

**AXE FOR THE FROZEN SEA : *EXISTENZANGST*
IN THE PLAYS OF EUGENE IONESCO**

ABSTRACT



NAOMI BHUYAN
Regn. No: 774 of 2003

SUPERVISOR
Prof. Sujata Gurudev

Department of English
School of Humanities
North-Eastern Hill University
Tura

2010

NEHU LIBRARY

Acc. No. _____

Acc. by. _____

Date. _____

Class by. _____

Sub - Heading by. _____

Enter by. _____

CONTENTS

- Chapter-I** **Introduction: *Existenzangst***
- Chapter-II** **Schizophrenic Perceptions in *The Chairs***
- Chapter-III** **Sadomasochism in *The Lesson***
- Chapter-IV** **Neurotic Overtones in *Exit the King***
- Chapter-V** **Paranoid Realities in *Amadee***
- Chapter-VI** **Conclusion: *Satori***
- Bibliography**

Chapter I

Introduction : *Existenzangst*

A real book must be the axe for the frozen sea in us.¹

Kafka

The Theatre of the Absurd, which came as a post war phenomenon had an obviously startling effect. It was as powerful a force as the war was on modern man, provoking tumultuous upheaval in the psyche of the individual. Man's integrity had become threatened for his belief both in himself and the Godhead was completely shattered. Camus who identified the problem declared :

... anyone who is without God and without a Master, the weight of days is dreadful.²

The pathos of isolation, the struggle to survive in a hostile universe was highly traumatic. Man suffered in anguish and intensity, in the belief:

There is no light at the end of the tunnel.³

Entirely alone bereft of a God as Nietzsche had asserted, or even Camus' 'master', modern man survived while attempting to harness a quality life. Man discovered that continual failure was highly traumatic in one's

struggle given one's individual isolation and deep seated trauma. The war within the mind was augmented by an all encompassing fear.

Hence, the title of this discourse emphasizes the perfect term which ironically arose amongst the perpetrators of the War Crimes - a German term - *Existenzangst*, which when translated literally means, "The Fear of Living". This was the basic problem for the individual grappling with the 'turbulent peace' especially after the 2nd World War man, survived in an almost comatose state, benumbed in the icy waters of dehumanization – the psychological "frozen sea". Esslin had stated that the basic theme of the post war playwrights especially the absurd writers:

The sense of metaphysical anguish at the
Absurdity of the human condition...⁴

Moreover, *Existenzangst* is not something new to literature. Prior to the Theatre of the Absurd other contemporary writers have also dealt with the 'absurd' element of man in the universe. Camus in his essay, *The Myth of Sisyphus* (1942) envisages Sisyphus forever rolling a stone, up a hill, eternally aware that it will never reach the top. This poignant symbol the metaphysical anguish at the meaninglessness of existence. Sartre in *Le Diable et le Bon Dieu* (1951) demonstrated the irrelevance in the modern scenario.

Existentialist writers called upon man to take a stand and raised questions about the world at large. The irrational world plunged a man into a greater crisis. This was revealed by the Theatre of the Absurd which:

...strives to express its sense of senselessness of the human condition and the inadequacy of the rational approach by the open abandonment of rational devices and discursive thought.⁵

The angst of each and every man emerging from Auschwitz and Schevenigen and other centres of hell was graphically if not symbolically recorded. The Absurdists did not argue about the human condition, they merely presented it in all its stark detail. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that while these works highlighted the trauma of man, they were not always objective. The subjective overtones are obvious as each playwright grappled with his personal angst. A number of the playwrights were domiciled in France like Beckett, Ionesco, Arrabal, Adamov. However only Genet was a Frenchman. These playwrights transcended the personal to the universal mind and featured the degeneration or *Ausarten* a German term, relevant to the individual in the post war period.

Beckett exposed the evanescence of man in time and the mystery of the human personality and identity in his two masterpieces namely, *Waiting for Godot* (1953) and *Endgame* (1957). Adamov used his creativity as psychotherapy, exposing his own oppression and anxieties especially in *Professor Taranne* (1951). Albee's *Zoo Story* (1958) clinically featured the schizoid mind dwelling in ritualistic and symbolic levels, while Pinter attacked the superficiality and sterility of society. Eugene Ionesco considered the 'Father of Absurd Drama' suffered his own trauma. A product of a broken home, he spent much time with his father in Romania whom he hated, and worried about his absentee mother whom he loved. His return to France gave him several experiences which made him,

...adamantly anti - bourgeois, anti – authority, anti- militarism, against male control of women and agnostic. With this viewpoint he delved into writing.⁶

The Twentieth Century, has been called the “Age of Anxiety”. The agony of the inner psychological war in the mind of man was a situation which lingered and man could not cope with the predicament much longer. As a result the trauma which ensued, compelled the individual to collapse psychologically and become inherently “sick”. Sickened with inner pain of survival with tormenting memories, man ‘lived’ but was barely ‘alive’ in the literal sense. To deal with this ordeal was the need of the hour and the only solution was to resort to the understanding and healing of the psyche of the individual, so as to combat this psychological epidemic. In this context psychoanalysis became of paramount importance during this age to foster the healing process.

In the seminal book *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1949), Sigmund Freud had referred to the fact that *angst* was not an emotion which could be translated. In fact the word in its original revealed an emotion which was choked with extreme levels of the paranoia, terrifying in its onslaught. ‘Intensely emotionally scarred’, modern man sank to the deepest levels of *angst* where the damaged mind incited unusual behavior bordering on the insane. This is basically the area which this thesis will probe for literature is a reflection of life. Ionesco reflected in his plays the “authentic” experience of the age.

It is important to identify the area of analysis of the psyche and its abnormal manifestations before proceeding to Ionesco’s plays. As understood, ‘mass madness’ was a reaction to the conditions of

existence in the post war a situation which could not be ignored by man. Moreover, the psychological decay set in stage by stage with the first psychological attempt by the individual to mobilize one's inner resources to cope with stress. However the 'emotional arousal' and 'heightened sensitivity', often caused maladjustment, where with adaptive measures being inadequate to deal with stress the individual was compelled to tackle his predicament with the means of 'resistance'. The individual became set in rigid responses and clung to conditioned defensive patterns. Furthermore, when this maneuver became impossible and completely depleted with the excessive stress, the individual had a complete break with reality.

Considering the aspect of psycho – analysis which will be the main foundation of this thesis, it has been divided into two basic areas, Neurosis and Psychosis. The first has been featured as an anxiety disorder and a defense oriented avoidant behavior and often termed as a "substitute for legitimate suffering" and covered anxiety, stress and to a certain extent, phobia. In Freudian terms 'Neurosis' comprised a clash between the rational or reality principle, 'ego' and the pleasure principle, 'id'. Psychosis on the other hand, dealt with the dominance of the id and the suppression of the ego and hence, this severe mental illness left the individual hallucinating continually in the auditory and the visual realm, acutely distanced from reality living, in a dream state.

Furthermore, relating this prognosis to the works of Ionesco, one will note that the specified works in this thesis all highlighted the abnormal manifestations. Particularly, a play like *The Chairs* (1952) revealed the psychotic aspect of Schizophrenia , while the display pertaining to the Neurosis type of ailments were exemplified in three specific works namely, in *The Lesson* (1951), where Sado-Masochistic

aspects of Neurosis are evident. Additionally in *Amadee* or *How to Get Rid of It* (1953), the Neurotic and Paranoid outputs manifested and *Exit the King* (1962), focused on various levels of Neurotic behavior.

This thesis basically aims to identify the catastrophic effect of *Existenzangst* on the psyche of modern man. Specifically in Ionesco's plays which reflected the truly authentic, characters who were damaged in the mind, and were portrayed as such. These victims were compelled to live in a fantasy world and became psychotic in consequence while the mass resorted to escape mechanisms and as a result, suffered from neurosis.

The psychosomatic ailments will be highlighted in great detail in Ionesco's plays and the exposure of the 'psychological cripples' will be given due place. However, though manifestations of various diseases overlap in some of his plays, attempts will be made to focus on a singular manifestation in each case study of his plays. The introduction will highlight the confusion, query and disturbance in the individual as a consequence of *Existenzangst* which provoked one to intense introspection and questioning to make sense of one's situation and come to a higher realization as will be seen in the conclusive area of this thesis.

The chapterisation of this thesis will cover the following:

Chapter II

Schizophrenic Perceptions in *The Chairs*.

Schizophrenia was significantly associated with the highest category of persecution.⁷

A disturbed mind is tortured with questions. The experience of *Existenzangst* which follows, compels the mind to tackle this ordeal as a last remnant of an attempt at kinship with people. Unfortunately, all endeavors fail, and the individual is left a victim of the most unfortunate circumstances.

The mind was unable to withstand the negative emotional inputs during the Post War period. The massive life – long psychological disintegration imposed by the Holocaust for both the Semite and otherwise, caused a severe psychological chronic and deteriorating ailment called the “Holocaust Syndrome”, in which the mind though wounded, never stopped questioning.

As a result, the mind broke down in maladjustment. The battle of the mind “overpowered with questions” sought an escape reality the ‘lie of living’ and the intense pain left the individual psychologically “spilt and sick”. The individual was deemed mad to put the matter trivially, and in the clinical terminology - a lunatic or Schizophrenic.

A holocaust, ^{Survivor} Corrie ten Boom made a most poignant remark. The inescapable truth according to her was that “everyone was a

damaged human being". The Swiss psychologist Joseph Bleuler, who coined the term 'Schizophrenia', was more explicit. Ten Boom's "damage" he analyzed was due to the 'schizoid' mind. There was in the victim, a disorganization of thought process, a lack of coherence of thought and emotion and an inward disorientation from reality.

In Freudian terminology, the victim unable to bear reality due to the pressure of the *existenzangst*, survived in a dream like state with the predominance of the *id* or the pleasure principle, which clashed vehemently with the *ego* or the reality principle. Along with the recorded psychological case studies literature also recorded the ailment and specifically the Absurd playwrights, did a stupendous job of documentation. In fact, the critic G.C. Barnard in his study of Beckett's plays commented that Schizophrenia was:

an important characteristic of Beckett's heroes... The essential element of (schizophrenia) is a withdrawal of interest from the outside world and a concentration upon the inner world of fantasy.⁸

Barnard's observation of Beckett pertained to the Catatonic type of the ailment while in Ionesco's work, like *The Chairs*, one notices that it was replete with Schizophrenic perceptions of the Paranoid type. This basically included the behavioral symptoms of delusions of persecution and grandeur, and the tendency to hear inner voices and hallucinations..

Typifying several of the Absurdist's techniques Ionesco's work *The Chairs* deals with a minimal cast in an isolated setting. The two protagonists namely a ninety year old, Old Man and his wife Semiramus, are isolated in a Watchtower and are compelled to recall memories and 'historical allusions', for over seventy five years. The pathos

of the exercise was that the endeavor was a means to fill a social vacuum in the 'ancient's lives which their isolation in the island necessitated. To overcome their stagnant death – like daily existence, the Old Man spurred on by his cajoling and overambitious wife, unconsciously surrenders to fantasy and especially 'delusions of grandeur', which leads them to continue a heightened level of fantasy and hallucination to initiate a peace conference. The Old Man states:

I've a message you're right. I must fight for it, a mission, I can give birth to a great idea, a message for all men, for all mankind.

(The Chairs p.133)

Such a decision is fostered by the onset of the 'Primary process' of the Schizoid mind with the 'delusions of grandeur' which became their mainstay. This is clarified when the Old Man and his wife overstep the limitations imposed by age. Their invitees include:

...important people, ...the property owners, the parliamentarians, the proletarians, the revolutionaries,..the mental patients, the mental specialists...the chromosomes..the scientists...anyone who can be called . scientist or a property owner..

(The Chairs p.136)

Reflecting the decay that has set in, the chromosomes are mentioned along with the mental specialists, which helps the playwright reveal the fact that 'mass madness' had become widely prevalent during the modern era. This is also true of the protagonists in the

play. The Additionally too, it portrayed the psychological condition of the protagonists in the play.

The advancement of their senile state enhances the madness in the ancients. The ridiculous grandiose scheme becomes apparently real with the ringing of the door bell. A Lady is ushered in followed by others such as the Colonel, Miss Lovely, a Photographer, a family with children and numerous others. In fact the room becomes overcrowded to such an extent that there is no place for the elderly couple to stand together and they have to separate. However, the strangest part of the situation lies in the fact that throughout the play the apparent 'invitees' were non-existent. The conversations and inter social intermingling that takes place happens with individuals who were represented by the "Chairs". The people were invisible hence, they were merely a hallucinatory exercise, perfectly Schizophrenic in content.

G.C.Barnard referring to Beckett's works specified that the pseudo-couple were two halves of one mind who were indissolubly bound together. Specifying this trait in Beckett's masterpiece *Waiting for Godot* (1952), we find Estragon manifests the withdrawn 'inner self' and Vladimir represents the pseudo-self which is related to the body. This is also seen in Beckett's other plays like *Endgame* (1957).

However, a similar fact is noticed in Ionesco's ancient couple in *The Chairs*. The Old Man embodies more of the higher ideals of the 'inner self' and 'inner life' and Semiramus, seems altogether different. She, unleashes her libidinous urges with the photographer, with her seductive maneuvers for a brief period enough to contrast her with her husband. This play deals with the "split" in the dual persona of the couple –

who are at once very different and yet, at the same time united. The Old Man comments:

The person and the individual are one and the the same person...I am not myself, I am someone else. I am the one in the other.

(The Chairs p.161)

The unity of the Couple gets revealed in a more pertinent way. Emulating the Old Man's feelings, Semiramus echoes his message, his vision, spontaneously and almost unconsciously, to create an impact on the audience. Semiramus upholds her husband's role in society as being of 'supreme importance and quite sublime'. Unfortunately the task could not be completed without the presence of The Orator, who the Old Man had hired to speak on his behalf. The Couple have to await his presence. However, in the interim the most unexpected visitor arrives.

With great ceremony, and a fanfare of trumpets and brilliant light, the Emperor arrives to grace the occasion with his unexpected presence. The protagonists were intensely excited, completely overcome with the regal presence and yet, the occasion propelled the Old Man to veer to feelings of persecution and discontent. He confesses:

I have always been hated for the right reason and loved for the wrong ones...I was a collector of disasters, a lightning conductor for catastrophe...

(The Chairs p.167)

The pathos of the Old Man's anguish, his failures, and his great struggle moves the audience to such an extent that the noted critic Richard N. Coe confessed:

I saw the play 8 times. At each performance the audience was more moved than amused. A discussion followed and several members of the audience... said the play 'exhausted' them and made them 'feel empty'. This uniform response suggested ...that the play evoked anguish as well as pity. Perhaps a better rendering of Aristotle's "pity and fear".⁹

Referring, to Coe in essence relates to the climax in the play shattering the mind of the audience with Kafka's "axe" effect, delivering the desired shock technique. The play continues and Orator had still not arrived.

When he does arrive it is in the garb of the last century and a ghost-like walk. He is so silent a presence that it is difficult for the protagonists to realize whether he was merely a figment of their imagination or real. However, he was the only other character besides the Ancients, who was actually a living human being unlike the imaginary audience in the "Chairs". The time has come for the imminent for the departure of the protagonists.

The Old Man in gratitude to the Orator becomes almost trivial in conveying his indebtedness to all, and specifically, the masons who raised the walls of the watchtower, the paper manufacturers, printers, proof readers, technicians and then to greater issues like the "universal solidarity of the human race", which he expected the Orator to gather from his life and his personal philosophy of enlightenment. The Old Man hoped that in his life would not be wasted if the Orator only paid heed. The Old

Man affirmed that after his death all his life's efforts would bear fruit. A street would bear the couple's names and even the Emperor would not be able to forget them. Thus, knowing that he had not lived his life in vain, the Old Man along with Semiramus for their transcendence. Exceedingly animated they testify to the fact that that:

It would appear that Schizophrenics were often slower than normal persons in returning to a state of normal equilibrium.¹⁰

The difficulty for a schizoid mind to distinguish reality from fantasy which is technically known as the "filtering process" gets revealed at this point in the play. The conflict of the internal and the externally stimulated impulses at that juncture became unbearable for the Couple. As a result failing to consider the consequences or even being indifferent to them, the Couple resort to the most unexpected act. There was sudden splash of bodies hitting the water. The Couple ultimately commit suicide.

The fatal act verifies what psychologists have always maintained that people with schizophrenia have a high risk of committing suicide and are especially likely to do so during psychotic episodes. Left in their 'watery grave' Orator takes his cue and speaks. He does so it is with the awareness of his limitations as he was deaf- mute. The Orator utilizes a blackboard and scribbles a number of illogical words such as "NNAA NNMNWNWNWV...Adieu,..." (*The Chairs* p.176) after which, bowing to the "Chairs", he exits. He remains enigmatic till the end.

The conclusion of the play invites more questions. The end of the play sees the empty stage come alive and the 'Chairs' react. To elucidate, the "Chairs" came to life and laugh. Furthermore, as Ionesco specified to the director Sylvian Dhomme, before the play was staged in Paris in 1952 that the impact of the 'Chairs' lay in the fact that :

(is the effect beyond reason, true in its improbability, that we are looking for and that we must obtain), upsetting logic and raising fresh doubts. ¹¹

To discover the meaning of one's existence which the playwright highlights is the question the post war man had to resolve. Hence, the psychological disturbance experienced by the old couple created the "split" effect of the Schizoid. Ionesco's brilliant portrayal of the Schizoid was the actual analysis of the ailment. Schizophrenia, more than the popular "split personality", was an ailment where the individual was "split off" from reality. Ionesco's rendition of escape mechanisms in *The Chairs*, asserted his understanding of the 'Holocaust Syndrome' and its epidemical activity.

Ionesco had dramatized the effect, which only served to reaffirm the ultimate truth was that - Schizophrenia is a manifestation of our times.



Chapter III

Sado Masochism in *The Lesson*

As a matter of fact I am personally convinced that the concepts which arise in our thoughts And in our linguistic expressions are all – when Viewed logically – the free creations of thought...¹²

Survival with *Existenzangst*, the Post War man lives in a state of psychological deterioration. Man found his outlet through speech. This aspect is central to Ionesco's *The Lesson* (1951), and will be the primary analysis in this chapter.

Beyond the speech frontier the mind came to the bedrock of human behavior. This foundation was fortified by suspicion, hate and above all fear. This was ingrained in the post war man and literally produced the psychological – holocaust product. Man's survival was not merely on a physical level; his struggle with his mind compelled him to exhibit strange behavioral patterns in his interpersonal relationships. In extreme levels it veered beyond the strange to the macabre, to manifestations of excessive cruelty to oneself or another – psychologically termed as the Sadistic and the Masochistic.

Sadism pertains to the affliction of intense cruelty on one's victims for sexual pleasure while Masochism refers to the feeling of sexual pleasure obtained through personal pain. These terms became infamous through literary works focusing on the dark area of the mind inflicting suffering on oneself or another. In Absurd Theatre, Ionesco's *The Lesson (TL)* too is no exception and reveals this dialectical trauma. The play

literally centres around a “lesson” between an aged Professor and an enthusiastic pupil. Beyond the apparently harmless experience, it becomes an exercise which goes beyond the academic to perverse psychology.

An aspect of psychoanalysis, is that along with Freud’s “Life instinct” there was another one which was termed as “Death Instinct”. If the former term was indicative of the libido state of the passion to love, the latter was an extreme urge or the ‘passion’ to destroy. Freud clarifies:

...besides the instinct to preserve living substances, there must be another, contrary instinct seeking to those units and to bring them back to their primal, inorganic state. That is to say, as well as eros there was an instinct of death. ¹³

The Behavioralist expert, Konrad Lorenz, had referred to what he called the “Hydraulic Model”, which basically meant the sadistic impulse. This impulse finds fulfillment in Ionesco’s student – tutor interaction in the play. The sadistic drive dominates the play but the masochistic manifestation finds expression in the final transformation of the characters. However, in the beginning of the play the chief characters are deceptive.

The Professor guised as an apparently timid individual does not intimidate the unsuspecting Pupil at the outset of the play. However, with the progress of the ‘lesson’ Ionesco’s comment becomes perceptive:

Excessively polite, very shy, a voice subdued by his timidity,...He is constantly rubbing his hands together; now and again the prurient gleam in his eyes will slowly and imperceptibly disappear; the prurient gleam in his eyes will end by blazing into an insistent, lecherous, devouring flame...the Professor will grow more ...excitable, aggressive, domineering, until he can do as he pleases with his Pupil, she having become putty in his hands...

(The Lesson, p.183)

As a contrast however, the lively and animated confident Pupil changes her demeanor. Gradually she sinks into a state of nervous depression till she became a lifeless object in the Professor's hands with her eyes only left, reflecting her 'indescribable shock and terror' as, the play progresses.

The introductory part of the play focused on queries relating to Geography. This was an area where the Pupil had no problem. However, when the 'lesson' focuses on arithmetic the difficulties of the Pupil begin. The Pupil exhibited unusual prowess in addition and multiplication but when it came to subtraction, the psychological torture is subtly imposed by the Professor. The trauma for the Pupil is increased when her mistakes arouse the anger in the Professor which progressed to intense cruelty towards the young girl. The illustrations given by the Professor terrifies her even more with his sadistic examples such as, the "plucking off noses" or "nibbling of the ears". However, much worse is in store for her with the development of the 'lesson'.

With the actual and symbolical 'subtraction' of the Pupil's vivacity by the Professor, the Pupil was left in a vulnerable enough state to submit to coercion of any kind. Specifically, this form came not

through numbers but through the words. In Ionesco's play *Jacques or Obediance* (1950), Jacques bemoans:

Oh words, what crimes are committed in your name! ¹⁴

Emerging as an intolerant powerful figure apparently intent on his academic vocation but in reality, even more determined to finish off the Pupil, by literally silencing her forever, the Professor advances beyond the Sadistic hunting instinct to one of the actual 'kill'.

Focusing on a complex lecture on philology and the purity of language groups the Professor gradually confuses and exhausts his Pupil. In a state of terror, emotional trauma or pain in the Pupil manifests in the psycho-somatic state in the form of a toothache which persists till the end of the play. However, despite her mounting agony the Professor ignores her intentionally. In fact, he provokes her and tortures her with the word 'teeth, vocal chords, uvula, tongue' and onomatopoeic words sadistic in content as, 'vibrating, hissing, rustling, bristling and whistling'. The latter device, was utilized by the Professor with villainous motive, for the repetition of similar sound words co-related to the chants used in ancient times before a human sacrifice. Here, all the Professor's efforts mounted to satiate his actual 'blood lust' or technically, the 'death instinct'. The tension lies in his focused determination. The suspense lies in whether his efforts would result in actually killing the Pupil or there was still hope of escape for her. The climax was yet to be seen.

Along with the sadistic auditory stimuli the Professor, shrewdly combined the method of miming the word through action. The Professor, imposing upon the Pupil to partake of 'auto-suggestion', from the imaginary to the real, made it mandatory for the Pupil to watch very closely the movements of an imaginary knife which he had in his hand. He

commands: "Don't take your eyes off it." (TL, p.212) and additionally, declared: "The knife can kill." (TL, p. 214) In response, the Pupil in a trancelike state, agrees with a "yes, yes..." yet, paralyzed in astonishing incredulity she asks the fatal question: "...the knife can kill?" (TL, p.214) where, in response, with hard knife-thrusts, the Professor stabs the Pupil with the imaginary knife bringing about her actual death. The dual response of the cry "aah!", at the time of the murder and the Pupil's posture of sprawling in an immodest position combined with the cry of the girl, carries the final Masochistic imprint.

The German psychiatrist Richard von Krafft-Ebing in his work *New Research in the Area of Psychopathy of Sex*, (1890), had clarified that Masochism manifestations occur due to the fact that:

Often these actions are motivated because the patient feels they are under high pressure to achieve something.¹⁵

In Ionesco's play, the strain, the frustration and above all the tension in its own morbid way, provides ample stimuli to excite the Pupil. Besides, this was the apex which the Professor was building the Pupil up to, to finally respond to his libidinous impulse which unfortunately she does ultimately succumb to, with her death. The Professor had succeeded but to what extent is ironically revealed much later in the play. The Maid, though not a major figure in the play had her own moments of brief importance specifically, as she alone knew the extent to which the Professor's could overreach himself. However, the reality when unraveled is terrifying, when she disclosed the chilling fact that:

This is the fortieth time today ! We're going to bury her...at the same time, as the other thirty- nine...forty coffins that'll make...

(TL, p.129)

The open-ended conclusion of many more coffins coincide with the doorbell ringing and the Maid ushering in the expected 41st victim for another "lesson"- another fatal Sadistic kill. This second play of Ionesco secured his position as a playwright of excellence. Rising from a plot structure of a mere "lesson", the playwright's astute insight into human nature goes far beyond the damaged mind of the individual to Jung's collective unconsciousness of all minds. If humanity, was deemed 'split and sick' in the previous chapter, the same psychological decay is evident in this particular work with the focus upon extreme inner perversion.

The state of *Existenzangst* which had become a permanent fixture, in the Twentieth Century and birthed the period "The Age of Anxiety" exposed humanity as being not merely lonely, but emotionally unhinged and craving for attention. This "inner pain" Ionesco understood with penetrating insight and hence, he portrayed the trauma in such vividness so as to awaken Post War man to the great psychological manifestation after the War. Basically Ionesco knew that reliving that 'emotional hurt' would basically be therapeutic, a catharsis for man and hence, help in survival in a holistically healthier level instead of Freud's inference that the essence of Sadomasochism is that masochism desires to experience pain, but he generally desires that it should be inflicted in love; the Sadist desires that it should be felt as love.

Hence, *The Lesson*, with its play of the “sodomasochistic fantasy” provokes and simultaneously, uplifted the consciousness of humanity by infusing understanding and wisdom beyond the perverse mind of post war consciousness. *The Lesson* is, not only was a mirror image of man’s “inner sickness” but ultimately, a revelation of the ability to overcome the excessive decay and empower oneself.

Chapter IV

Neurotic Overtones in *Exit the King*

The role of anxiety is particularly prominent in individual character formation and personality development ...As with any stimulus, however, a massive dose can defeat its own purpose by causing overreaction or complete paralysis. In excess anxiety can cause disjunctive and pathologic behavior. It is, in fact, probably at the root of most neurotic and psychotic illness.¹⁶

When the mind falters in the abyss of anxiety, the psychosomatic effect overpowers the individual. Hence, that mind is compelled to questions and find a solution. The individual was left even more agonized, and, the human psyche is conditioned by the force of negation utilized. The defensive mechanism to somehow survive. This results in non-acceptance, denial of reality, and even attempts to continue to do so in a reiterative mode. This maladjustment lead to a serious malady in the mind and hence, one was deemed a Neurotic.

Neurosis has been defined as an anxiety disorder. The common core in Neurosis is a maladaptive behavior typified by anxiety and defensive oriented avoidant behavior. Basic to Neurotic Lifestyle are:

Neurotic nucleus – the faulty evaluation of reality and the tendency to avoid rather than cope with stress. Neurotic paradox –the tendency to maintain this lifestyle despite its self defeating and maladaptive nature.¹⁷

Keeping this in mind, Freudian psychoanalysis reveals that the *ego* with its dependence on reality suppressed a portion of the *id*. However, the *id* being ever rebellious clashed with the *ego* and as a result became incapable of adjusting to the exigencies of reality and sought an escape by becoming sick or specifically, Neurotic. To clarify, strains of both these manifestations were visible in Ionesco's play *Exit the King* (1962).

This work of Ionesco focuses on the neurotic 'escape' not only in terms of daily survival but in the aspect of one's finiteness. The playwright's "Everyman" is King Berenger, who under the delusion of immortality refuses to die and declares:

I'll die when I want to. I'm the King.
I'm the one to decide.

(*Exit the King*.p.18)

However, his Elder Queen Margeurite, contradicts him and prepares him for death. Basically hence, this play deals with the Regent's last hours before Berenger transcends from the world. *Exit the King* (ETK) has six characters namely, the King, his elder wife Margeurite, the younger wife Marie, a maid named Juliette, a doctor who combines the role of official astrologer and executioner and the last character in the play is the Guard. Each personality had a specific role to play not only in their respective individual functions but more so in their participation in the ailments of Berenger. Their personal psychoneurotic manifestations heighten the

neurotic display and setting of the play further inanimate objects too also reflected the malaise as everything is in ruins.

The throne-room walls show signs of past glory but now everything is crumbling. This similar state is reflected in the furniture and even in the clothes worn by the Royals. The Kingdom which was once great also has shrunk and the King's comment, "I do see the nation's not very fit" (*ETK*, p.11) directly referred to the symbiotic "unfit state" in the King.

This play exposed yet another aspect of the *Existenzangst*. The interior strife in the mind resulted in what Karen Horney termed as "inner conflicts" of the individuals which developed as "compulsive drives". This was a coping skill born in the individual out of feelings of helplessness and profound levels of inadequacy as revealed in Berenger, to meet with the challenge of his last moments. However, the psychological Shoah effect is terrifying, and in this play the environment affects both the victim and co-victim. The horror of living though traumatic, yet as the Existentialist Psychologist Erich Fromm deduced "...man knows that he must die; and yet His body wants to go on living".¹⁸

Berenger was aware that the state of living no matter how much it was infused with suffering was something the individual was familiar with, but in relation to death which basically was a mystery, caused greater agony for the Regent. Hence, he deliberately delayed his acceptance of the fact that he had barely an hour to die.

Denial was not only in the Regent but also pervasive in his younger wife, Queen Marie. Marie equally deluded refused to accept her husband's condition and implores to him to cling to her love saying that it would save her, she too is neurotic like the King. But the greatest crisis lay in the fact that the King's last hours were pre-destined and there was no

means of escape especially through another's love or affection. The King deeply stressed exhibits various patterns of Neurosis in like anxiety, phobic, hysterical, and hypochondriacal neurosis. To elucidate, Berenger's incessant bemoaning of ailments can be classified as Neurosis of the Hypochiandriacal type. His garrulous chatter of his stiff legs, or lumbago misdiagnosed in his ribs instead of his loins, or his choked liver all verify to his neurosis, for instance, when the King requests the Doctor for pill to:

...shake up my liver...to stimulate my appetite...my legs...I've a nasty taste in my mouth..

(*ETK*, p.10)

Here what can be observed is that, part of Berenger's psyche, in a hysterical mode and physically ailing, makes him admit he is sick however, the fact was that his complaints lacked any logical sequence. Berenger attempts to deal with the resulting anxiety by avoidance of the seriousness of his situation with great futility he tried to assert...(he will) die all right. In forty, fifty, three hundred years...when it suits (him). (*ETK*, p.10)

What is noticeable is that the Elder Queen Margeurite, throughout the play stood unmoved by the entire fiasco as she knew that Berenger had no way to escape his situation. Berenger's death was predestined and even in the cosmic realm the Doctor declares that :

You will notice a gap in the sky that used to house the Royal Constellation. In the annals of the Universe, his Majesty is entered as deceased.

(*ETK.*,p.18)

Of the impending demise heighten tension. Excluding Margeurite, all the other characters leave the Throne Room, leaving Berenger to face his final "exit" alone. Queen Margeurite left alone with the regent, is the only character who can guide Berenger out of his neurotic denial and to help him transcend his fears, to a state of acceptance. However, at this juncture Berenger has to make the transition from a King who had to witness the death of his dwindling kingdom as a result of his epicurean excess, is compelled to notice his extreme agedness which brings him to the brink of death.

Embodying a figure akin to the "Angel of Death", Margeurite symbolically helps Berenger transcend the world. She assists him partly in his journey to the 'otherworld', with her comments and through her direction to him to focus on detachment. Margeurite specifies that everything that Berenger was exposed to in the tunnel of life and death was an illusion and specifically, a "mirage", which she gradually guides him to transcend. Finally to the level of negating the basic physical functions of the need of the heart to breathe and the need to speak or the body to move, Margeurite guides Berenger till the end when he physically stops functioning and ultimately exits. Finally Margeurite concludes, that it was a "fuss over nothing".

This play basically negates the Divine Right of Kingship that King's ought to be immortal. In fact it stresses the fact that all aspects of creation are subject to entropy. Death is the ultimate leveler. Escape in the form of Neurosis was only self – defeating. The ultimate and final solution lies in Shakespearean axiom:

The scepter, learning, physic must.
All follow this (death) and come to dust¹⁹

Ionesco's great concern was to bring an awareness to the generation about the futility of deluding one's mortal state which co- existed with the living essence. Escape in the form of Neurosis the playwright knew was self defeating. Thus, Ionesco personally clarifies:

Since the death instinct exists in the heart of everything that lives, since we suffer from trying to repress it, since everything that lives longs for rest, let us fasten the ties that bind us to life, let us cultivate our death wish, let us develop it,..suffering and fear are born from the repression of the death wish.²⁰

Chapter V

The Paranoid Realities in *Amadee* or *How to Get Rid of It*

The Anxiety – Panic Reaction is an acute subjectively dramatic incident: in it the anxiety literally overwhelms the patient who may feel as though he is disintegrating...a sense of impending doom is manifested.²¹

Any emotionally shocking experience especially those which involve death – whether actual or threatened incites intense fear and psychological distress causing a major breakdown. The panic reaction as quoted above gravitates to the ‘Paranoid’ or fearful state state. Paranoia is basically a disease where the patient is intensely afraid, intensely confused and agitated. Initially this term was used by Hippocrates to refer to conditions involving mental deterioration and was generally applied to any form of psychological disorder. However, in the modern age specifically, Kraepelin, Paranoia related it to case studies involving ‘delusions’ and ‘impaired contact’ with reality. It basically referred to defensive reactions against trauma.

The psychologists have specified that paranoid symptoms attributed to the usual inputs such as trauma, abuse or stress can also manifest out of guilt and hidden anger. This is exposed in Ionesco’s play, *Amadee*. Death consciousness, as witnessed in *Exit the King*, is differently approach in this play. No longer focused on death of a crumbling era this play highlights ‘death’ as an animating life asserting quality.

Strangely enough, from the apparently deceased form of a corpse Ionesco's play deals with a couple who have been isolated in a flat for fifteen years, with a corpse which appears to be growing from the limbs affected with "geometric progression" or "The incurable disease of the dead". [*Amadee* or *How to Get Rid of It (A.HTR)* p.10]

Initially nothing is clear as to whether the corpse was brought as an infant, abandoned and died or whether it was Amadee's wife Madeline's lover, who was killed by Amadee in a fit of jealousy. Getting rid of a rival lover was easy but the crucial question was how to get rid of the corpse from their dwellings. This is a critical question which gets more pronounced as the corpse continued to grow longer and longer and physically threatens to overtake the space of their entire apartment.

The entire atmosphere was suffused with *Existenzangst* not merely felt by the Couple, but is reflected through the setting of the play with the profusion of the growth of poisonous mushrooms. The whole surrounding involved a stifling of the energy of all that was alive and wanted to live. Especially with reference to Amadee, the protagonist who has a subjective link with the Ionesco himself. Amadee like Ionesco was also a playwright however, similar to Berenger in *Exit the King*, he suffered from Neurasthenic Neurosis implies chronic fatigue. Hence, for the tenure during which the corpse had become a part of the household, while the latter was growing swiftly the playwright failed to write his play and had only been successful in completing two lines- the disability being a consequence of fear.

The fear which prevailed was one which transcended the normal state of *Existenzangst* which incorporated the panic psyche. Additionally too, the agony which one was compelled to experience,

revealed certain complications which Freudian psychoanalysis termed as “jealousy paranoia” and “persecutory paranoia”. Both these traits are predominant in the introductory act of this three act play.

Primarily due to the intense marital discord between the Couple the paranoid symptoms cited above were vividly apparent. However, the primary cause of their discord is the corpse which is a matter of great torture for the two of them. The corpse grows inch by inch and so do the mushrooms but the greatest crisis is the fact that the play magnifies the nightmare. The panic inference in the nightmare has been clarified:

Nightmares are disturbing dreams which may follow us for years worrying us with their persistence and vividness...The nightmare is a dream that needs to be taken seriously. They are urgent messages that something in our emotional psyche needs to be paid attention to and can no longer be ignored or we do so to our own peril.²²

The unfortunate fact is that dreams, even “anxiety dreams” as Freud termed nightmares, were basically ensconced in the level of the sub-conscious. In Ionesco’s play the dream or specifically the nightmare, had become a reality, haunting and requiring an immediate change. This change, becomes mandatory and hence, the end of the Second Act of the play, a decision is made on the part of Amadee that the corpse who was now crashing through the doors and walls, had to be ousted out of the house that night in the cover of darkness. That was the only recourse for Amadee to save his matrimonial relationship which had become chronically

disturbed over the last fifteen long years. Symbolic of their discord is the presence of the corpse.

The suspense of the two Acts in the play shifts to another aspect in the final Act as Amadee pulls the corpse out of the window of the house and drags through the deserted streets. In the course of his labor he meets several people outside a brothel cum bar. Among those present it was a slightly drunk American soldier who helped Amadee with the corpse while the others curious and amused watched. However, it was with the arrival of the innkeeper who knew Amadee, two policemen and finally Madeline, that the action of the play proceeds quickly and something unexpectedly strange takes place. The corpse:

wound around Amadee's waist seems to have opened like a sail or a huge parachute; the dead man's head has become a sort of a glowing banner, and Amadee's head can be seen ...drawn up by the parachute; then his shoulders, his trunk and his legs follow. Amadee is flying out of the reach of the policemen.

(*A.HTR*, p.99)

This horror which one was made to witness shows a transformation from a stifling element to one of liberty for the protagonist. It was emphasized in the introductory portion of this thesis, that the abnormal display in the psyche of post war man revealed in *Amadee* and the other cited plays were utilized for a purpose by the playwright. Ionesco to provoke further questions in the mind of man through his shocking and strange works, this was done with the purpose of invoking "higher realization". The playwright had once, asserted:

It is not the answer that enlightens us, but the question.²

Chapter VI

Conclusion: *Satori*

A real book must be the axe for the frozen sea in us.

Kafka

The “axe” effect of Kafka has been emphatically highlighted throughout this study of *Existenzangst*. The Absurd writers wrote with a specific motive and that was to transcend the ‘gross mind’ consciousness to a state of a ‘higher mind’. The Absurdists focused, primarily on the ‘authentic’ and traumatic state of the *angst-ridden age*, revealing the bizarre and horrific manifestations in the psychological composition of post war man. This period itself was most productive of a much more drastic change. One could be stirred, to a sort of enlightenment finally releasing the individual from one’s deep seated trauma. The bindings of *Existenzangst* could be surpassed. Esslin declared:

The theatre of the absurd aims to shock its audience to bring it face to face with the harsh facts of the human situation as the writers see it. It is a challenge to accept the human situation with all its mystery and absurdity, and bear it with dignity, nobly and responsibly. This ultimately leaves behind a sense of freedom and relief.²⁴

Furthermore, Ionesco was particularly focused upon the method of transcendence. He stated that his plays especially invoke the spirit of Zen. He specified that the practice of the Zen Buddhists and the Theatre of the Absurd were similar. To clarify, Ionesco stated that the

teaching methods of the Zen masters especially of the Rinzai tradition were akin to the Absurd procedure. The Zen use of kicks and blows in reply to questions related to the nature of enlightenment and their habit of setting of nonsense problems, closely resembled some of the procedures of the Theatre of the Absurd.

The Theatre of the Absurd, basically unearthed one's placidity and released man from the "frozen sea", through the use of extreme methods. Besides, no matter how bizarre the method was it was primarily for the purpose of inner transformation and awakening. The playwright declares:

To attack the absurdity (of the human condition) is a way of stating the possibility of non-absurdity...for what else would there be a point of reference? In Zen Buddhism there was no direct teaching, only the constant search for an opening, a revelation...I feel that every message of despair is the statement of a situation from which everybody must freely try to find a way out.²⁵

The basic pursuit in Zen was to contact one's 'inner being' without attachment to anything external, superficial, dialectical or logical. With such an experience, one's true nature and original identity would emerge which was of paramount importance for the individual in order to survive. Eminent Zen scholar Griffis has referred to Zen as "mind murder" basically to awaken the intuitive mind which was the true Buddha nature and mind. Furthermore, to transcend beyond any dependency, the Zen masters even directed that 'if one should meet the Buddha on the road one should kill him'. Hence, one should empower oneself and realize "(One has) been complete and perfect from the very beginning".²⁶

Thus, life with all its intricacies and complexities was also perfect, the individual would finally comprehend and finally, have the wisdom specifically, to survive. This would happen through the intricate, non logical statement or anecdotes or particularly, the “spiritual puzzles” or Koans as they were called. “What is your original face, before your parents were born?” or “What is the sound of one hand clapping?” were some of the most famous examples of the Koans where basically, the paradoxical statement was intended to drive the pupil “mad”, mad enough, so as to stimulate the intuitive higher mind. Hence, only when the pupil was in a state of distancing from the externals could one truly connect with oneself and get an insight into the Universal Truth – the Enlightened State of *Satori* or sudden enlightenment. This is what was intended in Absurd Drama.

Ionesco’s plays, *The Chairs*, it produced a similar Koan – like effect with all its psychological disarray and damage meted to the Ancient Couple. The effect of *Existenzangst*, had become so critical that the Old Man and Semiramus had no other alternative but to commit suicide. Apparently defeatist in the Existentialist mode, the effect of death by water had a different function. Water in its basic essence has a purifying effect and according to the Hopi Indians water is:

...a spirit. Water floods around the boat protecting and holding your conscious and unconscious selves... Water cleanses the physical body, the mind, emotions and spirit. Tears clean the soul. Bathe in it, drink lots of it, do not take it for granted.²⁷

Hence, if water is life, it had ultimately rejuvenated the existence of the elderly ones, by keeping them “internally alive”. Furthermore, the end of the play had the desired Koan – like effect with the

“Chairs” laughing. Ionesco, in support of the Zen system understood its significance:

To laugh is a sign of sanity..the cosmic is deliberately used to break up concepts, to release tensions and to teach what cannot be taught in words. ²⁸

The wisdom behind a play like *The Lesson*, had a greater Koan effect. For, beyond the horror and the sadistic thrust of the Professor there is a deliberate intent of the playwright, Ionesco to authenticate the war and the Nazi's especially Hitler and Joseph Mengele in the Professor and also reveal the fact that evil which had overreached normal limits had done so, due to a certain reason. This was essentially due to brilliance or the 'evil genius'. The play establishes the Zen *Shoshin* or beginners empty mind. Ionesco through the disturbance provoked in the individual established the “higher consciousness”, bereft of internal strife. Hence, *Satori* could be achieved.

Besides, if the play had concludes literally with murder, *Exit the King*, presented another aspect of awakening to the audience. It presented a fundamental lesson on finiteness and death. A famous Zen Koan of the 13th Century by Bunan -Zen Master or *Roshi* , as they were called went thus:

Die while you are alive and be absolutely dead. Then do whatever you want: it's all good. ²⁹

The very denial of death by King Berenger in the play was not something Ionesco wanted the Post War man to indulge in. In fact like the *Bardo Thodol* or *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* (1972) which Ionesco's play referred to, *Exit the King*, was a preparation for death not exclusively as an art of dying but more as the 'art of living a quality life'. If the Tibetan Book meant "liberation through understanding", Ionesco's function as a playwright was similar. The play basically impelled a shift in the psyche of man to one of the "universal consciousness" of one's finiteness and the acceptance of it as such. Ionesco's focus of the *Satori* awakening was to focus on the quality of "now-ness" to deal with one's *Existenzangst*.

Death consciousness was also dealt with in *Amadee* or *How to Get Rid of It*, but not in similar to *Exit the King*. Death, specifically, was featured in a nightmare situation with the living overpowered by mortality in a sickened perverse form of guilt with the growing corpse. The malaise of fear and *Existenzangst* though revealed vividly in the play was used as a method of upliftment. In *Le point du depart* Ionesco clarified that:

Two fundamental states of consciousness are at the root of all my plays...These two basic feelings are evanescence on one hand, and heaviness on the other...but all this can be euphoric; anguish is suddenly transformed into liberty.³⁰

The concluding aspect of *Amadee* with the protagonist floating in the air aided by the corpse who had transmuted into a

balloon and the mushrooms blooming comes as a message. Like the Zen Roshi's function, Ionesco had to find a way of:

...increasing (the)tension in the student's mind to explode in a flash of *Satori*, a knowing beyond all thinking.³¹

Ionesco too had animated the mind to excess to a state of resultant "stillness". Moreover, this was the primary to the Zen art of the witnessing "No Mind", hence, the point of stillness. As Suzuki elucidated:

When the freezing point is reached, water suddenly turns into ice, the liquid has suddenly turned into a solid body and no more moves freely...(the axe) *Satori* comes upon a man unawares, when he has exhausted his whole being. religiously it is a new birth; intellectually it is the acquiring of a new viewpoint . The world appears to be dressed in new garment.³²

With the complete re-structuring of the psyche, where the life of man had matured to a deeper level of wisdom, *Satori* becomes permanent. More importantly, moving beyond confusion results the acceptance and the incessant queries in the mind tortured by *Existenzangst* dissolve. Ionesco finally established that the Empowered *Satori* Mind was the last frontier for the post war man:

When the questions stop
One is enlightened.³³

End Notes

- 1 Kafka, Franz. *The Metamorphosis*. ed, trans,. Stanley Corngold. New York: Stanley Norton and Co, 1996. Print. p. X.
2. Camus, Albert. *The Fall*. London: Penguin,1986.Print. p.98.
3. Churchill, Winston. *The Second World War; Volume II*. Lond: The Educational Book Company, 1951. Print.p.141.
4. Esslin, Martin. *The Theatre of the Absurd*. Lond: Penguin, 1980. Print. p.23,24.
5. Ibid., p.24.
- 6.“EugeneIonesco:TheFavoredSon”.ShayGoosens,1997.GeocitiesBroadway Geocities.com<<http://www.geocoties.com/Broadway/Stage/10352/Ionesco2.html> (accessed on 10 June, 2010)
7. “After the Holocaust”.Ian Chovil.May I,2001.Suite 101.com/insightful writers. Informed Readers
<http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/schizophreniaretiared/67723> (accessed on 15 April, 2010)
- 8.. Barnard,G.C. Samuel Beckett. *A New Approach: A Study of Novels and Plays*.Lond: Methuen L Bowering Press, 1970.Print.p.4.
- 9 . “A Source for Eugene Ionesco – La Cantaric Chuave: R.Coe’s criticism on Ionesco.Ask.com.2009.
<<http://www.springerlink.com/index/kq172781Q355221G.pdf> (accessed on 15 June, 2010)

- 10..Coleman. *Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life*. Bombay: D.B.Taraporevala Sons & Co.Ltd.1988.Print.p.314.
11. "The Chairs".From Wikipedia,The free encyclopedia.2010.
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/the-chairs>
- 12.Einstein, Albert. *Ideas and Opinions*. New Delhi: Rupa and Co.,2004.Print.p.22.
- 13.Fromm, Erich. *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*. Connecticut:Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1975.Print. p.36.
14. Esslin. p.36.
15. "Small-Cast-One-Act" Guide online.2009.Wiki.Sadism and Masochism as Medical Terms.1/2/http/wapedis.mobi/en/Sadismmasochism -as-medical-terms.<http://www.wapedia.mobi/en/sadism_and_masochism_as_medical_terms>
16. Hardin, C.H. ed. *Aspects of Anxiety*. Toronto: Lippincott, 1965.Print.p.9.
17. Eugene, Ionesco. *Exit the King*.Tran. Donald Watson.London:Samuel French,1963.Print. p.12
18. Strange, J.D. *Abnormal Psychology: Behavior Disorders*. New Delhi: Tata McGraw Hill Publishing Co. Ltd.,1995.Print.p.73.
- 19.Shakespeare, William. *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. Lond: Murray Sales and Service, 1977.Print.p.1006.
- 20."Eugene Ionesco: The Favored Son". Shay Goosens 1997.Geocities *Broadway Geocities.com*.June2010.
<<http://www.geocities.com/Broadway/Stage/1052/ionesco5.html> (accessed on June, 2010)

21. Hardin, C.H. *Aspects of Anxiety*. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Co, 1965. Print. p.12.
22. "A Collection of Short Works". Richard J. Corelli, M.D., Paulo Alto, California. 19 June 2010.
<<http://www.Stanford.edu/corelli/shortworks/nightmares.html> (accessed on 7 May 2009)
23. "Brainy Quotes": Eugene Ionesco Quotes. 18 quotations and quotes by Eugene Ionesco. Brainyquotes.com. May 2010.
<<http://www.brainyquotes.com/quotes/quthors/e/eugene/Ionesco.html> (accessed on 7 March, 2008)
24. Esslin. p.23.
25. Ibid., p.198.
26. Kapleu, Roshi. *The 3 Pillars of Zen*. New York: Anchor, 1989. Print. p.50.
27. "Sacred Symbols and Their Meanings". Shannon Thunderbird, Turtle Islands 2010. <<http://www.shannonthunderbird.com/symbols-and-meanings.html> (accessed on 15 June, 2010)
28. Hyers, Conrad. *Zen and the Cosmic Laugh*. London: Ryder, 1974. Print. p.35.
29. <<http://www.zencentreofsyracuse.org/Trisha.html> (accessed on 15 June, 2010)
30. Esslin. p.158.
31. Humphreys, Christmas. *Zen : A Way of Living*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1962. Print. p.102.
32. Suzuki. p.95.
33. "Oneness" *Onenessuniversity*, by Amma Bhagwan. Lecture. Amma Bhagavan. *40th episode*, Sony T.V. New Delhi, 1st May 2007. Television. <<http://www.onenessindia.org>>

Select Bibliography

Primary Source

- Ionesco, Eugene. *3 Plays: Amadee, The New Tenant, Victims of Duty*. (trans.) Derek Prouse and Donald Watson. New York: Grove Press, 1988. Print.
- *Rhinoceros. The Chairs, The Lesson*. (trans.) Derek Prouse and Donald Watson. London: Penguin, 1962. Print.
- *Rhinoceros*. (trans.) Derek Prouse. London: John Calder, 1960. Print.
- *Exit the King*. (trans.) Donald Watson. London: John Calder, 1963. Print.
- *The Hermit*. (trans.) Richard Seaver. New Delhi: Rupa, 1981. Print.
- *The Killer and Other Plays*. (trans.) Donald Watson. 1st Evergreen Book (ed). New York: Grove Press, Grove Weidenfeld, 1960. Print.
- *The Bald Prima Donna*. (trans.) Donald Watson. London: John Calder, 1958. Print.

