of a Waiting, and along with it, the still more abstract phenomenon of an absent-presence, Godot. In this effort a sense of immediacy remains the hall mark of the entire strategy. Therefore, an almost empty stage, and significant stage-directions; Pauses, Silences and a two-act circular structure; sheer torso-corporeality as a presence 'there'; and, logo-centricity as rhythm, beat, cross-talk cliché epiphany and song despite a language collapse are the distinct features of Beckettian dramaturgy in *Waiting for Godot*.

However, after all is said and done, *Waiting for Godot* is a significant logo-centric exercise, so that language remains its ultimate forte. It is ofcourse not a language of metaphor. It is a 'collapsed' language, but creatively used, tension and drama being inherent to the language dynamic itself or to its 'ontology', where 'ontology' is used loosely to describe the way in which a language has in its nature to exist, either as an absence, that is, as Silence, or, as communion, that is, as Articulation. Dramatic tension is an inherent, innate quality of language, and Beckett, aware of Artaud's attitude, was more aware and alert to the dramaturgic subtleties intrinsic to lingual and gestural expression. In fact, the playwright has his fingers on the very pulse of this phenomenon used as a strategy to show that disruption too is often very communicative, even if it be only as absence of meaning. For, a word is a speech-sound and sound is dramatic. Again, words, spoken or written, come one after the other. They cannot be spoken or written all at once. They have sequence and movement, which have their own beat and rhythm. Therefore, Silence or Articulation is full of potential friction, and language is brimful with drama. Language has in it a drama,

upon which a metaphor is an artificial imposition. A cart-load of metaphors can often smother language of its natural beat and rhythm, as well as of its proximity to existential experience. In any case, since metaphors implied metaphysical systems they were anathema to Beckettian themes. Alert even to the slightest hint of a beat or rhythm even in a cross-talk or other language banality, and, with the ability to creatively exploit these for profound dramaturgic strategies, Beckett often makes the trite sound lyrical. It is hardly surprising therefore that the playwright is reputed to have become a classic in his life time.

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