Secondary Source

Ackerley, C.J. and S.E. Gontarski (eds). *The Grove Companion to Samuel Beckett*. New York: Grove, 2004. Print.

Adelson, Alan and Robert Lapides (eds). *Lotz Ghetto: Inside a Community Under Siege*. New York: Vikings, 1989. Print.

Ackerman, Diane. *A Slender Thread: Rediscovering Hope at the Heart of Crisis*. New York: Random House, 1997. Print.

Almansi, Guido and Simon Henderson. *Harold Pinter*. New York: Routledge, 1983. Print.

Altman, Nathaniel. *The Nonviolent Revolution: A Comprehensive Guide to Ahimsa – The Philosophy of Dynamic Harmlessness*. Dorset: Element Books Ltd. 1988. Print.

Alvarez, A. *Night: An Exploration of Night Life, Language, Sleep and Dreams*. London: Vintage, 1995. Print.

Amery, J. *At the Mind's Limit*. New York: Schocken, 1986. Print.

Ardagh, Arjuna. *Awakening into Oneness: The Power of Blessing in the Evolution of Consciousness*. Mumbai: Indus Source Books, 2007. Print.

Astro, Alan. *Understanding Samuel Beckett*. Columbine: University of Carolina Press, 1990. Print.

Aurobindo, Roshi. *The Life Divine*. Twin Lakes, Wisconsin: Lotus. 2002. Print.

- Badger, Richard G. *Studies in Abnormal Psychology*. Boston: The Gorham Press, 2007. Print.
- Bailey, Lisa Siefker and Bruce J.Mann. *Edward Albee*. New York: Routledge, 2002.
- Baral, K.C. *Sigmund Freud: A Study of His Theory of Art and Literature*. New Delhi: Sterling, 1995. Print.
- Barber, Stephen. *Jean Genet*. London: Reatkin, 2004. Print.
- Barnard, G.C. *Samuel Beckett a New Approach: A Study of the Novels and Plays*. London: Bowering, 1970. Print.
- Barrett, T.H. *Zen – the Reason of Unreason*. London: Aquarian Press, n.d. Print.
- Batchelor, Martine. *Principles of Zen*. London: Thorsons Publications, 1999. Print.
- Beckett, Samuel. *Endgame: A Play in One Act followed by Act Without Words*. London: Faber and Faber, 1958. Print.
- *Waiting for Godot*. Intro. Javed Malick. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001. Print.
- Behera, Guru Charan. *Reality and Illusion in the Plays of Harold Pinter*. New Delhi: Atlantic, 1998. Print.
- Billington, Michael. *The Life and Work of Harold Pinter*. London: Faber, 1996. Print.

- Blau, Leslie. *Bonyhad: A Destroyed Community: The Jews of Bonyhad, Hungary*. New York: Shengold publisher, 1994. Print.
- Bender, Benjamin. *Glimpses: Through Holocaust and Liberation*. Berkeley: North Atlantic books, 1995. Print.
- Brecher, Elinor J. *Schindler's Legacy: True Stories of the List Survivor*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1994. Print.
- Bauminger, Arie L. *The Fighter of the Cracow Ghetto*. Jerusalem: Keter, 1986. Print.
- Braham, Randolph L. *The Politics of Genocide: The Holocaust in Hungary*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1981.
- Bodian, Stephan. *Wake Up Now: A Guide to the Journey of Spiritual Awakening*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008. Print.
- Bogard, Travis and William I. Oliver, (ed). *Modern Drama: Essays in Criticism*. London: Oxford University Press, 1971. Print.
- Bonnefoy, Claude. *Conversations with Eugene Ionesco*. (trans.) Jan Dawson. New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1971. Print.
- Boom, ten Corrie and John and Elizabeth Sherril. *The Hiding Place*. Great Britain: Hodder and Stoughton, 1978. Print.
- Bottoms, Stephen J. *The Cambridge Companion to Edward Albee*. London: Cambridge University Press, 2005. Print.

- Bradby, David. *Beckett, Waiting for Godot*. London; Cambridge University Press, 2001. Print.
- Brandt, W. George. *Modern Theories of Drama: A Selection of Writings on Drama and Theatre, 1840-1990*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. Print.
- Brecht, Bertolt. *Plays One: Baal, The Threepenny Opera, The Mother*. Intro. Hugh Rorrison. London: Methuen, 1987. Print.
- Breitman, Richard. *Official Secrets: What the Nazis Planned, What the British and Americans Knew*. London: Penguin, 1999. Print.
- Burt, E.A. (ed). *The Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha*. New York: Mentor, 1955. Print.
- Czech Danuta. *Auschwitz Chronicle, 1989 – 1945*. London: Tauris, 1990. Print.
- Camus, Albert. *The Fall*. London: Penguin, 1986. Print.
- *The Myth of Sisyphus*. Middlesex: Penguin, 1975. Print.
- *The Outsider*. Lond: Hamish Hamilton, 1962. Print.
- *The Rebel*. London: Penguin, 1971. Print.
- Carr, Alan. *Abnormal Psychology*. Philadelphia: Psychological Press, 2001. Print.
- Castaneda, Carlos. *Tales of Power*. London: Penguin, 1976. Print.
- Causton, Richard. *The Buddha in Daily Life*. London: Random House, 1995. Print.

- Chi, W. Liu. *The Short History of Confucian Philosophy*. London: Routledge, 1990. Print.
- Chiari, Joseph. *Twentieth Century French Thought: From Bergson to Levi- Strauss*. London: Elek Books, 1975. Print.
- Chopra, Deepak. *7 Spritual Laws of Success*. New York: Bantam, 1996. Print.
- Chung, Tsai. *Zen Speaks*. (trans.) Brian Bruya. Guernsey: Guernsey Press. 1994. Print.
- Churchill, Winston. *The Second World War*. London: The Educational Book Co. Ltd., 1944. Print.
- Coe, Richard N. *Eugene Ionesco: A Study of His Work*.^{1st} Evergreen Black Cat. New York: Grove Press, 1970. Print.
- *The Vision of Genet*. New York: Grove Press, 1968. Print.
- Coelho, Paulo. *Veronika Decides to Die*. (trans.) Margaret Jull Costa. New Delhi: Harper Collins Publishers, 2006. Print.
- Cohn, Ruby. *A Beckett Canon*. New York, University of Michigan Press, 2001. Print.
- Coleman, C. James. *Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life*. New Delhi: Bombay: D.B. Taraporevala Sons and Co. Ltd. 1988. Print.
- Comer, Ronald J. *Abnormal Psychology*. New York: Worth Publishers, 2009. Print.

- *Fundamentals of Abnormal Psychology*. New York: Worth Publishers, 2009. Print.
- Cornwell, Neil. *The Absurd in Literature*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006. Print.
- Coyle, Martin. *The Encyclopedia of Literature and Criticism*. London: Routledge, 1990. Print.
- Croce, Benedetto. *My Philosophy: Essays on the Moral and Political Problems of Our Time*. (trans.) E.F. Carritt. New York: Collier Books, 1962. Print.
- Cronin, Anthony. *Samuel Beckett: The Last Modernist*. New York: Da Capo Press, 1997. Print.
- Crystal, H. (ed). *Massive Psychic Trauma*. New York: International University Press, 1968. Print.
- Dalal, A.S. *Eckhart Tolle and Sri Aurobindo: Two Perspectives on Enlightenment*. Cochin: Stone – Hill Foundation Publishing Pvt. Ltd., 2008. Print.
- Deighton, Len. *Winter: A Berlin Family 1899-1945*. London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1987. Print.
- Delfgaauw, Bernard. *Twentieth Century Philosophy*. (trans.) N.D. Smith. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1969. Print.
- Dinnage, Rosemary. *Experiences of Psychotherapy*. London: Viking, 1988. Print.

- Drain, Richard. *Twentieth Century Theatre*. New York: Routledge, 1995. Print.
- Dobroszycki, Lucian.(ed) . *The Chronicle of Lodz Ghetto, 1941 – 1944*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984. Print.
- Driver, Tom Faw. *Jean Genet*. New York: Columbia University Press. 2001. Print.
- Einstein, Albert. *Ideas and Opinions*. New Delhi: Rupa and Co, 2004. Print.
- Elster, John. (ed). *The Multiple Self*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1987. Print.
- Elkes, Joel. *Values Belief and Survival: Dr. Elkhawan Elkes and the Kovno Ghetto: A Memoir*. London : Yale Publisher, 1979. Print.
- Epstein, Mark M.D. *Going to Pieces without Falling Apart: A Buddhist Perspective on Wholeness*. New York: Broadway Books, 1998. Print.
- Esslin, Martin. *The Theatre of the Absurd*. U.S.A.: Pelican and Doubleday, 1980. Print.
- Fast, Julius. *Body Language*. New York: Pocket Books. 1971. Print.
- Fell, Jill. Alfred Jarry, *An Imagination in Revolt*. Madison: Farleigh Dickinson University, 2005. Print.
- Fillingham, A. Lydia. *Foucault: For Beginners*. Chennai: Orient Longman Ltd, 2000. Print.
- Flanagan, Owen.*The Science of the Mind*. Massachusetts: Bradford Books, 1984. Print.

- Falstein Louis (ed. *The Martyrdom of Jewish Physicians in Poland*. New York. Exposition Press, 1963. Print.
- Ferencz, Benjamin B. *Less than Slaves: Jewish Forced Labor and the Quest for Compensation*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979. Print.
- Falstien, Alex. *Heroism and Bravery in Lithuania – 1941 1945*. Jerusalem : Gefen 1996. Print.
- Felstiner, Lowerthal Mary. *To Paint her Life: Charlotte Salomon in the Nazi Era*. London: Harper Collins, 1994. Print.
- Ford, John M and Curtis Smith. *Double Paranoia*. New York: Games Workshop, 1986. Print.
- Fordham, Frieda. *An Introduction to Jung's Psychology*. Suffolk: Chaucer Press, 1975. Print.
- Foucault. M. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. (trans.) Richard Howard. Chennai: Routledge India, 2009. Print.
- Francis Gillen and Steven H. Gale. *Harold Pinter's Ashes to Ashes- Personal and Literary Echoes of the Holocaust: The Pinter Review Collected Essays 1999-2000*. Tampa: Tampa University Press, 2000. Print.
- Frank, Anne. *The Diary of a Young Girl*. (ed). Otto H. Frank and Mirjam Pressler. New Delhi: Penguin, 2001. Print.

Frankl, Viktor. *Man's Search for Ultimate Meaning*. New York: Perseus Book Publishing, 1997. Print.

Freud, Sigmund. *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*. New York: Perma Giants, 1949. Print.

..... *The Interpretation of Dreams*. New York: Avon Press, 1998. Print.

Fromm, Erich. *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*. Connecticut: Fawcett Publications, 1975. Print.

..... *The Art of Loving*. London: Unwin, 1971. Print.

..... *The Fear of Freedom*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 2002. Print.

Geddes and Grosset. *A Dictionary of Dreams*. Glasgow: Geddes and Grosset Press, 1999. Print.

Gelley, Alexander. *Mythology and Humanism: The Correspondence of Thomas Mann and Karl Kerényi*. London: Cornell University Press, 1972. Print.

Giddens, Anthony. *Modernity and Self-Identity*. California: Stanford University Press, 1991. Print.

Giddu, Narayan. *As the River Joins the Ocean: Reflections About J. Krishnamurti* (ed.) Narsipur, Chandramouli. New Delhi: Book Faith India, 1998. Print.

Gilbert, Martin. *Never Again: A History of the Holocaust*. Oxford: Harper Collins, 2001. Print.

- Gilman, L. Sander. *Freud, Race and Gender*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993. Print
- Godman, David (ed). *Be As You Are: The Teachings of Sri Ramana Maharishi*. New Delhi: Penguin, 1992. Print.
- Goldhagen, D.J. *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*. New York: Knopf, 1996. Print.
- Goldstein, Joseph. *One Dharma: The Emerging Western Buddhism*. London: Rider, 2002. Print.
- Gomathy, Gopinath. *The Brain: A Precious Possession*. New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1996. Print.
- Gupta, V.P. *The Greatest Wiseman*. New Delhi: B.K.Offset, 2008. Print.
- Gutting, Gary (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972. Print.
- Gutman, Israel. *The Warsaw Ghetto*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982. Print.
- Gutman, Israel. *Resistance: The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1994. Print.
- Goldberger Leo (ed). *The Rescue of Danish Jews: Moral Courage Under Stress*. New York: New York University Press, 1987. Print.
- Gryn, Hugo and Naomi Gryn. *Chasing Shadows*. London: Viking, 2000. Print.
- Haas, Aaron. *The Aftermath: Living With the Holocaust*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995. Print.

- Hall, Donald. *To Read Literature. Fiction, Poetry, Drama*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston Publishers, 1983. Print.
- Hamalian, Leo (ed). *Franz Kafka a Collection of Criticism*. London: McGraw Hill Book Co, 1996. Print.
- Hanh, Nhat Thich. *Being Peace*. Berkeley: Parallax, 1987. Print.
- *Teachings of Love*. New Delhi: Full Circle, 2007. Print.
- *The Sun in my Heart*. Berkeley: Parallax, 1988. Print.
- *Touching Peace: Practicing the Art of Mindful Living*. Berkeley: Parallax, 1987. Print.
- Hardin, C.H. *Aspects of Anxiety*. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Co. 1968. Print.
- Haskell, M. Block and Robert G. Shedd. *Masters of Modern Drama*. New York: Random House, 1969. Print.
- Hayman, Ronald. *World Dramatists: Eugene Ionesco*. New York: Federick Unger, 1976. Print.
- Heller, Erich. *Disinherited Mind*. Edinburgh: Penguin Books, 1961. Print.
- Henry, Krystal. (ed). *Massive Psychic Trauma*. New York: International University Press, 1968. Print.
- Hallie, Philip. *Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed*. New York: Harper & Row, 1979. Print.

- Hilberg Raul. *The Destruction of European Jewry*. Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961. Print.
- Hackett, David. A. (ed and trans). *The Buchenwald Report*. Colorado: Westview Press, 1995. Print.
- Hesse, Hermann. *Siddhartha*. New Delhi: Indialog Publications, 2009. Print.
- Hitler, Adolph. *Mein Kampf*. New Delhi: Jaico Publishing House, 2002. Print.
- Horney, Karen. *Our Inner Conflicts: A Constructive Theory of Neurosis*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd. 1968. Print.
- Horton, Edward. (ed). *The Marshall Cavendish Encyclopedia of Family Health*. New York: Marshall Cavendish Ltd., 1993. Print.
- Howarth, W.D. (ed). *Comic Drama: The European Heritage*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1978. Print.
- Howells, Christins. *The Cambridge Companion to Sartre*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. Print.
- Humphreys, Christmas. *Zen: a Way of Life*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1962. Print.
- Innes, C.D. *Avant Garde Theatre – 1892-1992*. New York: Routledge, 1993. Print.
- Izenberg, Gerald. *The Existentialist Critique of Freud: The Crisis of Autonomy*. Princeton University Press, 1976. Print.

- Jacobus, Lee A. *The Bedford Introduction to Drama*. Boston: Bedford. 2005. Print.
- Jarvis, Dinah. *The Soul Purpose: Recovery from Transgenerational Trauma*. Bangalore: Sai Towers Publishing, 2003. Print.
- Jung, C.G. *Aspects of the Masculine*. (trans.) R.F.C. Hull. Chennai: Routledge, 2006. Print.
- *Dreams*. London: Routledge, 2002. Print.
- *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*. (trans.) R.F.C. Hull. London: Princeton University Press, 1969. Print.
- *The Undiscovered Self*. London: Routledge, 2002. Print.
- Kapleu, Philip Roshi. *The 3 Pillars of Zen*. New York: Anchor, 1989. Print.
- Karp, David. *Speaking of Sadness*. London: Oxford University Press, 1996. Print.
- Kennedy, Andrew K., *Samuel Beckett*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1989. Print.
- Kenrick, Douglas and John Seamon. *Psychology*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., 1992. Print.
- Khantipalo, Phra. *Buddhism Explained: An Introduction to the Teachings of Lord Buddha*. Bangkok: Mahamakut Rajavidyalaya Press, 1993. Print.

- Khera, Shiv. *You Can Win: Step by Step Tool for Top Achievers*. Delhi: Macmillan India, 2002. Print.
- Kit, Kiew Wong. *The Complete Book of Zen*. London: Vermillion, 2001. Print.
- Knight, Everett. *Literature Considered as Philosophy*. New York: Collier Books, 1962. Print.
- Knight, Margaret. *William James*. Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1950. Print.
- Knowlson, James. *Damned to Fame: The Life of Samuel Beckett*. New York: Grove Press, 1996. Print.
- Kopp, B. Sheldon. *If You Meet the Buddha on the Road, Kill Him*. New York: Bantam, 1976. Print.
- Krishnamurti, J. *Can Humanity Change? : J. Krishnamurti in Dialogue with Buddhists*. (ed.) David Skiff. Boston, Shambala, 2003. Print.
- *Meditations*. Madras: Krishnamurti Foundation Ltd. 1980. Print.
- Klien Dennis B. *Hidden History of Kovno Ghetto*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1997. Print.
- Kubar Zofia S. *Double Identity: A Memoir*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1989. Print.
- Krugman, Luba. *The Death Train: A Personal Account of the Holocaust Survivor*. New York: Holocaust library. 1978. Print.

- Kristof, Aziz and Houman Emami. *Enlightenment Beyond Traditions*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas Publishers, 1996. Print.
- Lacan. *A Selection*. (trans.) Alan Sheridan. London: Routledge.2006. Print.
- Laing and D.G. Cooper. *Reason and Violence: A Decade of Sarter's Philosophy- 1950-1960*. Norwich: 1971. Print.
- Laing, R.D. *The Divided Self: An Existential Study in Sanity and Madness*. Middlesex: Penguin. 1969. Print.
- Lamont, Rosette. C. *Eugene Ionesco: A Modern Classic*. New York: Grove Press, 1995. Print.
- Leuner, H.D. *When Compassion was a Crime: Germany's Silent Heroes*. London: Oswald Wolff, 1966. Print.
- Lindwer, Willy. *The Last Seven Months of Anne Frank*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1991. Print.
- Litner, Isabella. *Fragments of Isabella: A Memoir of Auschwitz*. New York: Laurel, 1987. Print.
- Langer, L. *Holocaust Testimonies*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991. Print.
- Laslett, Peter. Comp. *The Physical Basis of the Mind*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1950. Print.
- Leggett, Trevor. *Samurai Zen: The Warrior Koans*. London: Routledge, 2002. Print.
- Levi, Primo. *If this is a Man and the Truce*. (trans.) Stuart Woolf. London: Abacus, 2006. Print.

- Levi, Primo. *The Drowned and the Saved*. New York, 1988. Print.
- Levin, Daniel. *The Zen Book*. New York: Kindle, 2005. Print.
- Lewis, Allan. *Ionesco*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1972. Print.
- Loori, J. Daido. *The 8 Gates of Zen: A Program of Zen Training*. New York: Shambala. 2002. Print.
- Lord, Georgianna and Sallie Spears. *The Discontinuous Universe*. London: 1972. Print.
- Lukacs, George. *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*. London: Merlin Press, 1963. Print.
- Luytens, Mary. (ed). *The Krishnamurti Reader*. New Delhi: Penguin, 2002. Print.
- (ed). *The Second Krishnamurti Reader*. Middlesex: Arkana, 1991. Print.
- MacHove, C. Frank. *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. New York: Peter Pauper Press, 1972. Print.
- Mack E. John. *Nightmares and Human Conflict*. Boston: Little Brown and Co. 1970. Print.
- Mah, Adeline. *Watching the Tree*. London: Harper Collins Publishers, 2001. Print.
- Malkin, R. Jeanette. *Verbal Violence in Contemporary Drama - From Handke to Shepard*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. Print.

- Mascaro, Juan. *The Upanishads: Translated From Sanskrit*. Middlesex: Penguin, 1965. Print.
- Maskovitz, Richard A. *Lost in the Mirror: An Inside Look at Borderline Personality Disorder*. New York: Taylor Publishing Co., 1996. Print.
- Masters, Brian. *A Student's Guide to Sartre*. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1975. Print.
- Mays, John Bentley. *In the Jaws of Black Dogs: A Memoir of Depression*. New York: Penguin, 1995. Print.
- Marks Jane. (ed). *The Hidden Children: the Secret Survivors of the Holocaust*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1993. Print.
- Mendelson, John. (ed). *The Holocaust Selected Documents in Eighteen Volumes*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1982. Print.
- Mc Mohan, Joseph H. *The Imagination of Jean Genet*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963. Print.
- McRae, John. *Seeing. Seeing. Through Zen*. New York: Amazon, 2004.
- Mercier, Vivian. *Beckett/Beckett/* New York: Oxford University Press.1977. Print.
- Michener, James. *Poland: The Towering Saga of a Proud Land and its Indomitable People*. London: Corgi Books, 1991. Print.
- Miles, Keith. *Gunther Grass*. London: Vision Press, 1975. Print.

- Miller, Norton. *Dictionary of Dreams*. New Delhi: Goyal Saab Publishers, 1996. Print.
- Morgan, L. Michael. *A Holocaust Reader: Responses to the Nazi Extermination*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. Print.
- Nasar, Sylvia. *A Beautiful Mind: The Life of the Mathematical Genius and Nobel Laureate John Nash*. New York: Touchstone International. 2006. Print.
- Neidorf, Robert. *Deductive Forms: An Elementary Logic*. London: Harper and Row, 1967. Print.
- Neugeboren, Jay. *Imagining Robert: My Brother, Madness and Survival*. Los Angeles: William Morrow and Co Inc., 1997. Print.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Birth of Tragedy*. London: Allen Unwin. 1909. Print.
- Nyanaponika. *Pathways of Buddhist Thought: Essays from the Wheel*. London: Unwin, 1971. Print.
- Oaklander, L. Nathan. *Existentialist Philosophy: An Introduction*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1992. Print.
- Ogilvy, James. *Living without a Goal*. New York: Doubleday, 1995. Print.
- Okawa, Ryuho. *The Laws of the Sun: Discover the Origin of Your Soul*. Mumbai: Jaico Publishing House, 2009. Print.
- Olsen, Laurie Samsel. *He Was Still My Daddy: Coming to Terms with Mental Illness*. Boston: Ogden House Publishing Co, 1994. Print.

- Osho. *The Diamond Sutra: The Buddha also said....*Noida: Gopsons Papers Ltd, 2010. Print.
- Page, J.D. *Abnormal Psychology and Clinical Approach to Psychological Disorders*. New Delhi: Tata McGraw Hill Publishing Company, 2000. Print.
- Pandya, Sudha and Prafulla C. Kar (eds). *Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Modernity*. New Delhi: D.K. Fine Art Press, 2001. Print.
- Pease, Barbara and Allan Pease. *The Definitive Book of Body Language*. New Delhi: Manjul Publishing House, 2007. Print.
- Pinter, Harold. *Old Times*. London: Methuen. 1971. Print.
- *The Homecoming*. London: Faber and Faber, 1988. Print.
- Pirsig, Robert. *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. New York: Bantam, 1984. Print.
- Poster, Mark. *Existential Marxism in Post War France*. Surrey: Princeton University Press, Print.
- Pisar, Samuel. *Of Blood and Hope*. New York: Macmillan, 1982. Print.
- Prentiss, Chris. *Zen and the Art of Happiness*. New York: Kindle, 2006. Print.
- Probuddhanandha, Swami. *With Love. Swami Probuddhanandha: Letters on Advaita Vedanta* (ed). Charles Gibson and Alexis Maurya. Varanasi: Printeck, 2009. Print.

- Pronko, Leonard Cabell. *Avant Garde*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003. Print.
- Radhakrishnan, S. *Eastern Religion and Western Thought*. New Delhi: Oxford UP, 2004. Print.
- Remarque, Maria Erich. *All Quiet on the Western Front*. (trans.) Brian Murdoch. London: Vintage, 1994. Print.
- Richards, Angela, (ed). *Sigmund Freud: On Psychology Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety and Other Works – Volume 10*. New York: Penguin, 1979. Print.
- Roebuck, Valerie. *The Upanishads*. London: Penguin. 2000. Print.
- Root, Benjamin A. *Anxiety Panic and Other Anxiety Disorders*. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2000. Print.
- Ruch, L. Floyd. *Psychology and Modern Life*. Bombay: D.B. Taraporevala Sons and Co. 1970. Print.
- Sahn, Seung. *Dropping Ashes on the Buddha*. Comp and (ed). Stephen Mitchell. New York: Grove Press, 1976. Print.
- Samuel, Beckett. *Malone Dies*. London: Penguin, 1975. Print.
- Sankarananda, Swami. *Advaita Vedanta*. Guwahati: Deep Graphics, 2006. Print.

Sarason, Irwin and Barbara Sarason. *Abnormal Psychology: The Problem of Maladaptive Behavior*. New Delhi: Prentice-Hall of India Private Limited, 2000. Print.

..... and Charles D. Spielberger, (eds). *Stress and Anxiety*. Volume 2. Washington: Hemisphere Publishing Corporation, 1975. Print.

Schaeffer, Fromberg Susan. *Anya*. New York: Avon, 1980. Print.

Schneiderman, Stuart. *Jacques Lacan: The Death of an Intellectual Hero*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. Print.

Schumacher, Claude. *Encyclopedia of Literature and Criticism*. New York: Routledge, 1983. Print.

Schwartz, Lynne Sharon. *The Fatigue Artist*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995. Print.

Segal, Erich. *The Death of Comedy*. Harvard : Harvard University Press, 2001. Print.

Seifer, Marc. *Inward Journey from Freud to Gurdjieff*. Kingston: R.I. Doorway Press, 2003. Print.

Sharma, Rachana. *Abnormal Psychology*. New Delhi: Atlantic, 2003. Print.

Sharma, Rajiv. *Feminine Sensibilit: Alienation in Charlotte Bronte and Anita Desai*. Meerut: Shalabh Prakashan, 1995. Print.

Shiller, Lori and Amanda Bennet. *The Quiet Room: A Journey out of the Torment of Madness*. New York. Warner Books Inc., 1997. Print.

Shunryu. *Zen Mind, Beginners Mind: Informal Talks on Zen Meditation and Practice*. New York: Weatherhill, 1970.

Sideman, Belle (ed). *The World's Best Fairy Tales*. Montreal: Readers Digest, 1967. Print.

Simson, Stephen Dr. *Play Magic Golf: How to Use Self Hypnosis, Meditation, Zen, Universal Laws, Quantum Energy and the Latest Techniques to be a Better Golfer*. New York: Kindle. 2010. Print.

Stanton, Mary. *How to Read Faces*. New Delhi: Black Rose Publications, n.d. Print.

Stanton, Olmsted Mary. *How to Read Faces*. New Delhi: Black Rose Publications, 2003. Print.

Smith Micheal *The Spy who Saved 10,000 Jews*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1999. Print.

Schneider Gertrude. *Journey into Terror: Story of the Riga Ghetto*. New York: Ark House, 1979. Print.

Snyder, Louis L. *Encyclopedia of the Third Reich*. London: Robert Hale, 1976. Print.

Spiltzer, Martin. *Storm Over Tatra*. Adelaide: Kitchener Press, 1989. Print.

Werner, Harold. *Fighting Back: A Memoir of Jewish Resistance in World War II*. N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1992. Print.

Stcherbatsky, Theodore. *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas, 1996. Print.

- Storr, Anthony. *Human Destructiveness*. London: Sussex University Press, 1972. Print.
- Strange, R. Jack. *Abnormal Psychology: Understanding Behavior Disorders*. New Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1965. Print.
- Styan, J.L. *The Dark Comedy: The Development of Modern Comic Tragedy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968. Print.
- Suzuki, Daisetz. *An Introduction to Zen. Buddhism*. London: Rider, 1991. Print.
- *Mysticism: Christian and Buddhist*. The Eastern and Western Way. New York: Collier Books, 1962. Print.
- Suzuki, Mitsu. *Temple Dusk: Zen Haiku*. Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1992. Print.
- Suzuki, Shunryu. *Not Always : Practicing the True Spirit of Zen*. New York: Harper Collins, 2002. Print.
- *Branching Streams Flow in the Darkness: Lectures on the Sandokai*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999. Print.
- Taxidou, Olga, Kolocotron Vassiliki and Jand Goldman. *An Anthology of Sources and Documents*. Edinburg: Edinburg University Press, 1988. Print.
- Taylor, Russell John. *The Penguin Dictionary of Theatre*. Middlesex: Penguin, 1979. Print.

- Turner, Barry. *And the Policeman Smiled: 10,000 Children Escape from Nazi Europe*. London: Bloomsbury, 1990. Print.
- Tolle, Eckhart. *Stillness Speaks*. New Delhi: Thomsons Press, 2003. Print.
- Tzu, Lao. *Tao Te Ching: The Book of Meaning and Life*. (trans.) Ostwald. London: Arkana, 1987. Print.
- Uris, Leon. *A God in Ruins*. London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1999. Print.
- Valency, Maurice. *The End of the World: Introduction to Contemporary Drama*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980. Print.
- Viorst, Judith. *Imperfect Control*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998. Print.
- Waller, J. *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killings*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002. Print.
- Wiesel, Elie. *And the Sea is never full: Memoirs*. 1969. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1999. Print .
- Warner, Harold .*Fighting back: A Memoir of Jewish Resistance in World War II*. New York: Columbia university press, 1992.Print.
- Wilhelen Heinrich – Hans and Israael Gutman. *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, Four volumes. Macmillan , 1990. Print.
- Walsh, James. *Free Will*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1962. Print.

- Walter, Mink, Merrill Roff and Grace Hinrichs. (ed). *Developmental Abnormal Psychology*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc., 1966. Print.
- Watson, Gay, Stephen Batchelor and Guy Claxton (eds). *The Psychology of Awakening: Buddhism, Science and Our Day to Day Lives*. London: Rider, 1999. Print.
- Watts, Alan. *Taoism: Way Beyond Seeing*. London: Thorsons, 1998. Print
- Watzlawick, Paul. *The Situation is Hopeless, But Not Serious: The Pursuit of Unhappiness*. Lond: W.W. Norton and Co Inc., 1983. Print.
- Webb, Richard C. *File on Genet*. London: Methuen, 1992. Print.
- Wenger, Michael and Erlich (eds). *Teachings from the San Francisco Zen Center – 1968-2001*. New York: North Atlantic, 2001. Print.
- Wes, Nisker. *Buddha's Nature: Evolution as a Practical Guide to Enlightenment*. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell. 1992. Print.
- Westen, Drew. *Is Anyone Normal?* London: Amazon, 2000. Print.
- White, Edmund. *Genet*. London: Picador, 1993. Print.
- Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. (trans.) Marion Wiesel. London: Penguin, 2006. Print.
- Williams, Raymond. *The Birthday Party: Harold Pinter. Modern Critical Views*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1987. Print.

Wilson, Colin. *The Outsider*. London: Indigo Publishing House, 1997.
Print.

Wilson, Rowan. *The Mind*. Nederland: Time-Life International, 1968.
Print.

Wintle, Justin. *The Makers of Modern Culture*. New York: Routledge,
2002. Print.

Wollenheim, Richard. *Freud*. Glasgow: William Collins Son and Co Ltd.
1975. Print.

Worten, W.B. (ed.). *The Wadsworth Anthology of Drama*. Boston:
Thomson, 2007. Print.

Wright, D.S., Ann Taylor, D. Roy Davies, S.G.M. Lee and J.T. Reason.
*Introducing Psychology: Abnormal Psychology: Changing
Conceptions Experimental Approach*. Middlesex: Penguin, 1970.
Print.

Zanten, Van John. *Caught in the Act: Modern Drama as a Prelude to the
Gospel*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1972. Print.

Zax and Cowen. *Abnormal Psychology: Changing Conceptions*. New
York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1972. Print.

Internet Source

“Eugene Ionesco: The Favored Son” *Geocities Broadway* Shay Goosens.
1997. Geocities Broadway.

<<http://www.geocities.com/Broadway/Stage/1052/ionesco5/>> 10
June 2010.

“Brainy Quotes” Eugene Ionesco. Quotes.18 quotations and quotes by
Eugene Ionesco. BrainyQuotes.com. May 2010.

<[http://www.brainyquotes.com./quotes/authors/e/eugene/Ionesco.h
tml](http://www.brainyquotes.com./quotes/authors/e/eugene/Ionesco.html)>

7 March 2008.

“After the Holocaust”. Ian Chovil, May 1, 2001. Suite 101.com/insightful
writers.informedreaders

<http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/schizophreniaretired/67723> 8
Sept. 2002.

“Sacred Symbols and their Meanings-Water”. Shannon Thunderbird.
2010. Shannon Thunderbird.

<<http://www.shannonthunderbird.com>> 3 January 2010.

“A Collection of Short Works”. Richard J. Corelli, M.D., *Small-Cast-
One-Act* Guide Online. 2010. <[http://www.stanford.edu/corelli/
shortworks.html](http://www.stanford.edu/corelli/shortworks.html)> 7 May 2010.

“Reception of Eugene Ionesco” presented by the Academie Francaise:
Speech by Eugene Ionesco on his election to Academie Francaise
in 1971.

<<http://www.academie-francaise.fr/immortel/discoursereception/ionesco.html>> 4 June 2010.

“Eugene Ionesco: Jacques or Obedience. Amadee.” Ann Louise Bannon. City Garage Theatre. 18 February 1999.

< <http://www.citygarage.org/past-productions/journeys-among-the-dead.html>> 17 August 2009.

“Eugene Ionesco. Introduction: Full-Length Theatre Play.” www.lucianabveit.com Dreams, Fears, Reality vs Chicho. The 7 Sinners of Havenland.

<<http://www.enotes.com/drama-criticism/Ionesco-eugene.html>>
6 December 2009.

“Adam at Odds With Eve: Ionesco and Woman’s Mission.” C.E.J. Dolamore. *Journal of European Studies*, Volume 23, 1993.

<<http://www.questia.com/googleScholar.qst?docId=3002198967.html>> 18 May 2007.

“The Anti-Spiritual Victory in the Theatre of Ionesco.” Leonard C. Pronko. *Modern Drama*, Volume 2, No. 2, May 1957.

<<http://www.enotes.com/drama-criticism/ionesco-eugene.html>>
5 March 2008.

“Fear Degrees Paranoia Terror Feeling Perception Emotion Phobia...”
[Economic Expert.com](http://EconomicExpert.com) Wikipedia- 9 August 2010.

<http://www.economicexpert.com/a/Fear.Terror1/html>. 27 June 2010.

“Coaching; Paranoia and Paranoid Behavior.” Mary Carruthers. 2009-2010

Soulwork.net:Solutions for emotional issues and relationships problems.

<<http://www.Soulwork.net/sw-articles-eng/paranoia.html>.> 1 February 2010.

“The Zen Mind.” Adrian Cooper. Our Ultimate Reality, 25 October, 2009.

<<http://www.ourultimatereality.com/newsletters/251009.pdf>.> 25 February 2010.

“Ma-Tsu-Tao-1 and the Unfolding of Southern Zen.” Wahlen Lai. Japanese Journal of Religious Studies. 12 February 2003. The Zen Site.

<http://thezen.site.com/zen/Essays/Historical/Zen/MaTsu-and-the-unfolding-of-Southern-Zen.html>. 12 February 2009.

“A New Staging of the Chairs Alone Again, Unnaturally.” Barry Pineo. The Austin Chronicle. 27 July 2001.

<<http://www.austinchronicle.com/gynobase/Issue/story?oid=oid%3A82440.html>> 27 July 2010.

“Existentialism and Theatre of the Absurd at the Realm of Existentialism.” Katherine Eirhmann.

www.dividingline.com/private/Philosophy/Philosophers/Theatre/Theatre-of-the-Absurd.html 3 February 2010.

“Viktor Frankl.” From Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/vf%2F2> 16 February 2009.

“The Theatre of the Absurd”: An Essay in Definition and the Yugoslav Variant. Jovan Hristic. The Impact of the Theatre of the Absurd on World Drama. Books Abroad 1972 Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma. www.JSTOR.org: Books Abroad, Vol.46, No.3 (Summer 1972)

<http://www.jstor.org/pss/40126282.html> 16 November 2007.

“The Enactment of “Not” in Ionesco’s Les Chaises.” Richard Schechner. [JSTOR Yale Studies](http://www.JSTOR.org). 1962. Yale University Press. No.29 (1962)pp-65-72. www.JSTOR.org/pss/2929036. <http://www.springerlink.com/index/kq172781Q355221G.pdf>.> 15 June 2010.

“Understanding Schizophrenia: Signs, Symptoms, Causes, and Effects” Melinda Smith, M.A. and Robert Segal, M.A. April 2010.

- [Helpguide.org](http://www.helpguide.org). A Trusted Non-Profit Resource - understand, prevent and resolve challenges. <http://www.helpguide.org/mental/schizo-symptom.html> 28 May 2010.

“Les Chaises.” Academic Dictionaries and Encyclopedias

<http://support@academic.ru.pda.version.<http://en.academic.ru/dic.nsf/enwiki/4193582.html> 28 October 2008.

“From Beckett to Stoppard : Existentialism , Death and Absurdity.

<http://www.homesprintmail.com/lifeform/backstop.html> 3
November 2009.

“Ionesco and the Comic Spirit.” J.S. Dubrovsky.

<http://www.jstor.org/pss/3206384/ask.com.html> 3 November
2009.

“The Function of Humor in Zen Religion.” Bruce Bigenho. Zen
Humor.google.com Date of Conrad M – Zen and Comic Spirit.

<http://www.montefin.com/zen/zen-humor.html> 9 Jun2 2010.

“What can I Lexigram.” Lindaland-Linda-Goodman.com.12th December

2007.<<http://www.lindagoodman.com/ubb/Forms/8/001758html>>
28 November 2009.

Website.<<http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/mistic/bardo-thodol06html>>

1 March 2010.

“Death as Initiation in Exit the King.” M.S. Barranger.

<<http://www.jstor.org/pss/3206384-ask.com>> 1 March 2010.

“Survivor Guilt in Holocaust Survivors and Their Children.” Aaron Haas.

California State University , Dominguez Hills, California.

<[http://www.Survivor 20 Guilt%20m%20Holocaust%20.html](http://www.Survivor20Guilt%20m%20Holocaust%20.html)> 6
March 2002.

“Small-Cast-One-Act.” Guide online.2009.Wiki.Sadism and Masochism-

as-medical-terms <<http://www.wapedia.mobi/en/Sadomasochism-as-medical-terms.html>>

17 March 2009.

“Tragic Farce.” John

Simon.answers.com<<http://www.answers.com/topic/the-chairs-play-6.html>> 3 January 2010.

“The Chairs: Review of a 1998 Revival of Ionesco’s play.” Lahr

Review.enotes/the chairs/review of a 1998 revival of his play.

www.enotes.com/of-and-a-studyguide-chairs/essay.html> 28
November 2009.

Zen Centre of Syracuse . Hoen-ji. Summer 2008.

<http://www.zencentreofsyracuse.org/teisho.html> > 5 May 2010.

“Eugene Ionesco. The Lesson.” City Garage Theatre 1999-2010. Eugene Ionesco. Comic Drama/ Backstage West – Critics Choice. LA Times Recommended.

<<http://www.Citygarage.org/past-productions/the-lesson.html>> 8
January 2005.

“Eugene Ionesco.” The Art of Theatre No. 6. The Paris Review – Shusha Guppy 1984.

<<http://www.theparisreview.org/media/2956-Ionesco2.Pdf>> 15
November 2006.

“What Made This Man? Mengele.” Robert Jay Lifton. N.Y. Times – July 21, 1985 Section 6; page 16, column 1. 1985 N.Y.T. Co.

<<http://www.wellesley.edu/Polixi/wi/100/mengele.html>> 14
November 2009.

“The History of the Third Reich. The World Stands United.” Hans. Alabama, U.S.A.

<<http://www.thirdreich88.blogspot.com/2009/.../adolph-hitlers-national-socialism.html>> 28 November 2009.

“Ionesco Beyond Absurdism.” Jessica Runde. Consciousness, Literature and the Arts. Archive – Vol. 8. 1st April 2007.

<<http://www.blackboard.lincoln.ac.uk/bbcswebdav/users/dmeryerdinkgrafe/archaic/runde-html>> 4 September 2004.

“Eugene Ionesco and the Search for Identity.” Dascalu Mihaela. 3rd December 2009. Scribd. <<http://www.scribd.com/doc/23848345/Eugene-Ionesco-and-the-Search-Identity.html>> 27 September 2009.

“The Chairs.” <<http://www.answers.com/topics/the-chairs-play-6.html>> 7 March 2007.

“Do the Wounds Ever Heal?” PTSD and Holocaust Survivors Andy Douillard. 5th December 2005 for Prof. Marcuse’s Lecture Course “Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Holocaust.” University of California, Santa Barbara, Fall 2005. Prepared for Web by Harold Marcuse on 15th December 2005.

www.history.ucsb.edu/faculty/marcuse/classes/33d/projects/survivors/SurvivorPTSD-AN 4 July 2010.

“Eugene Ionesco” – Introduction/Eugene Ionesco.1909-1994 enotes.com
www.enotes.com/drama-criticism/Ionesco-Eugene. 16 July 2010.

“The Rhinoceros.” <<http://runninginheels.co.uk/articles/EugeneIonesco.html>>
24 March 2010.

“Sadomasochism.”
<<http://www.artandpopularculture.com/sadomasochism.html>>
7 March 2009.

“Exit the King” from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

<http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exit-the-King.html>> 25 February
2010.

NEHU LIBRARY
Acc. No. _____
Acc. by. _____
Date. _____
Class by. _____
Sub - Heading by. _____
Enter by. _____

Television Source

“Oneness”. *Oneness university*, by Amma Bhagavan. Lecture. Amma
Bhagavan. Episode 40, Sony T.V. India, 1 May 2007. Television.
<<http://www.onenessindia.org>>

AXE FOR THE FROZEN SEA : *EXISTENZANGST* IN THE PLAYS OF EUGENE IONESCO

NAOMI BHUYAN

Regn. No: 774 of 2003

**SUPERVISOR
Prof. Sujata Gurudev**



**Department of English
School of Humanities
North-Eastern Hill University
Tura**

2010

English

NEW LIBRARY
Acq. No. 164297
Auth. by. EN-24
Date 11/2/24
Class by. _____
Sub - Heading by. _____
Enter by. _____

**AXE FOR THE FROZEN SEA : *EXISTENZANGST*
IN THE PLAYS OF EUGENE IONESCO**

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**NAOMI BHUYAN
Regn. No: 774 of 2003**

**SUPERVISOR
Prof. Sujata Gurudev**

**Department of English
School of Humanities
North-Eastern Hill University
Tura**

2010

This Thesis is dedicated

To

the Departed...

My grandfathers

Rai Bahadur, Padmashree (Late) Dr. Surya Kumar Bhuyan

Rai Bahadur (Late) Heramba Prasad Barua

My Parents

(Late) Parvati Kumar Bhuyan

(Late) Nilima Bhuyan

the Living...

My son Rex Prem Bhuyan


Department of English
North-Eastern Hill University
Tura Campus, Tura

September 2010

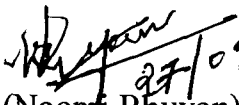
DECLARATION


I, *Naomi Bhuyan*, hereby declare that the subject matter of this thesis is the record of work done by me, and that the contents of this thesis did not form the basis for the award of any previous degree to me or, to the best of my knowledge, to anybody else, and that the thesis has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other university/ institute.

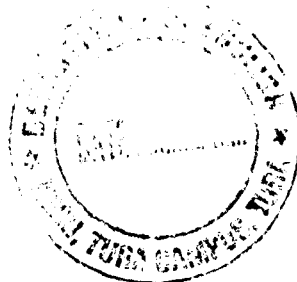
This is being submitted to the North-Eastern Hill University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English.


27/09/10

(Dr. Jyotirmoy Prodhani)
Head
Head,
Department of English
NEHU, Tura Campus, Tura.


27/09/10
(Naomi Bhuyan)
Candidate


27/09/10
(Prof. Sujata Gunde)
Professor
Supervisor
Department of English
North-Eastern Hill University
Tura Campus
Tura.



Acknowledgements

“Gratitude is Prayer.” Adhering to this in prayerful gratitude, I express my sincere thanks to the individuals mentioned below. Their support for almost a decade made it possible for this thesis to be completed and I am indebted to them. I thank:

My supervisor, Professor Sujata Gurudev, Department of English, N.E.H.U., Tura Campus, for her insights, support and encouragement over the many years. I express my heartfelt gratitude to her.

To the personnel of the N.E.H.U. Library Shillong and Tura Campus, the British Council Library and the National Library Kolkata, British Council Library Chennai, for their help and access to research materials.

To their Holiness, Sri Amma Bhagavan, founders of the Oneness University and Vandanaji Dasa, for their help and blessings regarding the thesis.

To his Holiness Sri Bhagavan, founder of the International Vedanta Society, Swami Probuddhananda, Swami Shankarananda, Swami Phraladanda, the other Swami's, Sanjib Bhattacharya, his wife Tapashi and Kojima Halliday, for their insights on Universal Consciousness and blessings.

His Holiness Dr Sabyasachi Pal Choudhry and his wife Jonali for their insights, blessings and consistent encouragement for my research work.

His Holiness, Rinpoche Nawang Tsultrim, Lama Lobsang Nyima, Lobsang Dhaigesh, Khalsang Damdul and Tenzin Tseyang of the Shillong Tibetan Gumpa and Association, for their kindness, insights and help on Bardo Thodol.

Venerable Jyoti Pal Bhante (Bhikhu) of the Shillong Buddhist Association for his insights on Hinayana Buddhism and Pali.

My German Friends namely, Professor Raffael Schaffrath, for his kindness and invaluable help regarding research materials and insights on the post war era, John Hans Dillenberger, who survived Hitler's war, for his insights as a child survivor, Tobias Rehmer, for his translations and insights on “Survival Guilt”, from a younger generation. Also, Tim Hines from Oxford, England for helping me with research materials.

Late Dr. Radhon Singh Lyngdoh, Late Dr. S. Homchaudhri, Late Dr. Siddhartha Ganguli, Late Dr. E. Lall and - to Dr. Nurul Hasan, Dr. Temsula Ao, Dr. R.P. Sharma, Dr. K.C. Baral, Dr. Kynpham Singh Nongkynrih, Dr. Mala Renganathan and Dr. Esther Syiem, Dr. R.N. Sharan for their help, wisdom and guidance in N.E.H.U.

Special Thanks to Godfrey Pathaw, Daphishisha Nongkynrih, Romy Roy, Macximillian Wahlang and Gaurav Modak for their invaluable help in typing and editing this thesis.

My many well wishers for their prayers, encouragement and help for research materials – Dr. Swarnali Ghosh Chakraborty and Dr. Arundhati Datta, Vincent Stone and Dr. Cecelia Stone and innumerable others.

Lastly, my son Rex Prem Bhuyan, for his help, support and encouragement especially during my health relapses. I am grateful that together we could make this tribute to Ionesco and our ancestors, a reality.

I am grateful to all.

Naomi Bhuyan

CONTENTS

Chapter-I	Introduction: <i>Existenzangst</i>	1-23
Chapter-II	Schizophrenic Perceptions in <i>The Chairs</i>	24-57
Chapter-III	Sadomasochism in <i>The Lesson</i>	58-99
Chapter-IV	Neurotic Overtones in <i>Exit the King</i>	100-139
Chapter-V	Paranoid Realities in <i>Amadee</i>	140-174
Chapter-VI	Conclusion: <i>Satori</i>	175-214
	Bibliography	215-250
	Bio-Data	

Chapter-I

Introduction: *EXISTENZANGST*

A real book, must be the axe for the frozen sea in us.¹

Franz Kafka

Questions shower as an outburst during troubled times. And at times prolonged in crisis and trauma or a Kafkaesque nightmare to be precise, questions rain incessantly, finding no solution to one's existence. Emerging from the Second World War, the most extensive, most horrific World Wars of the 20th Century, what more could one do thereafter. Probably pose more questions. This inner quest provoked decisive questions: 'Who am I?', 'What is the world?', 'What is being?' - Questions all pertinent for the sensitive seeker, but unfortunately became most traumatic, in one's struggle to survive in a hostile universe. As stated, one lived in 'self torment'; one could only tremble silently in dread. Furthermore, it carried horrific implications the fact lay as Albert Camus stated:

...anyone who is alone without God and without a master, the eight of days is dreadful.²

Entirely alone bereft of a God as Nietzsche had asserted, or a master, modern man survived attempting to harness a quality life but failing persistently. For as he or she discovered, the bitter truth was that

the peace which ensued was simply external. Henceforth, the human condition was in a critical state, naked and exposed and survival in what was delineated by T.S. Elliot as - a “wasteland”.

Man as a result, lived with the desertification of consciousness and the extinction almost of hope. Furthermore, the serenity which one craved for was plagued in sheer dilemma and the frustration which followed, was one where the failure to deal with such a psychological calamity, provided the ideal foundation for the all encompassing emotion - fear. Hence, the title of this discourse emphasizes the perfect term which ironically arose from the perpetrators of the war crimes - a German term - *Existenzangst*; which when translated literally means, “The Fear of Living”. Notably, such was the basic crux for the individual grappling with the ‘turbulent peace’ especially after, the Second World War. What else then was the basis of living for man save, to survive in an almost comatose state, benumbed in the icy waters of dehumanization – eternally trapped in the “frozen sea”.

Historically speaking, during the period of the Greeks, Aristotle had spoken eruditely about fear in *The Rhetoric* (4th cent. B.C.). He referred to the emotion as an agony arising from a mental image of impending evil particularly of a destructive and painful type. Furthermore, he also touched upon the fact that fear went beyond hurt to

the extreme feeling of pain and ruin. In retrospect then, the social cataclysms of the twentieth century left the legacy of the mood of despair which resulted in the torture of the psyche. As a result, it will not be the helplessness “fostering despair” which the discourse will highlight, but the intense emotion creating the “psychological cripple” which the Post War age namely the Second World War, birthed.

In search of a meaning for himself and his life, man still persevered in his or her attempt to rationalize, plunging into a wave of philosophical activity one queried and sought answers. Hence, philosophy was of prime importance and in reference to the 1920's and the 1930's, Existentialist philosophy became the mainstay as Existentialism, triggered off deep introspection into life for;

Existential thought has always begun as a reflection upon the threat presented by the world.³

It must be noted that also is the fact that if fear is the primary emotion of one's existence triggering off one's defensive instinct, on the other end of the spectrum is hope. This is clearly underlined by Maurice Valency clearly stated:

In 1948 the post war theatre was in much the same condition as the post war world, a bewildering yet familiar landscape, much of it in ruins. In those years much of the world had been reduced to rubble. The bits that could be salvaged did not fit together very well. In the theatre as in the world outside, it was the time of sorting out and clearing away before a new departure could be made.....⁴

Here what is important, is the fact that if the Existentialists spurred on the internal pursuits, so did other philosophies which followed specifically, the philosophy of the Absurd which will be focused on henceforth. For now, one must realize that the priori Existentialist query of Sartre's 'existence' and 'essence', dwelt primarily on the creed of despair and the choices each individual had, while taking a stand in an 'irrational universe'. In Camus' 'thought', Existentialism was almost a form of 'philosophical suicide'. The individual was compelled to start from the world's lack of meaning and end up by finding a meaning and depth to one's existence. Despite the excruciating difficulty, this leads ultimately to coping skills and an area of hope. This was an aspect which the Absurd, furthered.

Related to the Existential focus, it must be noted that Sartre dealt with human problems which the experience of war, collaboration with the enemy or resistance had brought to the awareness of everyone and he highlighted, extreme situations and moral dilemmas and the freedom and responsibility of every human being to make his own choices. Highly ambiguous in context, concepts of right and wrong were far from clear. Having stressed upon the fact that life was a continuous chain of 'decision' and 'choices', Sartre focused on the resultant aspect of consciousness which "being" in complete freedom created vis-à-vis a

certain anguish in the individual. The persona knew the past, but was ignorant of one's future choices and decisions. Consciousness became elusive and hence, an ordeal for the individual. Conclusively, the choice and decisions which one made usually veered to the opposite of one's intent. As a result it strayed away from the personal and liberating one, to the 'other', the 'mass', which seldom if ever, echoed own. This was a malaise which Sartre termed as "bad faith", a situation where one 'fell into error'. Hence, for the individual, the quest for one's accountability became an overtly traumatic, if not a 'nauseous' exercise. This predicament Sartre expanded upon in *Le Nausea* (1938) and *La Mort* (1949) and his other novels but his search for the aspects of 'essence' and 'existence' were expounded with greater clarity in his plays.

Especially *Le Diable et le Bon Dieu* (1957) which demonstrated the uselessness of the concept of God. However in *Les Sequestres d'Altona* (1959), Sartre became more focused as the play expresses the anguish of a family in post Nazi Germany. It deals with the fortunes of the Von Gerlach family where the younger son Frantz has incarcerated himself in his room, isolated in his memories of the torture of prisoners which he had participated in as a Nazi officer. He seems half mad, trapped in an incestuous relationship with his sister and refusing to confront the truth about his own life or European history. It is Sartre's

most pessimistic play. If the Existentialists called upon man to take a stand and raised questions about the world, the problem lay with the fact that the irrational world presented a great crisis which man could not cope with. This was the ultimate problem of the Absurd where the “time of sorting and clearing away the rubble” to garner some ‘hope’ however small, was the need of the hour which the Absurdists delved into with no small success.

To put it succinctly, to accept the absurd is basically to accept a paradox, and for this ‘One Needed Faith’. Such a predicament the Absurdists handled with tremendous mastery for the world of the Absurd writers was one not only of irrationality, but more so as one having little sense of direction. There was no meaning in life and events occurred and were accepted, as such, but to truly accept this predicament in completeness as already stated was tremendously challenging. Thus, while critiquing Kafka, Roland Barthes with reference to the writer’s works and literature at large, stated that literature was primarily an ‘interrogation about life’ and while Kafka made his mark with his horrendous yet realistic depictions of the contemporary world and following upon his tradition were the Absurd playwrights:

...The Theatre of the Absurd strives to express its sense of senselessness of the human condition and the inadequacy of the rational approach by the open abandonment of rational devices and discursive thought.⁵

The Absurdists focus was to present the final truth, a poignant 'interrogation' in depth, through 'openness'. The angst of each and every man emerging from Auschwitz and Schevenigen and other 'centres of hell' were graphically recorded. The Absurdists not only "interrogated" about the human condition, but presented it in all its stark detail. Besides, while the works highlighted the trauma of man, they were not entirely objective. The subjective overtones were obvious as each playwright had to overcome his personal angst.

While most of the playwrights were domiciled in France, like Beckett, Ionesco, Arrabal and Adamov, only Genet was a Frenchman and that too an outcast faced with his own personal exile. These playwrights transcended the personal to the universal mind and featured the degeneration or *Ausarten* a German term, applicable to every individual in the post war period.

The twentieth century was deemed by psychoanalysts, as the 'Age of Anxiety'. The inner psychological war in the mind of man was a lasting phenomenon and man could not cope with the predicament much longer. The resultant trauma compelled the individual to collapse psychologically and become morbidly 'sick'. Sickened with tormenting memories, man lived but was barely alive in the literal sense. To deal with this ordeal was the need of the hour. The only solution lay in

understanding and healing the psyche of the individual. Thus combating this psychological epidemic made psychoanalysis the predominant study of the age.

In another tangent, what must be noted is that in the seminal book *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1949), Sigmund Freud had referred to the fact that “angst” was not an emotion which could be translated. In fact, origins of the word revealed an emotion which was choked by the extreme levels of the paranoid, terrifying in its onslaught. ‘Intensely emotionally scarred’, modern man was sunk in the extreme level of angst, which became a condition almost suicidal. The threshold of pain, especially emotional, had risen beyond tolerance where the endurance level of the individual found expression in the behavioral aspect which reflected the agony within. As a result the ‘damaged mind’ inciting unusual behavior pertaining to the insane will be highlighted while analyzing modern creativity through drama. For finally, what is creativity if not in highlighting reality at that present moment one might ask? And importantly, what is literature if not a reflection of life? The queries thence, still linger awaiting clarification.

The queries persisted in the rationalizing the inner predicament of the age. Literature complimented and stimulated the understanding of other disciplines notably, psychology. Specifically, in reference to the

disturbed mind it must be understood that:

Long before abnormal psychology became an area of scientific study, masters of fiction and drama developed many brilliant and moving characterisations of abnormal behavior, based on their keen observations of human behavior.⁶

Consequent upon the understanding of the psyche, literature yielded valuable information about mental disorders. Since the Hellenic Golden Age, various manifestations of the abnormal behavioral aspect became the basis of Greek tragedy. For instance, Euripides had analyzed the emotions of vendetta and envy leading to the murder of the children by their mother in his play *Medea* (431 B.C.). Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* (420 B.C.) and *Electra* (458 B.C.) focused on the issue of incest and human behavior and in the *Oresteia Trilogy* (B.C.), the guilt stimulating outlets of remorse inciting delusion and hallucination, was the primary emotion which Aeschelus had showcased. Besides several of Shakespeare's plays focused upon the abnormal mind and behavior in great vividness. Case studies of Ionesco's plays noted reveal the fact that the primary focus was upon the process leading to, the collapse of the mind.

Life is stress which in turn leads to situations which usually foster constraints and demands coping skills. Extreme situations like, 'wars have disrupted both personal and national life, leaving in their wake grief, destruction and social unrest'. Hence, the ability to cope broke down, in

modern man, as the situation was unbearable. The predominant thought overridden by sorrow and guilt for a concentration camp survivor had to find expression and this unfortunately, resulted in maladaptation enmasse often leading to insanity. The psychologist T.P. Rees elaborated that:

The insane came to be regarded as normal people who had lost their reason as a result of having been exposed to severe psychological and social stresses.⁷

Post Holocaust victims of the Nazi attempt at “the final solution”, were ‘emotional cripples’ who lived with the recurrence of negative life events in the memory and seldom experienced the positive here and now. This basically caused the breach between the ‘ideal and the real self’ in man a major focus of psychodynamic analysis by Humanist psychologists. Moreover, this was a major factor where by the actual crisis it paved the way for the “cripple”, emotionally maimed for life. Creativity specifically in the theatre focused on such a crisis in its entirety.

Theatre reflects life, life reflects true theatre.⁸

Prior to the Absurd, the Theatre of Cruelty pioneered by Antonin Artaud, focused on the symbiotic relationship of what Artaud deemed as the ‘theatre and its double’. However, the integral truth lay in the fact that the playwright was essentially focusing on theatre as an exposure of the ‘inner reality of life’. Here the latter was essentially an area of disturbance, primarily featuring cruelty. The Theatre of Cruelty became a

forerunner to the Absurd and provoked the absurd quest of life, beyond one of complacency to one of excessive disturbance. Thus, the pioneering impact of the Theatre of Cruelty is not a venture to be ignored, but one to be referred to while understanding the Absurd. To clarify, the focus was the function of the mind in discord and the abnormal mind. However, at this juncture it is of imminent importance to identify the area of analysis of the psyche and its abnormal manifestations, before proceeding to the in-depth study which will be the focus of Ionesco's plays.

The fundamental query into mental abnormality is to explore abnormal behavioral outlets in the individual. Nonetheless, a slight digression will be resorted to, to comprehend the dilemma. In reference to the much significant post war term 'Holocaust' it may be clarified, *Holokauston* being a Greek word denoting sacrifice usually by fire, related to the Jews, Gypsies, homosexuals, Communists, certain Christian denominations and physically or mentally challenged individuals who were compelled to meet their end in the crematoriums in the Concentration Camps during the war. However, the Jewish term *Shoah* referred to this climax, in greater accuracy and universality, as in translation it basically means, "catastrophe".

The essential crisis of the Post War period was that the truth of the Armistice between the Allies and the Axis powers was nothing more than

desolation. But on a more poignant note, this calamity pierced the psyche of modern man severing any hope of normalcy. The effect was catastrophic as already noted, and the Absurdist exposed the ravage with tremendous authenticity.

Beckett exposed the evanescence of man in time and the mystery of the human personality and identity in his two masterpieces namely, *Endgame* (1957) and *Waiting for Godot* (1953). Adamov used his creativity, as a form of psychotherapy exposing his own inner oppressions and anxieties mostly neurotic in context, in his book *Professor Tarrane* (1951), which focused on the persona one portrayed in private and in public. Besides, Edward Albee's *Zoo Story* (1957), clinically exposed the schizoid mind dwelling in the ritualistic and symbolic levels while his masterpiece *Whose Afraid of Virginia Woolf* (1966) explored the intensity of terror and violence in relationships along with, the clash of reality and illusion in the individual's lives, while Pinter, attacked the superficiality and sterility of society in his plays. Moreover, as clarified by the critic William I. Oliver:

Ionesco has steadily moved toward longer, more psychological plays.⁹

The 'dramatic concern' directed toward the psyche in distress, was not only in the longer works of Ionesco but, in the one act plays, denoting the playwright's subconscious sensitivity to man's breakdown in consciousness - the *Shoah* filtering through the mind. Ionesco displayed

an astonishing insight hardly achievable by any other creative writer. The final verdict of the discourse will also establish the genius of this extraordinary dramatist.

As specified, the predominant mass madness as a reaction to the conditions of existence in the post war world was a situation which could barely be ignored by man. For the erudite witness, the creative output which was garnered not only through observation but primary experience became the mainstay for the writer. Moreover, the experience became automatic of a universal upheaval a 'psychological decomposition' where the personality of the 'everyman' decayed under excessive stress.

The rot set in stage by stage with the first abortive attempt on the part of the individual to stem it through alertness and the mobilizing of resources, to cope with the stress. However, the 'emotional arousal' and 'heightened sensitivity', often caused maladjustment, where adaptive measures became inadequate to deal with stress and led to the next stage, where the individual was compelled to tackle his predicament with the means of 'resistance'. Often as it was seen, the individual became set in rigid responses and clung to conditioned defensive patterns instead of reevaluating novel coping skills. As a result, the excessive stress depleted the individuals' adaptive skills and left him completely exhausted.

The final reaction was a psychological disorganization and a “break with reality”, resulting in total abnormal behavior a study of which, is the foundation of this discourse. Ionesco, in all his works focused on this psychological “break” in one way or another as will be analyzed in the forthcoming chapters.

A focus on the aspect of psychoanalysis and the inherent ‘abnormal break’ will give a clearer picture of the rationale behind what Ionesco and the other Absurdists witnessed and which provoked them to write their very unusual if not disturbing works. Therefore, it is mandatory to discuss the contribution of specific psychoanalysts in order to comprehend abnormal behavior. As early as the beginning of the nineteenth century, sincere attempts to understand the role of irrational thought leading to manic manifestations was equated to, the ‘inner life’ of a person.

The German psychiatrist Johann Heinroth, specified that mental illness resulted from the guilt generated from unacceptable impulses and the ensuing shame exhibited thereof. That ‘conflict’ in the mind of the individual which harbored maladjustment and the hidden ‘inner drives’, resulted in excruciating guilt and unhappiness bordering on agony.

However, shortly after Sigmund Freud took the inference further, by specifying both the causes behind the malady and the maladjustment, of the individual in daily life. The above mentioned ‘inner drive’

elaborated by Heinroth, was then identified by Freud as the propelling 'force' in the mind of a person resulting in the aberrant behind pattern. This psychic impetus Freud termed as the 'unconscious', which became the basic foundation determining human behaviour for all time.

Furthermore, he systematically elaborated on the 'psychic apparatus', which clearly demarcated the 'mental world' of the person as having three basic structures namely, the *id*, the *ego* and the *superego* which were interlinked with each other. The 'primary system' which the personality incorporated was the aspect of instinct where firstly, the *id* comprised of the 'life instinct'. This was an area which consisted of the libido or the sexual instinct where according to Freud, was one of arousing pleasure whether through the procreative urge or a simple act of eating. Besides, the *id* also consisted of the 'death instinct', which consisted of aggression and specific drives which were opposed to the former constructive instinct composing the *id*. Here Freud underlined the fact that the *id* being completely instinctual in nature was totally selfish. It sought self gratification whether through libido or death instinct, while never heeding the moral consequences. Freud hence, categorized it as the 'primary process'. What must also be noted is the fact that the *id* basically ignored the outcome of its actions and therefore never undertook any responsibility.



Moreover, in the analysis of the psyche Freud spoke of a second subsystem in the 'psychic apparatus', namely the *ego*. This drive was one of reason and intellect which functioned inherently as a mediator between the impulsive *id* and the demands of the external world which conflicted with the *id*. Adaptive measures were the speciality of the *ego* and the intermediary role it performed made Freud refer to this drive as the 'secondary process'. Unfortunately as the conflict of the primary and secondary process often failed to resolve and evolve, Freud specified a third personality structure which was the *superego*. Essentially functioning as *conscience*, the *superego* compounded the taboos and the moral values of society. However, as each 'drive' attempted to assert itself, the 'inner conflicts' which resulted in the personality disorder were never laid to rest. Especially deep seated anxiety psychological disturbances in the personality, which Freud and other psychoanalytical schools of thought sought to identify.

Besides, keeping in focus the external situations and survival conditions, the factors of existence had a devastating effect on the psyche of the individual. The person it was noticed seldom survived in a state of emotional balance. The individual essentially disturbed within, resorted to escape measures.

The clear inference at this point is that all psychological disorders arise out of the emotion of anxiety. However, when this feeling turns to panic within the individual to a state of total anguish, it became transformed into what was clarified earlier as 'angst'. Furthermore in order to survive the impending disaster, the mind went into the shut down state' a form of one's survival mechanism, or the psychic energy became excessively heightened resulting in strange behavioral patterns. With such consequences that psychic energy became 'introverted' to use a Jungian term, and manifested such symptoms as one of inadaptability to life's situations. Furthermore, Jung also noted yet another trait in the psychological form of the individual which was, the hidden "shadow" self. This he elaborated was the personal unconsciousness imbibing the uncivilized desires and emotions which were incompatible to social standards and the ideal personality. The question which now arose was that if the "shadow self" was meant to be hidden, how long the endeavor would be successful, was doubtful. For as Jung stated, repression despite being a social necessity was beset with problems:

The danger of repressing the shadow is that in the unconscious it seems to acquire strength and grow in vigor, so that when the moment comes...it is more dangerous and more likely to overwhelm the rest of the personality which otherwise could have acted as a wholesome check.¹⁰

Challenging the ego personality, the "shadow self" and the tenacity it exhibited was a grave threat. The danger lurked in the 'shadows'

provoking the memory mind. The disturbance as a result, clung in persistence to the inner self of the individual finally creating the “shadow self “. However, as Jung elucidated any attempt at repression was a calamity for the person threatening the individual’s very integrity, ruining any hope for peace. Finally the deduction at the end was that the person was insane.

Such a prognosis was incredibly harsh but it was the truth. The angst of existence not only placed the individual in an emotional-cocoon like state, but incited the most dangerous of all emotions for the person, which to clarify was, ‘depression’. Beyond the state of dejection this unhappiness was traumatic and it is specifically for this disabling reason that depression was termed by psychologists as “Emotional Cancer”. Gnawing away at the life resource the lethal effect of this emotion yielded the post war society in general to live on the brink of madness. Each person anticipated the disturbing stimuli of life’s existential challenges, and unfortunately the stimulus existed in the psyche of the person as a full blown diagnosis of the insane - a situation which very few individuals could escape from. Hence, the shattered psyche in most individuals was witnessed.

As stated, this “witnessing” was successful through literature as such a discipline yielded valuable information about personality

dynamics and mental disorders prevalent during a particular historical period, and about inner experience of those who have undergone such disorders. To be specific about these mental disorders, Psychosis and Neurosis were of primary importance with other psychosomatic ailments as existing sub-groups. At this stage to notify, that adhering to the venture in this thesis, all categories of psychological ailments would be defined and related to in specific plays of Ionesco in the forthcoming chapters.

Traditionally Neurosis pertained to disorders stemming from the nervous system and Psychosis, as an affliction from the psyche. At present however, this approach has seen changes. Specifically, transcending the physiological state Neurosis has been defined as an anxiety disorder and a defense oriented avoidant behavior. As Carl Jung stated, Neurosis was always a substitute for legitimate suffering. Hence, it was basically an escape mechanism covering, anxiety, stress and phobia. On the other hand, Psychosis was the inability to distinguish what is real and what is imaginary. It is a severe mental illness in which a person hallucinates in the auditory and visual realm, acutely distanced from reality.

Relating to the works of the playwright in this discourse, one will note that the specified works highlighted the abnormal manifestations. Particularly, a play like *The Chairs* (1952), revealed the psychotic aspect

of schizophrenia, while the display pertaining to neurosis type of ailments were exemplified in three specific works. Namely, in *The Lesson* (1951), where Sado - Masochistic aspects of neurosis were evident, in *Amedee* or *How to Get Rid of It* (1954), and *Exit the King* (1962) the neurotic and the paranoid manifested and ultimately the last cited play, focused on various levels of neurotic behavior, in depth.

However the query rests on as to why the playwright pursued such an unusual besides bizarre approach in his plays. Referring to this aspect again Kafka's comment becomes pertinent. Relating to *The Metamorphosis* (1912), the author confessed that "...it was infinitely repulsive". Later he modified it to "the axe" like effect as quoted above. The whole intent was not only to awaken the reader through "shock repulsive "techniques but most importantly, to spur the process of evolvement to the level of enlightenment. This particularly was the basic quest of Ionesco who incorporated the teaching methods of Zen Buddhist problematic and nonsense type of techniques, primarily to animate one specifically, to "sudden enlightenment", which was termed as *Satori* in Zen - it being the highest quest to incorporate a complete quality life.

Ionesco's, most compulsive need was to make sense of the chaotic post war situation and to usher in a state of acceptance if not, a condition of peace as a final aftermath of the mass madness. In his words he stated

a pertinent comment which will lead to the conclusion of this thesis specifically, the zen-like state of ‘resolving and evolving leading to enlightenment’.

The playwright once declared in his masterpiece, *The Rhinoceros* (1959), that “Living is abnormal” the final solution hence, was to undergo the series of negations like the ‘abnormal’, to grasp the ‘central fact of life of pure existence’, which Zen propounded. Considering the opinion of the greatest authority on Zen, Dr Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki that:

Zen must be seized with bare hands with no gloves on.¹¹

Conclusively, Ionesco pursued the same mission. In his words he elucidated,

To attack the absurdity (of the human condition) is a way of stating the possibility of non-absurdity...For what else would there be a point of reference? In Zen Buddhism there was no direct teaching, only the constant search for an opening, a revelation. Nothing makes me more pessimistic than the obligation not to be pessimistic. I feel that every message of despair is the statement of a situation from which everybody must freely try to find a way out.¹²

‘From Absurdity to Enlightenment’ was the basic quest propounded by this prolific and brilliant playwright. And the ultimate understanding through this study is that, like the wise elders or Zen *Roshi's* of the ‘Old’, Ionesco secured his place of immortality in the medium of theatre. His exalted vision, instilled in mankind to focus on a catharsis and finally, to “find a way out”. His genius imposed on one a transcendence from the *Exisenzangst* situation, to that of acceptance and

‘Satori’ infused ‘enlightenment’.

Ionesco had ‘enlightened’ the way, as will be elucidated in this thesis, as in his prophetic words, it was up to modern man to:

....freely find a way out.¹³

End Notes

- ¹ Kafka, Franz. *The Metamorphosis*. ed. trans., Stanley Corngold. New York: Stanley Norton and Co, 1966. Print. p.X.
- ² Camus, Albert. *The Fall*. London: Penguin, 1986. Print. p.98.
- ³ Delfgaauw, Bernard. *Twentieth Century Philosophy*. Trans. N.D. Smith. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1969. Print. pp.131, 132.
- ⁴ Valency, Maurice. *The End of the World: Introduction to Contemporary Drama*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980. Print. p.311.
- ⁵ Esslin, Martin. *The Theatre of the Absurd*. New York: Peregrine, 1987. Print. p.24.
- ⁶ Coleman, C. James. *Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life*. Bombay: D.B. Taraporevala Sons & Co. Ltd., 1988. Print. p.8.
- ⁷ *Ibid.* p.45.
- ⁸ Valency. p.324.
- ⁹ Bogard, Travis and William I. Oliver, ed. *Modern Drama: Essays in Criticism*. London: Oxford University Press, 1971. Print. p. 9.
- ¹⁰ Fordham, Frieda. *An Introduction to Jung's Psychology*. New York: Pelican, 1975. Print. p 51.
- ¹¹ Suzuki, Daisetz. *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*. London: Rider, 1991. Print. p.51.
- ¹² Esslin. p.190.
- ¹³ *Ibid.* p.190.

Chapter-II

SCHIZOPHRENIC PERCEPTIONS IN *THE CHAIRS*

Schizophrenia was significantly associated with the highest category of persecution.¹

Ian Chovil

A disturbed mind is tortured with questions. This has been unraveled in the introductory portion of this discourse. Moreover, the experience of *Existenzangst*, compelled that mind to overcome this ordeal with an attempt of normalcy and kinship with people at large. However, more often than not any such endeavor failed.

Hence, that mind was at the end of its tether regarding how much it could accept or even tolerate, during the post World War II period. The massive life-long psychological disintegration imposed by the holocaust caused a severe and chronic, deteriorating ailment called the ‘Holocaust Syndrome’, which led to the schizoid mind, the shattered mind. And yet, that wounded mind still prevailed, still quested and questioned.

As already clarified in the introductory portion of this thesis the mind broke down in maladjustment. Reality became unbearable, and hence, the individual’s mind in tandem with the loathsome consciousness, the unfulfilled desires of the individual, sought to escape from reality to

live out a lie” in a comfort zone. The embattled mind ‘overpowered with questions’ took on alarming proportions, leaving the individual ‘split’ and ‘sick’. The individual was deemed mad, and in the extreme – a lunatic, a Schizophrenic.

The analysis of Ionesco’s, *The Chairs* best exemplifies such an almost epidemical psychological ailment. However prior to in depth psychological literary study, it is imperative that the background to Schizophrenia has to be understood — A study of the murkiest area of the mind living in the darkest consciousness.

Schizophrenia was considered the most perplexing, the most serious and the most disturbing of all psychotic disorders. Initially it was called Dementia Praecox by the psychologist Kraepelin. This term implies premature mental deterioration, as Kraepelin focused on mental patients in the childhood age group, besides the ailing adults. However, this term was finally changed to Schizophrenia by the Swiss psychologist Joseph Bleuler which essentially means ‘splitting’ of the mind. According to him, Schizophrenia incorporated aspects such:

...the disorganization of thought processes, a lack of coherence between thought and emotion, and an inward orientation from reality.²

Such disorientation from reality makes Schizophrenia characteristically a disorder under the realm of Psychosis. Furthermore, it can be more explicitly stated that Schizophrenia is a state:

.....which shatters the integration of the personality and disrupts the individual social relationship.³

However, it must be kept in mind that if one has to understand the basic function of such an ailment, one has to resort to Freudian psychoanalysis where he stated that the Schizoid mind involves a direct clash between the rational Id and the overbearing Ego. Furthermore, the Id comprises of two mechanisms namely, Reflex Actions and, Primary Processes which relates to fantasy and hallucinations. This second component is of primary importance especially with respect to existent Schizophrenic perceptions, in this study of Ionesco's, *The Chairs*.

In the struggle of the worldly Ego and the rebellious Id, the Id emerges victorious and the Psychotic is thrust into a day – dream world unaware of the practical realm of existence, with a complete distortion of reality. Fostered, by excessive stressful inputs, the individual underwent personal decomposition with a “residual damage” to one’s “self – structure”. Apparently, extreme conditions such as war and the aftermath as already seen in the introduction, fostered responses which psychologists term as “insulating effects”: “This is’nt really happening to me.”⁴

Referring to the insulating efforts again, P. Chodoff cites a sensational case where prisoners in the Concentration Camps during the Second World War, Refused to believe that the smoke arising from the

crematorium chimneys came from the burning corpses of their mothers. Elie Wiesel's holocaust experience makes it more explicit. His first exposure to the horror that awaited him in Auschwitz was through the comments of an inmate who stated plainly as Wiesel along with the other Jews moved in the Camp, that they were heading for the "crematorium":

He seemed to be telling the truth. Not far from us, flames, huge flames were rising from a ditch. Something was being burned there. A truck drew close and unloaded its hold: small children. Babies! Yes, I did see this, with my own eyes...⁵

Further on there was a larger ditch for adult prisoners but the sight being too painful for the young Wiesel resulted in an outburst:

I could not believe that human beings were being burned in our times; the world would never tolerate such crimes.⁶

The naivety of youth coupled with his innocence, meant a vehement denial of the unspeakable crime which took place in front of his eyes. The only survival instinct one required was to be blind to the cruelty like Wiesel, to consciously blot out the pain and "insulate" oneself psychologically, and exist in a limbo like state.

This was not an isolated case of the Concentration Camp inmates, it was also the condition of modern man. If the Semite group, the Gypsies, Homosexuals and other tarnished groups experienced the trauma of the war and its aftermath, those who observed and witnessed, were also affected. In fact, a British soldier named Peter Coombs, had this to say in his letter to his wife, "The sight of these affects one profoundly". Corrie

ten Boom a survivor of the horror testified: "...everyone was a damaged human being."⁷ Hence, this damage characterized the Post War man living then in a Schizophrenic state. Records of psychiatric hospitals showed Schizophrenia to be the most frequent ailment of post war psychogeriatric patients.

For a layman Schizophrenia harbors the Jekyll and Hyde concept with clear cut distinctions of the good psyche and the evil. However, such is not necessarily the case and the abnormal condition, is perhaps a little less malignant and more complex as will be seen in the case study of Ionesco's, *The Chairs*. Schizophrenia had been not only in a part of psychological research but also into literature too by Absurdist like Kafka and Beckett. In fact, the critic G.C. Barnard stated that Schizophrenia was an ".....important characteristic of Beckett's heroes"⁸ as also in Ionesco's play *The Chairs* which is suffused with Schizophrenic perceptions.

Reverting back to psychoanalysis, one discovers that prior to Bleuler, Kraepelin characterized Schizophrenia into three sub-groups namely Paranoid Schizophrenia, Hebephrenic Schizophrenia and lastly, Catatonic Schizophrenia. In the Hebephrenic type or Disorganized Schizophrenia as it has been called till recently, another psychoanalyst called Hecker highlighted regressive behavior as an ailment. The patient

displays silly, giggling behavior and at other times, tearful bouts of emotional display.

In Catatonic Schizophrenia, Kahlbaum focused more on motor disorientation of the body rather than behavioral symptoms. The only behavioral symptoms which did exist were periods of manic depression. During this depressive phase, the patient was not only mute and morose, but he or she failed to change their position for hours on end and was also capable of maintaining most uncomfortable contorted positions which psychologists call, "waxy flexibility". Furthermore, at other times, the patient displayed bursts of energy, frenzied and destructive. This behavior is described as Catatonic Type Excited and Catatonic Type Withdrawn. Both these formed what Kahlbaum termed as "Cyclic Insanity".

G.C. Barnard's analysis of Beckett's works, the focus is more on the Catatonic Type of Schizophrenic characters in the novels and plays. Case studies were evident, in works like *Endgame* (1957) and *Waiting for Godot* (1952).

Eugene Ionesco's play, *The Chairs* it must be clarified, reveals a case study essentially of the Paranoid type of Schizophrenia. It has been stated that this manifestation exhibits less personality disorganization than the two former types of Schizophrenia. However certain serious inconsistencies in the psyche are revealed as will be unraveled and

elaborated in depth in this chapter.

Major issues accompanying Schizophrenia which are termed as the Primary Process and Positive or First Rank symptoms consist of hallucinations and delusions. Delusions focus mainly on the patient's persistent false belief, even when he or she has been proved wrong. This could cover delusions of Persecution and delusions of Grandeur. Both these manifestations will be apparent in *The Chairs*. Barnard, in his study of Beckett mentions:

The essential element (of Schizophrenia) is a withdrawal of interest from the outside world and a concentration upon an inner world of fantasy...⁹

In Ionesco's play the withdrawal is a necessary phenomenon. Primarily, it is so due to the fact that besides being a withdrawal on the part of the characters themselves, the setting of the play implies it and it is imposed on the characters. This phenomenon is not new in the playwright's works. Other plays such as *The New Tenant* (1955), *The Killer* (1957) and also *Amedee* (1953) feature this isolated setting.

In keeping with Ionesco's minimalistic setting and cast, two characters, the Old Man and his wife Semiramus, both in their mid-nineties are living in a Watchtower on an island. When the play starts we become aware that the room is in "semi-darkness". It is evening and the Old Woman is lighting a gas lamp which emits a "green light". Psychologists state that the period between dusk and dawn stimulates the

Schizophrenic mind, whilst the distractions of the day divert and fail to arouse the abnormal mind. Hence, 'darkness and solitude' are the requirements for the onset of hallucinations which it must be noted is an essential component of Schizophrenia. Bleuler clarifies:

...hallucinations, occurred primarily when patients were alone in quiet surroundings; darkness and night maximize their appearance, distractions by contrast, reduce them.¹⁰

With the lighting on the stage a sense of gloom descends and the loneliness is poignant. The Old Woman even states: "Oh this house, this island, I shall never get used to it." (Ionesco, *The Chairs*, p.128) Semiramus' anguish was not her's alone but a characteristic 'voice' of the post war man who was too traumatized to get any comfort out of their habitation or their daily lives. However like the general populace the unfortunate fact was that there was no way out for this unfortunate couple distanced from the social world by a vast expanse of water. Semiramus complains:

.....water all around you.....water under the windows, water as far as the eyes can see....¹¹

Hence, the water which surrounded them determined their habitat and their life situation. Semiramus could not reconcile herself to this fatalistic fact.

At the beginning of the play the Old Man makes a simple yet poignant observation that it is six o'clock and the night has already come. The

darkness here is a contrast to the “old days” when it was light even at midnight he nostalgically recalls. The symbolic inference is that the ‘light of the past’, was that of the light of ‘peace’ and ‘security’, which has now been annulled by the ‘darkness of modernity’ especially during the post war period. Darkness of the mind and chaos has become a permanent state. The Old Woman reasons that the early onset of the dark is due to:

...perhaps, because the further we go, the deeper the rut, it’s all on account of the earth which never stops turning, turning, turning...¹²

the ‘rut’ that darkness equates to is clarified by the playwright in *Fragments of a Journal* (1968) when he states:

...the black nothingness has already begun to devour me and that I have lost my feet, my legs, my thighs; I was merely a torso being consumed by the icy fire of nothingness.¹³

In the Absurd World suffering looms everywhere, dark and menacing and the horrific fact is that it is a permanent state. One could perhaps find a way, a meaning, a purpose, but Ionesco himself stated that “....absurd is that which is devoid of purpose.”¹⁴

Thus the play focuses on nothingness. The darkness inherent denotes the futility and the failure of existence around, and in the minds of the two characters; “under the great black bridge of time”. With the passing of time, the ordeal of the couple had intensified to a state of agonizing loneliness with tragic consequences. The passage of time which functions as a link between life and death leaves the protagonists

isolated in a state of limbo. The ordeal of ageing and seclusion has a catastrophic effect. The couple long for social company but in the absence of it feels as ‘The Old Man’ poignantly laments: “I feel all cracked and smashed.”¹⁵

Hence, like any other schizophrenic patient:

They produce responses pervaded by a feeling of meaninglessness and emptiness and lack of purpose.¹⁶

The first inkling that something is wrong is apparent in the beginning of the play. Though darkness is fast advancing the Old Man insists that he can see the shadows cast by the setting sun on the water. Hence, although a part of him is aware about the darkness, he contradicts himself and is insistent about the fact relating to the shadows, this can be clarified as a hallucination on his part for it is already too dark.

Furthermore, a trivial aspect catches one’s attention. ‘The Old Man’ has a slight verbal banter with his wife and insists that she should drink her tea but as Ionesco notes in brackets (Naturally there is no tea) (*Ibid.*, p.129). However, what is important here is the fact that it apparently comes as a forerunner to the final ‘hallucinatory’ aspect later in the play. At this juncture it may be mentioned that what comprises the dreams of a normal person at night, is the very substance of the Schizoid psyche. If such is the case, it becomes very apt for *The Chairs*, where the setting and situation have an unreal effect on the characters. Bereft of

social intercourse the elderly couple have been resorting to recalling “historical illusions”, like the instance of King Francis the First. However, recalling the same event every evening for the last seventy five years is unnatural and intensely tragic. As the Old Man states:

It's so boring.....every evening, every evening without exception, through seventy-five years of married life, you make me tell the same story, imitate the same people, the same months....always the same...¹⁷

A similar situation can be witnessed in the works of the German Absurd playwright Wolfgang Hildesheimer. In the *The Clocks* (1958) where a couple who are the protagonist's in the play, recall and relive scenes from their life together. However, in *The Chairs*, the situation gets pathetic perhaps, even horrendous. Two people living in a time warp for so many years have to find some kind of outlet for their loneliness. So they ultimately are compelled to resort to mind- games. Hence, like typical schizoids they live in the ‘world of the mind’ with a psyche which has become warped as a result of their stressful existence and senility. This condition is ripe for the manifestations of the two aspects of the abnormal state, ‘delusions’ and finally ‘hallucinations’.

As the Couple gets entrapped in recreating the past they focus on an incident which occurred eighty years earlier suffused with the slapstick aspect, the irrational and the grotesque. Requested by his wife, the Old Man does a Stanley Laurel rendition of the month of February. They

recall “arriving” near a village gate and heading towards a path which led towards the village church. They then advance on the route to Paris which then evokes memories of a universal phenomenon of a city which, like the state of man in general – is in ruins. Related to this, is the fact that a schizoid persona often utilizes disjointed verbal techniques. For instance, when the Old Man referred to the famous Paris as “Parasite lost” (*Ibid.*, p. 132) thereby using an aspect of Schizophrenia called “clang words”.

This phenomenon focuses on an association of some sort where the associative threads were disrupted as in the case of “clang words”. Furthermore, as Zax and Cowen’s work on the abnormal psyche clarifies:

Schizophrenics make associations based on the similarity of word sounds...¹⁸

Yet what must be noted here is the fact that the logic behind the association is often deficient. The Old Man’s reference to “parasite lost” is a ‘slip’ where he suddenly blurts the word implying a shattered city, during his conversation with his wife.

Furthermore, Freudian analysis specified about the trait of the ‘slip’ of the tongue which speaks of the predominance of the unconscious. The hidden manifestations of the mind at an unguarded moment emerged as a ‘slip’. Besides, Jung’s understanding of this Freudian ‘slip’ he clarifies as:

..in the case of neurosis,..the unconscious is quite capable of bringing about all kinds of unwelcome disturbances “by mistake”, often with

serious consequences, or of provoking neurotic symptoms. These disturbances are due to the lack of harmony between conscious and unconscious...very frequently it is simply not there, and this is the reason for a vast number of psychogenic misfortunes ranging from severe accidents and illness to harmless "slips of the tongue".¹⁹

In the case of the Old Man, the 'slip' was an outburst about a Paris which was once a Paradise, but unfortunately was no longer so. In one tangent it related to Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667), in another, the illogical aspect focused on the city of Paris which like the state of the Old Man was, in utter ruin. Moreover, coming to the second primary trait of 'delusions' in schizophrenia which focus on a negative persistent false belief even if one is proved wrong the Old Woman Semiramus, exhibits more of the problem. She displays a trait of intense ambition and is determined that her husband is capable of greater achievement:

...You really are a great scholar. You are so clever, my dear. You might have become a President General, a General Director, or even a General Physician, or a Post master General if you'd wanted to, if you'd had just a little ambition in life...²⁰

Schizophrenic 'delusion', exhibits what psychologist's term as "negative symptoms" where the victim exhibits a behavior incorporating a lack of directedness.

Barbara Sarason, a psychologist mentioned the fact that it was usual for the patient to emerge from a certain strata of society which in this analysis was related to the Old Man. She elaborates that:

...people of lower socioeconomic status (SES) are diagnosed with schizophrenic disorder more frequently than people of middle or upper SES....the Social Selection theory assumes that people who cannot make it in society gradually become lower in SES because of their poor coping skills.²¹

This aspect is most pertinent to the Old Man. Unlike his wife's delusion of grandeur regarding him, he lacked focus and hence, slipped to the lower rung in the societal strata to become a quarter master general, an ordinary man. However it is noteworthy that there remained in the Old Man a memory of people he had quarreled with. Probably as Semiramus stated, if he had befriended them he would have become more successful instead of lapsing into the frustrated phase and thus as is implied, would have avoided schizophrenia as an ailment. Yet, despite the slight chiding it is the very same spouse who encourages the Old Man. Semiramus states:

...You have'nt smashed everything, there's still some hope left; you'll tell them all about it you can explain it all. You've got a message...you're always saying you're going to pass it on...²²

Thus, she became the main impetus till the final event in the play.

Reminiscent in a benign manner of a Lady Macbeth, Semiramus typifies Shakespeare's "lady", in her support and encouragement of her husband's aspirations and mission. Furthermore, there is another aspect to the Old Woman, was another important aspect. The name Semiramus was an allusion to the legendary 9th Century B.C. queen of Assyria who was primarily the goddess of fertility and both wife and mother to Nimrod.

The word, 'semi' being a prefix for half, and 'ramus' referring to an extension of bone especially the lower jaw; thus vis-à-vis to spouse the Old Woman's name implies the 'complete' jaw, branch and speech. Immediately thereafter as it was witnessed, the Old Man who was the other half, cooperated readily with his wife, to render their "fantasy" real.

He responds by stating:

I've a message, you're right. I must fight for it. A mission, I can give birth to a great idea, a message for all men, for all mankind.²³

This decision was accompanied by the necessity to host a peace conference.

Although psychologists state that psychotics, specially schizophrenics suffer from emotional impoverishment there are however some exceptions. Bleuler cited that some Schizoids were "...active writers, world improvers, and founders of new religions."²⁴ Referring to *The Chairs* such a fact is applicable to the Old Man's psyche. But the practicality of the endeavor was questionable. It has been stated in psychoanalysis that most of the delusions of Schizophrenics are far beyond reasonable grounds. Such was also the case of the two ancients as this grandiose 'scheme' of a peace conference hosted by the Couple.

However, at that moment the two doddering old people are intent on holding the above mentioned meeting on a massive scale. The invitees included a variety of people reminiscent of Ionesco's work, *The Future is*

in Eggs (1957), which ends with the protagonist Roberte hatching basketful of eggs from which was destined to emerge emperors, policemen, Marxists, drunkards and the like. In *The Chairs*, the invitees covered not merely leaders, bishops, musicians, the working class, reactionaries, scientists, mental patients but even 'chromosomes'. It is noticeable that the psychological sickness inherent during the post war times was ingrained in society, right to the core of modern man's existence hence the 'chromosomes' were not exempted.

Moreover, the old couple had been witness to much of the world in deterioration; hence they were intent on a mission or a "sacred duty" to speak to all the continents in the world, and the whole universe if possible. These protagonists especially the Old Man pictured themselves as champions for the cause of peace but whether people would respond is questionable, as the Old Man stated to Semiramus: "you and the Orator are the only people who have understood me."²⁵ However they persisted and are presented as two ordinary people trying to overreach themselves, victims of 'delusions of grandeur' in their attempts as 'world peace makers' despite being in the "rut" themselves.

Besides it is to be noted here that ingrained in psychotic disorder is the alteration of perception which in the process of proceeding from the mind to visual impairment, in the patient usually involves hallucinations.

This is due to the fact that “hallucinations can talk, they can even walk”. This, “Primary Process” accommodates itself as predominant feature in the play.

At this juncture the doorbell rings and the two protagonists usher in a young woman in a “pretty suit...a blouse in red, white and blue....” and converse with her. The incredible thing is that was that she was given a “chair.” This is just a visual hallucination in the couple’s mind as she is invisible and can be analyzed as a psycho-dynamic fruition of social interaction for the couple such as “wish fulfillment”. This is followed with the entrance of the Colonel whom they introduce to the first visitor.

Herein, it is noticed that the presence of diverse manifestations in the Old Couple can be deduced as a phenomenon called the “pseudo-couple.” This term has been very explicitly mentioned in G.C. Branard’s work on Beckett who said that the pseudo-couple are two halves of one mind who are indissolubly bound together. In Barnard’s analysis of *Waiting for Godot* (1948), Estragon manifests the withdrawn “inner self”, whilst Vladimir imbibes the “pseudo-self which relates to the body. Furthermore, the same pattern was repeated with Hamm and Clov and in *Endgame* (1958), with Nell and Nagg.

However, this observation is also most appropriate to the couple of Ionesco’s play as they inherently feature the “Pseudo-couple.” The Old

Man with greater reserve and higher ideals imbibes the ‘inner self’ of “the inner life” as he tells Mrs. Lovely:

That’s exactly what saved me: the inner life, a quiet home, austerity, my scientific research philosophy, my message...²⁶

while Semiramus with her ‘repression of urges’ forges more of the ‘pseudo-self’, which will be an aspect to be covered shortly.

Coleman has analyzed regression to primary levels of thinking, in Schizophrenia. Illogical ideas, fantasy and magical thinking such as the thought process of children becomes the mainstay and also includes the indulgence of the child, to converse with imaginary playmates. The extent of personifying inanimate objects and other figments of his or her imagination in a child are observed as the very indulgence of Ionesco’s Couple during the conference. To be specific, when the Old Couple express indignation regarding the presumably amorous and erotic conversation from the Colonel towards the first lady visitor, the entire experience bordered on the aspect of the imagination and an inference regarding what presumably was taking place. Nothing was logically real but for the ancients, it was the reverse. They were not merely entrapped in that abstract world but furthermore, they resorted to Coleman’s aforementioned ‘fantasy’, in great clarity.

However, Semiramus manifested more of such responses than the Old Man. Her interaction with Mrs. Lovely’s husband the photographer,

provoked the most unusual behavior though she emphasizes that; “I have never been unfaithful to my husband.” (*Ibid.*, p.148) The playwright however states:

She should have become more coquettish as the scene goes showing her thick red stockings, lifting her numerous skirts revealing a petticoat full of holes, uncovering her ancient breasts; then throwing her head backwards...it should suggest something in the Old Woman’s which normally remains hidden and it vanishes abruptly.²⁷

Furthermore, she goes on to contravene herself by stating that she is too old “for that now”, however, she still persists with her seduction maneuvers. The Old Man on the other hand featured reactions distanced from his wife’s sensuality to a more emotional kind. To Mrs. Lovely he implored: “May I play Tristan to your Isolde? Beauty lies in the heart....”.²⁸ This whole episode as it is witnessed, is a study of the contrasts in the Couple, who manifest a Schizoid connection as the pseudo-couple. Moreover, the clash between the two became more marked with each individual statement made by them.

For instance, when the Old Woman mentioned they had a son who left them at the age of seven the Old Man immediately negated this aspect by mentioning that he would have liked a son, and that they never had any children. The interpersonal relationship then takes on a different angle as the focus proceeded to the emotional link that the Old Man had with his mother.

Psychologists usually state that Schizophrenics are mostly involved with relationship primarily of tumult with the mother, who usually is an overbearing and excessively dominating mother. This factor is not clearly revealed in the play save for the aspect of the neglectful son who rushes off to a dance and leaves his mother, to die all alone in a ditch. The Old Man it is then noticed spends his entire life trying to “dig” her out as “...it tortures me...” he admits.

The intensity of the abnormal psyche and the indulgence in the excitement provokes a further hallucination with the presence of more imaginary characters, and the corporeal presence of more “chairs”. The bells keep on ringing, doors are opened and “chairs” are frequently brought in by the Old Woman. The only exception to the imaginary objects coming alive is in reference to a “table” which is completely non-existent. The Old Man is seen moving a table with his wife assisting him, to make more room for the audience. The room it is seen to be overflowing with imaginary people and a whole bevy of chairs. At a critical moment in the play the movement of the couple becomes minimal with the Old Man swirling his hands from to side ushering in imaginary guest while the Old Woman picks up chairs and sets it down from left to right and right to left. The whole movement was deliberately placed to express intense activity, though the fact remains that, the hands, torso,

head and eyes are the only aspects of the couple which actually move. When no more “chairs” are to be presented Semiramus progresses towards other aspects like selling of the programmes. It is here that the clash of the pseudo-couple is subtly marked in the Old Man’s. While interacting with Mrs. Lovely he states:

I was in love with you a 100 years ago...There’s been such a great change...There’s been no change in you at all...I was in love with you then, I love you now....²⁹

The fluxes and contradictions continue in the speech while the sale of choc ices, toffees and drops proceed. Notably, then the situation becomes increasingly bizarre as the people are teeming in hordes for the conference. The crowd becomes so unmanageable that the couple are jostled and pushed around until the Old Man is forced to stand by a window near a stool. As Ionesco specifies:

The Old Woman will do the same, but in the opposite direction, to end up by the stool near the window on the left.³⁰

This will become the final position till almost the end of the play. They will no longer be able to reunite. The aspect of the pseudo-couple gets more pronounced at this stage. The Old Man remarks unconsciously highlighting the disjointed and unity of the fragmented self:

The person and the individual are one and the same person....I am not myself, I am someone else. I am one in the other.³¹

Both of them hereafter, exhibit aspects of delusion in its twin aspects. Semiramus as usual continues with the concept of ‘grandeur’ while the

Old Man typified, pronounced 'persecution'.

Furthermore, accompanying the dual aspect of delusion in the Couple, the pseudo-self in them is manifested in a much more pertinent way. Emulating the Old Man's feelings Semiramus, repeats his message, his vision, like an 'echo' spontaneously and almost unconsciously to create an impact on the audience. Besides it must be noticed that at this juncture, Semiramus seems to negate the importance of the others as being nobodies and her husband's role being of, "supreme importance, quite sublime". Unfortunately the reality was that the task would not be effective without the presence of the Orator and hence, they are compelled to await his presence. However, the most unexpected visitor arrives.

With great ceremony, with a fanfare of trumpets and brilliant light, the Emperor arrives to grace the occasion with his unexpected presence. The protagonists become intensely excited, completely overcome by the regal presence and yet, for the Old Man the occasion propels him to express his discontent and unhappiness. Stirred to the nadir of feelings of persecution the outburst flows and the Old Man demeans himself as the emperor's most 'loyal of all his subjects', his most faithful "hound", but at the same time, the most traumatized. Greatly upset he states:

*I have always been hated for the right reason and loved for the wrong ones...I was a collector of disasters, a lightning conductor for catastrophe...*³²

Yet, there is great pathos. The Old Man's anguish, his failures, all moved the audience to such an extent that as the noted critic Richard N. Coe confessed:

*I saw the play 8 times. At each performance the audience was more moved than amused. A discussion followed and several members of the audience...said that the play 'exhausted' them or made them 'feel empty'. This uniform response suggested ...that the play evoked anguish as well as pity. Perhaps a better rendering of Aristotle's "pity and fear"*³³

The sincerity of the couple to bring about a change of perception in society and improve life despite the ridiculous aspect arouses feelings of great admiration in any sensitive individual. Such was the main appeal provoked by this masterpiece of Ionesco which won laurels in the halls of fame. As for the reader, besides many a member of the audience, the climax shattered the mind with Kafka's "axe" wielding effect or shock technique. The play plunges one into the depths of psychological disturbance, but the end is yet to come. The Orator, the spokesperson for the Old Man, was anticipated. A painter or poet in the elaborate apparel of the last century, the Orator finally entered a silent presence with a characteristic ghostly walk. As Ionesco stated:

*If the invisible character should appear as real as possible, the Orator should look unreal; slipping along the right hand wall, he goes quietly to the back of the stage in front of the great door, without moving his head to left or right.*³⁴

The existence of the Orator is so fantastic. So much so that the couple, especially Semiramus is compelled to touch him to affirm that he really exists and 'is not a dream'. However, this fact becomes questionable till the end of the play. As stimulated to action by the Old Man, the Orator proceeds to sign the autographs handed over by the audience in an automatic gesture like a robot while the Old Man delivers his final vote of thanks. The Orator despite being the only other corporeal character in the play represents a contrast to the human specifically 'real' presence of ancients. His presence, his apparel incites the impression of strangeness, neither belonging to this world nor the specific post war period. He represents all that is 'strange'.

The Old Man aroused particularly by the presence of the Orator to feel gratitude, veers on the trivial aspect of conveying his indebtedness to all specifically, the masons who raised the walls of the Watchtower the diggers of the foundations, the paper manufacturers, printers, proof readers, technicians, mechanics and so on. Nonetheless, he advances on to greater issues like "Universal solidarity of the human race," from which he expects the Orator to glean the protagonist's life and his philosophy of enlightenment. All would not be wasted then, if the Orator pays heed, for the Old Man affirms that even after his death all life's efforts will bear fruit. A street will bear the couple's names and even the

Emperor will not be able to forget them.

It may be noted that this aspect of immortalizing and consciously attempting to transcend time has been dealt with by the playwright in neurotic depth in *Exit the King* (1963). King Berenger desires to be remembered in script and in form, all for the purpose of gratifying his personal megalomaniacal pursuits. However, *The Chairs* highlights another aspect. Unlike, the selfish self-gratification of King Berenger, the Old Man's pursuit was more idealistic. The primary desire of the 'ancients' was that their intent to "save the world" would not be forgotten and a concrete gesture of gratitude and acknowledgement from the part of society would be forthcoming. Affirming this realization, the Old Man is prepared for his final transcendence from the world as he ultimately realizes that his life was 'not lived in vain'. Hence, sinking deeper and deeper to the conference as an outcome of their fantasy, the 'ancients' get exceedingly animated.

As a result, the psychological equilibrium of the Schizoid couple gets tested. Coleman states that once arousal occurs:

....it would appear that Schizophrenics are often slower than normal persons in returning to a state of psychological equilibrium.³⁵

The greatest dilemma for a schizophrenic is the difficulty in distinguishing reality from fantasy in what is technically known as the "filtering process." The Couple have gone beyond the rational and hence,

in such a condition, the final exit remains.

In such a state where the frenzy of the Conference has been too excessive for the Couple to bear the only logical step was the ultimate "exit" of the protagonists. But the method is surprising. Semiramus separated from the Old Man by a vast chasm of hallucinatory people realize they cannot come together in physical proximity. The pathos comes to light when the Old Man laments: "...alas, in our moment of triumph we are separated by a pitiless mob."³⁶ It has been stated that schizoids cannot bear to accept internal or external stimulated impulses and as their reunion is almost impossible they:

...follow whatever within arises, either because they fail to consider the consequences or because they are indifferent to them. Their behavior is accordingly, unpredictable.³⁷

Their mission complete, the Couple then finally departs from the scene, not in a logical sequence of bidding farewell to the audience. They resort to the unexpected. There is a sudden splash of bodies hitting the water. The Couple ultimately, commit suicide. Such an act was propelled by desperation suffused with emotion which made the couple too blind to seek an alternate course. Consequently, they typified psychological case studies. The intensity of mood disorders and negative thoughts though not apparent in the consciousness, compelled the Schizoid mind in the elderly couple to take the "final plunge" as has been witnessed in the play.

Besides, as clarified in psychoanalysis, the fact verified that ninety percent of successful suicide cases were psychotic in nature where the vulnerabilities were extreme and resilience factors had depleted. To elucidate:

People with schizophrenia have a high risk of attempting suicide. People with schizophrenia are especially likely to commit suicide during psychotic episodes.³⁸

Furthermore, having reached the breaking point it is important to highlight the aspect of water. Right from the inception of the play, water had formed a boundary for the couple from the social world and kept them in a cocoon. But water as Semiramus had stated earlier in the play, had also coerced them. Their personal frustration, leading to maladjustment and a completely warped psyche had led ultimately, to the triumph of water.

Significantly, one notices the fact that what the couple failed to adjust to, was the natural element to which they had finally succumbed. Water emerges victorious and ironically, the final home for the couple was a 'watery grave'. However, akin to the fluid nature of water, Ionesco's play does not culminate with the death of the protagonists. In fact, with characteristic fluidity the play moves on to verify the significance of the Orator.

The 'final mode of action' of the protagonists, is the required cue for the Orator. Hence, the Orator starts to speak. With feeble attempts to

communicate, the Orator aware of his limitations as he is a deaf-mute utilizes a blackboard. Scribbling the word “Angepain” which translates to the French ‘Angel Bread’, followed by other words such as “NNAA NNM NWNWNW V... Adieu, Adieu, Apa” (*The Chairs*, p.176). The Orator then bows to the “Chairs”, and exits.

Ionesco, on the occasion of the debut of his “play on April 22nd 1952”, specified certain directional notes to the director Sylvian Dhomme, before the play was staged in the ‘Theatre Lancry’ Paris. Notably, as in the playwright’s words:

The last decisive moment of the play should be the expression of absence... (after the Orator leaves) at this moment the audience should have in front of them...empty chairs on an empty stage...which would give an impression of sadness, emptiness and disenchantment...it would be after this that the Chairs, the scenery, the void, would inexplicably come to life (that is the effect beyond reason, true in its improbability, that we are looking for and that we must obtain), upsetting logic and raising fresh doubts.³⁹

The conclusion of the play invites further quest and questions. Ionesco who had personally been a witness and a participant in the ‘great distress’ the aftermath of the war was intensely aware of the depths of anxiety and suffering of mankind. In consequence of the ‘terrible truths’ he had learnt. Moreover, his sensitivity had fed the creative impulse in him, reflecting what his intent as Esslin noted was to bring man:

...face to face with the harsh realities of the human condition...this is also the way to liberation.⁴⁰

As in several of his plays, Ionesco utilizes the props to convey like the Old Man's intent, – his vision, his message. The notable critic, Kenneth Tynan while critiquing Ionesco's *The Chairs* (1951), *The Future is in Eggs* (1957), *Victims of Duty* (1953), *The New Tenant* (1955) and *Amadee* (1954) stated:

Ionesco populates his stage with meaningless physical objects to emphasize his theme of unreason and convey a nightmarish sense of inanity.⁴¹

However, 'meaningless' as the objects are, the reality rests on the fact that the inanimate enhances the hidden truth of the horror, with greater poignancy. Hence, in accordance to his objective, the 'chairs', react in the empty stage:

For the first time human noises seem to be coming from the invisible crowd; snatches of laughter, whisperings, a 'Ssh!' or two, little sarcastic coughs; these noises grow louder and louder, only to start fading away....The curtain falls very slowly.⁴²

The end of the masterpiece leaves one with greater query especially focused on the aspect of 'laughter' emanating from the 'invisible audience'. For the ultimate purpose of the 'open ended' conclusion, focuses on the aspect of the stimuli which provoked such a powerful reaction. The intensity of the entire experience of the conference as witnessed in the play provokes not a normal reaction for the couple, who are insane. Hence, the 'laughter' exuded from the 'chairs', in reality reflects their breakdown state.

Psychologists have particularized certain personality trait disorders specifically, the paranoid personality, the cyclothymic personality, the passive-aggressive personality and the hysterical personality to name a few. However, the last category pertained to the individual whose behavior pattern was characterized by immaturity, excitability, emotional instability and histrionic personality. This analysis characterized the Old Man and Semiramus. Considering their demise one understands that the couple had reached the brink of a hysterical collapse with alternate paroxysm of extreme feelings.

However, from the particular, one transcends to the universal. Hence, the display of despair and the resultant outcome through the abnormal manifestation in *The Chairs* impelled an outburst, a realization. If post war man emerged in the darkest 'night' of consciousness, the apparently inanimate presence of the 'chairs', testify to the general psychological ruin: The 'chairs', significantly laughed.

Reflecting of the psychological instability exposed in the play, the 'chairs', notably, the 'invisible audience' reflect the nervous breakdown through the maniacal outburst of laughter in the void. Beyond hilarity, this dark, tragic farce portrays the pathos of what the critic John Simon analyzed:

The exact meaning of every detail is debatable, but the outline is clear enough. We live in terrifying isolation, companioned mostly by imaginary others. We cannot even voice our final justification.⁴³

This is akin to another critic, William Oliver's view that *The Rhinoceros* (1959) and *The Chairs* were tragic masterpieces. The brilliance of Ionesco's tragic farce lay not in the fact that the Old Man had failed to deliver his message to the world, or that his spokesman was dumb, his isolation becomes modern man's reality.

In post war existence, with the fragmentation of human life, the 'Wasteland' of Eliot, the 'being' of man, is torn asunder fragmented into bits. The "voice" was not stifled as the interior dialogue in the mind could never be put to rest. In the silence, in the dilemma of survival, man sunk to deeper levels hence, the introspective questions of life continued. Post war man lived with the daily toil of psychological disturbance and the effect of the 'split' in the schizophrenic, was an assumption in relation to many an individual. Ionesco's portrayal of the schizoid was more the 'split personality' in truth, it indicated an ailment where the individual was "split", cut off from reality. This brilliant rendition of escape mechanisms in *The Chairs*, asserted Ionesco's understanding of the 'holocaust syndrome' and its epidemical activity.

Ionesco had dramatized it, Jung had critiqued it especially in his analysis of James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), Jung openly declared, the ultimate truth that fixed the post war psyche, the disturbed querying

mind, the damage had set in to establish the fact that: "Schizophrenia is a manifestation of our time."⁴⁴

End Notes

- ¹ "After the Holocaust." Ian Chovil. May 1, 2001. Suite 101./insightful writers. Informed Readers. <<http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/schizophreniaretired/67723>> 8 September 2002.
- ² Sarason Irwin and Barbara Sarason. *Abnormal Psychology: The Problem of Maladaptive Behavior*. New Delhi: Prentice- Hall of India Private Limited, 2000. Print. p. 292.
- ³ Page, J.D., *Abnormal Psychology and Clinical Approach to Psychological Disorders*. New Delhi: Tata McGraw Hill Publishing Company, 2000. Print. p.5.
- ⁴ Coleman, C. James. *Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life*. New Delhi: D.B. Taraporevala Sons & Co. Ltd. 1988. Print. p.123.
- ⁵ Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. Trans. Marion Wiesel. London: Penguin, 2006. Print. p.32.
- ⁶ *Ibid.* p. 33.
- ⁷ Boom, ten Corrie. *The Hiding Place*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1978. Print. p.215.
- ⁸ Barnard, G.C. *Samuel Beckett a New Approach: A Study of His Novels and Plays*. London: Bowering, 1970. Print. p. 5.
- ⁹ *Ibid.* p. 5.
- ¹⁰ Zax and Cowen. *Abnormal Psychology: Changing Conceptions*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc. 1972. Print. p. 125.
- ¹¹ Ionesco, Eugene. *Rhinoceros, The Chairs, The Lesson*. Trans. Donald Watson & Derek Prouse. London: Penguin. 1962. Print. p.128.
- ¹² *Ibid.* p.128.
- ¹³ Esslin, Martin. *The Theatre of the Absurd*. New York: Peregrine, 1987. Print. p.128.
- ¹⁴ Esslin, Martin. *The Theatre of the Absurd*. p.23.
- ¹⁵ Ionesco, Eugene. p.132.
- ¹⁶ Zax and Cowen. p.119.
- ¹⁷ Ionesco, Eugene. p.130.
- ¹⁸ Zax and Cowen. p.119.
- ¹⁹ Jung, C.G. *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969. Print. p. 288.
- ²⁰ Ionesco, Eugene. p.129.
- ²¹ Sarason, Irwin and Barbara Sarason. p.320.
- ²² Ionesco, Eugene. p.133.
- ²³ *Ibid.* p. 133.
- ²⁴ Zax and Coleman. p.120.

- 25 Ionesco, Eugene. p.137.
- 26 *Ibid.* p. 148.
- 27 *Ibid.* p. 147.
- 28 *Ibid.* p. 148.
- 29 *Ibid.* p.146.
- 30 *Ibid.* p. 159.
- 31 *Ibid.* p. 161.
- 32 *Ibid.* p. 166, p.167.
- 33 “The Enactment of the “Not” in Ionesco’s *Les Chaises*.”Richard Schechner. JSTOR Yale French Studies 1962. Yale University Press, No. 29 (1962) pp.65-72. <http://www.Springerlink.com/index/kq172781Q355221G.pdf> > 15 June 2010.
- 34 Ionesco, Eugene. p.170.
- 35 Coleman, C. James. *Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life*. New Delhi: D.B. Taraporevala Sons & Co. Ltd. 1988. Print. p. 314.
- 36 Ionesco, Eugene. p.174.
- 37 Zax and Coleman. p.123.
- 38 “Understanding Schizophrenia: Signs, Symptoms, Causes, and Effects” by Melinda Smith, M.A. & Robert Segal, M.A. April 2010. – [Helpguide.org](http://www.helpguide.org). A Trusted Non-Profit Resource – understand, prevent and resolve challenges. <<http://www.helpguide.org/mental/schizo-symptom.html>> 28 May 2010.
- 39 *Les Chaises*. Academic Dictionaries & Encyclopedias – [http:// support @academic.ru](http://support@academic.ru). pda version. <<http://en.academic.ru/dic.nsf/enwiki/4193582.html>> 28 October 2010.
- 40 Esslin, Martin. *The Theatre of the Absurd*. U.S.A.: Peregrine, 1987. Print. p.198.
- 41 Eugene Ionesco: “Introduction” 2010 e.notes.com inc, <<http://www.enotes.com/drama-criticism/Ionesco-eugene.html>> 16 July 2010.
- 42 Ionesco, Eugene. p.177.
- 43 “Tragic Farce”. John Simon. [answers.com](http://www.answers.com/). <[http://www.answers.com/ topic/the-chairs-play-6.html](http://www.answers.com/topic/the-chairs-play-6.html)> 3 January 2010.
- 44 Esslin. Martin. *The Theatre of the Absurd*. p. 414.

Chapter-III

Sado Masochism in The Lesson

As a matter I am personally convinced that the concepts which arise in our thoughts and in our linguistic expressions are all - when viewed logically - the free creations of thought...¹

Albert Einstein

The pre-speech state propelled by the mind is, an obvious fact. This was explored by Ionesco since his inception as a playwright with his debut in Theatre with the play *The Bald Prima Donna* (1950). It is for this specific work, as also for *The Lesson* (1951), that Ionesco was hailed as a maestro in avant garde theatre, especially by linguistic analysts. However, the word is transcended by the mind and the latter has to be reckoned with especially during the post war period. The crux was, the query and the quest of the actual importance of living and the dilemma with which the individual had to deal with, was of importance as one witnessed greater and more intense catastrophes in one's daily life - the quagmire of *Existenzangst*. It was when the "mental" was in decay during this era, that the speech the behavioral aspect of every human being. Here what is of prime importance was the discord in the mind due to the modern age crisis. This caused excessive abnormality in the individual which subsequently, was reflected in the speech. This is primarily what this chapter will attempt to analyze. Specifically, it will dwell on what Ionesco while commenting

on *The Bald Prima Donna* and *The Lesson* insisted upon which was to “bury” oneself to study words and “to go beyond.”

Beyond the speech frontier in the chain of word and thought, is the mind interfused in the bedrock of human behavior. This foundation fortified by suspicion, hate and above all fear, is ingrained in post-war man, literally the psychological-holocaust product. Furthermore, man was fighting not only to survive but struggling with a mind which compelled him or her to exhibit strange behavioral patterns in interpersonal relationships. In extreme levels moreover, it veered beyond the strange to the macabre, to manifest excessive cruelty on oneself or another – psychologically termed as the Sadistic and Masochistic.

Interestingly, Sadism was a term derivative from the Marquis de Sade who was intensely cruel to his victims for sexual pleasure and was condemned for insanity in the Bastille. Yet, it was not only for his name that Sadism refers, but also his writings which describes sexual license as individual freedom. Similarly, Masochism was derived from the Austrian novelist Leopold V. Sacher-Masoch who specifically, focused on characters obtaining sexual pleasure through pain. Both the terms acquired fame through literary works incorporating the darkest area of the mind instigating suffering on oneself or the other. In the Absurd Theatre, Ionesco’s *The Lesson* too, is no exception and imbibed this dialectical

trauma. Moreover the interplay of this aspect was cleverly contrived. Being a simplistic plot, which followed the insightful *The Bald Prima Donna*, this work surprisingly, did not focus on an enigmatic 'Godot' like presence of the Prima Donna but particularly, a play which literally featured, a "Lesson" between an Aged Professor and a young enthusiastic Pupil.

However, what must be clearly understood from the inception is the fact that the foundation of this manifestation is aggression. Since primitive times man was born with a certain instinct of hunting and gathering, which featured mainly aggression. However, aggression is of two levels - simplistically the benign state which is essential for survival and the other the malignant state, which featured the Sadistic. This latter state was one where the individual was destructive towards others and often too, to oneself. The former condition was common among animals is an instinct, which neo-instinctivist Konrad Lorenz asserted, "has gone wild" in man. Hence, this aggressive destructive energy resulted in a "real evil" in man. The energy which Freud featured as *libido*, transmuted during the World War periods to its reverse. As a result Freud formulated a new theory in the 1920's focusing no longer on the "life instinct" which was primarily the *libido* or the passion to love, but to the other extreme which was the passion to destroy which he entitled the, "death instinct". In

1930 he elucidated:

....besides the instinct to preserve living substances, there must exist another, contrary instinct seeking to those units and to bring them back to their primal, inorganic state. That is to say, as well as eros there was an instinct of death.²

In the analysis of *The Lesson* it is to be noted that the malaise of Sado-Masochism is seen especially with the final transformation of the characters. This play which when it was initially performed startled the audience. In the beginning a much apologetic stuttering professor enters with the excuse "...I was just finishing....you understand".³

He states this as an excuse but what exactly he is up to, "Finishing" as he states, is not clarified to his pupil nor does one understand. The probability of unraveling the mystery is only comprehended after the tragic conclusion of the play, when it is too late to avert the situation.

From the inception one gets a clearer insight, that the Professor is unpredictable and his integrity is questionable. A simple response to the query from the Pupil about whether he liked Bordeaux or Paris and his uncertain response, verifies his forthcoming Sadistic nature. Roger Brown in his book *Social Psychology* (1965) wrote with reference to animal dominance that the qualities of Sadism lie in strength, aggressiveness and the "ability to bluff". Furthermore, he also clarified that such an ability was also to be assessed. The Professor's vague replies are a deliberate cover up to divert the conversation to the pupil, shifting her attention with great

courtesy, from his character lapses. This preventive maneuver was deliberately utilized by the Professor, lest through the Pupil's defensive instinct she would be more wary of him. However, the girl is not shrewd and luck is with the Professor's.

The introductory part of *The Lesson* thus focuses on Geography and the "chief towns" of France which being a familiar field, catches the Pupil's immediate attention and encourages her confidence. As a result the Professor treads on safe turf to proceed with cajoling her through great flattery about the Pupil's "well-informed memory". The playwright however specifically makes a comment on the Professor that:

.....he is constantly rubbing his hands together, now and again a prurient gleam, quickly dismissed lights up his eyes.⁴

This directorial note stressed by the playwright is most insightful, it is to be noted. Ionesco with his second work was no novice in theatre and besides, his personal experience as an actor also contributed to his directorial skill. For with the experience of enacting the role of Stepan Trofimovich in the adaptation of Dostoevski's novel *The Possessed* (1872), the once much misunderstood ordeal for the playwright, became a bonus. "An actor best understood others by playing the part of another". This experience coupled with his keen sense of observation, became invaluable assets. In fact, the latter trait was more pertinent for Ionesco, as he was a 'natural' in the art of physiognomy. Physiognomy primarily was

understood as an art or science of getting a deep perception regarding the character of the mind through the combination of the face, body and movements in combination. Its importance is elucidated in Winkleman's comment:

The mind is invisible to those who understand not the body of physiognomy.⁵

Ionesco probed, uncovered and revealed the kinks in his characters and added to the twists in his plays. Such proficiency was undeniable. In this Ionesco equated Shakespeare's vision it will be seen.

At this juncture it is seen the Professor, aware of his impending success with the Pupil, knows that though he warns her specifically to be "prepared" for anything or everything, she would not heed the hint. This awareness adds to his self importance even further. Being a true Sadist he can master and control this naïve girl without much resistance and this fact undoubtedly fuels his pleasure.

The aggressive domain of the hunter and the hunt also involves two aspects of resistance and submission. The latter trait is disclosed by the future victim when the pupil is not only "prepared" but through the overambitious zeal of herself and of her family. She should complete the 'doctorates', but more importantly coupled with her personal academic zeal, she unknowingly blurts out; "I'm quite ready for you, Sir" (*The Lesson*, p.187). Viola! This is precisely the reaction required by the

professor who with: (A gleam in the eye, quickly dispelled, a gesture immediately checked.) “It is I who am ready for you,.....”.⁶ He states, and with this commences the predatory act.

At this point there is a very brief intrusion of the Maid who enters on some task in the room and lingers momentarily and this irks the Professor to such an extent that he rudely dismisses her. Before her departure however, she makes a poignant remark about not pursuing the therapeutic scientific discipline of arithmetic in the beginning as it makes him “tired” and “upset” and he should avoid “too much excitement”, she specifies. The Professor does not heed her and he immediately retorts:

I’m too old for that now....it’s my concern and I know what I’m doing....⁷

No doubt, he does and no doubt he was compelled, for once again one looks back to the dilemma of the period with the predominance of trauma.

Psychologically, the modern age being the age of anxiety as discussed in length in the introduction of this treatise, also heralds another disturbing insight – the root cause of angst surprisingly, emerges from boredom. Peace descended at the close of the Great War but not inner serenity. In fact, the predictable automated existence became a monotony for Man who found the vacuum claustrophobic. His sustenance therefore was the very “excitement” which the Maid warned the Professor to avoid, and as Erich Fromm analyzed in the context of Malignant Aggression:

In his attempt to transcend the triviality of his life man is driven to seek adventure, to look beyond and even cross the limiting frontier of human existence. That is what makes great virtues and great vices, creation as well as destruction, so exciting and attractive.⁸

As in several of Ionesco's plays, minimalist cast and locale depict isolated individuals who barely relate to their immediate domestic social inmates. This Existential need to "relate" expresses itself through love and kindness and at the other end of the spectrum – through negative traits like Sadism, Masochism and destructiveness. Predictably the reclusive life of the Professor created in him a need to exert Behaviouralist, Konrad Lorenz's hydraulic model where the sadistic impulse continuously active in a sadistic persona awaits a fitting situation to be released. Ionesco's pupil - tutor interaction becomes ideal for such activity.

Freud while he demarcated the 'Death and Life instinct' also understood that they were interlinked. For what is sadism if not the need of love and kindness perverted? In another angle, this death instinct includes power, instead of exclusively lust. This phenomenon has been revealed in several of Harold Pinter's plays, especially in *The Birthday Party* (1958) with its interrogation of Stanley by Goldberg and Mac Cann also can be specified. In Ionesco's play however the former aspect becomes explicit when one understands Karen Horney's declaration "Masochistic and Sadistic drives a fusion between sexual and destructive instincts".⁹

The essential desire to relate to another is more pertinent to the modern individualistic person today. Being the social animal that man is, his interaction given his mistrust and emotional lack compels him to resort to sex, to seek a comfort zone to make him appear more human, but actually with a total lack of the humane essence in him. As a result when the Professor comments about the Pupil that she is “very well developed” and “so young too” it is understood by the recipient as a compliment to her academic prowess but for the Professor, it was a precursor to the future verbal rape which the Pupil, fails to comprehend. Moreover, coming to the “perception of plurality”, which the pupil confesses is confusing, can be understood as being on the threshold of Blake’s “age of experience”, her years have not matured her enough to imbibe wisdom through multifarious situations. The complexity of modern life as stated by the Professor is something the Pupil is literally “vague” about, but he assures her that they would, “...have a look at it...” (*The Lesson*, p. 187) or rather, that unknowingly, she would be groomed for her murder, starting with as the Professor specifies, the “arithmetical sheep”, where she would qualify as one of the herd about to be slaughtered.

This was highly reminiscent of the Gestapo where the Semite mass were loaded in cattle trucks and as Etty Hillesun a victim, from Westerbruck wrote:

My God, are the doors really being shut now? Yes, they are. Shut on the herded, densely packed, mass of people inside. Through small openings at the top we can see heads and hands,...it is quite possible, indeed quite certain this time, that a few will die or be crushed to death on the way....One more piece of our camp has to be amputated.¹⁰

Etty Hillesun - 24th August 1943.

Etty Hillesun died in Auschwitz shortly afterwards, but in the year 1951 with the performance of *The Lesson*, so would the Pupil meet a tragic end in a Parisian stage performance. This play was overtly a tragic comment on the fate of the Jews or Gypsies and other 'marginalized groups' exterminated by the SS Corps, but with the malicious intentions of the Nazis more psychologically attuned, as emulated by the Professor.

The formal introduction to the "lesson" specifically through the discipline of arithmetic was a calculated move by the Professor, to prepare him to proceed with his 'preying play'. Having a remarkably shrewd mind he was well aware that the realm of addition was one which the Pupil would fare well, but her ability not only to succeed but to foresee numerical calculations in advance as when she says "Eight for the fourth time. And sometimes nine"¹¹ astounds him. He congratulates her no doubt, but makes a certain decision to proceed towards subtraction, in order to primarily subtract and overpower her will besides testing her intelligence. To refer, very early in the last century when the German psychologist William Stern stated that:

*Intelligence is a general capacity of an individual consciously to adjust his thinking to new requirements; it is general mental ability to new problems and conditions.*¹²

Problems are placed in front of the Pupil in the form of subtraction “What is left when you take three from four?”¹³ Here, her immediate response, it is revealed, is one of a lack of comprehension. This does not imply the absence of intelligence in the Pupil but definitely a lapse somewhere. Being young and vivacious the Pupil would naturally relate to accumulation, but dissimulation in the form of the mathematical exercise of subtraction reveals her inability to cope. This situation when once again analyzed revealed not only the predicament of the Pupil in general, but on a deeper level, the plight of Modern Man and his maladjustment. But, these aspects would be commented in detail after witnessing the ordeal that the Pupil had to undergo in her learning process.

Thereafter, the Professor quizzes the Pupil in vain for some time and then to dissuade her from “guesswork”, which she was resorting to, discretely suggests that she should not only “reason”, but count. Her feat and confident declaration that she can count till “infinity” and her proof thereof, propels him to curtly dismiss her feat with the remark “... We must all recognize our limitations”¹⁴ quashing any hope on her part to impress the Tutor. But what are the deeper implications of this act of dismissal one probes. Could it be stemming from a reaction based on fear?

The magnitude of suffering meted out to a survivor of the War like the Professor taking into account his age, was deeply embedded in the Angst of existence. Hence, such a memory would not be harmful in a presumably healthy individual, but it would be psychologically damaging to a sickened product brimming with hell - like memories of the War. The product in consequence would resort to the defensive instinct of elimination of any form of threat, the psychologist and writer Jack Roy Strange has clarified. Hence, particularizing this dilemma to the Professor, the ultimate solution for him was to diminish any aptitude of the pupil by swiftly testing her beyond the field of subtraction to one of comparative analysis. A shrewd and symbolical decision on his part he proceeds to the queries about Greater and Smaller numbers, equated to their respective positions which she was completely ignorant about. Again unknown to her and worse still, was the explanation of numbers and how:

If all the units are very small, there are many more units in the smaller numbers than in big ones.¹⁵

Hence, coupled with the deliberate technique of inflicting confusion for the Pupil with typical Absurd theatrical comparisons of “ducks and drakes”, and “cabbages and kings”, the Professor imposes the ultimate experience of dehumanization on her.

Masters of Modern Art, like Picasso and Chougall had reflected the rampant dehumanization of life figuratively in their works like *Guernica*

(1937) of Picasso and Chougall's *Over Vitebsk* (1814) but here in Ionesco's theatrical work, the playwright dealt with the same predicament in a novel way. The malevolent intent of the Professor not only consciously reduced the Pupil to the number that she was dealing with during the lesson interaction, but honed her into the aforementioned twentieth century, 'fragmentation of life' to her. Picasso's cubism is shrunk to the profusion of units by the Professor in smaller numbers as a ploy to create the "greatest" or maximize the damage to the 'Being' of the Pupil.

Unfortunately, once more unaware, the massacre of the psyche of the Pupil was swiftly and efficiently achieved by the Sadist, right from the miniscule, "smaller unit", level. Thenceforth, she is not spared the ordeal but exposed to more psychological torture through additional confusion techniques. For instance when questioned by the Professor about the missing units between the numbers three and four, the Pupil's reply:

There aren't any units Sir, between three and four. Four comes immediately after three; there is nothing at all between three and four.¹⁶

Though correct, is deliberately negated by the Professor. The entire motive by the Professor it is understood, as one of forcing the Pupil to get more confused and in a psychologically shaky condition, to plunge into the abyss of worthlessness. The rational or Reality Principle, termed as Ego by Freud, which is the basic essence of survival for The Pupil, gets eroded with each query of the Sadist. The Professor's negativity proceeds onwards

to be the 'Greater Number' and overpowers any feeling of self esteem left in the Pupil. Besides, her 'Smallness' increases more and more with the elucidation of numbers figuratively and symbolically, as specified through "sticks", "noses" and "ears".

Here, what is noteworthy is the fact that the basic crux of the Sadistic drive is the pleasure obtained through the complete domination over another. Furthermore, G. Gorer's analysis of Marquis de Sade's works reveals that the sadistic mastery made it mandatory for the sadist to make the victim a 'will - less instrument' in his hands. Such a comment is pertinent to *The Lesson*, for the cunning in the Professor focuses on such an intention in totality. In the battle of the wills to survive, it became apparent that the Professor was progressing swiftly and the aspect of the Pupil in overcoming the dehumanizing ordeal was losing ground. Moreover, when the Professor cites such examples as the "plucking off noses" and the "nibbling off the ears" of the Pupil, the Professor gets physically stimulated in increasing the intense preparation for the impending "kill". It is to be noted here that such stimuli was mandatory for generating destructive drives hence, the Professor deliberately prepares his student for her impending doom. But here the playwright introduces an interesting element of surprise. An exceptional response from the Pupil's lips in the form of adhering to her answers in obstinacy and even in opposition to the

Professor's opinions. At this juncture the sparring between the two gets more intense till the Professor literally rings the death knell on the Pupil regarding any aspirations to pursue Mathematics for an engineering qualification. Dismayed, the Pupil resorts to her swan song with a brilliant attempt at multiplication. Ionesco stressed here that the Professor was literally "stupefied", but openly expressed his dissatisfaction with the knowledge that she had learnt everything by rote. He specifies that "memory is a deadly enemy to mathematics", here it is not merely as an advice or criticism to belittle her further, but the "memory" had deeper implications.

Here "memory" refers to the specific age where having survived the War physically, man was yet to overcome and eradicate the "memory" of disaster from their minds and the memory thereof, was the ultimate enemy which man had to overpower. In the Pupil's case, her age and the fact that she was very much a child in her innocence and naivety almost made her ignorant about the death of humanity, but clarified her prowess to simplify and accumulate through the quality of exceptional multiplication ability, to the point of "infinity". Such an ability comes as a direct challenge to the Professor threatening not only his scholarship but more so, his ego. So the Professor quashes her and concludes the first phase of the "lesson" with the ultimate verdict that she would be prepared:

".....for the partial doctorate..."¹⁷

At this juncture his decision to pursue “the essentials of linguistics and comparative philology” is desperately opposed by the Maid who is present in the scene. She emphasizes that out of all disciplines Philology is the “worst” here implying, that it would cause the most intense damage to him and his pupil. Rudely snubbed by the Professor the protagonist clearly elucidates that he is an adult above twenty one years of age.

The Maid’s warning about the forthcoming catastrophe, however, actually related more to the young girl but with this warning, the actual interplay of the Sado-Masochistic manifestation between the teacher and student gets deliberately ignored. Furthermore what is noted here is the fact that so far ‘The Lesson’ focused exclusively on the sadistic traits as revealed by the Professor but has avoided transparency of the Masochistic. What must be understood is the fact that both have to coexist. So far the Pupil did not manifest the malady in an overt manner but one can still relate it to her in an unusual manner, for as psychologists Barbara and Irwin Sarason declared in their study of Masochism:

...pleasure is attained from pain inflicted on oneself, from being dominated, or being mistreated.¹⁸

The climate of the post holocaust era with the prolonged exposure to victimization was one which Elie Wiesel the 1986 Nobel Laureate and onetime inmate of Bucenwald and Gleinitz Death Camps candidly opined, that with the norm of the Nazis where “it was human to be inhuman”,

survivors were conditioned to be self destructive.

Pain no matter how intense was unfortunately the only reality one was familiar with and hence, that familiarity in a morbid way gave comfort in trans-generational trauma as reflected in Dinah Van Swol Jarvis' book *The Soul Purpose* (2003) confesses how her mother once liberated from Bergen-Belsen alluded to her that "she was born to complete the work Hitler had left unfinished."¹⁹

What compulsion would require such an accusation from a Jewess mother to her offspring except for the intense conditioning to pain. Pain was all she was familiar with and in a miniscule manner that awareness in her deep seated consciousness, nourished her. Hence, pain had become a comfort zone in a perverse way which nourished her pleasure and sustained her. Similarly in *The Lesson* the Pupil's participation in the drama of Sado-Masochistic interaction in the play was her receptivity to be dominated and abused. The Professor in gradually "subtracting" her vivacity by degrees ensured the success of this venture primarily the Professor had conditioned her to be subservient to his will and personally the Pupil was vulnerable to coercion in any form. This form in the play comes not through numbers but through the word.

An open behavioral change takes place in the Professor. No longer timid and wheedling to get the student's attention, the Professor emerges in

this act as a powerful intolerant figure focused on his academic vocation but in reality on the psychological of finishing off the pupil by silencing her forever. In fact in true military fashion he paces about the room emphasizing his words. The lecture of Neo-Spanish languages and the root Spanish as the Mother Language with the offshoot of Latin, Italian, French, Portuguese, Turkey, Greece, Scandinavian and Rumanian all followed the “linguistic law” of geographical proximity. Moreover he segregates the aforementioned group from the pidgin tongues like Esperanto and the dialectical Basque which can be linked with Hitler’s theory of the Superior Race - superior in looks and Nordic breeding. The Professor follows suit with the Superiority of the Neo-Spanish linguistic group and the ones he had bracketed as inferior exposes his totalitarian outlook. In this play moreover, Hitler’s pure breed quest gets a phonological shift to purity in language with the Professor. Additionally, prior to expounding his theory of linguistics proper, his identification and differentiation of the pure and ironically polluted and original language groups is skillfully pursued with the deliberate mention of the “dis” sound over and over again which Jeanette Malkin specifies as a preparation for the auditory hypnotic stimuli. To elucidate:

I am speaking of the neo-Spanish languages themselves which, however, can be differentiated thanks to their destructive characteristics, unquestionable and indisputable evidence of that remarkable resemblance that renders their common origin indisputable.²⁰

With a flash the Pupil responds with an “Oooh, ooh” sound revealing the unconscious receptivity to the sexual intrusion through the tone of the Professor rather than the ambiguous content. Her fascination for the academic jargon inputs is at once noticed by the Professor who insists:

Every language mademoiselle - note this carefully and remember it till the day you die.²¹

Once again and ironically, the Pupil in mutual accord complies with the Professor's instruction with:

Oh! Yes, Sir, till the day I die...yes, Sir....²²

Little did she know that her death was imminent and approaching swiftly, through the presence of this great perpetrator of her ultimate ruin.

The pronouncement of death of the Pupil gets a further sadistic thrust with an exposure to the essentials of articulation. Word specified such as Trafalgar, Napoleon and more usher in a dictatorial martial environment conducive to the “grappling” of sounds though arranged in an irrational manner. According to the Professor such words sustain themselves despite the unreasonable “grouping”, being impervious to destruction. This highlights the concepts that the Absurd was here to stay. An overt message by the playwright that the ridiculous is what will survive and not the heavier meaningful words which will ultimately nose dive to their death. With reference to *The Lesson*, so would the Pupil, with her conditioning towards a meaningful, hopeful aptitude, strengthened in “addition” with an

imaginary utopian existence. Such values of hers ultimately have to be shattered "... bursting like balloons in the indescribable chaos"²³ till the "chaos" resurrects the strife and the law adjusts to it. Her coping skills however like most of Modern Man are problematic which the Professor knew only too well and hence he bides his time for her approaching mortal exit.

Unfortunately, the Pupil embodied in the course of the "Lesson" the grouping of words of previous units and typifies the 'Fragmentation' of existence. Hence, her transcendence of the situation to a higher level of survival was so far questionable. The doubt manifested symptomatically through a toothache could be clearly ascribed to a psychosomatic ailment. Specifically, the chant detailing the physical structure of the body as involved in the speech, constituted such details as lungs, vocal cords, uvula, tongue, palate, teeth, coupled with the sing - song recitation of words such as "quivering", "trembling", "vibrating", "hissing", "rustling", "bristling", "whistling", were all directed by the Professor to stimulate an onomatopoeic seduction release to coerce the Pupil intensely. Furthermore, her angst heightened with the confusion imposed upon her with garbled talk about the similarity and differences of language, the illustration of suffixes and prefixes of language and to the generalization of synonyms amongst all tongues.

Such a strategy to a certain extent was used earlier by the playwright in *The Bald Soprano* where such talk between the Smiths and the Martins with the Fire Chief focused on relationships:

My brother-in-law, had on his father's side, a first cousin whose maternal uncle had a father-in-law whose paternal grandfather had in second marriage married a young native girl whose brother had met, during one of his voyages, a girl with whom he fell in love and by whom he had a son who married a gallant governess who was no other than the niece of an obscure leading seaman in the British Navy, whose adoptive father...²⁴

This narration not specifically synonyms or words, but similarity as one would state of relatedness in relationships on the whole make no sense whatsoever but carried on the overflow of meaninglessness which exposed the triviality of social interaction through a humorous satirical approach in *The Bald Soprano* but in *The Lesson* is different. This divergence is meted out through a similarity of word, pronunciation and syntax of a variety of languages and the concept imposed upon the Pupil was something she struggled literally to comprehend throughout. Even the “parenthesis” to clarify the phonetic aspect of the prime importance of pronunciation did not appeal to her consciousness and simply jarred her. Here, while the tutor attempts to give an illustration, the Professor's momentary sentimentality in the play reminiscent about his friend, is checked immediately to refocus upon his sadistic vocation. For example the Professor's friend a Viscount who was in the regiment when he was in military service during his youth the Professor narrates, had a particular problem with the pronunciation of

the letter “f”. Words such as “fresh fields, Franklin, Fimblenigger” are specified and repeat a brief chant with an inceptional savage propulsion especially with the intensity of:

Fe Fi Fo Fum.....I smell the smell of an Englishman.²⁵

The primary motive here as is witnessed is something which is frightening. The Sadistic impulse elucidated in Andrew Lang’s collection of the traditional English fairytale, *Jack and the Beanstalk* (n.d) as overheard by Jack comes at time when the presence of Jack through the olfactory mode became the impetus for the cannibalistic urge of the Giant. In *The Lesson*, the urge is not literally the same as the fairytale, but the killer instinct is sustained. Similarly another aspect the Professor could relate to was his friend’s cunning ruse of camouflaging his phonetic “F” defect by donning various hats to impersonate different nationalities. The Professor, to the hunter, the confidence trickster persona, like his friend - the ‘multi-hatted’ character are all incorporated into one monstrous package hypnotizes the Pupil reducing her to a state of awe regarding all the academic jargon he emits. Heightening her stupefaction, she sinks to levels of pain which she repeatedly expresses to the Professor but her outbursts are of no avail.

It is noticed that while the Pupil gets more and more in awe of the academic jargon, so increases her toothache increases which leaves her almost speechless. Hence, the futility in the presence of a rambling

Professor, relaying upon intricacies of syntactic structure numbs the student to such an extent that her physical ordeal compels her to complain, “Oh my tooth, my tooth....” Yet irked the Professor retorts; “Oh leave your tooth alone”. Here proceeding onwards to sentence construction it is worthy of note that the Professor universalizes the grammatical constructs in totality with the exception of certain cases, the utilization of words in their connectedness to expression differentiating them from one language to another. Especially in relation to “country” and “capital” as the terms for a Neo-Spanish, France, Oriental, Portuguese would imply. Here individuality persists otherwise as the Professor has specified all languages are replete with common words.

The universalization of speech which the Professor touches upon is totally acceptable. Linguistically one understands that phonemes pertaining to sound vibrations in the Universe are the same basically in all tongues. But beyond linguist analysis, when relating to psychoanalysis, the Professor is actually referring through language, to the situation of man. The general phenomenon amongst all races and their modes of expression through speech, if is almost uniform as the Professor states, could imply that the inter-relatedness of language and their connectivity to situations. The Absurd scenario is a predicament involving the whole of humanity irrespective of race and linguistic descent. To clarify the Professor’s

declaration that:

....each single concept is expressed by one and the same word and its synonyms, in all the countries of the world²⁶

signifies the “concept “ pertaining to the crisis experienced by all of humanity. In the play, the same predicament is common to the Pupil, the Maid and even the malevolent Protagonist. However, the in contrast to the adolescent Pupil, the Professor could surmount the situation and survive, as he lacked the Pupil’s sensitivity and vulnerability to stress on the whole. His Machiavellian force would be more practical, suited to the situation.

However, it can be witnessed that the Professor was also stress prone even if it is to a minimalistic level. Hence, the only solution to transcend his slight panic was to coerce her. Moreover, he succeeds in dehumanizing her.

Subsequently, he comes to the “root” programming the human to the figure of “square” or “cubic” root, here although it refers to arithmetics it could be applied to modern man as being reduced to a dehumanized cubic object instead of a ‘human’ being, who would also account for Hitler’s need for brute force. In Hitler’s first volume of *Mein Kamph* (1925) he openly declares:

If those nations will be victorious who are of more brutal will and are not the nations who have practiced self - denial. Nobody can doubt that this world will one day be the scene of dreadful struggles for existence on the part of mankind. In the end the instinct of self preservation alone will triumph. Before its consuming this so called humanitarianism, which connotates only a mixture of factious timidity and self - conceit will melt away....²⁷

Hitler's approach to the 'brutal will' to eliminate threat of any form correlates to the Professor. His survival instinct is the same though his methods:

...are scarcely perceptible to anyone not experienced in detecting them.²⁸

Hence, the young girl's ignorance of survival of the fittest as the truth behind existence, leaves her blind unable to "detect" the fear provoking manifestation in the Professor - an emotion involving coercion as a defensive mechanism. In fact, this is the Professor's usual stratagem which he naturally applies as he proceeds:

...would you say, in English, the roses of my grandmother are as yellow as my grandfather who was born in Asia?²⁹

the Professor asks the girl. And as she replies, her physical condition coupled with the pressure imposed upon her makes her react. Compelled to continuously repeat the sentence, she retorts: "Are as yellow as my grandfather when he lost his temper". Here "grandfather" by implication identifies the aged Professor initially the statement provokes her sensitivity. With the introduction on a romantic note of roses, the concluding part with the color of roses being "yellow" in hue stimulates a thoroughly disturbing memory. Under compulsion she states as "yellow roses", which was in Hitler's time akin to the Yellow Star of David. Considering the Pupil's age and the time of the first production of the play

at the Theatre du Poche on the 20th of February 1951, the fact was that the Pupil had her formative years during the War. Though not personally a Semite, her deep-seated memory comprehended the significance of the Yellow Star of David as a badge of death, but in the Professor's presence she is yet to realize its implication as the "yellow rose of death". By degrees the Professor was conditioning her for her slaughter where her survival instinct was enfeebled by the profligate Elder. Thereafter, her survival instinct fails to warn her about her last moments. Her personal situation could well refer to the "Grandfather who was born in Asia."

During the War the Fuehrer underlined the inferiority of the Orient and the necessary culturization through the technical skill of the Teutonic Aryan's. This was exemplified in *The Lesson* as the skill of the Professor was also technically akin to the Aryan's. The force of Science which Hitler felt was the only solution to effect progress unfortunately turned perverse under his leadership. Similarly, the hellish presence of the Professor, who being scientifically and technically sound, utilizes his sadistic impulses to kill. Interestingly, this was the ultimate means by which the Professor could launch his own morbid upliftment.

The Professor's progress thence becomes rapid. With each statement on the nuances of language he nears his goal and grows more and more obnoxious, as it is noticed and the raving and ranting about language

increases in circumlocutory content. After the “diversity” of tongue, intonation, and aspiration of phonetic content which the Professor stated was “intangible” the maudlin effect of it all, disturbs the student acutely. The Professor was only too aware of her predicament, only too alert to the fatal cue so he shouts: “Will you listen to me, Mademoiselle? you’re making me very angry”.³⁰

However the outburst is not enough. The Professor overtly complains and showers profanities like; “Damn and blast you!” and warns her:

Don’t interrupt! And don’t make me angry! for if I lose control of myself....³¹

Nothing is elaborated further by him but the unspoken threat what he was ‘capable of’ in its own way is explicit.

The tension is heightened to the extreme and in sheer desperation she blurts out that it was “enough”. No plea was featured here. Her only plea was that the verbosity should cease permanently, revealing her realization clearly to the tutor. However the Professor thinks otherwise.

He commences on the next sadistic phase, by magnifying her agony with sharp jibes focused on shattering her physically as well as psychologically. He cleverly provokes psychosomatic attachment to the toothache by repeating the ailment frequently and the word “teeth”, and threatens to extract them. The Pupil predictably for the Professor was not

silenced but continues complaining. Hence he commands that she should immediately cease “....or I’ll blow your brains out!”³²

This verbal threat is advanced further and immediately with the first and only attempt of true physical abuse. As revealed through the words of the Playwright (The Professor takes her by wrist and twists it) (*Ibid.*, p.209).

The concept of Masochistic tendencies in regard to the Pupil takes on a vivid turn thenceforth. The base of the manifestations of the Sadistic and the paradoxical Masochistic quality is embedded in fear, provokes the girl to “snivel”, to periodically complain, though deep inside she knows she aggravates her suffering further. It is not the capacity to bear pain that makes one a Masochist. Forbearance is basically acceptance in coming to terms with one’s condition. Here the Pupil reveals her traumatic state by not doing so. So she grimaces, exhibits her increase of tension through her bodily behavior specifically, in response to the deliberate inclusion of physical pain, in the enraged Professors speech:

....But to cap it all, Mademoiselle, those who say, for example in Latin, they take to be Spanish : “I’ve got pains in my chilblains.....”³³

This deliberate reference to chilblains by the Professor arouses the Pupil’s restlessness which is witnessed through her shifting her legs stamping her feet. Not unnoticed by the Professor who comments about it, she reaches a level of hysteria and laughs poignantly and briefly. She could

have checked herself, been more cautious of her responses, but in contradiction, invites more trouble upon herself. In fact she provokes self imposed and self inflicted suffering.

Here what must be referred is the fact that Sigmund Freud's "death instinct" in Sadism, is usually understood as a feeling which is directed towards the other. Karen Horney in her work *Our Inner Conflicts*(1968) has specified people according to their psychological make-up as ones "moving towards, away or against people". Referring to the Death Instinct again, the latter most prominent trait correlated to the Professor but the girl embodied the tendency to feature to a certain extent the aspect of "moving away from people" and more so, herself. The severity of the disturbance reaches an extent of impossibility to cooperate with the balanced state, where she could respond logically to the Professor's, "lesson". She fails. Hesitant, she falteringly says with gaps denoted by dots in the statement; "I'm..... paying.....attention" (*The Lesson*, p. 210).

This lame response certifies the "death instinct" which she was at the subconscious level imbibing inwardly, and was heading towards destruction. The slight semblance of the survival instinct was swiftly frittering away. She sinks into the depths of pain. While the Professor declares: "But it can't go on like this, not like this, not like this, not like this..."³⁴ and is determined to inflict a lethal wound where she can only

falter “All right if you wan’t to....after all...”³⁵ as she had surrendered to her dark fate.

For the Pupil, being a post-war product, pain was all she was accustomed to as stated earlier and as a witness and a listener, it became more intensified with her prolonged conditioning, specifically in the “lesson”. This “lesson” expedites her readiness to a condition towards suicide, by losing her grip on life. Notably, what was imposed through the Professor’s sadistic grip, she herself acquiesced wholeheartedly. Moments before the end it was understood that all the subjection to torture which she had faced was an experience which she found pleasurable. Ultimately she exposed herself as typifying the Masochist, the ideal counterpart of the Professor, in the finale.

A subtle and yet brilliant move by the Professor comes as already stated, through the “word”. The “orderly fashion” as he states, the very methodical strategy of teaching all possible translations acquainting the pupil with of the word “knife” was actually a strategy to invite the Pupil to fathom inputs, through the sound and meaning which amounts to a license to kill. And even when he briefly leaves the room, the Pupil still hysterical, is unable to snap out of her state of absorption. Ionesco comments: (The Pupil is left alone for a few minutes, gazing blankly into space, quite besotted) (*Lesson*, p. 21).

At this juncture, the Professor's re- entry with the Maid replete with complaints about the Pupil incites the Maid to warn him. She cautions the Professor about his state of excitement, a condition which would be impossible for him to handle she states, but this becomes like a provocation for him leaving him more determined to progress to the end. Especially when the Maid identifies the "signs" of the toothache declaring it "... the final symptom! The worst symptom!"³⁶ this enhanced the Professor's ego. Aware that the success is finally near, he commands her to look for the Spanish, Neo-Spanish, Portuguese, French, Oriental, Romanian, Sardanopolitan and Latin terms for knives but the Maid leaves with a clear refusal. Hence, amplified in hellish growth, the Professor resorts to improvisation-in nature totally fiendish. Brandishing an "imaginary knife" which he takes out from a drawer, he eyes the Pupil in diabolical glee.

Perhaps with the exception of Shakespeare's Iago, no character could react in such a Machiavellian way as Ionesco's Professor. Intelligence coupled with astute cunning propels the Professor to select the ideal mode of the homicide. Here, he chooses sound. During a formal academic interaction what is of primary importance is the medium of sound. The Professor well aware of this fact combines sound with tone as he mentions repeatedly the word "knife":

Say, kni, like kni, fff like fff...and watch it carefully, don't take your eyes off it....³⁷

He continues over and over again stating and compelling the Pupil to say “knife”. While the Pupil attempts to do so the Professor subtly chants the word himself.

At this juncture to note, much time was spent on the impact of language on society during the Second World War in Germany. George Steiner’s essay, *The Hollow Miracle* (1959), highlights the fact that the Nazis found the phonetic aspect in the German language perfect for their mission and moreover:

Hitler recognized in his native tongue the latent hysteria, the confusion, the quality of hypnotic trance.³⁸

In Ionesco’s play is evident, the motive of the Fuehrer was replayed through the Professor. Furthermore, considering another aspect the Professor’s hypnotic and induced melodious chant coupled with the frenzied focus on the ‘word’ on the Professor’s part, is reminiscent of the human sacrificial ceremonies. The victim usually impaled, is here transfixed to her chair in fright. Compelled to stare at the movement of the imaginary knife in the Professor’s hands which advances towards the face and body, her increasing agony transforms her pain from her tooth to the other areas of her body. She states her feet, her head pain, besides her consistent tooth ache. When the pain proceeds to her ears which starts aching as a result of his piercing voice, the Professor revives her mathematical ordeal by “nibbling” her ears when he threatens:

“I’ll soon have those little ears of yours off.”³⁹

No longer in a position to protest, the Pupil’s strength swiftly wanes away. Now stupefied, the effect of combining the word “knife” and the implicit image of the destructive implement, - the sound and the suggestive objects intertwined, affects her to the level of acute catastrophe. She stands as he circles around her imitating a “scalp dance”, over and over again repeating “knifey....knifey....knifey...” with intense excitement. In fact, as Ionesco indicates, “he is almost beside himself” as he does so. At the pinnacle of his approaching ecstasy, the young girl’s participation by specifying her intimate physical zones as she details them with a caress:

Knife.....my shoulders.....my arms, my breasts, my
hips....knife...knife...⁴⁰

Induces him to encourage her, to repeat ‘knife’, ‘knife’, repeatedly and this momentum with sound vibrations infused over and over again has its final effect.

The Pupil’s complaints of his voice “piercing” her ears, which has psychological implications. The symbol of the knife is never fated for the Professor; hence, it was deliberately selected with a specific intention by the Elder as an intention of assault, sexually implicit. In *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899), Freud clarified, that all the elongated objects such as “stick”, “tree trunks”, or “umbrella” stood for the male organ including long sharp weapons including knives. Furthermore, referring to the

symbolical implications, the Professor who imposed upon the Pupil's psyche to partake the experience of 'auto – suggestion' from the imaginary to the real, made it mandatory for her to watch very closely the movements of the knife: "...do'nt take your eyes off it..."⁴¹ he instructs. His mesmerizing chant along with her continual following of the direction of the imaginary knife succeeds in hypnotizing her completely. True to Ionesco's introduction about her, she becomes "putty" in his hands. So when the Professor's tone varies, reflecting the shift in the situation with the clear declaration: ".....the knife can kill..."⁴² trance-like she agrees, "yes, yes...." yet paralyzed in astonishing incredulity she asks the fatal question "...the knife can kill ?"⁴³

In response with hard knife - thrusts, the Professor stabs her to death. The dual response of the "aah!" cry at the time of the murder and the Pupil's posture of sprawling in an immodest position combined with the cry of her's, was the final Masochistic imprint.

The German psychiatrist Richard von Kraft-Ebing in the year 1890, in his work *New Research in the Area of Psychopathy of Sex*, clarified that in Masochism manifestations:

Often these actions are motivated because the patient feels they are under high pressure to achieve something.⁴⁴

The strain, the frustration, and above all the tension in its own morbid way, provided ample stimuli to excite the Pupil. Moreover, this was the apex

which the Professor was building up to, to finally respond to his and her own *libidinous* impulse. The Professor overpowered with his own scandalous desires tries to direct it away from himself by making her the scapegoat; “Trollop” he calls her, hiding his personal nefarious inclinations where this, James C. Coleman clarifies that Projection is a defensive reaction by means of which:

- (a) Others are seen as responsible for one’s own shortcomings, mistakes and misdeeds; and
- (b) Others are seen as responsible for one’s unacceptable impulses, thoughts and desires.⁴⁵

The Professor’s lack of accountability, his branding of her to the lowest level possible till her death, reveals the fact that, deep in his subconscious, he was hiding something. His academic veneer was just a cover up of affected respectability concealing immense lust; hence, he diverts this vice unto the Pupil, “projecting” his fault onto her. But the Maid who is present then is not convinced.

The Maid in a way impersonates the partner in the crimes committed. Alerted about the progress of the “Lesson”, she had earlier warned that “Arithmetic leads to Philology, and Philology leads to crime...”⁴⁶ Her attempts to dissuade the Professor failed but she was quite aware of the outcome. Taking charge of the situation finally the Maid reveals her inner strength. The strength which is dissipated with the Pupil proves ineffective on the Maid, who avoids all attempts of stabbing her

with his “imaginary knife”, by the Professor. Chided sternly by the Maid, the Professor’s aggressiveness mellows down to a state of self-pity.

The panic stricken Professor momentarily weeps, was not regretting the death of the student as much as the end of his own pseudo-sex play. Sorry for the absence of the stimulator of his erotic desires in true Sadistic fashion, he is left in a vacuum awaiting another kill perhaps. One learns here that over and over again the Professor has indulged, succeeded and as a result proceeded with his intention. As the plot unravels the Maid referring to the disposal of the corpse reveals the chilling fact that:

And it’s the fortieth time today! We’re going to bury her...at the same time, as the other thirty - nine..forty coffins that’ll make..⁴⁷

The horrifying situation reveals the Professor not merely as a Sadistic character, but as a psychopath. If the initial stages of the kill recalled the *Jack and the Beanstalk* (n.d.) comment of sensing the presence of the prey in the play. Prior to its final moments, *The Lesson* exposes the Blue Beard myth from the Charles Perrault and Andrew Lang collection. *Blue Beard* (1837)’s wife whilst opening the forbidden closet door trembling and aghast saw:

....a bloodstained floor on which lay the bodies of several dead women. These were the wives Blue Beard had married and murdered one after Another..⁴⁸

However, the hapless student in Ionesco’s play did not have the good fortune of Blue Beard’s wife of being saved by her brothers. Alone she

entered the death chamber of the Professor to enhance her fatal Masochistic strains and her mortal remains in collectivity, joined the group of the other thirty nine coffins, awaiting their burial.

The Maid conditioned to such a situation suggested to the Professor that being, “a bit of a Priest” himself, he could oversee the funeral rites of the departed. Perhaps, Ionesco replayed the character of the World War II antagonist; Josef Mengele in the role of the Professor. One of the greatest psychopathic serial killers the world has ever known, Mengele, popularly branded as the “Angel of Death”, the “doubling trait” in his character was psychologists state witnessed often in his domain Auschwitz. Often being kind, and loving presence to the Jewish women and children. However, the same person would reverse his role soon after with his selected victims. No longer treating them as humans, the women were sent to the gas chambers and children were killed after undergoing prolonged and excruciating medical experiments like rats and specimens of the laboratory, all for the purpose of furthering science and genetic purification. In the mathematical portions of *The Lesson* the Professor stated thus:

....it is also necessary to subtract. Integration is not enough. Disintegration is essential too. That's what life is...that's science, progress, civilization.⁴⁹

Termed the “Knowledge of the Gods”, science perverted manic minds like Mengele and the Professor and the ‘knowledge’ was utilized exclusively to further evil. The Professor “doubling” his function as

academician and a quasi-priest in *The Lesson*, focused exclusively on “fantasy play” which is the very foundation in the creation of a serial killer, through the scientifically plausible academic sessions of number and word. The Professor realized his fantasy and satisfied the killer instinct in him. But this is merely a prelude to yet another kill. Thus *The Lesson* concludes with the doorbell ringing and the Maid ushering in the expected forty first victim for yet another “Lesson” - another fatal kill.

This second play of Ionesco secured his position as a playwright of brilliance. Rising from a plot structure of a mere “lesson”, his astute insight into human nature helps him go beyond the damaged mind of any individual, to Jung’s ‘collective consciousness’ of all minds. Akin, to an apparently Mozartian melody which progresses always in harmonizing intricate notes, Ionesco inter-related psychologically complex minds. This is an experience not merely of a “lesson” between a Pupil and a Professor, but the situation has much more Universal implications.

The donning of the Swastika at the finale of the play deliberately imposed by the playwright on the Professor is a political statement relating to Ionesco’s own personal angst. Witnessing the upsurge of Fascist movements in Romania in the 1930’s, is the chief impetus for a major play namely, *The Rhinoceros*(1959). Keeping the creative perspective of the playwright in mind its genesis started much earlier with *The Lesson*. The

barrage of information especially the 'word' factor, the Professor's oratorical skills, impersonates the most powerful Orator, Germany produced - Adolph Hitler.

The "Fuehrer", the leader of a dictatorial movement of "monsters" akin to the "rhinoceroses", of Ionesco, emerges in *The Lesson*, as an aspect of Hitlerian sadistic death-lust. Basically one then understands then that the Nazi way of hold onto power was to exterminate the powerless. Hence, they resorted to the 'axis of evil'. With astute sensitivity Ionesco recreates this 'evil in man' to underline the terrifying thought of whether there would be a repeat of the hell-like fury or abstinence.

The debate has persisted, but Ionesco's *The Lesson*, renders the finest message and speaks eloquently, through the creative media. The philosopher and literary giant of the old, Rousseau in his autobiographical work entitled *Confessions* (1782), elaborated on his personal Masochistic fantasies. This came up as a result of the severe difficulties which he was undergoing in his life. Keeping this in mind, Ionesco was receptive to the agonizing inputs which post war man had to undergo not only collectively but more so individually. "Life is suffering". The Buddha had stated. And the continuing depths of suffering was experienced by mankind as a whole during the "Age of Anxiety", that is the twentieth century. Man's existence of the Angst, the 'fragmentation' of relationships at all levels, left mankind

not merely lonely but craving for affection. However, living in depravation, the longing was overpowered by the debasement of emotion and the perversion of behavior. Ionesco empathized with this ordeal related to the 'inner pain' in the Professor and the Pupil, who represented 'everyman. Ionesco in *The Lesson*, verified the psychological truth that the quest for love namely Freud's "Life Instinct", was essentially the mainstay, unfortunately reversed in the war and post war 'emotional epidemic of hate' or "Death Instinct":

The essence of Sadomasochism is that...Masochism desires to experience pain, but he generally desires that it should be inflicted in love; the sadist desires that it should be felt as love.⁵⁰

End Notes

- ¹ Einstein, Albert. *Ideas and Opinions*. New Delhi: Rupa and Company, 2004. Print. p.22.
- ² Fromm, Erich. *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*. Connecticut: Fawcett Crest Publishers, 1975. Print. p.36.
- ³ Ionesco, Eugene. *Rhinoceros, The Chairs, The Lesson*. Trans. Donald Watson & Derek Prouse. London: Penguin, 1962. Print. p.184.
- ⁴ *Ibid.* p.185
- ⁵ Stanton, M.O. *How to Read Faces*. New Delhi: Black Rose, 2003. Print. p.11.
- ⁶ Ionesco, Eugene. p.187.
- ⁷ *Ibid.* p.188.
- ⁸ Fromm. p.299.
- ⁹ Horney, Karen. *Our Inner Conflicts*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1968. Print. p.39.
- ¹⁰ Gilbert, Martin. ed. *Never Again*. Oxford: Harper Collins, 2001. Print. p.82.
- ¹¹ Ionesco, Eugene. p.189.
- ¹² Wilson, R. John. *The Mind*. Neiderland: Time-Life International, 1968. Print. p.129.
- ¹³ Ionesco, Eugene. p.190.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.* p.191.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.* p.191.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.* p.192.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.* p.198.
- ¹⁸ Sarason, Irwin and Barbara Sarason. *Abnormal Psychology: The Problem of Maladaptive Behavior*. New Delhi: Prentice – Hall of India Private Limited, 2000. Print. p.581.
- ¹⁹ Jarvis, Dinah. *The Soul Purpose: Recovery From Transgenerational Trauma*. Bangalore, 2003. Print. p.1.
- ²⁰ Ionesco, Eugene. p.200.
- ²¹ *Ibid.* p.200.
- ²² *Ibid.* p.200.
- ²³ *Ibid.* p.201.
- ²⁴ Ionesco, Eugene. *The Bald Prima Donna*. London: Samuel French, 1958. Print. p.27.
- ²⁵ Ionesco, Eugene. p.203.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.* p.204.

- ²⁷ Hitler, Adolph. *Mein Kamph*. New Delhi: Jaico Publishing House, 2002. Print. p.124.
- ²⁸ Ionesco, Eugene. p.203.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.* p.204.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.* p.207.
- ³¹ *Ibid.* p.207.
- ³² *Ibid.* p.207.
- ³³ *Ibid.* p.207.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.* p.210.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.* p.211.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.* p.211.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.* p.212.
- ³⁸ Miles, Keith. *Günther Grass*. London: Vision Press Ltd., 1975. Print. p.20.
- ³⁹ Ionesco, Eugene. p.213.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.* p. 214.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.* p.212.
- ⁴² *Ibid.* p. 214.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.* p. 214.
- ⁴⁴ "Small-Cast-One-Act" Guide online. 2009. Wiki.Sadism and Masochism—as –medical-terms.<http://www.wapedia.mobi/en/Sadismmasochismas_medical_term 17 March 2009.
- ⁴⁵ Coleman, C. James. *Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life*. New Delhi: D.B. Taraporevala Sons & Co. Ltd., 1988. Print. p.125.
- ⁴⁶ Ionesco, Eugene. p.216.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.* p.216.
- ⁴⁸ Sideman, Belle. *The World's Best Fairy Tales*. Montreal: Readers Digest. 1967. Print. p. 639.
- ⁴⁹ Ionesco, Eugene. p. 192.
- ⁵⁰ "Sadomasochism." <<http://www.artandpopularculture.com/sadomasochism.html> 7 March 2009.

Chapter-IV

NEUROTIC OVERTONES IN *EXIT THE KING*

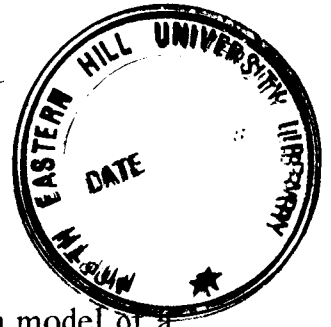
When the trauma is inflicted by another person is especially intense, or the traumatized person is extremely close to the trauma, the severity of traumatization may be especially profound.¹

Robert C. Scaer, M.D.

Man is unable to overcome his predicament when the mind falters, in the abyss of anxiety. Intensely traumatized hence, he sinks deeper and deeper into his chaotic psyche, primarily of his own making. Not merely the external aspect of the torture, in painful situations but more importantly, within. In one's search for a meaningful life therefore, the mind was compelled to resort to questions often in finding solutions which were tedious, tormenting and difficult resulting in total mental decline.

The human psyche uses the propelling force of negation primarily, as a defensive mechanism to somehow survive. This word "somehow", is relevant as such a person can barely face reality. He or she skirts the issue with non-acceptance, or a denial of reality, and continues doing so in a reiterative mode. Moreover this habitual emotional conditioning in its excessive manifestation, portrays illogical behavior, which is justly termed as "Absurd", to the onlooker, but is not really so to the one experiencing it.

164 297



This person accomplished in such behavior becomes a model of a being, avoiding reality in the shelter of inadequate coping skills and resultant weakness, caused by trepidation of feelings. This self-conditioning maladjustment results in a serious malady on the level of the psyche and furthermore, leads to neurotic behavior. To elaborate:

The role of anxiety is particularly prominent in individual character formation and personality development...As with any stimulus, however, a massive dose can defeat its own purpose by causing overreaction or complete paralysis. In excess, anxiety can cause disjunctive and pathologic behavior. It is, in fact, probably at the root of most neurotic and psychotic illness.²

In the modern period, the individual propelled by the extreme level of emotional pain coerced by post war *existenzangst* conditions, was compelled to battle the ailment of the mind, the sickness of the psyche, whether it was neurotic or psychotic.

However, keeping in mind this discourse, a clarification needs to be made where the most important point is that Neurosis is a term used since times immemorial to relate to a mind 'riddled with sickness'. Neurosis is emphatically the tendency to avoid and misunderstand the 'realistic' and resort to a 'comfort zone' of escapism which is self-defeating and has been specified by psychologists as Neurotic Nucleus. Moreover the tendency to continue with the behavioral pattern which provides temporary succor irrespective to the danger posed to the wellbeing which is termed as Neurotic Paradox. To specify, Coleman's seminal work on

psychological studies which states that basic to the Neurotic lifestyle is:

Neurotic Nucleus - The faulty evaluation of reality and the tendency to avoid rather than cope with stress. Neurotic Paradox - The tendency to maintain the lifestyle despite its self-defeating and maladaptive nature.³

To be more explicit, Sigmund Freud, had stated that the Ego in its dependence on reality, suppresses a portion of the Id. As a result, reality is greatly affected. This was basically due to the fact that the Id rebels against the external world as it becomes incapable of adjusting to exigencies of 'reality' resulting in various manifestations of behavior, especially the abnormal type.

What must be noted here is the fact that alongside psychoanalysis even in the realm of literature neurotic case studies are being dealt with in depth, for integrally, the basic foundation is that literature relies primarily on the human condition. Hence, psychological studies and especially those pertaining to the post war period with the mind gone awry was the main focus of studies of the psyche. Moreover, this aspect became the bedrock of novels and dramas features the modern era - as essentially a problematic age with the predominance of the abnormal mind. Often too it is noticed that modern writers incorporated their personal experiences and analysis of abnormal behavior in their works.

In the Absurd Theatre there has two ways of tackling this issue. For the playwright Adamov it was a direct subjective link where his plays

explore his personal predicament as represented in his characters and situations, reflective of his personal battle with Neurosis. This has been most vividly represented in his masterpiece *Professor Tarrane* (1951) which reveals the dual personality in solitude, and in public. Ionesco however, portrayed various aspects of trauma as a fairly objective analysis of society around. In his play *Exit the King*(1962), neurotic overtones do not emphasize the fear of living but the contrary morbid fear of dying where the feeling is basically a consequence of ‘Inner Conflicts’.

This work features Ionesco’s Everyman in the role of Berenger - a King who obstinately refuses to accept his finiteness. Under the delusion of immortality, Berenger is of the impression that it is the King’s “right” to manifest this ‘permanent state without questioned or denial. This becomes the fertile ground for his Neurosis. Primarily it is witnessed from the prerogative of Berenger, ‘to live and rule till eternity’ is the basic message conveyed in *Exit the King*. Foolhardy though it seems, it reflects the pathos of the regent’s mind, and this is basically the magic that Ionesco has woven, especially in his masterpiece in-depth interpretation, of the “sick mind”.

This complex character is an individual who is torn asunder in Freudian terms by the “reality” and the “pleasure” principle. The fact belies the adequacy of the repressive activity of the Ego or Reality

Principle therefore the imminent clash of the two titanic forces ensures a temporary 'exit' of the Ego which finally bows to the Id or Pleasure Principle, when the latter seeks an escape from reality. This persistent stubborn trait attempts to remove the cause of the finiteness or "what is meant to be", with a wish fulfillment stance of "what can be". Hence, the persona like Berenger focuses on the former cadence which is but an immature delusional thought. Such a person's efforts fail when faced with life's corporeality and temporariness.

Exit the King highlights Berenger's mental state groping with the impossible, with a lack of accountability, leading to the destruction of the propagator who is propelled by fear.

Reflective of this age, perpetrator of "The Final Solution" the Nazi's, surpassed themselves through the rapid systematic extermination. The 'speed' implied causing as much damage lest someday they would be prevented as though diabolical swiftness demanded sensational and mass deaths, they were aware that they would be brought to meet justice, some day. However, these perpetrators focused on the present and ignored the future accountability or the 'reality principle', and stagnating in the present perverted state of epicurean-like excess. The overpowering passion of hate was guided by the rationale of performing one's duty to the Fatherland. An emotion which for the present and before their final

defeat, helped ignore the consequences of the future. The emotion beguiled the perpetrator and cushioned him or her from fear.

However despite attempts of denial the foundation of such reactions are stored in the subconscious, essentially based on the amalgamation of guilt and fear. Fear is Angst This anxiety, this panic, incorporated the spheroid of emotions based on excessive tension and terror. This forms the bedrock of maladjustment which leaves the individual tackling the dead -end of growth. The malaise legitimized by post war trauma, shifts from external situations to interior strife in the psyche or the “intra-psychic process”, to terminate in a splintered mind. Critics such as Richard Wollenheim elucidate that essentially Neurosis rests upon a triad of factors such as ‘frustration, fixation of *libido* and the tendency to conflict’. Furthermore, Karen Horney in her work *Our Inner Conflicts* (1968) exposes the inner conflicts of the individual as “compulsive drives “which are coping skills born in the individual out of feelings of helplessness, hostility and anxiety out of other disabling factors which collide with each other. It is noteworthy that the absence of an integral psychological wholesomeness in the person fosters profound levels of inadequacy to meet with the challenge of living. The person caves in out of panic alleviated by deep angst, screaming silently for relief. Hence, the situation is terrifying and notably so, as it affects both

the victim and the co-victims.

Exit the King deals with both the aspects. At the apex rests the regent's reactions and at a lower rung the co-victims including his two wives who exhibit dialectical neurotic behavior along with three subjects who manifest the malady. In this play the impending death-like ritual becomes sheer agony for the King. This is heightened by what Aaron T. Beck refers to as attempts to avoid fear of punishment rather than the punishment itself. It must be noted here that fear as already stressed, is the intrinsic emotion whether in avoidance or acceptance of the Regent's situation, and is also the propelling force behind denial of the truth. The mystery of death is akin to a punishment for Berenger. Hence, there is "no exit" for him but to lash out to the others, being personally spurred by pain. As Martin Esslin elucidates:

..in Ionesco's theatre death is always present in the sense that the fear of extinction always pervades it's sense of being.⁴

The legacy of war posed an acute dilemma in the mind of man especially with reference to Existentialism which came as a precursor to the Absurd. The Existentialist psychoanalyst Erich Fromm deduced that:

.....man knows that he must die; and yet his body wants to go on living⁵

relating this to Ionesco's *Exit the King*, the fear of death is propelled by a desire not merely to deny mortality but to deny "Being".

Right from the inception of the play an event of prime importance is the preparation of approaching death of King Berenger. The death of the King implies the death of a bygone era which is fast crumbling. This is conveyed with the use of symbols as the critic Esslin states symbols: “....transcends any search for interpretations”.⁶ For instance, in Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot* (1952), the play shows a tree centre-stage. Bleak and bereft of leaves, it is symbolical of the bleakness of man’s existence as also in the bareness of nature. However, the Second Act displays the same tree which “has four or five leaves” and this focus indicates a shift not only in the Act but in time, for a few leaves present not only a profusion or abundance of man’s existence as reflected through nature. The symbolism in *Exit the King* is clearly indicated by the ‘cracks in the walls of the palace’ which while they:

...show the remaining signs of past glory, but are now in a state of ruin and cracked.⁷

This is also indicative of the behavioral aspect of the characters, a reflection of their psychic state, through the stage ‘setting’. The use of inanimate objects which come alive and conveys in-depth truth, is seen in several of his plays namely, *Amedee* (1954), *The New Tenant* (1955) and *The Chairs* (1952) to name a few. Stuart Schneiderman’s intent of ‘cancelling consciousness’ to understand the so called abstract becomes more lucid when he states that:

The real is most real when we are not there...the concept of the real means the annihilation of the subject...it is through the structure of the symbolic order that things become real. A subject can only make the real into objects; consciously make it into phenomena.⁸

Transcending the object, the “setting” speaks the voice of silence. At the final frontier face to face with death, this ultimate reality is reflected in the play lucidly through, the inert non-verbal setting. The playwright even focused upon such details such as the clothing of the elder queen Margeurite’s, purple cloak which despite keeping to the royal color, failed in its “upkeep”. Reflecting the ruined condition of the palace, her cloak is shabby and worn out in ruins. But the most powerful reference to the kingdom’s shoddy reality is the profuse growth of cobwebs - a symbol undoubtedly of the chaotic maze in the psyche of the regent, propelling the kingdom’s permanent ruin. A symbiotic mortal situation such as this implies the deterioration through the material reflection of the functional and indispensable amenities in the palace. For example nothing really works.

The Guard - a ‘harbinger’ of character and events in the play, spurs the momentum of the play with the announcement of the appearance of the King, the two Queens. When he heralds the presence of the Doctor with his multiple functions as Court Surgeon, Bacteriologist, Executioner and Astrologist, akin to the multifunctional Police Commissar in Ionesco’s *The Killer* (1958), it is understood that he is the actual character

who induces the onset of the Final Event and its subsidiary situational happenings. The Doctor reacting to the cold in the palace orders the central heating to “start up” but each attempt is met with failure. The complaint that his additional responsibility as a Chief Firefighter has suddenly been officially removed refers to the impulsive decisions of the Regent spurring the utilitarian crisis on the miniscule level and on the “cosmic front” when the Elder Queen emphasizes; “The sun’s already too deaf to his commands”. The radiator ceases to function, the sun is hidden, overshadowed by clouds which enfeebles the solar life force and in fact constraints any attempt to rejuvenate life.

Life by implication ‘alive’ and ‘procreating’ is also the destructive life force, shattering walls housing innumerable cracks. Akin to Shakespeare’s technique of getting nature to reveal a crisis, in Ionesco’s play, nature has already braced itself for the demise of the Regent. The royal Doctor elaborates:

Mars and Saturn have collided....both planets have exploded. The sun has lost between fifty and seventy- five percent of its strength.....the comet is exhausted, feeling its age and curling up like a dying dog.⁹

Furthermore, this passage is reminiscent of the state or Rome before Caesar’s death in Shakespeare’s play, *Julius Caesar* (1606). In Act I, Scene 2, Casca states thus:

O Cicero! I have seen tempests, when the scolding winds have rived the knotty oaks; and I have seen the ambitious ocean swell and rage

and foam...Either there is a civil strife in heaven, or else the world, too saucy with the Gods, incenses them to send destruction.¹⁰

Nature cooperates, with the forthcoming death. This relates to the technique of 'pathetic fallacy' which Ionesco like Shakespeare, utilized in several of his plays. Here nature is not featured as an impersonal force but is given personal human attributes above all a sensitivity to the overall situation in the play. In Ionesco's play, the collision of the warring planet Mars with Saturn one of strife and tribulation, leaving the latter planet triumphant in diminishing the effect of Mars. Hence, the former glory of a once powerful kingdom and ruler is seen tottering on its last legs, while Saturn, the rigid taskmaster is in command.

Unveiling the effect of epicurean excess of Berenger, the play also affirms the indulgence of this trait with the "denial" of the actual epicurean maxim which translates "for tomorrow you may die". Berenger rigid in his denial of the final accountability of death is neurotic to the extreme - the excess shared by his younger wife Marie who contributes to his delusions.

Berenger's elder wife Margeurite, severely chides Marie that she was exclusively responsible for leading the King "astray", from his official duties over mere trifles and parties. Margeurite affirms - "We've got to live, you used to say". Unfortunately, the consequences of the zest to 'live', now involves the rigidity of Saturn. One could no longer ignore

the planet's all encompassing lethal effects as Margeurite vehemently asserts; "One must never forget". The contrary lesson beyond the final frontier would be his ultimate realization she forcibly affirms forthwith.

At this juncture a clarification has to be made that what was called Neurosis, is now technically termed as 'Anxiety Disorder'. However, the original term which will still be retained in this treatise, will analyzing the impact of the 'progressive term' stated above and its relevance. Defensive measures mitigated by anxiety are utilized by the individual but as clarified the effort becomes misleading and even more maladaptive. Coping becomes a misnomer and each attempt becomes catastrophic. Relating to Berenger one notices that what he manifests is not only Anxiety Disorder in general but specifically Anxiety Neurosis. This is essentially a Neurotic pattern where the inner psychological stress awakens behavior "...punctuated from time by acute anxiety attacks."¹¹ The 'time, goes against Berenger. He experiences anxiety - a state of fear especially of the unknown which is evident as - the fear of death.

Despite defensive attempts, the Elder Queen stresses the fact the King:

Should have his eyes fixed in front of him, know every stage of the journey, know exactly how long the road, and never lose sight of his destination.¹²

Unfortunately this is not the case, as stated earlier the King let his

kingdom go to “Rack and Ruin”, ignoring the disastrous effects. Perhaps he could have tried to rectify it by, “planting conifers in the sand”, disciplined the army. If such measures were timely, the kingdom would have prevented the colossal loss and mass exodus of the people notably, the youth, who as Margeurite stated were “leaving in hordes”.

Furthermore she clarifies:

At the start of his reign there were nine thousand million inhabitants.
Less. Even now, while I’m talking they’re passing away.¹³

Besides note, even the fortyfive young people have not been spared the calamity. As Margeurite clarifies:

...repatriated at twenty five, two days later and they are over eighty.
Can you pretend that’s the normal way to grow old.¹⁴

This apparent rationale lies in the fact that the subject’s share the Regent’s plight. For he was young the previous night but was subject to rapid ageing. The appearance of Berenger at the beginning of the play with the announcement music shows his actual state. He enters barefoot like a commoner, with the Maid Juliette, carries the King’s slippers behind him, reflects the ridiculous nature of things. Monarchy is in crisis, and the remnant of this final ceremony is nothing better than a “hollow formality”. His present, permanent state of senility is a form of has magnified madness now exposed in alarming proportions. Complaining unceasingly though his garrulous chatter, the King

personally affirms the Doctor's previous diagnosis, with the declaration;

I had a bad night what with the earth splitting, frontiers retreating,
cattle bellowing and sirens screaming.¹⁵

this sentence being very Shakespearean in context interesting with its mention of "Sirens Screaming". Sirens harbingers of death, specifically related to the King. The awareness of impending death, a thought too painful to be accepted by the King has been consciously stated by him. Erasing permanent memory, being impossible, the subconscious mind gets aroused and surfaces in the form of nightmares or prophetic warnings.

The incessant bemoaning by the King can be clarified as Neurosis of the Hypochondriachical type. Hypochondriacs:

...are characterized by their multiplicity of complaints about – physical illness complaints that are not restricted to any logical symptom pattern.¹⁶

Though manifested clearly in Berenger the motive and cause have to be analyzed. Regarding the Neurotic overtones, Berenger's garrulous chatter of his stiff legs, lumbago misdiagnosed in his ribs instead of his loins, choked liver and the request to the Doctor to, "...give me some pills to stimulate my appetite and shake up my liver." (*Exit*. p. 10) all confirm the malady. This talk digresses from the actual situation in the kingdom for instance its lack of a polytechnic which "fell through a hole in the ground" and the draughty Palace interior with broken window panes

which Juliette clarifies have fallen into the stream. The King is intent on rectifying the situation despite its futility, coupled with his talk of his assumed psychological ailments and keeping ‘an eye’ on the ‘few titbits’ of the country, all account his Neurosis.

Moreover, Berenger, hysterically overpowered by his angst over his forthcoming death, diverts himself to delay the ultimate reality of his demise. He deliberately attempts to escape from the impossible situation thereby bringing into the play the Neurotic Paradox – of clinging to an escape mechanism notwithstanding its fatal outcome. For instance, the observing of his chatter when Marie says that Berenger is limping which makes him respond:

Limping? I’m not limping. I am limping a little....it does’nt hurt. Why should it hurt? Why yes, it does, just a little. It’s nothing.¹⁷

Continual contradiction becomes an almost permanent state. When Berenger is informed by the Doctor and Margeurite that he was going to die, in true Neurotic fashion he retorts:

But I know that, of course I do. We all know it. You can tell me when the time comes¹⁸

interestingly, the ‘all’ stressed by the playwright is contravened by the ailing King’s intent to stay alive. Mortality predominates. His denial is akin to the aforementioned Auschwitz inmates, whose denial of the “sweet smell” from the gas chambers of human bodies burning. A future

fate which awaited them: this may be seen as a 'slim' resistance. Against all odds Berenger willed to stay alive. Here, Berenger being still in a position of authority despite his enfeebled kingship reveals the absurdity with the declaration:

I'll die, yes, I'll die all right. In forty, fifty, three hundred years. Or even later. When I wan't to, when I've got the time, when it suits me.¹⁹

He states. The pathos of a man desperately trying to control his destiny when "it suits" him, afraid from any acceptance, is part of the "angst" syndrome. In sheer terror the King opposes all the warning with the plea that he is in "perfect good health" and any contradiction are just 'lies' for he 'will decide'. Although Margeurite and the Doctor certify to the contrary, he pays no heed.

With the waning of the powers "exits" of the King thence "exits", the powers of the King who is commented is in no position to control the elements, or even himself. The "rot" sets in with symbolic swiftness. The profusion of cobwebs typifying not merely an entrapment predicament, but more so, a 'mesh' functioning at the service of death. The King, the prey not to be devoured by any predator, but by the calamitous circumstances of his own designing, now witnesses the "and state" of his ruin, where the only 'solution' for the King, is to abdicate. Abdicate from governance, physically and morally for this was the best way, as specified by the Doctor and Margeurite.

At this point Queen Marie reacts appealing to her husband not to pay attention to the two who the King condemns as “mad” or “traitors”. Marie, orders the King to have them arrested, witnessing the slow response on the King’s part. She orders the arrest commanding the Guard herself which could be understood as a desperate act on her part.

The Guard, now crippled like Berenger with gout and rheumatism and an unknown virus which paralyses him, is not the only one struck down with ailments. As he also represents the army, was “sabotaged”. His loss of virility leaves him disabled and crippled unable to carry out Berenger’s commands.

Berenger aware of his weakened state accuses Margeurite and the Doctor. The duo it is understood are manifestations of the “ego” persona of Freud whose position clashes with Berenger, the “id” impersonator. The, non-acceptance by the “ego” that is by the two stimulators makes Berenger accuse them as being a; “Pair of humbugs. Conspirators, Bolsheviks!” Berenger ironically affirms that monarchy is in deep crisis. Apparently, the evil inherent in the Divine Right of Kingship can no longer assert its “right”. Hence, revolutions have cropped up all over Europe along with the conspiracies. It is interesting to note that Berenger personally specifies “Bolsheviks” and shortly afterwards orders; “Off with Margeurites crown” (*Exit*, p. 16).

For the King, it is merely reliving the great nightmare of monarchical rulers of the past. The assassination of the last Tsar and Tsarina by the Bolsheviks is strengthened further by the beheading of the King and Queen by the French revolutionaries. When Berringer mentions, “the knocking off of Margeurite’s crown” he refers to the fear of being beheaded. With the “ceremony” which the Guard declares is about to commence, the life of the King would finally end. And to establish it even further, the Doctor emphatically states:

You will notice a gap in the sky that used to house the Royal Constellation. In the annals of the Universe, Majesty is entered as deceased.²⁰

The universal phenomenon declaring Berenger as “deceased” finally dawns on the Regent. For the first time he no longer denies his fatality but exposes the breach in his neurotic defensive mechanism with:

....I don’t want to die. Please don’t let me die. I don’t want to. I don’t want to.²¹

The panic established by the ingenious device of the pathetic fallacy shows is that nature as a Universal phenomenon is unchanging. The *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms (2006)* describes Pathetic Fallacy as basically a state where:

The poetic convention whereby natural phenomenon which cannot feel as humans do are described as if they could.²²

It is at this point that veil of defensive neurotic strivings are torn asunder but with momentary acceptance of the possibility of change. Along with

his highly neurotic spouse Marie, implores all present, to “Let time turn back in its tracks.” (*Exit*, p. 18) to “last week”, “yesterday”, or “twenty years ago”, but as the inexorable Margeurite affirms Berenger’s delusion of control over everything especially, nature, refuses to comply. His personal physiology is also at odds with his immature ideas of clinging to his youth and declining his power. At this juncture, there is a noticeable change. When the Doctor assures the King that the “we” i.e. Margeurite and himself would declare in public how they would “miss” his presence, the utterance results in Berenger’s hair turning white, while;” The wrinkles are spreading across his forehead, over his face. All at once, he looks 14 centuries old.” (*Exit*, p. 19) The King’s “passing”, coupled with his tottering attempts to replace a “disagreeable reality”, by avoiding it as revealed in his naive belief that: “King’s ought to be immortal.” Also results in his premature ageing.

His tottering gait, his lack of strength, are fatal indications. When he attempts to behead the Doctor and knock off Margeurite’s crown, he “knocks off” his own crown and more importantly, drops his sceptre. Berenger in terror sees the two happenings as “bad omens”. Melancholia, as a part of Neurosis sees “bad omens”. These being actually the apprehensions of the victim:

.....external world governs the ego in two ways. Firstly, by current, present perceptions which always renewable, and secondly, by the

store of memories of earlier perceptions which, in the shape of an 'internal world', form a possession of the ego and a consistent part of it.²³

The stream of reminiscence directs itself once again from the beheading of the Regent during the French revolution notably in the fourteenth century as Louis the fourteenth. The playwright identifies with the great revolution more so as a Frenchman. Moreover, the Theatre of the Absurd which sprang from the Parisian capital did so to confirm the:

....preoccupations and anxieties, the emotions and thinking of many of their contemporaries of the Western world.²⁴

The play *Exit the King*, focuses on the end of an era of regency, the beheading of the power of the 'Divine Right' of Kings. It also empathizes through the Regent not only his frivolities and irresponsibility but more, the psychological crisis within. Ionesco in this play interiorises intense psychological war of Berenger in its final stage of the play. Berenger is reminded of his lineage by the Doctor,

Your Majesty, think of the death of Louis the Fourteenth, of Phillip the Second, or of the Emperor Charles the Fifth who slept in his own coffin for twenty years. It is your Majesty's duty to die with dignity.²⁵

Unfortunately for Berenger, the dignified approach to his demise is not only cast aside but also, the familiarity with death which Charles the Fifth morbidly dealt upon. Berenger personally veers away from Charles macabre practice resorting to an immaturity, most unbecoming for a Regent. Hence, he can only resort to shouts and screams. With no

avenues for immortality, or 're-sitting the exams of life and death', bereft of any way out, Berenger rushes to open the window beseeching for help and proclaiming his state. He implores:

Who will give me his life ? Who will give his life for the King's ? His life for the poor old King's ?²⁶

An absurd situation, where King Berenger's anguish is augmented by his dawning clarity that he cannot control anything, not even to save himself. In sheer hopelessness the King declares: "I intend to stay on my feet." (*Exit*, p. 22).

Ironically he immediately collapses. Morbidly afraid, the King's reactions signal reactions of the hysterical type of Neurosis actualized by feeling of fear. In connection to this it was noticed that the avoidance of acceptance by the individual is converted into bodily disturbance symptomatic of World War I and World War II combat victims:

Conversion reactions were also relatively common among combat personnel in World War II. These conversion reactions typically occurred in association with the highly stressful conditions of combat...²⁷

specifically, the motor, sensory, and visceral reactions. But this is applicable not only to active combat acts but involved Everyman indirectly by experiencing the Post World War scenario. Eugene Ionesco a playwright intensely sensitive understood the predicament which propels the psyche to sink both psychologically and physically. Hence,

Berenger, stiff in the legs, failing to climb the steps of the throne witnesses the dissolution of the might of the King symbolized by the Crown and the Sceptre. The latter removed instantly is returned through the orders of Margeurite merely as a form of consolation. The King in panic screams hysterically, as the Maid Juliett affirms; “His legs can hardly carry him.” (*Exit*, p. 25) the limbs with which he seeks to “run away” give way. The impossibility of “chance in a thousand” to be saved leaves him frightened, and sobbing. The despondency sets off the fundamental existential query of “why was I born?”

Existentialism, a philosophical movement popularized by Soren Kierkegaard, elaborates the fact that the trauma of existence is the awareness of one’s non existence. Hence, man is:

...in bondage and is gripped by an overwhelming despair a sickness unto death....²⁸

Berenger, admittedly feels “the dying agony of all” and verifies with the plaintive cry:

....It’s not natural to die, because no - one ever wants to. I want to exist.²⁹

The Doctor declares that Berenger has come near death a thousand times the King states that in reality, death was not meant for him. And so the self-inflicted torture is perpetuated by the Regent with his denial. Berenger was behind not only the decline of the Kingdom but the death

of thousands specifically, Margeurite's parents, relatives even cattle which Berenger brutally ordered to be butchered. He had rationalized with the Doctor cum executioner, that they, "were going to die one day anyway," Ironically, he resists the same fate. The "reasons of State," required such lives were terminated; Berenger fails to apply this fact to himself. Margeurite reveals the irony here that because of the dwindling hold on the law, he was: "...dying, too, because of (his) your state" (*Exit*, p. 25). The profusion of non-functional hydrocephalics with goitre and a "few congenital mental defectives remain as subjects." The "exit" of the King leaves the country in a condition where the birth rate has come down to zero, diminished like nature where nothing grows, being now in a state of complete adaptation with the King. As a result the King seeks another alternative course. Reminiscent of the psychotic approach of *The Chairs* (1956), this play which emerged a decade later utilizes the escape mechanism as a device. As seen in *The Chairs*, this provokes the ninety year old couple to fantasize over an invitation to an audience of parliamentarians, scientists, mental patients, chromosomes, to name a few to attend a Peace Conference. However, in *Exit the King*, despite being told specified about the non-existent birth rate in the Kingdom, Berenger still persists with his delusions, symptomatic of the Neurotic Paradox. This condition of neurotic awareness about the ridiculous quest which

still persists repeatedly notwithstanding its 'self defeating' attempt, Berenger implores future school children and scholars to remember him. His presence should be kept alive through statues in the public squares, his name, his photograph in every office and enterprise or any conveyance. But the height of Absurdity come Berenger's wistful order, that negating the death of the King should be weighed by the presence of the King. The Divine Right should continue eternally with replicas of Berenger on "millions of crucifixes" in every Church for his subjects to worship. As far as his body was concerned it should be preserved in its natural state. Seated on a throne with a normal court scene in the presence of a banquet with musicians and vestal virgins, his delirious state makes him insist that he should not be embalmed, cremated or be fed to the vultures. His only need is to be smothered in love. An emotion Marie seeks to gratify. This is an excessive emotional craving to be continued in the life hereafter. The yearning for contact:

I want to feel arms around me, warm arms, cool arms, soft arms,
strong arms³⁰

expresses the inner vacuum throughout the King's life. This intense Angst, the need to feel arms even after death, reveals the tragedy of a man who throughout his life suffered an anxiety which had:

..it's seeds in fear of separation from the prime caretaking agent
(usually the mother)³¹

why else would the King literally crave for the comfort of the cradling of an infant in its mother's arms. Fragmented, separated from the security is a plight familiar enough in the modern day scenario, Berenger knows that death is an experience he has to undergo alone. This augments his dread. No longer seeking the warmth of a human physical presence, the King seeks the help of the sun to creep deep into him and save him. The King bargains with the sun to parch and wither the entire world, so that the King could go on living, complete solitude. Delirious he rambles on about his death. Leaving aside his ridiculous prattle the King is aware of his inability to really communicate and convey his crisis. Pain can only be expressed, Berenger himself states:

I can't express it, unless I talk like a book and make literature out of it.³²

The impossibility of authenticating experience is all too clear. The King considers it as a fictive endeavor. This is seen in Samuel Beckett's modern classic, *Malone Dies* (1958) Malone's soliloquy goes as such:

Beyond the grave, the sensation of being beyond the grave was stronger with me six months ago.³³

And the fact being Malone still alive, could not really authenticate the death experience. Literature could only skim over this reality or make it into a sensational fantasy akin to Paulo Coelho's, *Veronika Decides to Die* (2006), where Veronika at the time of her demise feels:

Death was sweet, it smelled of wine and it stroked he hair.³⁴

The fact is that no one has ever tried to tell the tale of the journey to the hereafter. Berenger, ignorant and bereft of the authenticity, bemoans his predicament. The transitariness of literature merely “wells up and drains away” thus, his appeal to ones who have crossed the threshold of life, to teach him “acceptance”, “indifference” and “serenity” fritters away. Alerted to the palace surroundings and the function of the senses, Berenger is warned for the fifth time that he has thirty two minutes and thirty seconds left to live, repeatedly falls in his attempts to seat himself on his throne. He fall into his wheel chair, sceptre at his side in a bag, symbolically denoting the demise of Regality and immortality.

The experience of pain at this point is noticed, in the others present. Queen Marie too shows the Neurotic trait. Her responses in fact, provide ample stimuli to advance the King’s Neuroticism. Self-programmed in denial, Marie refuses to acknowledge the fact that Berenger has to die due to the fear of the fall of the monarchic and domestic order she was familiar with. Her low stress tolerance leads are seen in her attempts to escape or “lose oneself”. She typifies Obsessive Compulsive Neurosis:

Characterised by recurring unwanted ideas and by persistent urges to repeat an act over and over.³⁵

Several plays of William Shakespeare have portrayed the development of abnormal behavior with clinical accuracy as stated earlier

but to specify, the symbolic elimination of guilt and fear of the aftermath is exemplified in the Sleepwalking Scene in *Macbeth* (1623), displays the insight of the dramatist in a brilliant mode. Lady Macbeth, the accomplice of her husband in King Duncan's murder, sinks in to distorted chasm of her own making unable to surface. Conscience stricken she stares at her inferred "bloody" hands which was:

It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus washing her hands: I have known her continue in this a quarter of an hour.³⁶

However, while Lady Macbeth's malady affirms Jack Roy Strange's repetitive act. In Marie the "recurrence" is not only of ideas but specifically, emotions.

Queen Marie in Ionesco's work veers towards the ideological. In her persistent belief that death can be negated and even denied, Marie prolongs her Neurosis with the futile hope. Notwithstanding the fact which she realizes straighter after her entry into the "throne room", that things are about to change: "I can feel the earth quaking. I can hear it." (*Exit*, p. 8) Furthermore, she notices the widening of the "crack" in the palace walls, signs of the King's ultimate ruin, as revealed through nature. Yet, obstinately complains about Berenger's failure to consolidate the land instead of leaving the kingdom "Full of holes as a gigantic gruyere cheese"³⁷ interestingly, Marie retorts: "We can't fight against fate, against natural phenomena like erosion." (*Exit*, p.6) yet she declares:

“He wo’nt go!...I’ll hold him back.” (*Exit*, p.5) earning a reprimand from Margeurite: “Many people have delusions of grandeur, but your’e deluded by triviality.” (*Exit*, p.7) Delusion implies:

..incorrect inferences about reality based on these alternatives and believes that the inferences are real and actual.³⁸

Keeping this fact in mind it is noticed that Marie dwells on the delusion that love conquers all. In desperation Marie implores the King to recall the memory of the morning in June they spent by the sea:

....rich, changeless and undying love.You found that fiery radiance within you. If it was there once, is still there, now. Find that radiance again - look for it in yourself.³⁹

The appeal from her side is to invoke his “will-power” to issue commands to the Guard, to Queen Margeurite and the Doctor which crumpled into futility. The specification of “will power” correlates in a certain way to Nietzsche’s insistence on “The Will to Power” in the aftermath to his thought provoking one of “God is Dead”.

Provoking modern man he has to uplift himself from the inertia of his survival state to one of empowerment. Superfluous, though Marie’s intention could have been the playwright was well aware of the impact of Nietzsche and its impact on the Nazis during the War. Hence, Ionesco put things in perspective in the 1960’s by harnessing the inner strength, the “will”, to assert and make a positive impact. The sentimental mode is much emphasized by this psychic-ailing Queen:

Until Death comes, you are still *here*. When Death is here, *you* would have gone...⁴⁰

The persistent appeal to the “you”, the ego state is made by Marie. Love, with its insistence upon the “you”, the “me”, makes us cling to life. Death compelling the individual to transcend life, to go beyond the sentiment of love and its “insanity” which is aptly described by Marie:

Love is madness. And if you're mad with love, if you love blindly, completely, death will steal away. If you love me, if you love everything, love will consume your fear. The whole universe is one, everything lives again and the cup that was drained is full.⁴¹

Aware that the annihilation of the King implies her own, Marie lives up to Shakespeare's adage:

For love is blind and lovers cannot see, petty follies that they themselves commit.⁴²

Marie's insecurity is seen in feelings of rivalry towards Margeurite. The King then goes beyond. Beyond all reasoning and memory fails, Berenger almost in a somnambulistic state tries to retain some memory of her. But the husband and a Regent is reduced to a permanent amnesia. Marie's name means nothing to him....repeated without understanding, sounds that are dead. Death sounds coupled with death denoting gestures comes, the “exit” of Marie. Ionesco comments: (Marie suddenly disappears drawn off on her throne) (*Exit*, p. 41) Berenger blind, death advancing awaits his “exit”.

Noticeably, the first to go is Marie with her tendency to “trap”, to “withhold” Berenger’s transcendence. With the expulsion almost of an individual with no further utilitarian value to Berenger. Only those who are functional are retained. Juliette the Domestic’s interaction with the King immediately prior to Marie’s absence, provides respite in an emotionally turbulent atmosphere. But the dialogue veers to mundane aspects of a common subject’s life, intentionally to distract the King.

His reactions paradoxically are ecstatic. The humdrum existence of the Maid with its state of “boredom” fascinates the King momentarily. Observed by the Doctor, Berenger remembers his condition, “Panic oozing out through his pores.” (*Exit*, p. 33) and as the Doctor predicts:

He’ll still be subject to fright, but pure fright...death will kill him,
now, and not his fear.⁴³

This diagnosis levelled at Berenger relates to the remaining cast as well, with the exception of Queen Margeurite. It is noticed that just when allegiance is expressed by Maid and Guard towards Berenger, they disappear, while the Doctor is compelled to leave. The sole member of the cast, who remains, is the Elder Queen who guides her Regent and spouse. Unfortunately this is resented by the King with “an hour and a half” of mortality left. Queen Margeurite the rigid taskmaster in every sense reprimands the Id suffused persona of both Marie, and Berenger, consistently. She says; “Sire, we have to inform you that you are going to

die.” (*Exit*, p.10) Her declaration turns the focus of the play to the hereafter thereby turning Berenger towards death.

Nature reflects the symbiotic catastrophe of Berenger’s death and what the Doctor specifies the cosmic collision of Saturn and Mars and other unnatural phenomena, Margeurite is convinced and accepts without any questions. Ionesco places her in the central position in this dramatic saga as detached witness. Increasing empowered tilting the scales of power towards herself. So much so that the impact, that after Berenger enters the throne room to attempt to forcibly remove Margeurite’s crown, ironically knocks his own crown off, whilst hers remains intact.

Though the others present such as the Guard, the Maid, the Doctor praise Berenger the, “...Commander-in-Chief, Master, Managing Director....” Margeurite exposes the reality of the illusion. Reactive and threatened, Berenger is compelled to brand Margeurite as the “hateful, hideous woman.” Jung has categorically clarified in his deduction of the Anima and Animus traits that while the former correlated to the unconscious masculine side of a woman, the Animus was the reverse. In this play the two psychological sides correlate with each other in the with respect to the King and the Elder Queen. This interpersonal link creates a dilemma where if as Jung states personally within themselves:

Men tend to depreciate feminine qualities...⁴⁴

Such depreciation also extends to their counterparts as they witness the reverse masculine qualities in the female persona. This is the fundamental discord between Berenger and Margeurite where her masculine strength stands to clash with his feminine psychological fears of threat. While amnesia propels the King eradicate any memory of Marie, towards the end of the play he fails to succeed in respect of Margeurite. She is the reality and the blatant truth which Berenger must acknowledge, irrespective of his intense Angst. As Margeurite poignantly points out “life is exile”. The impact of the displaced, exiled individual is studied by the playwright through his analysis, of King Berenger. Morose and rambling Berenger thinks about a ginger cat recalls how the cat was christened the “Wandering Jew”. The Wandering Jew was subsequently killed by a dog, exterminated in the King’s nightmare when the animal was charred to death and transformed into:

..a different cat, fat and ugly. An enormous she-cat. Like his mother, the wild-cat. A bit like Margeurite.⁴⁵

The exposure of the Semitic suffering by the playwright, extends to the post-war condition of modern man. The *Myth of Sisyphus* (1955) this fact:

A world that can be explained by reasoning however faulty is a familiar world. But in a universe that is suddenly deprived of illusions and light, man feels a stranger. He is an incredible exile, because he is deprived of the memories of a lost homeland, as much as he lacks the hope of a promised land to come.⁴⁶

This vision of the Absurdist does not end here. The exiled one's primordial plight rested on his innate dilemma of integrity, his identity albeit, in total ruin. Margeurite understands this with deep clarity. Placed purposefully now centre-stage by the playwright, Margeurite resolves to render the highest help possible. She states:

I'll help him. I'll drive it out of him. I'll cut him loose. I'll untie every knot and ravel out the tangled skein. I'll separate the wheat from the tenacious tares that cling to him and bind him.⁴⁷

Reminiscent of Judgement Day in the biblical *Book of Revelations*, Margeurite incorporates the prophetic aspect. Berenger has to be gleaned to undergo the process of anointing; "...typically as part of a religious ceremony", a separation and purification process. Elucidated further in the Parable of the Weeds or Tares in the New Testament's, The Gospel according to Saint Matthew, Jesus states;

He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the Kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one.⁴⁸

Berenger's evil tares are the nature of evil crystallized in his life. The dregs of moral darkness sedimented in his being have resulted in his being no more of a King, but the swine to be slaughtered, as Margeurite denounces:

"What was once a King is now a pig that's being slaughtered".⁴⁹

Hence, just prior to the finale the pig has to be vivisected, his already fragmented amputated self, torn asunder and discarded for his speedy

transcendence.

The truth when applied to *Exit the King*, relates to the actual role of Margeurite much misunderstood by the King. Noticeably, the misconception is revealed when the King says; "I used to like Mozart." (*Exit*, p. 30) Mozart's link with his father was not harmonious. In fact, it was a hateful one. And yet, it was this stalwart of a father figure, a contrast to the frivolous genius, who proved to be greatest muse. Hence, the appreciation of Mozart by Berenger entails similar reactions of the protagonist towards Margeurite. Being the unreflecting mirror she symbolizes the final truth and the solidity of inner strength which leaves him afraid and resentful. Though he refuses to acknowledge the fact, the truth was that without Margeurite he could neither "die with dignity", nor transcend to the life eternal.

Margeurite, the "Queen of Trades" as she calls herself henceforth proceeds on her mission. All of our existence is an illusion she says and; "The dreamer comes out of his dream." (*Exit*, p. 45) Berenger, compelled to realize that reality is neither within him with his trammels of self conditioning of "messy things" or the clutter of memories. He undergoes the final and novel experience of declutching from his existential load. The Queen introduces the charade of removing an imaginary ball and chain from the King's feet. Furthermore, she takes a sack, a back-pack

from the King's shoulders, his army boots and even a rifle, a machine gun and even a tool box. Implements of war on the imaginary level no doubt, but symbolizing the in-depth truth of unnecessary devices after the two wars on the universal scale.

Noticeably, Berenger becomes almost an automaton dependent exclusively on the verbal directions of Margeurite. Blinded and insecure he still persists in holding onto his kingdom; "In miniature; on micro-film - in tiny grains" (*Exit*, p. 45) - Sans true mountains and plains, which have all turned to dust, Margeurite unclenches his right fist to release the grains. Berenger's mobility at this juncture one witnesses is marionette-like. With the security of Margeurite's hand, the King with his eyes closed, attempts at the last moment to fantasize about the magnitude of his empire:

With two suns, two moons and two heavens two light it. And there's another sun rising and there's another third firmament appearing, shooting up and fanning out....dawn and twilight all at once. Beyond the seven hundred and seventy poles.⁵⁰

Henceforth, all he can express is the color blue, indicative of his final ascension to the firmament, if not higher. Berenger now in a condition of speechlessness becomes completely focused on Margeurite's presence, she guides him to ascend to the throne for the last time, his every step overseen by a watchful companion removing menacing creatures on his way. This vivisection became not an amputative exercise but one of

specifying each and every detail of his body and pronouncing the death sentence:

Give me a finger....let me have your right arm, your chest, two shoulders, and your stomach...now you've lost your power of speech, there's no need for your heart to beat, no more need to breathe.⁵¹

Hence, Margeurite like the Angel of Death is a witness to her husband's final departure. Her mission now complete, she seats herself on her throne and dismisses the whole death ritual flippantly and vanishes:

It was a lot of fuss about nothing....⁵²

Immediately after her, the King vanishes along with the Court.

What remains however, is the highly symbolic:

....there is nothing but the grey light or the mist and the empty throne, with the sceptre beneath.⁵³

The "reflecting mirror" "gaze reality asserts Shakespeare's lyric:

The Sceptre, Learning, Physic must all follow this (death) and come to dust.⁵⁴

As specified throughout, this play when negating the Divine Right of Kingship that King's ought to be immortal, basically highlights the fact that all aspects of creation are subject to entropy. Death is the ultimate leveler. Escape in the form of Neurosis becomes a mere ploy inviting disaster. Ionesco himself declares:

Since the death instinct exists in the heart of everything that lives, since we suffer from trying to repress it, since everything that lives longs for rest, let us fasten the ties that bind us to life, let us cultivate

our death wish, let us develop it, water it like a plant, let it grow unhindered. Suffering and fear are born from the repression of the death wish.⁵⁵

This play of Ionesco exposes the intense psychological breakdown that had infiltrated every level of modern man. Ionesco affirmed that the fear and agony which ensue have crippled the individual giving rise to the ‘inner play’ of combating the horrors of a psyche dealing with the *existenzangst*. Moreover, the apathy, or Neurosis of Nuresthenia exposed in *Exit the King* is applicable not to Berenger alone. Berenger represents ‘everyman’, the post war man, surviving the psychological holocaust – in neurotic denial, internally a total wreck.

On the occasion of the historic World Theatre Day – March 27th 1976, in Helsinki, Ionesco in his ‘International Message’ had declared:

Truth is to be found in the imagination. The theatre of imagination is a theatre of genuine truth and is genuinely documentary. The imagination cannot lie. It reveals our psychology, our abiding or passing anxieties, concerns of man in every age and of the present time, the depths of the human soul.⁵⁶

With astute perception Ionesco plunged into the deepest recesses of the human soul to uncover its nakedness. *Exit the King* notably, marks the brilliance of the playwright exposing the final reality of existence.

End Notes

- ¹ Scaer, Robert. *The Body Bears the Burden: Trauma, Disassociation, Disease*. New York: Taylor & Francis, 2007. Print. p.2.
- ² Hardin, C.H. ed. *Aspects of Anxiety*. Toronto: Lippincott, 1965. Print. p.9.
- ³ Coleman, C. James. *Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life*. New Delhi: D.B. Taraporevala Sons & Co. Ltd., 1988. Print. p.218.
- ⁴ Esslin, Martin. *The Theatre of the Absurd*. U.S.A.: Pelican and Doubleday, 1980. Print. p.211.
- ⁵ Strange, R. Jack. *Abnormal Psychology: Understanding Behavior Disorders*. New Delhi: Tata-McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1965. Print. p. 73.
- ⁶ Esslin. p.151.
- ⁷ Ionesco, Eugene. *Exit the King*. Trans. Donald Watson. London: Samuel French, 1963. Print. p.1.
- ⁸ Schneiderman, Stuart. *Jacques Lacan: Death of an Intellectual Hero*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. 1983. Print. p.77.
- ⁹ Ionesco. *Exit*. p.7.
- ¹⁰ Shakespeare, William. *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. London: Murray Sales & Service, 1977. Print. p.802.
- ¹¹ Coleman. p.220
- ¹² Ionesco. *Exit*. p.4.
- ¹³ *Ibid*. p. 6.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid*. p. 6.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid*. p. 8.
- ¹⁶ Coleman. p.249.
- ¹⁷ Ionesco. *Exit*. p.10.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid*. p.10.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid*. p.10.
- ²⁰ *Ibid*. p.18.
- ²¹ *Ibid*. p. 18.
- ²² Baldwick, Chris (ed). *Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2006. Print. p.187.
- ²³ Richards, Angela (ed). *Sigmund Freud: On Psychology Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety and Other Works – Volume 10*. New York: Penguin, 1979. Print. p.215.
- ²⁴ Esslin. p.22.
- ²⁵ Ionesco. *Exit*. p.21.
- ²⁶ *Ibid*. p.21.

- ²⁷ Coleman. p.239.
- ²⁸ Strange. p.79.
- ²⁹ Ionesco. *Exit*. p.29.
- ³⁰ *Ibid*. p. 26.
- ³¹ Giddens, Anthony. *Modernity and Self Identity*. California: Stanford University Press, 1991. Print. p 45.
- ³² Ionesco. E.T.K. p.27.
- ³³ Beckett, Samuel. *Malone Dies*. London: Penguin, 1975. Print. p.11.
- ³⁴ Coelho, Paulo. *Veronika Refuses to Die*. New York: Harper Collins, 2006. Print. p.184.
- ³⁵ Strange. p 467.
- ³⁶ Shakespeare. p.349.
- ³⁷ Ionesco. E.T.K. p.6.
- ³⁸ Sarasson, Irwin and Barbara Sarasson. *Abnormal Psychology: The Problem of Maladaptive Behavior*. New Delhi: Prentice-Hall of India Private Limited, 2000. Print. p.312.
- ³⁹ Ionesco. *Exit*. p.27.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid*. p.33.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid*. p.34.
- ⁴² Shakespeare. p.203.
- ⁴³ Ionesco. *Exit*. p.33.
- ⁴⁴ Frieda Fordham. *An Introduction to Jung's Psychology*. Suffolk: Penguin, 1975. Print. p.114.
- ⁴⁵ Ionesco. *Exit*. p.38.
- ⁴⁶ Esslin. p. 23.
- ⁴⁷ Ionesco. *Exit*. p.33.
- ⁴⁸ *The New Testament of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: with psalms and proverbs*. Tennessee: The Gideons International., 1982. Print. p.25.
- ⁴⁹ Ionesco. *Exit*. p.21.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid*. p.46.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid*. p.47.
- ⁵² *Ibid*. p.47.
- ⁵³ *Ibid*. p.47.
- ⁵⁴ Shakespeare. p. 1006.

- ⁵⁵ Goosens, Shay. Eugene Ionesco: The Favored Son” *Geocities Broadway*, 1997. Geocities Broadway. <<http://www.geocities.com/broadway/stage/1052/Ionesco5.html>> 6 December 2002.
- ⁵⁶ “Reception of Eugene Ionesco. Presented Academie Francaise: Speech”. On his election to Academie Francaise in 1971 <<http://www.academir-francaise.fr/immortal/discoursereception/Ionesco.html>> 4 June 2010.

Chapter-V

THE PARANOID REALITIES IN *AMADEE*

The Anxiety-Panic Reaction is an acute subjectively dramatic incident: it, the anxiety literally overwhelms the patient who may feel as though he is disintegrating,...a sense of impending doom is manifested...¹

C.H. Hardin

Any emotionally shocking experience especially concerning death results in intense fear and psychological distress in any individual, causing a major breakdown. This aspect has been reiterated over and over again in this study of *Existenzangst*. Furthermore, considering the fact that the concept of 'angst', which gained popularity after the two wars, and which Freud felt could not be adequately translated, lay in the fact that the emotion incorporated too much pain and suffering. The intensity could not be voiced, it could only be felt.

The excruciating turbulence of the 20th century as understood, provoked horrific responses in many sensitive beings. Man, was jolted into a situation where he was forced to face a world which was both frightening – a nightmare, a horror, a 'holocaust of the mind'. Notably, the psychological 'shoah' which ensued, established the great 'catastrophe' which had filtered down to the very core of man's existence, laying the foundation of a splintered mode of life. The

shattered being who emerged, lived in a world akin to the cubist's depiction of the fragmentation of life especially in post war German artist, Otto Wolfgang Schulze, "Wols", pictorial depiction in his work, the *Blue Phantom* (1951). Such an artistic rendition portrayed the zenith of anxiety in the core of modern man's life, triggering off a panic reaction, gravitating to the 'paranoid' state, the fearful state. Psychologists have categorized 'relative degrees of fear' in an individual notably, terror which "refers to a pronounced state of fear, where someone becomes overwhelmed with a sense of immediate danger".

Paranoia on the other hand is a term:

is a term to describe a psychosis of fear, to the perception of being persecuted. This persecution often causes one to change their normal behavior in radical ways, after a time their behavior may become compulsive.²

Paranoia is basically a disease where the patient is intensely afraid, intensely confused and agitated. Additionally, Paranoia manifests as a reaction to terror. However, in the distant past this term was first used by Hippocrates to refer to conditions involving mental deterioration and was applicable to any type of psychological disorder. Nevertheless, the modern usage of this term has become more selective.

The psychologist Kraepelin used the term to denote case studies involving 'delusions' and 'impaired contact with reality'. However, what must be noted is the fact that it differs from Paranoid Schizophrenia both

in intensity and the severity of the personality disorganization. It involves no radical break from reality as in the schizoid psyche, paranoia basically covers temporary 'attempts' to escape reality under anxiety or stress. Paranoia is basically a defensive reaction towards trauma. These psychological defenses became common place as psychologists have clarified "The most common prolonged social crises arise during wartimes."³

Keeping the above inference in mind trauma had become the mainstay during the cataclysmic war period. However, trauma still lingered as a poignant reality after the declaration of the peace. The disturbed peace, 'the damaged human' as exemplified by Corrie ten Boom, could neither relate nor live, in the aftermath of the war and the 'Armageddon' lingered in the mind of every man. Such was the actual reality of existence which incorporated not only the existential "being and becoming", but also the *Existenzangst*.

The creative impulse in man had graphically reflected this phenomenon in modern art. The survivors of the concentration camps who had lived to witness the end of, 'the period of hell' were intensely fatigued. Their urge to survive was tinged with the intense need to cleanse themselves off the 'memory' and specifically, the 'guilt'.

Thus, the 'Holocaust Syndrome', included 'survival guilt'. The 'guilt syndrome', was agonizing and the memory of their individual helplessness inflicted the highest torture, upon the post war individual. An interview with a holocaust survivor called Ethel conducted by Aaron Hass of the California State University Psychology department, revealed the following details:

Ethel told me that she goes to the movies about the Holocaust and reads voraciously in this area. 'Why do you do that?' I asked. 'It's a physical feeling' she explained. I go through it again. I need to feel it. When I don't feel it, I feel like I'm numb... It's like reconnecting with something very real in me, like my authentic self.⁴

The pathos was, the memory of the pain remained active in the individual like the Ethel's and others who had become so conditioned to trauma that they could not, and even did not, know how to relate to anything else. Hence, the 'war' still lingered in the mind. However, of equal intensity as the horror was the aspect of 'guilt' as to why a he or she was alive, and why the others could not be saved. This guilt became the mainstay of their existence, bringing them closer and closer to a psychological death.

Several writers have dealt with this post holocaust angst and perhaps, Paul Celan, was the darkest and most powerful poetic voice to come out of the Holocaust. Jean Amery or Primo Levi or Elie Wiesel, 'swore never to be silent' for their primary purpose for surviving was to record the horror and testify. War and the aftermath had pushed man

beyond the post Holocaust 'existential state' to 'guilt' of another more common and universal kind. This emotion it must be understood stemmed from certain actions and ensuing regret thereafter.

At this juncture what must be clear is the fact that the aforementioned 'prolonged social crisis', resulted in certain behavioral traits. A terrible crisis in the post war psyche implied an escape and a 'fight and flight' tendency compelling man's Ego to indulge in impulsive deeds which included acts of to the *libido* and even murder. Failure unfortunately left one swiftly drowning in one's psycho-social crisis. This was reflected in the literature of the day "The creative process is an attempt to resolve a conflict."⁵

Keeping this in mind one can relate with the attempt creative writers to find a way, out of the "inner conflict". Literature has emerged as a powerful force to authenticate and record current social scenarios. Post war era, literature specifically exposed the grim predicament in which man had been trapped in highlighting the fears, the guilt. When the Absurdists mirrored the reality of modern survival, they mirrored the ultimate fact of life.

Life was fraught with problems and literature reflecting the genuine 'voice' focused on featuring the truth. Moreover, with specific reference to the Absurdists, it was a colossal task but the challenge was met with

especially in the realm of theatre. This innovative dramatic movement, formally termed the Theatre of the Absurd, garnered the basic absurdity in most unconventional portrayal of the irrational, meaningless universe where people's lives had no real purpose or meaning primarily, due to the predominance of fear.

The Absurd playwright and Nobel Laureate, Harold Pinter highlighted fear, and the torture of the psyche in several of his works for example *The Room* (1957), *The Birthday Party* (1958) or *The Dumb Waiter* (1967), to name a few. Eugene Ionesco also focused upon the atmosphere infused with fear but, along with this "fearful emotion", the playwright recognized the existential situation in the absurd world.

Post war man had not only faced, but integrally was undergoing a crisis on a daily basis. Furthermore, the angst which persisted infused a catastrophic reaction in the 'paranoid psyche'. The paranoid reaction it has been clarified involved the following:

Following abuse, trauma, emotional stress or sleep deprivation, some people may show unpleasant anxiety or aggression associated with paranoia. Paranoid symptoms may also arise from denied guilt and hidden anger...Paranoia may include suspicion, anger and hatred. A person may mistrust others, act constantly irritated, be easily offended, cannot forgive, strongly react to perceived criticism,...incessantly argue, change moods abruptly and act in self-righteous and perfectionist ways.⁶

This basic reaction was a phenomenon Ionesco emphasized such a manifestation in his plays namely in *The Killing Game* (1970). The play deals with a maelstrom of paranoia and horror in a small town. However,

his first full-length play, *Amedee* or *How to Get Rid of It* (1954), focuses and portrays the ‘paranoid reality’ of everyman with profuse depth.

The year 1954 gave the Parisian theatre audience, an unusual play. Not only was it the first work which covered three acts, but Eugene Ionesco portrayed fear which was not only bizarre but intensely shocking. As gripping as Beckett’s *Waiting for Godot* (1953) had been to the inmates of San Quentin Prison on the 15th of November, 1957. Angst ridden twentieth century man often portrayed abnormal behavioral symptoms. In subtle ways implied a gradual withdrawal and the inability to communicate but in the extreme as psychosis or neurosis. Ionesco’s *Amedee*, highlights this extreme psychological crisis. It has been witnessed that victims of war or violence could react in two ways – indifference and apathy or ‘turn to stone’, or the victim could react. In this play it is witnessed that, the protagonist Amadee provoked under duress and compulsion.

This play focuses on a middle aged couple who are isolated in a flat for fifteen years. However, they find that they are not alone. Strangely, there is a presence of another inmate in the apartment who had been with the couple for more than a decade and a half years. Besides, the most fantastic and frightening aspect is that the other inmate who is a corpse, is ‘suffering’ from “geometric progression”, which was the

“incurable disease of the dead”. The resultant “suffering” is directed at the living namely, Amadee and his wife Madeleine. Although the corpse was dead it was growing inch by inch and had incessantly been doing so for the last fifteen years.

Death consciousness as witnessed in Ionesco’s *Exit the King*, implied survival for the living and furthermore, ‘death’ has an ‘animate quality’ asserting life. However, the quality of life and death are all juxtaposed in a strange and grotesque manner by the playwright in *Amadee*.

The ‘state of demise’ entwined with the ‘living manifestations’, is not only juxtaposed by Ionesco but also symbiotically linked, to make a powerful statement. A critical comment on Ionesco’s plays like *The Chairs*, *Amadee*, *The Future is in Eggs* (1951), *Victims of* (1953) and *The New Tenant* (1955) implies that:

Ionesco populates his stage with meaningless physical objects to emphasize his theme of unreason and convey a nightmarish sense of inanity.⁷

This reference to ‘meaningless’ objects is often misunderstood. The basic motive of Ionesco was to utilize these ‘props’ as a symbolical maneuver to convey the atmosphere of psychological inertia and the inherent crisis, reflective of the Age of Absurdity.

As specified, majority of Ionesco’s plays have had a proliferation of objects. The profusion of cobwebs or cracks in the walls in *Exit the*

King, furniture in *The New Tenant*, cups in *Victims of Duty*, piling of corpses in *The Killer* (1958). In *Amedee*, we see the unnatural and excessively rapid growth of 'mushrooms'. At the inception of the play *Amedee* the protagonist is intensely agitated. Furthermore, while pacing the room of his apartment *Amedee* bends down to pick up something which causes immense consternation. Miniscule though the object might have been the presence of a mushroom and specifically of the poisonous variety, introduces the audience to the atmosphere of *existenzangst*, *Amedee* reveals himself as a middle aged struggling playwright in a dismal mood, almost resigned to his fate. The mushrooms multiply and establish themselves as a mirror to his apathetic subsistence.

The growth of the corpse is similar to that of the mushrooms. While it asserted the sovereignty of death, it grows for a different purpose primarily as a kinship with the emotion of 'guilt'. Martin Esslin has asserted, that this play was possibly a form of catharsis for Ionesco personally, and professional doubts as a playwright. Hence, *Amedee* was a play which fostered an opportunity for the playwright, to introspect and inner cleansing. Ionesco had to find a solution for his own anxiety and *Amedee* provided an outlet. As Esslin elucidates:

The play springs from his darkest, most depressive mood, and presents what is most probably his most powerful symbol of the proliferation of matter and its stifling of the spirit.⁸

Notable psychologists specifically Cameron and Sullivan have declared that ‘paranoid symptoms were instituted primarily to deal with anxiety’. Hence, Ionesco’s *Amedee*, not only featured anxiety in the play, but basically focused on the consequences of ‘angst’ through the manifestation of Paranoia. Trapped in the nightmarish quality of existence, Amadee and Magdaline panic. Their attempts to tackle their angst fail and they are left in a state which is more paranoid and deluded.

Amadee, right from the outset of the play presents a gloomy picture. For Amadee, not only bemoans the condition of the home but frequently glances towards the door of the bedroom and reacts in agitation. His wife’s presence in the aforementioned room causes more stress for she is not alone within the confines, but in the company of another male presence. However, at that particular point the cause for his mental disquiet, has yet to be clarified.

Similar to the technique used in *The Chairs*, this couple like the ‘ancients’ specifically Amadee, are compelled to eavesdrop on the almost meaningless conversation of their neighbors from the landing outside. However, when the voice of the Concierge is overheard saying:

I am no southerner, Monsieur Victor. My grandmother’s mid-wife came from Toulon, but my grandmother’s always lived in Lille...⁹

This comment causes a great deal of consternation for Amadee. Typifying the issue of ‘clang words’ in *The Chairs*, the mention of

“parasite lost” in the play, pursues the same psychological upheaval. However, in this play in particular, it is more personally directed to one’s human relations specifically, one’s link with one’s spouse. Unable to tolerate his situation of stress and strain, Amadee is suddenly jolted to reconnect with his wife Madeleine, having overheard the rhyming word ‘Lille’. He rushes over and opens the bedroom door while calling out to his spouse to come to the main room.

However, it is noticed that when she complies Madeleine does so with a great deal of resentment and complaint. Furthermore, it is not merely the content of what she states which is revealing but even her appearance has a lot to reveal. Ionesco specifies that she is “a hard-looking, rough-tempered woman” and hence, her countenance is in keeping with her demeanor. She expresses disdain being the sole bread winner. Looking after the house along with her work as a switch board operator, was not a simple task. Furthermore, the growth not only of the poisonous variety of fungi but notably the corpse increased her trepidation intensely. Hence, she directly reacts directly with “I’m a modern slave, then”.¹⁰

A simple yet jarring remark made more out of bitterness than of self-pity, reveals not only the inconvenient physical conditions of the apartment, but also the matrimonial connection between the two

protagonists. The play unveils a great deal of incompatibility between the two leading almost to the death of the relationship.

What is noteworthy here is the fact that, death had penetrated all levels of existence. It has also permeated the aspect of creativity in Amadee. The protagonist had been a failure in his vocation as a playwright for fifteen long years. Much time had elapsed but Amadee was unable to proceed beyond the two lines he had written years ago:

The old woman says to the old man, 'Do you think it will do?' The old man replies, 'It won't do by itself.'¹¹

The psychologists Zak and Emory are of the opinion that:

That those who suffer more intense activity suffer depression...paralyzing indecision, irritability...strong feelings of inadequacy accompanied at times by paranoid suspicions.¹²

This is true of Amadee who embodied all these qualities. He replays his fears over and over again in his mind. Attempts to transcend the sense of fear are met with intense insecurity. His "feelings of inadequacy" cause a reaction laced with suspicion and paranoia, especially regarding his wife. Her daily chores incite much doubt in him.

In Ionesco's plays, the 'fragmentation of human life' which had surfaced as a necessary phenomenon to tackle the trauma - of modern life, is revealed in his works at the level of inter-personal relationships especially matrimony. The playwright shows marriage in discord, and

crisis. In conversation with Claude Bonnefoy in 1966, Ionesco had stressed his personal understanding of:

man and woman as needing each other. If they destroy or reject love it is because fail to remember its value, a failure which nearly always leads them to guilt and suffering.¹³

However in the two plays namely, *The Chairs* and *Exit the King*, Ionesco has portrayed the 'destructive' aspect of the relationship. The 'ruin' revealed through the behavioral patterns where in the couple clash, is linked to the dependency factor. The rift widens between Amadee and his wife without respite. Critics have held the wife responsible for the suffering much more than Amadee. Richard Coe had stated that in Ionesco's plays specifically *Victims of Duty* and *Amadee*, there are two Madeline's and both are guiltier than their spouses for the discord in the marriage.

He elaborates further that if Adam was betrayed by Eve in the Bible, in Ionesco's *Victims of Duty*, Choubert is betrayed by Madeleine to the police, and is thus the guilty party. However, with reference to the latter play *Amadee*, Coe clarifies that:

It is in *Amadee* that the fear, the egotism, the stupidity of emotional of woman is brought out in all its sordid splendor..It is Madeline who is forever embittering the quarrels dragging Amadee with her ever further downwards in her morass of despair and solitude and bourgeois misery.¹⁴

The bedrock of this discord lies with the presence of the corpse which petrifies Amadee. Initially nothing is clear, as to whether the

corpse was brought in as an infant, abandoned and died or whether it was Madeline's lover, who was killed by Amadee. These questions remain an enigma while the corpse grows inch by inch menacing in its aspect of 'growing death'.

According to Freudian psychoanalysis Narcissistic Ego fostered many an abnormal behavioral traits and the ensuing false inference of reality, basically resulted in the 'delusion of persecution'. Intensive probing revealed serious abnormal manifestations in the psyche in the form of fear manifesting as 'jealousy paranoia' and 'persecutory paranoia'. These psychological states were all apparent in the protagonist, as it will be witnessed.

The First Act promulgated the aspect of jealousy which had transcended to paranoid heights. For the situation made it mandatory for the feeling to exhibit itself, and incited the 'delusion' which increased with each mushroom which sprouted, with each enlargement of the corpse. The strain aggravated itself symbolically with the above mentioned display but the consciousness of death is followed the understanding that Amadee's ego had been slighted resulting in a backlash. It not only resulted in the inability to write a play but along with it, came the stifling of his will to live. This is apparent in his complaints about his physical condition which co-related to King

Berenger in *Exit the King*. As understood, Amadee and the King both suffer from Neurasthenic Neurosis which psycho-somatically covers “chronic fatigue, weakness and lack of enthusiasm”. In Amadee’s case it was poignantly expressed when he states:

The life we’re leading...it’s not exactly the right atmosphere...I feel so tired, so tired ...worn out heavy. I’ve got indigestion and my tummy’s all blown out.I feel sleepy all the timeI can’t stick it. Perhaps it’s my liver. I feel I’ve aged. Of course, I’m not exactly young any more. Still, to feel like this.¹⁵

Taking an overall perspective, it can be understood that Amadee with his inadequacy and neurosis hence, feels slighted by Madeleine and as a result feels uncomfortable every time she was alone with the corpse.

However, his magnanimity compels him to empathize with his wife’s condition despite the harassment meted out to him. The aspect of Narcissistic Ego in Madeleine emerges in the form of “projection onto others and the failure to recognize one’s own shortcomings”. Corresponding to R. Coe’s observation, Madeleine depicts the harsh figure grudgingly, indulging in her own self-pity with no interest in her husband’s suffering. Obstinate, she refuses to accept her personal accountability and projects the damage to their lives completely on Amadee. Her responses make it impossible for the resumption of their matrimonial ties.

Being an outright nag Madeleine she deliberately ignored Amadee’s considerate and understanding nature and merely chided him

with her caustic remark, "I don't want your pity. Hypocrite! Liar!" (*Ibid.* p. 29).

The stress she felt she targeted on Amadee, and even accused him of being an alcoholic when the only drink he had was tomato juice. And so the false allegations continued. However, as the marital schism grew amidst the couple so did the complexities in their personalities. Neurotic patterns infused with in Neurosis provoked the Ego to repress the Id as it has been clarified, but keeping this play in perspective the question was, for how long a tenure? Furthermore, the Psychotic psyche in its dependence on the Id vehemently suppressed Reality and that too the aspect dwelt on the fact, till when? These queries were pertinent as the couple subconsciously utilized both the psychological manifestations and in the abnormal mind, adhered to the 'pseudo couple'.

To refer to the aspects of psychosis and neurosis, what is pertinent here is the fact that both Amadee and Madeleine had lived in denial. In Amadee it was a shirking away of responsibility and in Madeleine it manifested as a trait more malicious and aggressive. Relating to the 'silent presence' of the third inmate it was symbolically a reminder of their guilt. Yet, the paradox of the response of the couple individually was interesting. Notably, as Amadee expressed an appreciation for the corpse almost an attachment, while Madeleine voiced the reverse.

Furthermore, embittered and frustrated, Madeleine being completely on the defensive even went to the extent of denial and especially in blaming the departed with her remark:

If he had forgiven us he would have stopped growing. As he's still growing. He must be feeling spiteful. He still has a grudge against us. The dead are terribly vindictive. The living forget much sooner.¹⁶

Here, the ironical aspect was that Madeline had not forgotten her lover of the past. Her ensuing guilt had changed her remorse and made her project blame on the corpse and even Amadee. With the impression that her office work, her housekeeping chores, offered her no rest. She resented the fact that Amadee could 'write and think', that his books and literature offered him an 'escape' from their horrific existence. She lived in delusions about her suffering and persecution Amadee though sensitive to their collective Angst, felt the pain more intensely and in consequence, could forgive and bond with the corpse in a more humane manner, a total contrast to his wife's attitude of hatred.

Despite Amadee's hope and a futile attempt at optimism that their plight would change, the corpse proves non-cooperative. The strain became more heightened as the madness proves a macabre atmosphere. The psycho-somatic milieu takes a more perverse form, deepening the crisis.

At this juncture *existenzangst* ironically reveals to 'absurd', realm in the play. Ionesco who focused on the aspect of psychoanalytical

dream states, projected a scenario close to a Shoah like catastrophe, relating to a nightmare projected by the Paranoid psyche. Besides, the Freudian 'anxiety dream', or in common parlance 'nightmare' in *Amadee*, was a result of certain panic inferences as has been revealed that:

Nightmares are disturbing dreams which may follow us for years worrying us with their persistence and vividness. The nightmare is often accompanied by feelings of oppression and helplessness...some emotional upheaval that is taking place or about to take place in our life. The nightmare is a dream that needs to be taken seriously. They are urgent psychological messages that something in our emotional psyche needs to be paid attention to and can no longer be ignored or we do so to our peril.¹⁷

The 'emotional balance' individually and collectively in the couple which had gone awry, exposes the limit of endurance. The physical and psycho-somatic state merges together to establish the life of a 'nightmare' for Amadee and Madeline. However, unlike the condition of perverse imagination in a horrific dream, the corpse is corporeal as also the other manifestation of death like the mushrooms. Hence, the pathos was that had Amadee and his wife been in a dream state, they would have been able to evade the calamity but unfortunately as they were actually "living" the nightmare, thus the dilemma lay deeper.

In the first act coupled with the great crisis in the apartment was a disturbance which came upon the couple from the outside. Co-relating this crisis to Pinter's plays during an interview with Phillip Tynan the playwright stated that the people in the room in his plays were scared became:

Outside the room there is a world bearing upon them which is frightening. I am sure it is frightening to you and me as well.¹⁸

In Ionesco's play the intrusion comes in the form of a postman who knocks on the door announcing that he has a letter for Amadee. However, the fact was apart from the corpse the couple had no interaction with anybody from the outside. Hence, after fifteen years this social interaction though an unwelcome one, was the first actual contact for them. This causes further trauma for Amadee and his wife. Hence, after a lot of hesitation Amadee musters enough courage, reacting defensively with the remark:

You see, you can come in, now I've opened the door, come right in, I've nothing to hide.¹⁹

The parley continues with the couple absolutely terrified. Their great 'angst' compels them to deny that the letter handed over to them by the postman is theirs; making a flimsy excuse that Amadee's name was spelt with a Roman capital and not in round hand. They managed to avert the crisis and consequently, the postman departs. Yet, the worst was not over for the couple. Silently, stealthily, the intrusion upon their lives through the corpse continues. Furthermore, the terror increases.

The situation offered no respite for the couple and the crisis merges completely with their subconscious state. Akin to the analysis of dreams where the psycho-analyst Haffner had specified that:

In the first place, dreams carry on waking life. Our dreams regularly attach themselves to the ideas that have been in our consciousness shortly before.²⁰

Dreams as a result invigorated the waking state leaving, Amadee and his wife more confused and frustrated, sinking under increasing levels of emotional pain. Moreover, with the level of their trauma increasing, so does the menacing bearing of the corpse. At the end of the introductory act, the corpse increased manifold and the frightening aspect was the rapidity of its elongation both through the hands and legs, which extended eighteen inches if not more, into the confines of the main living room. Furthermore, the growth was accompanied by cracking noises thereof, impelling not only Amadee but even Madeleine to collapse emotionally. She bewailed continually that it was “inhuman”, while Amadee gives the final expression of their *Existenzangst*, with the cry:

I can't understand how we ever got into such a mess. It's so unfair....And in a case like this...no one to turn to for help and advice.²¹

Bewailing their plight they fight the razor thin edge of the dream and nightmare state frightened, and intensely paranoid. Hence, the crisis powerfully portrayed by the playwright, became such that the horror reduces the couple to emotional wrecks.

The consistent strain in both the first and second act in the play was appreciated by critics. Ionesco's mastery as a playwright lay in his expertise at creating the atmosphere of 'fear'. Ionesco's *Journeys Among*

the Dead (1980), has been considered along *Amadee* as, the “Theatre of Fear”.

The continuation of the ‘nightmare disaster state’ in the second act progresses with greater detail as Amadee complains:

Six inches in twenty minutes. He’s growing faster than ever...Oh dear oh dear! [for a moment he gazes at the part of the body that is on stage, then at the enormous mushrooms.] They’re still getting bigger too!...If they were’nt the poisonous variety we could eat them or sell them! Oh I’m really no good at anything: Whatever I try! I can never make a go of it.²²

In certain ways the second act gives a totally different perspective to the crisis. Transcending and magnifying the usual phenomenon of the increase of the corpse or the mushrooms, comes the loss of hope and affection regarding ‘it’. Amadee felt that he was “no good at anything”, a loser, especially with reference to the corpse. Amadee consequently, was left increasingly apathetic and demoralized.

The incumbent need was that some solution would have to be found regarding the living conditions of the couple and that of the corpse. Amadee compelled by the decision of his wife that she would take the drastic step of divorcing him, had no other alternative but to agree to remove the corpse from the apartment or as the title of the play significantly states, had to find a solution regarding – “How to Get Rid of it”.

An inordinate delay of fifteen years had left their lives enmeshed in extreme difficulties. However with much hesitation on his part, Amadee was finally goaded by his wife, to agree to remove the corpse from their living space that very night. Although reluctant, he knew that the decision could not be deferred. His personal “tomorrows” and the typical ‘Hamletean–procrastination’, neurosis suffused in contentment, had to be abandoned.

Nonetheless, the decision was not that easy. An agonizing wait for the couple ensued as the time was three o’clock in the evening and the task could only be pursued in the cover of darkness at midnight. The horror, mounts, with the suspense.

At this juncture a poignant twist is introduced in the tale, relating to the marital relationship between the couple. Proceeding with the identity of the corpse, the discussion revolves around the fact that either he was a baby who was abandoned by his mother and whom Amadee killed, being provoked by irritation and anger due to the infant’s bouts of crying, or that he was a lover of Madeleine who Amadee killed out of jealousy. Infact, the memory gets so muddled in their minds that Amadee confesses:

...I get everything so mixed up, dreams and real life, memories and imagination...now I don’t know where I am.²³

Whatever responses Amadee gave, incites Madeleine to further resentment and anger. As a result, the 'guilt' and 'suffering' in their relationship is increased. The atmospheric strain had henceforth affected their personal relationship so intensely that at that specific moment in the play, Ionesco unveils the actual truth of their individual personalities and the resultant crisis in their marriage.

In a novel way, the playwright introduced the aspect of the 'doubles' of Amadee and Madeleine as Amadee II and Madeleine II, basically as personalities uncovering the hidden side of themselves individually. During the 19th century schizoid studies had discovered the aspect of the dual personality but in 1971, Heinz Kohut had revealed the 'split' in the interior life pertaining not to the extreme psychotic dream state as that corresponding to schizophrenia, but as one being more reality based. Furthermore, the 'second persona' displayed an asymmetry termed as an 'Alter Ego' which comprised of the representation of another complicit individual, constituent of the self or twin ship. Interestingly the term 'Alter Ego' in Latin, means "the other I" and in this work of Ionesco, he unveils not merely the "other" but the "inner persona" of the characters respectively.

While the original couple was seated in the corner, the 'double' took centre-stage and provoked much interest in the audience. Ionesco

shows us a younger Amadee and Madeleine in bridal wear but with marked differences in personalities. While Amadee typified the idealist, romantic persona, Madeleine was a contrast to her escapist spouse. The conversation which followed highlighted the issues which had provoked a crisis of the compatibility between the couple.

The scenario shows a marked contrast in the two doubles. The Amadee double expresses leanings towards a more amorous type of emotion while Madeleine exhibits the opposite forever spiteful and suspicious. Sexual connotation creep into the conversation too and the 'ardent' lover attitude which Amadee revealed, was equated to violent advances leading to rape. Similar to the overt tones of *The Lesson*, here Madeleine II directly accused her then young husband as being a 'sadist' and each of his advances as being primarily ones to inflict pain and torture. Despite the desperate attempts by Amadee to heal their relationship:

What is far can be near. What is withered can grow green again. What is separated can be reunited. What is no longer will be again.²⁴

The fact unfortunately remains that his attempts end in failure.

After the "doubles" recede and vanish from the stage, it was noticed that the same terror infused atmosphere continues in the play. The sub-conscious quest in the two however, does not disappear. Amadee continues to appeal to Madeleine about the finer quality of love:

Why don't we try to love each other, please, Madeline? Love puts everything right, you know it changes life²⁵

while Madeleine spurns his advances as being a load of “rubbish”. Any reawakening of the relationship was not only futile as seen but also, fatal in the emotional sense. Madeleine gives her final verdict as she states, “Love can't help people get rid of their troubles!” Keeping her declaration in mind and their unusual situation, the midnight hour finally approaches and the “silent witness of the past” as the corpse was deemed, had to be evicted.

The final conclusion of the scene is one where the symbolical implication became more explicit. Not only, did the corpse intrude into the living space and threatened to enlarge itself further out of the apartment, but the mushrooms symbolically attempt a similar feat reflecting the deathly, poisoned, decadent relationship of the couple. The mushrooms had mutated and grown enormous.

The eerie green light which lights up from the eyes of the corpse – a point of much discomfort for the couple, was no longer confined to the bedroom either. The light had filtered and proceeded like the corpse to the living room. Further both the manifestations were accompanied by “strange music” which gradually increased in volume from the corpse's bedroom. In fact as the playwright elucidated, that everything exuded “the mingled presence of horror and beauty”. The nightmare was far from

over. At this juncture what is noteworthy was the shift in the responses individually in the couple. Amadee though he proceeded in a robot-like manner while removing the corpse, was quite composed and “not frightened, because he was past fear”, unlike his wife. Madeleine on the other hand, was most unprepared for the moment of departure of the corpse. Presumably having personal guilt infused emotions regarding the separation from a lover of the past, Madeline on her part, seems terrified.

The repression of fear which had been prolonged in Madeline with the only exception being the brief encounter with the postman can be understood, as a camouflage of the strain she felt within. Madeleine had not only the collective guilt and consequences but deep within she had to deal with her own climactic feelings. The reality that the couples guilty secret was leaving forever, did not give her any relief. On the contrary coupled with the strain of removing “it” from the confines of the home without getting caught, was her intense internal agony. Her suffering which she refused to personally acknowledge as a result of being blind to her accountability in the marital collapse is projected onto Amadee thereby making her one of the most negative of the female characters of Ionesco.

The power of the immense upheaval she was personally facing culminated in somatic manifestations in her. Madeleine while the corpse was being removed began to experience severe palpitations in the chest.

The display was so severe that her “heartbeats seemed to shake the whole set”. Madeleine was thence, characteristically facing a typical ‘panic attack’ which psychologists state comes with high anxiety, feelings of dread which lead eventually to a full blown anxiety attack. Madeleine also caves in to the agonizing ordeal as she could barely tolerate the strain. The surroundings also mirror the inherent tension while the corpse advances from the bedroom outside the window down to the street. The plaster falls from the ceiling as the playwright notes:

This should give the impression that as the body...is pulled near the window, it is dragging the whole house with it and tugging at the entrails of the two principal characters.²⁶

The feat was accomplished. The corpse was removed but the dilemma was whether the crime could be concealed and the body be drowned in the river with no witnesses. Unfortunately, with the conclusion of this intermediary act finds, the strain still prolonged.

Two emotionally-powerful packed acts in this first full length play of Ionesco were applauded by critics, but the suspense still mounted whether in the final act, the disposal of the corpse would be achieved without difficulty. Greatly exhausted but resolved to complete the task Amadee dragged the corpse with painstaking endurance to the river Seine. However, this scene revealed that even though late, the Torco Square was teeming with life which was a problem for Amadee. But there

was no other alternative for him but to face the situation which he had tried to evade for fifteen years.

In this act Amadee is witnessed pulling the body by the legs onto the stage slowly, with great labor. Initially pleased that the Square was empty Amadee gradually encountered the various people loitering outside the brothel-bar and specifically interacting with an American soldier. However, with the soldier being slightly drunk he reacted to the corpse Amadee was dragging “without astonishment, as naturally as possible”, as if it was a friend presumably greatly intoxicated. The question however triggered from the deepest level of the consciousness in Amadee that the corpse was:

...a great misfortune, the tragedy of our life...the skeleton in our cupboard...You would'nt understand!²⁷

Amadee's response, to the soldier's question whether out of curiosity or suspicion was appropriate, as not only did the soldier fail to understand neither did he have any interest in Amadee's plight. Seeing Amadee with the corpse all he wanted to do was to extend a helping hand to ease the protagonist's predicament. Responding to the kindness expressed by the stranger, the play proceeds to another level with the protagonist revealing that he was a playwright, conscientious in his vocation. This was akin to another play by Ionesco namely, *Victims of Duty* (1953), which preceded *Amadee*, and dealt with an elaborate discourse about the problems of

theatre. In Ionesco's three act play, a similar yet brief, account was given by the protagonist which went beyond the academic exercise about theatre and focused on his personal quest as a playwright. He elucidated that he was "on the side of the living, against the dead", and is primarily an attack against 'nihilism' in favor of a new kind of 'humanism'.

The fact that his basic theme of the "living and the dead" was highly subjective and was, a focus of Amadee's personal need to live and surmount the death-like state he was compelled to experience daily. Furthermore, the factor of neo-humanism being more "enlightened than the old", according to the protagonist, revealed his own personal pursuit of progress and the establishment of an idyllic state. Whether these goals would be realized would have to be known, before the culmination of the play.

Aided by the soldier as the corpse was being pulled, a loud noise alerts Madeleine who called from offstage. However, as suggested by the American, Amadee's spinning of his body to progress faster with the corpse alerts a number of spectators from the bar, who appear to witness the situation. The recognition of Amadee by the Bar-Owner and "the piece of the incriminating corpse" causes the play to transcend the atmosphere of pathos and fear of the first two acts, to one of immense hilarity.

Almost slapstick in content, the play at this juncture proceeded to Amadee being chased by two policemen who had entered the scene but outcome was most unexpected. In Ionesco's words:

Suddenly a surprising thing happens. The body wound round Amadee's waist seems to have opened like a sail or a huge parachute; the dead man's head has become a sort of glowing banner, and Amadee's head can be seen appearing above the rear wall, drawn up by the parachute; then his shoulders, his trunk and his legs follow. Amadee is flying up out of reach of the policemen. The banner is like a huge scarf, on which the head of the dead man is drawn, recognized by the long beard etc.²⁸

The flight of Amadee brings a much disheveled and disturbed Madeleine on stage. Moreover, the encouragement and jousting of the crowd at Amadee provokes Madeleine to resort to psychological games of maternal concern regarding his physical exposure to the wind and chill, to one of alluring him with the mention that he could come home as, "the mushrooms have bloomed". But unfortunately it is to no avail as Amadee was past any return. And though Madeleine in her frustration expressed that his flight was not a state which could ever bring him 'up' in her estimation, her chiding is futile. Furthermore, Amadee's talent, his "genius" as a playwright, had been wasted and with his disappearance, the Bar Owner comments: "It's a bad day for literature". Madeleine was left in the end completely alone, Amadee had flown away finally beyond the trammels of any coercion, beyond existence, beyond literature. Amadee was ultimately free.

However, to elucidate what must be understood here is that the comic element which was provoked in such a play which was characteristic of several of the playwright's works, was that the humor suffused with a grave and pessimistic view about the human condition. It was more of a case of black humor. *Existenzangst* through the excitation of laughter delves deeply into the gloomy feeling of anxiety and dread and as a result, each development in the play, then focuses on such an atmosphere with intensity almost till the end. The agony meted to the characters, had compelled them to survive in a tomb-like atmosphere as already emphasized with no respite from the disquiet. As a result, the prolonged atmosphere had kept them in a condition of 'traumatic extension', nightmarish in context. Keeping this in perspective Schopenhauer's comment of 'dreams being a brief madness and madness a long dream' seems most suitable for the analysis of Ionesco's work. The pain infused in *Amadee* had its foundation in mental illness, which went beyond the physiological brain to the psychological inferences of the mind and such inputs had created immense mental discord. The combined frustrated conscience of the couple had kept them in a state of 'moral anxiety' which involved the need for punishment combined with the fear of punishment. Moreover, this terror induced the paranoid psyche to prevail and establish the 'anxiety dream' or nightmare conditioning

and as Professor J. Allan Hobson clarifies in his seminal book *The Dreaming Brain* (1989) that:

The five cardinal characteristics of dream mentation may also be seen in the hallucinations disorientations, bizarre thoughts, delusions and amnesias of patients with mental illnesses. These mental symptoms collectively constitute delirium, dementia, and psychosis. Dreaming could thus be the mental product of the same kind of psychological process that is deranged in mental illness...The study of dreams is the study of a model of mental illness.²⁹

The characteristic disarray of the psyche provoking madness and its manifestations, established the overflow of the dreaming/nightmare stage on to the reality stage with no discernment. The fearsome psycho-neurotic content had become an extreme form of *Existenzangst*.

...with Ionesco's other plays of the last two decades, the nightmare portrayed makes many allusions to the waking nightmare of the twentieth century existence.³⁰

The 'nightmare' induced by the agonized paranoid psyche, a victim of *Existenzangst* had 'to find a way out':

...worlds that Ionesco creates is bizarre and frightening, he holds out the hope that the human imagination, if freed can marvel at the astonishing fact of human existence in a fleeting world.³¹

The freedom which Amadee was finally made to experience was to pursue the "truth" through imagination as in that pure essence which correlated to Ionesco's personal vision about the contribution of the imaginative realm. Significantly too, another Absurd playwright, Vaclav Havel opined that:

Modern man must descend the spiral of his absurdity to the lowest point; only then can he look beyond it. It is obviously impossible to get around it, jump over it, or simply avoid it.³²

This search and “looking beyond” which all the Absurdists pursued would be finally revealed in the conclusive part of this thesis. From the chaotic fear induced agony, would dawn a moment of “arriving” characteristic of *The Chairs* when they reminisced and declared, “And then we arrived”.

Only when one had plunged to the depths and accepted one’s state could modern man reach a position where one could really ‘soar’. Amadee had transcended. Beyond all fear, limitations and death states, Amadee was finally liberated. Ionesco left the conclusion of the play open to debate, provoking whether each and every individual of the era of *Existenzangst* to set themselves free and get to a stage of enlightenment? Questioning everyman’s existential query he concluded with a poignant declaration that “It is not the answer that enlightens us, but the question.”³³

End Notes

- ¹ Hardin, C.H. (ed). *Aspects of Anxiety*. Toronto: Lippincott, 1965. Print. p. 9.
- ² "Fear, Degrees, Paranoia, Terror, Feeling, Perception, Emotion, Phobia..." Economic Expert. com. Wikipedia www.economicexpert.com/aSelf:confidence.html 27 June 2010.
- ³ Zax, Melvin & Emory. *Abnormal Psychology*. New York: Holt Rinehart & Winston Inc., 1972. Print. p. 316.
- ⁴ "Survivor Guilt in Holocaust Survivors and Their Children". Aaron Haas. California State University, Dominguez Hills, California. <http://www.Survivor%20Guilt%20m%20Holocaust%20_.html> 6 March 2002.
- ⁵ Mack, E. John. M.D. *Nightmares and Human Conflict*. Boston: Little Brown & Co. 1970, Print. p.93.
- ⁶ "Coaching; Paranoia and Paranoid Behavior". Mary Carruthers. 2009-2010. Soulwork.net: Solutions for Emotional Issues and Relationships Problems. <http://www.Soulwork.net/Sw_articles_eugene/paranoia.html> 1 February 2010.
- ⁷ "The Anti-Spiritual Victory in the Theatre of Ionesco". Leonard C. Pronko. *Modern Drama*, Vol. 2, No.2, May 1957. <<http://www.enotes.com/drama-criticism/Ionesco-eugene.html>> 5 March 2008.
- ⁸ Esslin, Martin. *The Theatre of the Absurd*. London: Penguin, 1968. Print. p.160.
- ⁹ Esslin, Martin. (Intro). *Absurd Drama*. U.K. Penguin, 1965. Print. p.28.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.* p.29.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.* p.31.
- ¹² Zax, Melvin & Emory. p. 316.
- ¹³ "Adam at Odds With Eve: Ionesco and the Woman's Mission." C.E.J. Dolamore. *Journal of European Studies*, Vol. 23, Issue 92, December 1993. <<http://www.questia.com/googleScholar.qst?docId=3002198967>> 18 May 2007.
- ¹⁴ "Adam at Odds With Eve: Ionesco and the Woman's Mission." C.E.J. Dolamore. *Journal of European Studies*, Vol. 23, Issue 92, December, 1993 <<http://www.questia.com/community/reviewsRatingsPage?docId=5002198967.html>> 18 May 2007.
- ¹⁵ Esslin. *Absurd Drama*. p.31.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.* p.43.
- ¹⁷ "A Collection of Short Works". Richard J. Corelli, M.D., Paulo Alto, California. 19 June 2010. <<http://www.stanford.edu/corelli/nightmares.html>> 7 May 2010.
- ¹⁸ Esslin. *The Theatre of the Absurd*. p. 235.
- ¹⁹ Esslin. *Absurd Drama*. p.47.
- ²⁰ Freud, Sigmund. *The Interpretation of Dreams*. New York: Avon Books, 1998. Print. p.41.
- ²¹ Esslin. *Absurd Drama*. p.55.

- ²² *Ibid.* p.56.
- ²³ *Ibid.* p.63.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.* p.76.
- ²⁵ *Ibid.* p.77.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.* p. 87.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.* p. 94.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.* p. 99.
- ²⁹ Alvaraz. A. *Night: An Exploration of Night Life, Language, Sleep and Dreams.* London: Vintage, 1995. Print.p.111.
- ³⁰ "Eugene Ionesco: Jacques or Obedience. Amadee." Anne Louise Bannon. City Garage Theatre. 18 February 1999. <<http://www.citygarage.org/past-productions/ourneys-among-the-dead.html>> 17th August 2009.
- ³¹ "Eugene Ionesco. Introduction: Full- Length Theatre Play." www.lucianabveit.com. Dreams, Fears, Reality vs Chicho. The 7 Sinners of Havenland. <<http://www.enotes.com/drama-criticism/Ionesco-eugene.html>> 6 December 2009.
- ³² "Existentialism and Theatre of the Absurd at the Realm of Existentialism." Katherine Eirmann.<<http://www.dividingline.com/private/Philosophy/Philosophers/Theatre/Theatre-of-the-Absurd.html>> 3 February 2010.
- ³³ "Brainy Quotes": Eugene Ionesco Quotes.18 quotations and quotes by Eugene Ionesco. [Brainyquotes.com](http://www.brainyquotes.com). May 2010. <<http://www.brainyquotes.com/quotes/e/authors/Eugene/Ionesco.html>> 7 March 2008.

Chapter-VI

CONCLUSION: *SATORI*

A real book must be the axe for the frozen sea in us.¹

Kafka

This bold declaration by Kafka, has been emphatically highlighted throughout this study of *Existenzangst*. However, of paramount importance was the fact that, the actual motive of the Absurdist writers was to transcend the gross, abnormal mind consciousness to a much higher mind. Hence, as Kafka confessed to Felix Bauer, his works, especially *The Metamorphosis* (1915), though being “infinitely repulsive”, was in truth the “axe for the frozen sea”. The “axe”, as apparent, becomes ultimately redemptive, functioning to invoke “higher consciousness”, proceeding beyond the ‘icy inertia’, to the fluidity of acceptance - a new birth.

Going beyond Kafka, the Absurdist specifically Ionesco, had a lot to elucidate on this lofty quest. The ‘shock methods’ utilized, by the Absurdist was primarily a tool to recapture the ‘authentic’ as one experiences. However, the aim was not one merely to expose the negative aspect. As already reviewed it was to go beyond the experiential level.

Although the turbulence of the twentieth century made it “the age of anxiety”, the final key note for a playwright like Ionesco, was not

necessarily so. The 'angst-ridden', 'absurd' age, was a period most productive of drastic change. One could be stirred to a state akin to enlightenment, finally releasing the individual from one's deep-seated trauma. As a result one became aware, that the bindings of *Existenzangst*, could ultimately be accepted and surpassed.

Keeping in perspective the psychological climate of the age, despite the prevalent anguish and memories of the horror amongst people, there were exceptions. Viktor Emil Frankl who survived the 'hell on earth' in Auschwitz, to become a leading pioneer in logotherapy which was basically a psycho-neurological therapeutic device:

It was due to his and others suffering in those camps that he came to his hallmark conclusion that even in the most absurd, painful and dehumanized situation, life has a potential meaning and that therefore even suffering is meaningful.²

Viktor Frankl's ordeal in Auschwitz became a boon. This psychotherapeutic system which he founded, was based on the belief that rather than 'power or pleasure' it is the striving to find a meaning in one's life that is the primary and most 'powerful' motivating and driving force in humans. With the foundation in the Greek word *logos* which meant 'meaning', Frankl's approach focused on the basic 'value' of suffering. This brought him close to the authenticity of the Absurdist. The dramatist's personal experiences along with their individual creative

pursuits worked collectively to understand the wisdom behind suffering and to supersede it.

Ionesco being not only a pioneer but an erudite spokesman for the Absurd genre clarified this mode of transcendence. He stated that his plays invoked the spirit of Zen. He specified too, that the method of the Zen Buddhists and that of the Theatre of the Absurd were similar.

To elucidate, he stated that the teaching methods of the Zen masters and their use of kicks and blows in reply to questions related to the nature of enlightenment and their setting of nonsense problems, closely resembled some of the procedures of the Theatre of the Absurd. The Absurd has basically unearthed one's placidity. It shook one from one's stupor or the 'frozen sea' in the individual, through the application of extreme methods. But no matter how bizarre the method, the purpose was effective. This 'method' finally fostered a stage of enlightenment.

Ionesco had declared:

To attack the absurdity (of the human condition) is a way of stating the possibility of non- absurdity...for where else would there be a point of reference? In Zen Buddhism there was no direct teaching, only the constant search for an opening, a revelation,...I feel that every message of despair is the statement of a situation from which everybody must freely try to find a way out.³

To elucidate further, the Eastern way of enlightenment the release from torments and catastrophes, is the method of Zen. Furthermore, Zen demands intelligence and will-power and transcending to the intense

inner growth. It was through Zen methods, that Man suddenly came face to face with a new perception of reality. No more a 'post war humanoid' individual, Man could holistically survive. More importantly as understood, Ionesco's works not only presented but demanded such a radical transformation in the 'Inner Man'.

Furthermore, the immediacy of the situation and the debasement as a result of the post war consciousness, made it mandatory for creative writers specially the Absurdists to not only provoke, but also to provide a change. As a result, their works were not the much condemned 'drawing-room type of comedies'. They had greater depth. The Theatre of the Absurd in conclusion hence, paved the way for the inner transformation of the 'everyman'.

Coupled with the seriousness of the theme, the Absurdists tried to reflect the residual damage done to Man especially in the area of the psyche. Furthermore, the playwright's aspiration especially from Ionesco's perspective was that Man should directly experience the reality of existence, the final truth. That 'reality' and was beyond the morbid and the apparently 'Absurd'. Transcending the damage, the individual would spontaneously be brought to the level of 'acceptance'. Finally, the individual through a kind of inner wisdom would then be able to survive.

Zen was an offshoot of Mahayana Buddhism. Furthermore, Zen characteristically came from the Sanskrit word *Dhyana* which meant the “meditative state”. This word was transliterated as *Chan* by the Chinese when Buddhism reached China from India. Finally this same tradition came to be called *Son* in Korea and *Zen* in Japan. However, the basic premise was that the system was about self-development. The experiential practice was one which helps one to see life directly and to act with wisdom and compassion. Zen ultimately, fostered the ability, to ‘live life’.

At this juncture it is important to understand what Wong Kiew Kit, the Grandmaster of the Shaolin Wahnam Kung Fu Institute elucidates in his book, *The Complete Book of Zen* (2001). He states that:

Although many people associate Zen with Buddhism, it is not exclusively a Buddhist practice. While Zen is spiritual, ...it transcends the physical, it is not religious.⁴

Whilst adhering to a number of basic Buddhist principles Zen transcended the religious aspect, to a more ‘universal cause’. The upliftment of humanity is the crux of Zen:

Zen is about living and about the acquirement of self awareness through living.⁵

The basic pursuit in Zen notably, was to intensely contact one’s ‘inner being’ without attachment to anything external or superficial, dialectical or logical. With such an experience then, one’s true nature and

original identity would emerge which was of paramount importance for the individual to survive. Relating this to Ionesco works, the method and the freedom to “find a way out”, could only be possible through Zen methods especially the Rinzai way.

This universal pursuit of Zen followed two methods namely the gradual ‘silent illumination’ or Soto method, or the more aforementioned popular and radical ‘public – case zen’ of the Rinzai school. However, both the paths pushed the individual to the limits of the mind to ‘awaken’ the Buddha Nature in the individual. Furthermore, the technique utilized was one which the renowned Zen scholar Griffis termed as “mind murder”, for beyond logic, the mind was prodded to proceed to the “inner mind”, the “intuitive mind” and henceforth, the -“Buddha”. This was the authentic state of the individual, which he or she was pushed beyond the edge of the rational, to recognize and survive.

Furthermore, the Zen Masters or Roshi’s as they were called, compelled the individual to ‘kill’ the mind and to proceed beyond thought to the ‘non thought’, to finally realize the state of ‘awakening’ – the authentic self, more accurately and symbolically termed, as the Buddha Mind. Legend goes:

... that once, the Zen monk Darnei asked Master Mazu, “ What is the Buddha?” Mazu answered, “Mind is Buddha.”⁶

This historical interaction of asking and answering between Roshi and monk, termed as Mondo, clarifies the fact that Zen went beyond the 'Buddha' as a person, to the 'Buddha' as the quality of the "Awakened One" present in all humans. Interestingly, Sheldon B. Kopp's book on psychotherapy incorporates a title which comes as not merely an instruction but also a warning from a Zen Master to his disciple: *If You Meet the Buddha on the Road, Kill Him* (1990).

Hence, it is clearly understood that Zen discouraged any dependency on any being and even asserted that one should "kill", or rather obliterate any awareness of such an existence. The Zen focus was such where one should ultimately and exclusively empower oneself and live the Buddhahood in completeness and in finality- from within. Furthermore, the most important aspect was the assertion which the realization established that "I have been complete and perfect from the very beginning."⁷

Hence, life with all its intricacies and complexities was also perfect. The individual would finally comprehend and eventually leads a quality existence. Ultimately, the pursuit of Zen – consciousness, implied the transcendence of *Existenzangst* to "Buddha Existenz". The final resolution of the existential queries of the individual and the trauma, leads to one of the "Awakening" and "Inner Empowerment", all encompassing

the “Buddha Mind. This understanding was the predominant learning in Ionesco’s works, which in keeping with the lessons imparted through this Japanese – spiritual practice.

However the process was definitely not easy and, certain techniques were used to initiate such an experience of “illumination”. Drastic in nature, the Zen practice followed instruction through the mode of meditation which was termed as *Zazen* and more importantly, the utilization of the *Koans*. While sitting meditation adhered to *Zazen*, enabling the student to focus and go beyond passions and excessive worldly attachments. Moreover, sitting meditation also fostered the *Kensho-godo*, popularly known as *Satori* awakening. Essentially it enabled the practitioner to see into their ‘true nature’ and also, the ‘ultimate nature of the Universe’. This was the realization of the ‘Supreme Way’ or, the Pure Buddha Nature, which was the final pursuit of Zen.

The other goal of reaching the Buddha Mind in Zen was through the use of “spiritual puzzles” which were known as *Koans*:

A Koan is a nonlogical statement, question, or anecdote, most often an exchange between master and student...A Koan is a means for the student to confront the self, to bypass logical, conceptual thinking. (The first Koan classically in Zen would be) “What is your original face? The face you had before your parents were born? ...You know the sound of two hands clapping – What is the sound of one hand clapping?”⁸

The *Koan*, was a practice where rational thinking was abandoned in pursuit of enlightenment especially, sudden enlightenment. *Koans* were composed with a specific purpose to force the pupil not to depend on rational thought. The paradoxical content would drive the pupil “mad”. Mad enough to stimulate the higher intuitive mind and hence, to usher in the *satori* mind. This basically, was the essence of the Zen practice.

However, in order to empower oneself to be graced with the *Satori* mind, one had to be an ideal recipient. As a result, the disciple was guided towards the paradoxical content would drive the pupil “mad”. Mad, enough to stimulate the ‘the power of the empty bowl’ philosophy, where the individual was expected to de-clutter one’s head of thoughts pertaining to the logical, survival worldly type of mind. Hence, only when the pupil was in a state where he could mentally distance himself could he connect to himself and get an insight into the universal truth, as the enlightened state of *Satori*.

It has been stated that a pupil once sought a Zen Master in order to be enlightened. The Master invited him to have a cup of tea when he started pouring the tea into a cup, he did not stop. The Master continued to pour even though the cup was full and the beverage was spilling down from the cup on to the floor. When the pupil remarked about what was happening, the Master remarked that it was impossible for him to instruct

the pupil unless he had 'emptied out his mind', to a state of "positive emptiness". This was the criteria for a true seeker of *Zen Satori*. Bereft of any mental debate and dialectical thought, only then was the pupil in a position to recognize his true Buddha Nature and live in the pure reality. The process of this intense cleansing would then, bear fruit.

However, as aforementioned, different methods were utilized by the *Roshi's*, but the Rinzai 'public-case' Zen with its sensational techniques, gained great exposure due it's unconventional mode of instruction. Besides, the mode was not merely through the questions posed by the *Roshi's*, but the creation of queries in the mind of the pupil himself. This inner questioning was traditionally called 'Great Doubt' and related to the intense search within the mind to access an opening to the higher consciousness of the evolved mind. Zen assumes the fact that:

Great Doubt, Great Awakening.
Little Doubt, Little Awakening.
No Doubt, No Awakening.⁹

Keeping this in perspective, it now becomes perfectly clear why Ionesco, spoke about the predominant importance of 'questions' rather than the 'answers', for enlightenment. Additionally, it was the great 'psychological earthquake' of the *Roshi's* and the Absurdist's which enabled man to emerge from one's littleness, to a state of magnitude. Shaken to one's inner core, the questions whether being the 'little' ones

tinged in self pity and delusion, or the 'greater' philosophical implications were all geared to a purpose which the Roshi's and sensitive writers like Ionesco, utilized.

As has been apparent throughout this thesis, the former trait of questioning brought the individual to the point of a psychological collapse. For the existential probing one pursued, became exhausting as ones quest lead to scant solutions and even if they did, the result was not only dissatisfactory, but increasingly traumatic. The agony of the ordeal resulted in acute emotional fear, and *Existenzangst* became a psychological reality.

As a result, it was inevitable that the psycho- somatic manifestations in the individual were warped and the Absurd playwrights did justice by exposing this malady. Unfortunately for some time critics and audiences were hostile towards the Absurdists and even attacked them with the judgmental attitude that even a playwright like Ionesco was a writer of 'nonsense' plays. This was as superficial as the opposite was true of Ionesco. This thesis would not only reveal the great genius of this playwright but also the tremendous influence he held for future generations. Most importantly too, this discourse will establish the intense vision which characterized a playwright like Ionesco. *Essential Zen*, outlines the following that:

We all tend to possess, accumulate, store and consume, trying to have as much influence and control as possible in our daily lives. This produces a great deal of anxiety, which in turn creates a longing for freedom from such a mode of clinging. Sooner or later we may come to understand that we are free when we are not preoccupied, that we receive more by letting go. This is the dynamics of non possession which is an essential part of the creative process in the Zen world.¹⁰

This cited 'storing and accumulation' would thereby transcend the presumed worldly store of material assets, to that of the genuine Zen demand, of the wealth of internal empowerment. All existence being in a state of flux thereby, the only quality which could be retained hence was that of the inner evolution of the individual's nature. This was not merely the mainstay of Buddhism, but was also a predominant 'Universal Truth'. Specifically, in Zen it was related to any form of attachment. The aspect of 'desire and craving leading to suffering' as clarified by the Buddha, had to be seriously checked. In conclusion, the individual was compelled to 'grow up'. The 'Great Doubt' now required the 'Great Awakening'. Thereafter man, enlightened and mature as an individual conscientiously forebore and accepted their individual and personal situations.

This compulsion to radically outgrow one's inner immaturity was not merely a pursuit of the Zen practitioner, but one which Ionesco consistently sought in himself. In fact, at a critical juncture, the psychological probing of his own psyche due to dark environmental factors left him in a state of confusion. He implores:

Since I find the world incomprehensible I am waiting for someone to explain it to me.¹¹

Ionesco, as witnessed, while clinging on to the thought patterns and the psychological conditionings fostered by the war, still persisted with questions while searching for the wisdom behind the agony meted out to mankind during and after the war. However, he finally did comprehend the situation and in the course of transcending the *Existenzangst*, experienced his own personal *Satori*. In *Fragments of a Journal* (1968), he related an experience which he had in his youth while walking through a small town on a sunny day when all of a sudden he stated that:

...the whole town was transformed. Everything became at once profoundly real and profoundly unreal. That was exactly what happened : unreality mingled with reality, the two becoming closely and indissolubly interconnected... an overwhelming joy rose up from deep within me, warm and luminous itself, an absolute presence a presentness. I said to myself that it was "truth", without knowing how to define this truth.¹²

Coincidentally this experience of "presentness", which the playwright related and yet could not expound in detail, was the basic requirement of the Zen mind. To elucidate, Zen practitioner, Peter Matthiessen's experience with Soen Roshi expounded these given details:

Question: "Should I struggle to empty out my mind?"
 Answer: "There is no such thing as 'empty mind'. There is only present mind."¹³

The profound experience of Ionesco cited above, enabled him to be emancipate himself from the illusion of the logically constructed 'self' to the pure 'self' of the basic Zen query of what one's, "Original Face"

looked like before one's parent's were born. Ionesco connected with his pure nature and hence, the playwright not only empowered himself but also empowered others. This was the consummate destination of not only his vision, but also the essence of his plays. Ionesco felt:

The writer's path towards others, he believes can only start with the search of the Self, with the investigation of the perplexities, the obsessions, of the most personal and profound dilemmas, used as a means of communication and, in an ideal manner, of the communion with others.¹⁴

A strong feeling of empathy towards the plight of man, led Ionesco on to stage the "inner drama", to glean the wisdom of existence. Furthermore, the awakening he sought for humanity was through this Eastern Way as it related to him in a very personal way. Evidently, even the aspect of his name phonetically coincided with this inner truth. The name "Eugene" in Romanian, was pronounced "Euzen", presumably, a sub-conscious leaning was fulfilled through his interest with the Zen universal mode which made him holistically complete. This interest in Zen finds its way into almost all his plays.

Ionesco, *The Chairs*, met with scant attention and praise after its debut in Paris in 1952. The general impression was that it was too strange and a critic in Ruby Cohn's *From Desire to Godot: Pocket Theatre of Postwar Paris* (1987) as already stated, wondered about the guests being represented by 'chairs'. They were left confused as to whether this was a

symbol of the author, a dream of the Old Man or even a financial economy. However, Ionesco unabashed, with his wife and daughter often being the only spectators in the theatre, made the profound remark “If my failures continue in this scale I will certainly be a success.”¹⁵

Coincidentally a success it became when in 1956 this same play was revived in Paris with accolades and was deemed as one of Ionesco’s masterpieces.

However, despite the play’s evident psychological disarray in the characters there was a deeper underlying message to be revealed. Notably, Ionesco echoes the universal intent of the Roshi, when the Old Woman states to the Old Man:

You’ve got a message...It’s your sacred duty....The whole universe is waiting just for you.¹⁶

Ironically, the subjective overtones of the playwright’s thoughts were greatly evident in the characters of his own creation. The Old Woman’s remark reflected Ionesco’s basic quest throughout his life and interestingly it also asserts the effects of his universal mission. It maintained his position as one of the greatest playwright’s of the Absurd genre but as one of the most influential dramatists of the contemporary theatre.

Textually relating to the play again, the intense damage meted to the ‘Aged’ ones, had kept them in a time warp for seventy five years of

married life. Hence, as already clarified, what basically cemented their relationship was through the recollection of memory specifically, the historical illusions of French history. However, when one co-relates the play to the Zen mind, a remark by the Old Woman to her husband when he remarks that he did not like the months of the year becomes insightful. She stated thus: "There's no other kind at the moment."¹⁷ Ironically and unknown to her she spontaneously remarks about an important aspect of the 'Universal Truth', which was emphatically stressed in the Zen practice.

In Zen, 'time' has been given special importance. Transcending the Absurd the "great black bridge of time" as mentioned in *The Chairs*, the essential message in the play was that - time stood still. In the stillness, where the past or future, the days, months or years were transcended, time itself became superfluous leading to the ultimate pursuit of Zen when:

...nothing matters other than living at the very moment with full intensity and joy.¹⁸

Living in the "Sacred Now" was the pinnacle of one's entire existence and that was the final truth of Zen *Satori*.

The approach towards *Satori* required a diligent and serious approach. Ionesco wrote for a purpose that basically focused on helping post war Man to understand the value of suffering and to transcend it.

Such a task seemed unsurmountable, almost as endless as Camus' hero Sisyphus' rolling a boulder uphill perpetually. However, such an endeavor though challenging, was a task which Ionesco was willing to undergo. Keeping in mind the perplexing, ridiculous, 'absurd' nature of existence, Ionesco utilized the ideal mode of 'awakening' notably, the *Koan* technique was a perfect method.

The "strangeness" of the situations portrayed in Ionesco's plays, depicted the intense suffering that Man was compelled to undergo under the tyranny of circumstances. *The Chairs* offers no respite from the pain. In fact, the protagonists are made to undergo such trauma where they collapse and take the final plunge out of the windows and die. Such a deed was defeatist, as the central tenet of existentialism was that man's condition in the universe is 'absurd', and the only way to combat this meaninglessness was to accept one's situation. Suicide was a totally escapist act. However, considering the absurd psyche, especially whilst analyzing this play, perhaps it contravened such judgment. As it has been clearly emphasized one is aware that the seat of Zen thought accommodated paradoxes. *The Chairs* hence, adheres to the Zen principles and as stressed throughout this thesis provokes more questions and provides an alternative viewpoint. To elucidate, the Old Man during his interaction with Miss Lovely states: "Perhaps there are flowers

coming up through the snow.”¹⁹ (*The Chairs*, p.141) Additionally, prior to their “supreme sacrifice”, he addressed the invisible crowd and:

...the left-over scraps of humanity, from which good soup can still be made.²⁰

Thus, the “*Angepain*”, translated as ‘Angel bread’, presumably refers to the biblical ‘manna from heaven’ heralding a state of acceptance. Humanity could still be saved and made into according to the realization of the Old Man of “good soup”. Furthermore the numerous references to water and the final death of the ‘Ancients’ thereof, cannot be equated to the above cited, existentialist defeatist death. In its essence there is profound wisdom being imparted by the playwright. Keeping in mind the belief of Hopi Indians of the Turtle Islands, whose philosophy goes:

“Water has a spirit. Water floods around the boat protecting and holding your conscious and unconscious selves...water cleanses the physical body, the mind, emotions and the spirit. Tears clean the soul. Bathe in it, drink lots of it, do not take it for granted”.²¹

The attempt of logic of trying to “save the world”, the peace conference of the Old Man and Semiramus to all appearances, failed. However, Ionesco’s ploy of the “glaucous sound of bodies striking water” was not meant to demean the endeavor of the Ancients. On the contrary it challenges one’s mind in the typical *Koan* tradition with the query about the Old Man and Semiramus – Did they actually die as failures with their “mission accomplished”? Or rather, did they actually transcend their personal schizophrenic trauma to bathe in the healing calm of water and

achieve their “awakening”? Hence, if water is life, water had ultimately, rejuvenated the existence of the elderly by giving them a new level of survival. As stated, Ionesco’s conclusion, left one in the stillness to introspect and be ‘internally alive’ with the endnote from the “Chairs” themselves when the curtains fell and slowly ended the stage performance; laughter emanated from the “invisible audience” of the quasi – inanimate conference invitees. Hence, in support of the Zen system Ionesco intelligently understood the significance. As Conrad Hyers states:

To laugh is a sign of sanity...the cosmic is deliberately used to break up concepts, to release tensions and to teach what cannot be taught in words.²²

The nonsensical absurd situation Ionesco incorporated in completeness when nothing else remains except liberated laughter. This laughter significantly, restores one’s psychological equilibrium and makes one survive with acceptance. Hence, *The Chairs*, finally, contributed in its own unconventional way to usher in Zen Awakening and establish a state of *Satori*. *The Chairs*, remains the highest example of tragic drama, when one considers the playwright’s utility and success with the Zen procedure. Similar examples can be found in other plays of Ionesco.

The Lesson was received by the Parisian audience with perplexity and disdain. Yet, the brilliance of the play was not overshadowed by prejudice. A significant comment on the play revealed the fact that:

This potent “Comic Drama” has the power to frighten and delight as only Absurd plays can. A cocktail of violence – psychological and physical – and comedy that ranges from screwball to inky black, the play is fresh and relevant today as its premier 55 years ago.²³

While instigating a sense of horror, this play exposed the very nature of man to mankind. Coming as a forerunner to *The Rhinoceros* (1959), Ionesco’s one-act play *The Lesson*, was a very penetrating work. Ionesco had already apprised his critics about the pain he felt while witnessing an old man being kicked by a young soldier in boots in Romania. This experience had taken place when the playwright was much younger but the memory could never be eradicated. Furthermore, the experience of that specific ‘witnessing’ aroused the loathing he felt for the Nazi’s throughout his life.

The Rhinoceros, was written as a direct and powerful symbolical exposure of the Nazi atrocity and the aftermath of revolutions in general, for it questioned the ensuing peace. Ionesco blatantly stated:

The more you make revolutions, the worse it gets. Man is driven by evil instincts that are often stronger than moral laws.²⁴

Hence, Ionesco in the role of the ‘conscience for mankind’, revolutionized the psyche of post war man in an innovative way, he

presented the basic truth. Furthermore, considering the fact that truth is never tactful and consoling as it appears on the surface hence, it shook one's inner core, typifying the *Rinzai Roshi's* system of the *Koan*. The playwright as a result, projected one of the most terrifying spectacles of horror in the character of the Professor.

The deluded state of man could not prolong a stay in the comfort-zone of denial. Ionesco made sure that post war man had to come face to face and meet his other 'nature'. As already apprised earlier, the sadomasochistic fantasy was in truth a replay of the holocaust and the behavior of the Nazi's in *The Lesson*. Ionesco sought basically to authenticate what had transpired in the War specifically, of the quality of evil exuded from superior intelligence, which was a reality which Ionesco understood only too well.

One had to consider what makes a Hitler? Being aware that no one of average mental acumen could ever qualify, the Professor was portrayed by Ionesco on par with the 'evil genius', the Fuehrer. Hannah Ardent, a survivor of the Holocaust made a pertinent comment about the psyche of the Nazi's specifically, that often they went through the process of "doubling" where a new self took shape that adapted to the evil environment and the evil became part of self. Such a comment was applicable even to the war survivors as has been seen in the introductory

portion relating to the psychological analysis of *The Lesson* in this thesis. However, from the perspective of the playwright it had a special Zen purpose as will be dwelt upon shortly.

Referring to the Nazi 'Angel of Death', Dr Joseph Mengele, his former physician comments:

Without Auschwitz, he would probably have kept his destructive potential under control. In ordinary times, Mengele could have been a slightly sadistic German professor.²⁵

This quality and particularly such an inferred academic profession related to Ionesco's Professor, additional observations of the Nazi's coincided with the character's persona in the play.

If sets of Semite twins who were imprisoned in the concentration camps and experimented on by Mengele during the Holocaust were of the opinion that Mengele was a gentle, affable man who befriended them and gave them chocolates and even transcended to the level of a 'father figure', the older ones more were perceptive, recognized his kindness as deception. If many Germans regarded Hitler as a:

...true gentleman, women adored him, children loved him. His character was very decent, he would not curse or allow any bad behavior.²⁶

The comment testifies to the mercurial character of this diabolical figure. This trait was an obvious and glaring one in Ionesco's Professor. The academician embodied complete evil in his multifarious ways and

the complexity he indirectly conveyed as he clarified to his young student: "...but you will learn that one has to be prepared for anything".²⁷

Ionesco had a poignant message for the spectators when he specified through the Professor that mathematics was "therapy", the play *The Lesson* itself carved out the same function.

Textually the Professor emphasized to the Pupil that:

Integration alone is not enough. Disintegration is essential too. That's what life is. And philosophy. That's science, progress, civilization.²⁸

The disintegrated aspect of the psyche has already been dealt with. But Ionesco focused upon the therapeutic aspect.

Ionesco was aware that a play as shocking as this and many more he wrote later had a cathartic effect leading to a cure. This being essentially, a *Koan* situation, Ionesco progressed with the diligence of the *Roshi* in hitting the disciple on the head with a stick, when he enquired what 'enlightenment' was. The method used by Ionesco, did not vary much from the Rinzai Zen teaching techniques. In fact the playwright upheld the Eastern "sudden enlightenment" method. What Ionesco was basically promoting was the method of Zen:

When the mind is all stirred up, all things are stirred up. When the mind is not stirred up there is nothing stirring and there is no name.²⁹

Basically the paradox was that the mind was not words, but the mind was not independent of words. Thus, the mind was revealed in

words but cannot be identified with it. The popular analysis of *The Lesson*, had focused exclusively on linguistic aspect Ionesco was aware that the quest of Zen meant transcendence from thought, and word to a state of the 'empty mind' and thereafter, to the 'full mind', 'full' with respect to the 'inner awakening' which required no label nor name. Hence, the focus of the play was towards the realization of the 'higher mind', leading to empowerment.

Evil becomes the final aspect of the Professor, and keeping this in mind truth can be very disturbing and Ionesco deliberately provoked man to witness the agonizing holocaust past in the play in order to transcend to the 'Buddha Awakened Nature' of perfection. Keeping the name and persona of Hitler in mind a lot of information can be conveyed especially in the form of a lexigram. Technically a lexigram relates to the mystical property of words. The lexigram decodes hidden messages in words, titles, from letters in the words that convey a deeper meaning than the original word. For example the name Adolph Hitler conveyed:

Hitler – Lord of Life; Foe of Hate; Lord of Hate; Foe of Life. With so much power in his hands Hitler obviously had a choice, and he made it.³⁰

The death of the Pupil in this play ushered in yet another student at the end of *The Lesson* – the anticipated 41st student to face her death. The reality being too simple and too painful left the audience in shocked and

silenced finally alerted and aware, with no questions left, thereby, invoking the state of *Satori* in modern man.

Ionesco, keeping in mind Hitler's actual potential left the destined 'choice' in the hands of the audience or the reader. Ironically, in modern parlance "The Final Solution" was in the "Awakening" of the 'conscience of mankind', and to establish *Satori*, which for Roshi Dogen was:

The foundation for a magnificent edifice of perfected character and personality of the spiritually developed individual, the man of moral virtue and the all – embracing compassion and wisdom.³¹

Hence, Ionesco provoking the individual to activate their intuitive mind fostered the establishment of the 'higher consciousness' bereft of internal strife, an acceptance in their daily lives of *Satori*. As clarified, Zen ceases to be a practice and merges with the ongoing Life Experience purifying the Mind leading to Enlightenment. Ionesco erudite and compassionate gave mankind the experience of the 'ultimate Lessons' and emotion in living the quality life.

Furthermore the simplicity of the Zen mind makes it very difficult for mankind with its pre-conceived opinions and emotional clutter. All this has to be de-conditioned and the mind has to be exposed to the 'Pure State of the Mind and Being' which in Japanese has been called *Shoshin* or "Beginners Mind":

The Mind of a Beginner has Infinite Potential. The Mind of an "expert" in contrast has none until such a person realizes this, and is ready and willing to become a non-expert. Beginners Mind is... that an

aspirant approaches Zen with Mind of a new born child. No other approach will do - it is an absolute perquisite.³²

What is noteworthy at this point is the aspect of *Shoshin* is essential for our existence. Hence his play *Exit the King*, Ionesco presented a fundamental lesson on finiteness and death. A famous Zen Koan in the 13th century by the Japanese Zen Master Bunan contains the following instruction:

Die while you're alive and be absolutely dead. Then do whatever you want: it's all good.³³

Ionesco's *Exit the King* was inspired by a childhood obsession with death when he believed one could avoid being sick and live forever. Thus the play was basically written as a kind of a lesson in death and dying. During an interview with Claude Bonnefoy in the year 1966 he confessed that:

Exit the King was composed when I was ill and frightened of death...I told myself that one could learn to die, that I could learn to die, that one can also help other people to die. This seems to be the most important thing we can do, since we're all of us dying men who refuse to die. This play is an attempt at an apprenticeship in dying.³⁴

To elucidate further, Ionesco did confess that his motive was to aid people accept their mortal state. The first German and Romanian translators of the play expressed their gratitude to Ionesco and said that the play "helped them" understand and accept their terminal cancerous state. Coincidentally, they both died soon after, but with fortitude having imbibed the wisdom of *Exit the King*.

Additionally, Professor Mircea Eliade, a lifelong friend of the playwright stated that when she met him in Romania she observed, that Ionesco was interested in Eastern spiritual texts specifically, the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* (12th cent. A.D.) and the *Brhadaranyaka Upanishad* (31st cent. B.C.). Especially pertinent to the playwright was the latter's message:

From delusion lead me to Truth.
From darkness lead me to Light.
From death lead me to immortality.³⁵

It helped him to understand his own basic mortal situation too, after comprehending the basic message and quest in the *Upanishad*. As a result he had enough inner tenacity to pursue the wisdom of death objectively and live bereft of fear. Ionesco was sufficiently empowered to plunge into a detailed study and comprehension of the *Bardo Thodol* or the *Tibetan Book of the Dead* as it was commonly termed.

This Tibetan masterpiece was fundamentally a preparation not exclusively for death, but the 'art of dying' as also the 'art of living'. Thus 'life and death', were not exclusively separate states but integrally, a spontaneous flow from the other. Hence, the Tibetan path encouraged an awareness of one's finiteness and the *Bardo Thodol*, was of pristine importance for the individual to recall the wisdom as it was understood,

with the awareness that the moment of death was a time of unsurpassed insight and supreme enlightenment. The book specifically instructed:

You can achieve Buddhahood, by hearing, remembering and meditating on and being one with these teachings and with what you experience after death...realize your true self and have great strength after death...these teachings are the very essence of Truth...Even if you hear them once, even if you do not understand them, you will be able to remember them in the Bardo, for memory there is nine times clearer.³⁶

At this juncture it becomes imperative to clarify to what the *Bardo* actually refer. The title of the Tibetan book is also significant, *Bardo Thodol* does not refer to death as such rather, *Bardo* meant a “in between state”, an interval or transition that the consciousness has after death, during the interval between death and rebirth and also the present state of life. *Thodol* on the other hand, meant “liberation through understanding” and collectively, six main *Bardo* states were specified namely, three during life and three after death. To elaborate:

A single span is itself a Bardo state, a transitional zone in a large cycle of rebirths. Dreams are Bardo states that occur...in the interval between waking and falling asleep and waking; feelings of uncertainty, paranoia, and delusion are sometimes grouped with dreams on a looser interpretation of this second Bardo state. A meditative trance is a third type of Bardo state, an intermediate zone between ordinary consciousness and enlightened awareness.³⁷

Furthermore, the state called the *Chikai Bardo*, was the experience of the death point where one was exposed firstly, to the “light” of “formlessness” after death, which is then accompanied by the *Chonyid Bardo* a state, where one gets visions of Buddha’s and deities which are

in truth but a projection of the mind's own consciousness, involving thus a tension with the very mind itself. The soul thenceforth is advanced to the *Sidpa Bardo* state, which has been termed the most desperate stage involving the compulsion of the mind to face a host of hallucinations especially of frightful nature. This state is one of realization and rebirth ushering the *Bardo*'s to the waking state. This stage can also be one of final liberation. However, the *Bardo Thodol* stresses that due to the fact that:

...the weaknesses attributed to the dead are all experienced by the living as well, a person learning to traverse the Bardo states of death will learn to navigate better the Bardo experience of life as well.³⁸

To note, the great empowerment that this sacred work imparted, was of utmost importance not only to Ionesco, but also to the message he was transmitting through his plays. Hence, when the playwright's critics failed to take notice of the last part of *Exit the King*, Ionesco in a conversation with Laure Riese remarked:

They should have noticed that there are analogies to be found in the 'initiative' death rites of the Tibetans.³⁹

Tibetan thought fundamentally upheld various states of life and death and did not believe in negation, but rather in the corpus of freedom. This approach was what Ionesco was emphasizing that one should be schooled in death not as a preparation of the life hereafter but more

importantly, in setting oneself free from fear and focus on the liberation from death.

Akin to Bunan's statement Mankind had to understand that consciousness of death in life meant transcendence from the world whilst in the world itself. It was the ultimate experience of total freedom. Moreover, the absurd behavior of the regent in *Exit the King* was an exposure of man and the 'everyman' in Berenger and the aspect of the crippling nature of fear, as the king himself lamented: "I am the dying agony of all."⁴⁰

The aftermath of the prevalent war scenario left man in an acutely state of death consciousness. Ionesco sincerely wanted a change. Thus, he presented a mirror image of the psyche of post war man as a shock tactic to bring about a change. Ionesco basically wanted the post war man empowered and in an enlivened condition. This was the Rinzai technique he utilized to enlighten man and foster an 'awakening', and establish a state of "*satori*".

The passage of time and the moment of death approaching, after prolonged attempts by the regent to cling on to his normal functions, the maid Juliette perceptively states: "He knows what not knowing means"⁴¹ (*ETK.*, p.47) The real implications of such a statement rests on the fact that Berenger had gone beyond the state of contraries, in fact he had

advanced to the “void”. Primarily, the “void” was basically the state that the Zen practitioner aspired to live and experience.

Thereafter, at the finale of the play one has already become aware how the Elder Queen Margeurite, is finally left alone with Berenger to enable him to surrender in the *Shoshin* mind and cross over to the ‘world beyond’. Her comments are revelatory:

Was there once a world, were you ever alive? ...Up, up you go. Higher, up again, up you go,...still higher, higher, higher,...now let me have your right arm...your chest,..There you are, you see. Now you’ve lost your power of speech, there’s no need for your heart to beat, no more need to breathe. ⁴¹

The final “exit” reveals the quality of existence of post war man. Primarily like Margeurite, Ionesco’s task was to guide mankind to go beyond concepts and percepts into ‘nothingness’. When such an experience of total death manifests then one to understand what was “true seeing” and above all, “the eternal seeing”. With the ‘completeness’ in the ‘nothingness’ thereafter, which implies the:

...breakthrough of the mind,...the universal unity of reality which encompasses the self and the cosmos is experienced.⁴²

The experience was not exclusively Berenger’s alone, for Ionesco through *Exit the King*, was attempting a shift in the psyche of man, to a state of ‘higher consciousness’. This “consciousness” transcended to the “universal percipient” which was all inclusive and hence, the necessary requirement was the de-conditioning of the old individual to the final

Shoshin state. Under such circumstances then only, was it possible for the ‘universal seeing’, where one went beyond the Buddha mind to the Universal Essence and one could finally, or genuinely experience the *Satori* realm.

However, Ionesco’s task did not only lie there. His expansion of consciousness which embraced the “all” was profoundly creative:

The worlds that Ionesco creates is bizarre and frightening, he holds out the hope that the human imagination, if freed can marvel at the astonishing fact of human existence in a fleeting world.⁴³

Thus, keeping in perspective the last case study of his plays in this thesis, one must understand the deeper implications of the playwright’s creativity and more specifically, his quest. Ionesco stated on the occasion of the World Theatre Day on the 27th of March 1976 that:

Truth is to be found in the imagination. The theatre of imagination is the theatre of genuine truth and is genuinely documentary...The imagination cannot lie. It reveals our psychology our abiding or passing anxieties, the concerns of man in every age and of the present time, the depths of the human soul.⁴⁴

The “depths of the human soul” was explored by the playwright eruditely and within the capacity of a visionary wherein Ionesco was perceptive about the transformation of the psyche of the ‘everyman’.

The journey towards death has been focused with great insight in *Exit the King*. However, death consciousness presents another world view with *Amadee* or *How to Get Rid of It*. The primary concern for the playwright was to uncover the abyss of the hidden mind, unmasked the

hidden in the everyman. Ionesco's basic quest was to spur the post war psyche to make peace with the memory of the War and the most effective method he could think of was to expose the sickness, the absurdity in its completeness and thereby bring about a therapeutic and cathartic calm.

Amadee, focuses on death like the previously referred play, but in this work it was not on one's own mortality, another aspect of death which is seen primarily in human relationships. But as the playwright intuitively declared in the 1976 address, 'truth was in the imagination' and the imagination was 'frightening' and yet, it was the actual fact of life. As clearly understood, the insecurities of one's emotional links compelled man, to take certain measures without really comprehending the consequences. This unfortunately led to repentance later. However, in this play it progressed beyond simple guilt to the extreme manifestation of 'guilt' in the area of fear culminating in the Paranoid. Furthermore, relating this emotion to the everyman, *Existenzangst* has already revealed the widespread malaise of fear and the breakdown of the mind, but the intent of the playwright was not that simplistic. Ionesco had a lot more to convey to uplift the world.

In *Le point du depart* (1964) Ionesco had clarified that:

Two fundamental states of consciousness are at the root of all my plays...These two basic feelings are evanescence on the one hand, and heaviness on the other...of the unreal transparency of the world, and of its opaqueness...but all this can be euphoric; anguish is suddenly

transformed into liberty ... this state of consciousness is very rare to be sure.⁴⁵

Ionesco's observation of the dual states and the dialectical reasoning common to man had to be transcended. As a result the situation in this dark "comedy in three acts" had to be surmounted and as one of the greatest critics of the Absurd, Esslin, termed it a "comedy of liberation". The "euphoric" state had to be realized and as the playwright stated, 'anguish' had to be 'transformed into liberty'.

However, Ionesco was also greatly aware of the state of consciousness of post war man and was perceptive to the colossal task he had ahead of him, to expose the "transparency" or the purity of the world within man, which once again, related to the Zen pursuit. As already revealed in the detailed psychological analysis of the play earlier the concluding part in *Amadee* too shows us Amadee's wife Magdeline, imploring her husband to come down as he was floated in the air with the corpse who had transmuted into a balloon. She cried:

Amadee you can come home, the mushrooms have bloomed...the mushrooms have bloomed....⁴⁶

Unfortunately her cries were not heeded and Amadee floated away towards to liberty.

However, despite the apparent termination of the relationship of the couple, the aspect of the mushrooms blooming has a special significance.

It implied the dawn of a new consciousness. Post War man made to witness the 'paranoia' in the characters and be in a state of a 'suspension of disbelief' could no longer prolong the delusion related to their individual lives.

The Truth naked in its essence, disturbed the psyche to the very core of these war survivors as it stirred the memory of the intense *existenzangst* they had been coerced to undergo. Yet, the effect was also a resolution and an understanding of their present state, for the "unreal transparency of the world". They finally knew the reality of what their fellowmen had undergone and the apparently fictitious element of the plays became a mirror image of themselves.

Provoking the ultimate question whether these witnesses preferred to remain in the deluded, disturbed condition or more importantly, whether they had finally comprehended the wisdom of suffering and above all were willing to transgress and be empowered, was left to the everyman. Ionesco knew that the query would clarify the mystery of survival and hence, he had emphasized the role of the question and answer process and enlightenment. Similarly the Zen Roshi's had utilized the same function through the ages as renowned scholar Christmas Humphreys explains:

Why does a Zen master talk in riddles and paradox, talk nonsense, do silly things and even use violence on the pupil who comes to him? Not

to show off, or because he is too lazy to explain. He cannot explain what Zen is, yet he must in some way help the increasing tension in the student's mind to explode in a flash of *Satori*, a knowing beyond all thinking.⁴⁷

The obvious truth was that Ionesco had done the same. He too had provoked the mind to excess, and that precisely was what Kafka had achieved in his works especially, *The Metamorphosis* (1912). Over the years from empty theatre halls where Ionesco, his wife and daughter were the only spectators of his plays Ionesco has grown to the stature of being deemed the 'Father', or the 'Spokesman' for the Theatre of the Absurd. He did not despair, and had the conviction to declare:

It takes a few decades for a work to become brilliant when it's no longer written by the author, but rewritten by generations who come after him.⁴⁸

This great vision similar to the Koan referred to in the 'Mind Sutra' in Zen, had a profound effect which was of lasting value to mankind. A question from Ma-tsu to his Roshi Liang 'whether the mind could lecture' elicited the following response from the Roshi:

Today a question from Ma-tsu dissolved the ice of a lifetime... Yes, no - mind can lecture alright... from birth to death, this is how it is... mind, cannot reveal the truth... The Zen understanding, at its very essence, is that the mind is unreliable, it changes throughout the life as it accumulates knowledge, opinions and ideas whereas no-mind is always the same unpolluted, always singing the truth whether we hear it or not its dance is eternal.⁴⁹

Ionesco's contribution to the awakening of the "No - Mind" which Roshi Liang had clarified, is amply clear to any scholar or one appreciative of the Absurd genre. For this Genius had provoked and had

awakened the mind in a tumult of agitation. His plays had the same shocking effect as Kafka's "The Axe for the Frozen Sea"; it left no room at the end for more query as all the questions especially pertaining to the core of existence had been answered.

Ionesco having located the 'no-mind', *Satori* Awakening, or the state of utter Stillness within his plays left one with no confusion, only acceptance. Ionesco thus revealed the depth of the Empowered Mind:

When the questions stop
One is enlightened."⁵⁰

End Notes

- 1 Kafka, Franz. *The Metamorphosis*. Trans & Ed. Stanley Corngold. New York: Norton, 1996. Print. p.X.
- 2 “Viktor Frankl.” From Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia.<<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/vf>¹₂> 16 February 2009.
- 3 Esslin, Martin. *The Theatre of the Absurd*. U.S.A.: Peregrine, 1983. Print. p.198.
- 4 Kit, Wong Kiew. *The Complete Book of Zen*. London: Vermillion, Print. p.9.
- 5 Mah, Yen Adeline. *Watching the Tree*. London: Harper Collins, 2000. Print. p.94.
- 6 “Mind is Buddha”. Geoffrey Shugen Arnold, Sensei. Buddhadharma – The Practitioners Quarterly. Spring 2005. <<http://www.thebuddhadharma.com/issues/2005/spring/shugen.html>> 27 October 2009.
- 7 Roshī, Kapleu. *The Three Pillars of Zen*. New York: Doubleday, 1989. Print. p.50.
- 8 Kazuki, Tanahashi & Schneider, David Tansho (ed). *Essential Zen*. New Delhi: Harper Collins, 1996. Print. p.11.
- 9 Batchelor, Martine. *Principles of Zen*. Glasgow: Thorsons, 1999. Print. p.16.
- 10 Kazuki, Tanahashi & Schneider. p. VII.
- 11 Valency, Maurice. *The End of the World: An Introduction to Contemporary Drama*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, Print. p.356.
- 12 “Ionesco Beyond Absurdism” by Jessica Runde. Consciousness, Literature and the Arts. Archive – Vol. 8. 1st April 2007. <<http://www.blackboard.lincoln.ac.uk/bbcswbdev/users/dmeryerdinkgrafe/archaic/runde-html>> 4 September 2004.
- 13 Kazuki, Tanahashi & Schneider. p 32.
- 14 “Eugene Ionesco and the Search for Identity” by Dascalu Mihaela. 3rd December 2009. Scribd. <<http://www.scribd.com/doc/23848345/Eugene-Ionesco-and-the-Search-Identity.html>> 27 September 2009.
- 15 “The Chairs.” <<http://www.answers.com/topics/the-chairs-play-6.html>> 7 March 2007.
- 16 Ionesco, Eugene. *Rhinoceros, The Chairs, The Lesson*. Trans. Donald Watson & Derek Prouse. London: Penguin, 1962. Print. p.135.
- 17 *Ibid.* p. 129.
- 18 Kazuki, Tanahashi & Schneider. p.IX.
- 19 Ionesco, Eugene. p. 141.
- 20 *Ibid.* p. 173.
- 21 “Sacred Symbols and their Meanings - Water” Shannon Thunderbird. 2010. <<http://www.shannonthunderbird.com>> 3 January 2010.
- 22 Hyers, Conrad. *Zen and the Comic Spirit*. London: Ryder, 1974. Print. p.35.

- ²³ “Eugene Ionesco. *The Lesson*” City Garage Theatre 1999- 2010. Eugene Ionesco. Comic Drama/Backstage West – Critics Choice. LA Times Recommended. <[http://www. Citygarage.org/past-productions/ the – lesson. html](http://www.Citygarage.org/past-productions/the-lesson.html)> 8 January 2005.
- ²⁴ “Eugene Ionesco” – The Art of Theatre No. 6. The Paris Review – Shusha Guppy 1984. <<http://www.theparisreview.org/media/2956-Ionesco2.Pdf>> 15 November 2006.
- ²⁵ “What Made This Man? Mengele.” Robert Jay Lifton. N.Y. Times – July 21, 1985 Section 6; page 16, column 1. 1985 N.Y.T. Co. <<http://www.wellesley.edu/Polixi/wi/100/mengele.html>> 14 November 2009.
- ²⁶ “The History of the Third Reich. The World Stands United.” Hans. Alabama, U.S.A. <[http://www.thirdreich88.blogspot.com/ 2009/.../adolph-hitlers-national-socialism.html](http://www.thirdreich88.blogspot.com/2009/.../adolph-hitlers-national-socialism.html)> 28 November 2009.
- ²⁷ Ionesco, Eugene. p. 185.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.* p.192.
- ²⁹ Suzuki. p. 80.
- ³⁰ “What can I Lexigram” – Lindaland – Linda – Goodman.Com. 12.12.2007. <[http://www.lindagoodman.com/ubb/Forms8/001758. html](http://www.lindagoodman.com/ubb/Forms8/001758.html)> 28 November 2009.
- ³¹ Roshi, Kapleu. p.9.
- ³² “The Zen Mind” Adrian Cooper. Our Ultimate Reality. 25.10.2009. <<http://www.Ourultimatereality.com/newsletters/251009.pdf>> 25 February 2010.
- ³³ Zen Centre of Syracuse Hoen-ji. Summer 2008. <[http://www.zencentre of Syracuse.org/ Teisho.html](http://www.zencentre of Syracuse.org/Teisho.html)> 5 May 2010.
- ³⁴ *Exit the King* from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. <http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exit-the-King.html>> 25 February 2010.
- ³⁵ Radice, Betty (ed). *The Upanishads*. U.K.: Penguin, 1965. Print. p. 127.
- ³⁶ MacHovec, J. Frank. *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. New York: Pauper Press, 1972. Print. p.7, 8.
- ³⁷ “Bardo Thodol: The Tibetan Book of the Dead.” Asif Agha – Death Reference Website.<<http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/mistic/bardo-thodol06html>> 1 March 2010.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*
- ³⁹ “Death as Initiation in Exit the King” <<http://www.jstor.org./pss/3206384ask.com>> 1 March 2010.
- ⁴⁰ Ionesco, Eugene. *Exit the King*. London: Samuel French, 1963. Print. p. 28.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.* p. 47.
- ⁴² Prof. Barret. *Zen the Reason of Unreason* London: Acquarian, 1993. Print. p.41.
- ⁴³ “Eugene Ionesco.: Introduction” Eugene Ionesco. – 1909-1994.enotes.com. <<http://www.enotes.com/drama-criticism/Ionesco-Eugene.html>> 16 July 2010.

- ⁴⁴ “Reception of Eugene Ionesco”. Presented by the Academie Francaise: Speech. on his election to Academie Francaise in 1971. < [http://www.ionesco.org/sites – eugeneionesco.html](http://www.ionesco.org/sites-eugeneionesco.html)> 4 June 2010.
- ⁴⁵ Esslin. P. 158.
- ⁴⁶ Esslin, Martin. (intro) *Absurd Drama*. London: Penguin, 1987. Print. p. 102.
- ⁴⁷ Humphreys, Christian. *Zen – A Way of Life*. London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1985. Print.p.102.
- ⁴⁸ “The Chairs: Review of a 1998 Revival of Ionesco’s Play.” Lahr Review.<[http://www.enotes.com/studyguide–chairs/essay.html](http://www.enotes.com/studyguide-chairs/essay.html)> 28 November 2009.
- ⁴⁹ Prof. Barret. p.16,p. 17.
- ⁵⁰ “Oneness” by Amma Bhagavan. Lecture Amma Bhagavan. Episode 40. Sony T.V. India.<<http://www.onenessindia.org>> 1 May 2007, Telecast).

Select Bibliography

Primary Source

- Ionesco, Eugene. *3 Plays: Amadee, The New Tenant, Victims of Duty*. (trans.) Derek Prouse and Donald Watson. New York: Grove Press, 1988. Print.
- *Rhinoceros. The Chairs, The Lesson*. (trans.) Derek Prouse and Donald Watson. London: Penguin, 1962. Print.
- *Rhinoceros*. (trans.) Derek Prouse. London: John Calder, 1960. Print.
- *Exit the King*. (trans.) Donald Watson. London: John Calder, 1963. Print.
- *The Hermit*. (trans.) Richard Seaver. New Delhi: Rupa, 1981. Print.
- *The Killer and Other Plays*. (trans.) Donald Watson. 1st Evergreen Book (ed). New York: Grove Press, Grove Weidenfeld, 1960. Print.
- *The Bald Prima Donna*. (trans.) Donald Watson. London: John Calder, 1958. Print.

Secondary Source

Ackerley, C.J. and S.E. Gontarski (eds). *The Grove Companion to Samuel Beckett*. New York: Grove, 2004. Print.

Adelson, Alan and Robert Lapidés (eds). *Lotz Ghetto: Inside a Community Under Siege*. New York: Vikings, 1989. Print.

Ackerman, Diane. *A Slender Thread: Rediscovering Hope at the Heart of Crisis*. New York: Random House, 1997. Print.

Almansi, Guido and Simon Henderson. *Harold Pinter*. New York: Routledge, 1983. Print.

Altman, Nathaniel. *The Nonviolent Revolution: A Comprehensive Guide to Ahimsa – The Philosophy of Dynamic Harmlessness*. Dorset: Element Books Ltd. 1988. Print.

Alvarez, A. *Night: An Exploration of Night Life, Language, Sleep and Dreams*. London: Vintage, 1995. Print.

Amery, J. *At the Mind's Limit*. New York: Schocken, 1986. Print.

Ardagh, Arjuna. *Awakening into Oneness: The Power of Blessing in the Evolution of Consciousness*. Mumbai: Indus Source Books, 2007. Print.

Astro, Alan. *Understanding Samuel Beckett*. Columbine: University of Carolina Press, 1990. Print.

Aurobindo, Rishi. *The Life Divine*. Twin Lakes, Wisconsin: Lotus. 2002. Print.

- Badger, Richard G. *Studies in Abnormal Psychology*. Boston: The Gorham Press, 2007. Print.
- Bailey, Lisa Siefker and Bruce J.Mann. *Edward Albee*. New York: Routledge, 2002.
- Baral, K.C. *Sigmund Freud: A Study of His Theory of Art and Literature*. New Delhi: Sterling, 1995. Print.
- Barber, Stephen. *Jean Genet*. London: Reatkin, 2004. Print.
- Barnard, G.C. *Samuel Beckett a New Approach: A Study of the Novels and Plays*. London: Bowering, 1970. Print.
- Barrett, T.H. *Zen – the Reason of Unreason*. London: Aquarian Press, n.d. Print.
- Batchelor, Martine. *Principles of Zen*. London: Thorsons Publications, 1999. Print.
- Beckett, Samuel. *Endgame: A Play in One Act followed by Act Without Words*. London: Faber and Faber, 1958. Print.
- *Waiting for Godot*. Intro. Javed Malick. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001. Print.
- Behera, Guru Charan. *Reality and Illusion in the Plays of Harold Pinter*. New Delhi: Atlantic, 1998. Print.
- Billington, Michael. *The Life and Work of Harold Pinter*. London: Faber, 1996. Print.

- Blau, Leslie. *Bonyhad: A Destroyed Community: The Jews of Bonyhad, Hungary*. New York: Shengold publisher, 1994. Print.
- Bender, Benjamin. *Glimpses: Through Holocaust and Liberation*. Berkeley: North Atlantic books, 1995. Print.
- Brecher, Elinor J. *Schindler's Legacy: True Stories of the List Survivor*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1994. Print.
- Bauminger, Arieh L. *The Fighter of the Cracow Ghetto*. Jerusalem: Keter, 1986. Print.
- Braham, Randolph L. *The Politics of Genocide: The Holocaust in Hungary*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1981.
- Bodian, Stephan. *Wake Up Now: A Guide to the Journey of Spiritual Awakening*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008. Print.
- Bogard, Travis and William I. Oliver, (ed). *Modern Drama: Essays in Criticism*. London: Oxford University Press, 1971. Print.
- Bonnefoy, Claude. *Conversations with Eugene Ionesco*. (trans.) Jan Dawson. New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1971. Print.
- Boom, ten Corrie and John and Elizabeth Sherril. *The Hiding Place*. Great Britain: Hodder and Stoughton, 1978. Print.
- Bottoms, Stephen J. *The Cambridge Companion to Edward Albee*. London: Cambridge University Press, 2005. Print.

- Bradby, David. *Beckett, Waiting for Godot*. London; Cambridge University Press, 2001. Print.
- Brandt, W. George. *Modern Theories of Drama: A Selection of Writings on Drama and Theatre, 1840-1990*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. Print.
- Brecht, Bertolt. *Plays One: Baal, The Threepenny Opera, The Mother*. Intro. Hugh Rorrison. London: Methuen, 1987. Print.
- Breitman, Richard. *Official Secrets: What the Nazis Planned, What the British and Americans Knew*. London: Penguin, 1999. Print.
- Burt, E.A. (ed). *The Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha*. New York: Mentor, 1955. Print.
- Czech Danuta. *Auschwitz Chronicle, 1989 – 1945*. London: Tauris, 1990. Print.
- Camus, Albert. *The Fall*. London: Penguin, 1986. Print.
- *The Myth of Sisyphus*. Middlesex: Penguin, 1975. Print.
- *The Outsider*. Lond: Hamish Hamilton, 1962. Print.
- *The Rebel*. London: Penguin, 1971. Print.
- Carr, Alan. *Abnormal Psychology*. Philadelphia: Psychological Press, 2001. Print.
- Castaneda, Carlos. *Tales of Power*. London: Penguin, 1976. Print.
- Causton, Richard. *The Buddha in Daily Life*. London: Random House, 1995. Print.

- Chi, W. Liu. *The Short History of Confucian Philosophy*. London: Routledge, 1990. Print.
- Chiari, Joseph. *Twentieth Century French Thought: From Bergson to Levi- Strauss*. London: Elek Books, 1975. Print.
- Chopra, Deepak. *7 Spritual Laws of Success*. New York: Bantam, 1996. Print.
- Chung, Tsai. *Zen Speaks*. (trans.) Brian Bruya. Guernsey: Guernsey Press. 1994. Print.
- Churchill, Winston. *The Second World War*. London: The Educational Book Co. Ltd., 1944. Print.
- Coe, Richard N. *Eugene Ionesco: A Study of His Work*. 1st Evergreen Black Cat. New York: Grove Press, 1970. Print.
- *The Vision of Genet*. New York: Grove Press, 1968. Print.
- Coelho, Paulo. *Veronika Decides to Die*. (trans.) Margaret Jull Costa. New Delhi: Harper Collins Publishers, 2006. Print.
- Cohn, Ruby. *A Beckett Canon*. New York, University of Michigan Press, 2001. Print.
- Coleman, C. James. *Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life*. New Delhi: Bombay: D.B. Taraporevala Sons and Co. Ltd. 1988. Print.
- Comer, Ronald J. *Abnormal Psychology*. New York: Worth Publishers, 2009. Print.

- *Fundamentals of Abnormal Psychology*. New York: Worth Publishers, 2009. Print.
- Cornwell, Neil. *The Absurd in Literature*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006. Print.
- Coyle, Martin. *The Encyclopedia of Literature and Criticism*. London: Routledge, 1990. Print.
- Croce, Benedetto. *My Philosophy: Essays on the Moral and Political Problems of Our Time*. (trans.) E.F. Carritt. New York: Collier Books, 1962. Print.
- Cronin, Anthony. *Samuel Beckett: The Last Modernist*. New York: Da Capo Press, 1997. Print.
- Crystal, H. (ed). *Massive Psychic Trauma*. New York: International University Press, 1968. Print.
- Dalal, A.S. *Eckhart Tolle and Sri Aurobindo: Two Perspectives on Enlightenment*. Cochin: Stone – Hill Foundation Publishing Pvt. Ltd., 2008. Print.
- Deighton, Len. *Winter: A Berlin Family 1899-1945*. London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1987. Print.
- Delfgaauw, Bernard. *Twentieth Century Philosophy*. (trans.) N.D. Smith. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1969. Print.
- Dinnage, Rosemary. *Experiences of Psychotherapy*. London: Viking, 1988. Print.

Drain, Richard. *Twentieth Century Theatre*. New York: Routledge, 1995.
Print.

Dobroszycki, Lucian.(ed) . *The Chronicle of Lodz Ghetto, 1941 – 1944*.
New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984. Print.

Driver, Tom Faw. *Jean Genet*. New York: Columbia University Press.
2001. Print.

Einstein, Albert. *Ideas and Opinions*. New Delhi: Rupa and Co, 2004.
Print.

Elster, John. (ed). *The Multiple Self*. Cambridge: Cambridge University
Press. 1987. Print.

Elkes, Joel. *Values Belief and Survival: Dr. Elkhawan Elkes and the
Kovno Ghetto: A Memoir*. London : Yale Publisher, 1979. Print.

Epstein, Mark M.D. *Going to Pieces without Falling Apart: A Buddhist
Perspective on Wholeness*. New York: Broadway Books, 1998.
Print.

Esslin, Martin. *The Theatre of the Absurd*. U.S.A.: Pelican and
Doubleday, 1980. Print.

Fast, Julius. *Body Language*. New York: Pocket Books. 1971. Print.

Fell, Jill. Alfred Jarry, *An Imagination in Revolt*. Madison: Farleigh
Dickinson University, 2005. Print.

Fillingham, A. Lydia. *Foucault: For Beginners*. Chennai: Orient
Longman Ltd, 2000. Print.

Flanagan, Owen. *The Science of the Mind*. Massachusetts: Bradford
Books, 1984. Print.

- Falstein Louis (ed. *The Martyrdom of Jewish Physicians in Poland*. New York. Exposition Press, 1963. Print.
- Ferencz, Benjamin B. *Less than Slaves: Jewish Forced Labor and the Quest for Compensation*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979. Print.
- Falstien, Alex. *Heroism and Bravery in Lithuania – 1941 1945*. Jerusalem : Gefen 1996. Print.
- Felstiner, Lowerthal Mary. *To Paint her Life: Charlotte Salomon in the Nazi Era*. London: Harper Collins, 1994. Print.
- Ford, John M and Curtis Smith. *Double Paranoia*. New York: Games Workshop, 1986. Print.
- Fordham, Frieda. *An Introduction to Jung's Psychology*. Suffolk: Chaucer Press, 1975. Print.
- Foucault. M. *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*. (trans.) Richard Howard. Chennai: Routledge India, 2009. Print.
- Francis Gillen and Steven H. Gale. *Harold Pinter's Ashes to Ashes- Personal and Literary Echoes of the Holocaust: The Pinter Review Collected Essays 1999-2000*. Tampa: Tampa University Press, 2000. Print.
- Frank, Anne. *The Diary of a Young Girl*. (ed). Otto H. Frank and Mirjam Pressler. New Delhi: Penguin, 2001. Print.

Frankl, Viktor. *Man's Search for Ultimate Meaning*. New York: Perseus Book Publishing, 1997. Print.

Freud, Sigmund. *A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis*. New York: Perma Giants, 1949. Print.

..... *The Interpretation of Dreams*. New York: Avon Press, 1998. Print.

Fromm, Erich. *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness*. Connecticut: Fawcett Publications, 1975. Print.

..... *The Art of Loving*. London: Unwin, 1971. Print.

..... *The Fear of Freedom*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 2002. Print.

Geddes and Grosset. *A Dictionary of Dreams*. Glasgow: Geddes and Grosset Press, 1999. Print.

Gelley, Alexander. *Mythology and Humanism: The Correspondence of Thomas Mann and Karl Kerényi*. London: Cornell University Press, 1972. Print.

Giddens, Anthony. *Modernity and Self-Identity*. California: Stanford University Press, 1991. Print.

Giddu, Narayan. *As the River Joins the Ocean: Reflections About J. Krishnamurti* (ed.) Narsipur, Chandramouli. New Delhi: Book Faith India, 1998. Print.

Gilbert, Martin. *Never Again: A History of the Holocaust*. Oxford: Harper Collins, 2001. Print.

- Gilman, L. Sander. *Freud, Race and Gender*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993. Print
- Godman, David (ed). *Be As You Are: The Teachings of Sri Ramana Maharishi*. New Delhi: Penguin, 1992. Print.
- Goldhagen, D.J. *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*. New York: Knopf, 1996. Print.
- Goldstein, Joseph. *One Dharma: The Emerging Western Buddhism*. London: Rider, 2002. Print.
- Gomathy, Gopinath. *The Brain: A Precious Possession*. New Delhi: National Book Trust, 1996. Print.
- Gupta, V.P. *The Greatest Wiseman*. New Delhi: B.K.Offset, 2008. Print.
- Gutting, Gary (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to Foucault*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972. Print.
- Gutman, Israel. *The Warsaw Ghetto*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982. Print.
- Gutman, Israel. *Resistance: The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1994. Print.
- Goldberger Leo (ed). *The Rescue of Danish Jews: Moral Courage Under Stress*. New York: New York University Press, 1987. Print.
- Gryn, Hugo and Naomi Gryn. *Chasing Shadows*. London: Viking, 2000. Print.
- Haas, Aaron. *The Aftermath: Living With the Holocaust*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1995. Print.

- Hall, Donald. *To Read Literature. Fiction, Poetry, Drama*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston Publishers, 1983. Print.
- Hamalian, Leo (ed). *Franz Kafka a Collection of Criticism*. London: McGraw Hill Book Co, 1996. Print.
- Hanh, Nhat Thich. *Being Peace*. Berkeley: Parallax, 1987. Print.
- *Teachings of Love*. New Delhi: Full Circle, 2007. Print.
- *The Sun in my Heart*. Berkeley: Parallax, 1988. Print.
- *Touching Peace: Practicing the Art of Mindful Living*. Berkeley: Parallax, 1987. Print.
- Hardin, C.H. *Aspects of Anxiety*. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott and Co. 1968. Print.
- Haskell, M. Block and Robert G. Shedd. *Masters of Modern Drama*. New York: Random House, 1969. Print.
- Hayman, Ronald. *World Dramatists: Eugene Ionesco*. New York: Federick Unger, 1976. Print.
- Heller, Erich. *Disinherited Mind*. Edinburgh: Penguin Books, 1961. Print.
- Henry, Krystal. (ed). *Massive Psychic Trauma*. New York: International University Press, 1968. Print.
- Hallie, Philip. *Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed*. New York: Harper & Row, 1979. Print.

- Hilberg Raul. *The Destruction of European Jewry*. Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961. Print.
- Hackett, David. A. (ed and trans). *The Buchenwald Report*. Colorado: Westview Press, 1995. Print.
- Hesse, Hermann. *Siddhartha*. New Delhi: Indialog Publications, 2009. Print.
- Hitler, Adolph. *Mein Kamph*. New Delhi: Jaico Publishing House, 2002. Print.
- Horney, Karen. *Our Inner Conflicts: A Constructive Theory of Neurosis*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd. 1968. Print.
- Horton, Edward. (ed). *The Marshall Cavendish Encyclopedia of Family Health*. New York: Marshall Cavendish Ltd., 1993. Print.
- Howarth, W.D. (ed). *Comic Drama: The European Heritage*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1978. Print.
- Howells, Christins. *The Cambridge Companion to Sartre*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. Print.
- Humphreys, Christmas. *Zen: a Way of Life*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1962. Print.
- Innes, C.D. *Avant Garde Theatre – 1892-1992*. New York: Routledge, 1993. Print.
- Izenberg, Gerald. *The Existentialist Critique of Freud: The Crisis of Autonomy*. Princeton University Press, 1976. Print.

Jacobus, Lee A. *The Bedford Introduction to Drama*. Boston: Bedford. 2005. Print.

Jarvis, Dinah. *The Soul Purpose: Recovery from Transgenerational Trauma*. Bangalore: Sai Towers Publishing, 2003. Print.

Jung, C.G. *Aspects of the Masculine*. (trans.) R.F.C. Hull. Chennai: Routledge, 2006. Print.

..... *Dreams*. London: Routledge, 2002. Print.

..... *The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche*. (trans.) R.F.C. Hull. London: Princeton University Press, 1969. Print.

..... *The Undiscovered Self*. London: Routledge, 2002. Print.

Kapleu, Philip Roshi. *The 3 Pillars of Zen*. New York: Anchor, 1989. Print.

Karp, David. *Speaking of Sadness*. London: Oxford University Press, 1996. Print.

Kennedy, Andrew K., *Samuel Beckett*. London: Cambridge University Press, 1989. Print.

Kenrick, Douglas and John Seamon. *Psychology*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc., 1992. Print.

Khantipalo, Phra. *Buddhism Explained: An Introduction to the Teachings of Lord Buddha*. Bangkok: Mahamakut Rajavidyalaya Press, 1993. Print.

Khera, Shiv. *You Can Win: Step by Step Tool for Top Achievers*. Delhi: Macmillan India, 2002. Print.

Kit, Kiew Wong. *The Complete Book of Zen*. London: Vermillion, 2001. Print.

Knight, Everett. *Literature Considered as Philosophy*. New York: Collier Books, 1962. Print.

Knight, Margaret. *William James*. Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1950. Print.

Knowlson, James. *Damned to Fame: The Life of Samuel Beckett*. New York: Grove Press, 1996. Print.

Kopp, B. Sheldon. *If You Meet the Buddha on the Road, Kill Him*. New York: Bantam, 1976. Print.

Krishnamurti, J. *Can Humanity Change? : J. Krishnamurti in Dialogue with Buddhists*. (ed.) David Skiff. Boston, Shambala, 2003. Print.

..... *Meditations*. Madras: Krishnamurti Foundation Ltd. 1980. Print.

Klien Dennis B. *Hidden History of Kovno Ghetto*. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1997. Print.

Kubar Zofia S. *Double Identity: A Memoir*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1989. Print.

Krugman, Luba. *The Death Train: A Personal Account of the Holocaust Survivor*. New York: Holocaust library. 1978. Print.

- Kristof, Aziz and Houman Emami. *Enlightenment Beyond Traditions*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas Publishers, 1996. Print.
- Lacan. *A Selection*. (trans.) Alan Sheridan. London: Routledge.2006. Print.
- Laing and D.G. Cooper. *Reason and Violence: A Decade of Sarter's Philosophy- 1950-1960*. Norwich: 1971. Print.
- Laing, R.D. *The Divided Self: An Existential Study in Sanity and Madness*. Middlesex: Penguin. 1969. Print.
- Lamont, Rosette. C. *Eugene Ionesco: A Modern Classic*. New York: Grove Press, 1995. Print.
- Leuner, H.D. *When Compassion was a Crime: Germany's Silent Heroes*. London: Oswald Wolff, 1966. Print.
- Lindwer, Willy. *The Last Seven Months of Anne Frank*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1991. Print.
- Litner, Isabella. *Fragments of Isabella: A Memoir of Auschwitz*. New York: Laurel, 1987. Print.
- Langer, L. *Holocaust Testimonies*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991. Print.
- Laslett, Peter. Comp. *The Physical Basis of the Mind*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1950. Print.
- Leggett, Trevor. *Samurai Zen: The Warrior Koans*. London: Routledge, 2002. Print.
- Levi, Primo. *If this is a Man and the Truce*. (trans.) Stuart Woolf. London: Abacus, 2006. Print.

- Levi, Primo. *The Drowned and the Saved*. New York, 1988. Print.
- Levin, Daniel. *The Zen Book*. New York: Kindle, 2005. Print.
- Lewis, Allan. *Ionesco*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1972. Print.
- Loori, J. Daido. *The 8 Gates of Zen: A Program of Zen Training*. New York: Shambala. 2002. Print.
- Lord, Georgianna and Sallie Spears. *The Discontinuous Universe*. London: 1972. Print.
- Lukacs, George. *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*. London: Merlin Press, 1963. Print.
- Luytens, Mary. (ed). *The Krishnamurti Reader*. New Delhi: Penguin, 2002. Print.
- (ed). *The Second Krishnamurti Reader*. Middlesex: Arkana, 1991. Print.
- MacHove, C. Frank. *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. New York: Peter Pauper Press, 1972. Print.
- Mack E. John. *Nightmares and Human Conflict*. Boston: Little Brown and Co. 1970. Print.
- Mah, Adeline. *Watching the Tree*. London: Harper Collins Publishers, 2001. Print.
- Malkin, R. Jeanette. *Verbal Violence in Contemporary Drama - From Handke to Shepard*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. Print.

Mascaro, Juan. *The Upanishads: Translated From Sanskrit*. Middlesex: Penguin, 1965. Print.

Maskovitz, Richard A. *Lost in the Mirror: An Inside Look at Borderline Personality Disorder*. New York: Taylor Publishing Co., 1996. Print.

Masters, Brian. *A Student's Guide to Sartre*. London: Heinemann Educational Books Ltd., 1975. Print.

Mays, John Bentley. *In the Jaws of Black Dogs: A Memoir of Depression*. New York: Penguin, 1995. Print.

Marks Jane. (ed). *The Hidden Children: the Secret Survivors of the Holocaust*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1993. Print.

Mendelson, John. (ed). *The Holocaust Selected Documents in Eighteen Volumes*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1982. Print.

Mc Mohan, Joseph H. *The Imagination of Jean Genet*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963. Print.

McRae, John. *Seeing. Seeing. Through Zen*. New York: Amazon, 2004.

Mercier, Vivian. *Beckett/Beckett/* New York: Oxford University Press.1977. Print.

Michener, James. *Poland: The Towering Saga of a Proud Land and its Indomitable People*. London: Corgi Books, 1991. Print.

Miles, Keith. *Gunther Grass*. London: Vision Press, 1975. Print.

- Miller, Norton. *Dictionary of Dreams*. New Delhi: Goyal Saab Publishers, 1996. Print.
- Morgan, L. Michael. *A Holocaust Reader: Responses to the Nazi Extermination*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. Print.
- Nasar, Sylvia. *A Beautiful Mind: The Life of the Mathematical Genius and Nobel Laureate John Nash*. New York: Touchstone International, 2006. Print.
- Neidorf, Robert. *Deductive Forms: An Elementary Logic*. London: Harper and Row, 1967. Print.
- Neugeboren, Jay. *Imagining Robert: My Brother, Madness and Survival*. Los Angeles: William Morrow and Co Inc., 1997. Print.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Birth of Tragedy*. London: Allen Unwin, 1909. Print.
- Nyanaponika. *Pathways of Buddhist Thought: Essays from the Wheel*. London: Unwin, 1971. Print.
- Oaklander, L. Nathan. *Existentialist Philosophy: An Introduction*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1992. Print.
- Ogilvy, James. *Living without a Goal*. New York: Doubleday, 1995. Print.
- Okawa, Ryuho. *The Laws of the Sun: Discover the Origin of Your Soul*. Mumbai: Jaico Publishing House, 2009. Print.
- Olsen, Laurie Samsel. *He Was Still My Daddy: Coming to Terms with Mental Illness*. Boston: Ogden House Publishing Co, 1994. Print.

- Osho. *The Diamond Sutra: The Buddha also said....*Noida: Gopsons Papers Ltd, 2010. Print.
- Page, J.D. *Abnormal Psychology and Clinical Approach to Psychological Disorders*. New Delhi: Tata McGraw Hill Publishing Company, 2000. Print.
- Pandya, Sudha and Prafulla C. Kar (eds). *Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Modernity*. New Delhi: D.K. Fine Art Press, 2001. Print.
- Pease, Barbara and Allan Pease. *The Definitive Book of Body Language*. New Delhi: Manjul Publishing House, 2007. Print.
- Pinter, Harold. *Old Times*. London: Methuen. 1971. Print.
- *The Homecoming*. London: Faber and Faber, 1988. Print.
- Pirsig, Robert. *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. New York: Bantam, 1984. Print.
- Poster, Mark. *Existential Marxism in Post War France*. Surrey: Princeton University Press, Print.
- Pisar, Samuel. *Of Blood and Hope*. New York: Macmillan, 1982. Print.
- Prentiss, Chris. *Zen and the Art of Happiness*. New York: Kindle, 2006. Print.
- Probuddhanandha, Swami. *With Love. Swami Probuddhanandha: Letters on Advaita Vedanta* (ed). Charles Gibson and Alexis Maurya. Varanasi: Printeck, 2009. Print.

- Pronko, Leonard Cabell. *Avant Garde*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2003. Print.
- Radhakrishnan, S. *Eastern Religion and Western Thought*. New Delhi: Oxford UP, 2004. Print.
- Remarque, Maria Erich. *All Quiet on the Western Front*. (trans.) Brian Murdoch. London: Vintage, 1994. Print.
- Richards, Angela, (ed). *Sigmund Freud: On Psychology Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety and Other Works – Volume 10*. New York: Penguin, 1979. Print.
- Roebuck, Valerie. *The Upanishads*. London: Penguin. 2000. Print.
- Root, Benjamin A. *Anxiety Panic and Other Anxiety Disorders*. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2000. Print.
- Ruch, L. Floyd. *Psychology and Modern Life*. Bombay: D.B. Taraporevala Sons and Co. 1970. Print.
- Sahn, Seung. *Dropping Ashes on the Buddha*. Comp and (ed). Stephen Mitchell. New York: Grove Press, 1976. Print.
- Samuel, Beckett. *Malone Dies*. London: Penguin, 1975. Print.
- Sankarananda, Swami. *Advaita Vedanta*. Guwahati: Deep Graphics, 2006. Print.

- Sarason, Irwin and Barbara Sarason. *Abnormal Psychology: The Problem of Maladaptive Behavior*. New Delhi: Prentice-Hall of India Private Limited, 2000. Print.
- and Charles D. Spielberger, (eds). *Stress and Anxiety*. Volume 2. Washington: Hemisphere Publishing Corporation, 1975. Print.
- Schaeffer, Fromberg Susan. *Anya*. New York: Avon, 1980. Print.
- Schneiderman, Stuart. *Jacques Lacan: The Death of an Intellectual Hero*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983. Print.
- Schumacher, Claude. *Encyclopedia of Literature and Criticism*. New York: Routledge, 1983. Print.
- Schwartz, Lynne Sharon. *The Fatigue Artist*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995. Print.
- Segal, Erich. *The Death of Comedy*. Harvard : Harvard University Press, 2001. Print.
- Seifer, Marc. *Inward Journey from Freud to Gurdjieff*. Kingston: R.I. Doorway Press, 2003. Print.
- Sharma, Rachana. *Abnormal Psychology*. New Delhi: Atlantic, 2003. Print.
- Sharma, Rajiv. *Feminine Sensibilit: Alienation in Charlotte Bronte and Anita Desai*. Meerut: Shalabh Prakashan, 1995. Print.
- Shiller, Lori and Amanda Bennet. *The Quiet Room: A Journey out of the Torment of Madness*. New York. Warner Books Inc., 1997. Print.

- Shunryu. *Zen Mind, Beginners Mind: Informal Talks on Zen Meditation and Practice*. New York: Weatherhill, 1970.
- Sideman, Belle (ed). *The World's Best Fairy Tales*. Montreal: Readers Digest, 1967. Print.
- Simson, Stephen Dr. *Play Magic Golf: How to Use Self Hypnosis, Meditation, Zen, Universal Laws, Quantum Energy and the Latest Techniques to be a Better Golfer*. New York: Kindle. 2010. Print.
- Stanton, Mary. *How to Read Faces*. New Delhi: Black Rose Publications, n.d. Print.
- Stanton, Olmsted Mary. *How to Read Faces*. New Delhi: Black Rose Publications, 2003. Print.
- Smith Micheal *The Spy who Saved 10,000 Jews*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1999. Print.
- Schneider Gertrude. *Journey into Terror: Story of the Riga Ghetto*. New York: Ark House, 1979. Print.
- Snyder, Louis L. *Encyclopedia of the Third Reich*. London: Robert Hale, 1976. Print.
- Spiltzer, Martin. *Storm Over Tatra*. Adelaide: Kitchener Press, 1989. Print.
- Werner, Harold. *Fighting Back: A Memoir of Jewish Resistance in World War II*. N.Y.: Columbia University Press, 1992. Print.
- Stcherbatsky, Theodore. *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvana*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas, 1996. Print.

- Storr, Anthony. *Human Destructiveness*. London: Sussex University Press, 1972. Print.
- Strange, R. Jack. *Abnormal Psychology: Understanding Behavior Disorders*. New Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1965. Print.
- Styan, J.L. *The Dark Comedy: The Development of Modern Comic Tragedy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968. Print.
- Suzuki, Daisetz. *An Introduction to Zen. Buddhism*. London: Rider, 1991. Print.
- *Mysticism: Christian and Buddhist*. The Eastern and Western Way. New York: Collier Books, 1962. Print.
- Suzuki, Mitsu. *Temple Dusk: Zen Haiku*. Berkeley: Parallax Press, 1992. Print.
- Suzuki, Shunryu. *Not Always : Practicing the True Spirit of Zen*. New York: Harper Collins, 2002. Print.
- *Branching Streams Flow in the Darkness: Lectures on the Sandokai*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999. Print.
- Taxidou, Olga, Kolocotron Vassiliki and Jand Goldman. *An Anthology of Sources and Documents*. Edinburg: Edinburg University Press, 1988. Print.
- Taylor, Russell John. *The Penguin Dictionary of Theatre*. Middlesex: Penguin, 1979. Print.

- Turner, Barry. *And the Policeman Smiled: 10,000 Children Escape from Nazi Europe*. London: Bloomsbury, 1990. Print.
- Tolle, Eckhart. *Stillness Speaks*. New Delhi: Thomsons Press, 2003. Print.
- Tzu, Lao. *Tao Te Ching: The Book of Meaning and Life*. (trans.) Ostwald. London: Arkana, 1987. Print.
- Uris, Leon. *A God in Ruins*. London: Harper Collins Publishers, 1999. Print.
- Valency, Maurice. *The End of the World: Introduction to Contemporary Drama*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980. Print.
- Viorst, Judith. *Imperfect Control*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998. Print.
- Waller, J. *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killings*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002. Print.
- Wiesel, Elie. *And the Sea is never full: Memoirs*. 1969. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1999. Print .
- Warner, Harold .*Fighting back: A Memoir of Jewish Resistance in World War II*. New York: Columbia university press, 1992.Print.
- Wilhelen Heinrich – Hans and Israael Gutman. *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, Four volumes. Macmillan , 1990. Print.
- Walsh, James. *Free Will*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1962. Print.

Walter, Mink, Merrill Roff and Grace Hinrichs. (ed). *Developmental Abnormal Psychology*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc., 1966. Print.

Watson, Gay, Stephen Batchelor and Guy Claxton (eds). *The Psychology of Awakening: Buddhism, Science and Our Day to Day Lives*. London: Rider, 1999. Print.

Watts, Alan. *Taoism: Way Beyond Seeing*. London: Thorsons, 1998. Print

Watzlawick, Paul. *The Situation is Hopeless, But Not Serious: The Pursuit of Unhappiness*. Lond: W.W. Norton and Co Inc., 1983. Print.

Webb, Richard C. *File on Genet*. London: Methuen, 1992. Print.

Wenger, Michael and Erlich (eds). *Teachings from the San Francisco Zen Center – 1968-2001*. New York: North Atlantic, 2001. Print.

Wes, Nisker. *Buddha's Nature: Evolution as a Practical Guide to Enlightenment*. New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell. 1992. Print.

Westen, Drew. *Is Anyone Normal?* London: Amazon, 2000. Print.

White, Edmund. *Genet*. London: Picador, 1993. Print.

Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. (trans.) Marion Wiesel. London: Penguin, 2006. Print.

Williams, Raymond. *The Birthday Party: Harold Pinter. Modern Critical Views*. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1987. Print.

Wilson, Colin. *The Outsider*. London: Indigo Publishing House, 1997.
Print.

Wilson, Rowan. *The Mind*. Nederland: Time-Life International, 1968.
Print.

Wintle, Justin. *The Makers of Modern Culture*. New York: Routledge,
2002. Print.

Wollenheim, Richard. *Freud*. Glasgow: William Collins Son and Co Ltd.
1975. Print.

Worten, W.B. (ed.). *The Wadsworth Anthology of Drama*. Boston:
Thomson, 2007. Print.

Wright, D.S., Ann Taylor, D. Roy Davies, S.G.M. Lee and J.T. Reason.
*Introducing Psychology: Abnormal Psychology: Changing
Conceptions Experimental Approach*. Middlesex: Penguin, 1970.
Print.

Zanten, Van John. *Caught in the Act: Modern Drama as a Prelude to the
Gospel*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1972. Print.

Zax and Cowen. *Abnormal Psychology: Changing Conceptions*. New
York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1972. Print.

Internet Source

“Eugene Ionesco: The Favored Son” *Geocities Broadway* Shay Goosens.
1997. Geocities Broadway.
<<http://www.geocities.com/Broadway/Stage/1052/ionesco5/>> 10
June 2010.

“Brainy Quotes” Eugene Ionesco. Quotes.18 quotations and quotes by
Eugene Ionesco. BrainyQuotes.com. May 2010.
<[http://www.brainyquotes.com./quotes/authors/e/eugene/Ionesco.h
tml](http://www.brainyquotes.com./quotes/authors/e/eugene/Ionesco.html)>
7 March 2008.

“After the Holocaust”. Ian Chovil, May 1, 2001. Suite 101.com/insightful
writers.informedreaders
<http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/schizophreniaretired/67723> 8
Sept. 2002.

“Sacred Symbols and their Meanings-Water”. Shannon Thunderbird.
2010. Shannon Thunderbird.
<<http://www.shannonthunderbird.com>> 3 January 2010.

“A Collection of Short Works”. Richard J. Corelli, M.D., *Small-Cast-
One-Act* Guide Online. 2010. <[http://www.stanford.edu/corelli/
shortworks.html](http://www.stanford.edu/corelli/shortworks.html)> 7 May 2010.

“Reception of Eugene Ionesco” presented by the Academie Francaise:
Speech by Eugene Ionesco on his election to Academie Francaise
in 1971.

<<http://www.academie-francaise.fr/immortel/discoursereception/ionesco.html>> 4 June 2010.

“Eugene Ionesco: Jacques or Obedience. Amadee.” Ann Louise Bannon. City Garage Theatre. 18 February 1999.

< <http://www.citygarage.org/past-productions/journeys-among-the-dead.html>> 17 August 2009.

“Eugene Ionesco. Introduction: Full-Length Theatre Play.” www.lucianabveit.com Dreams, Fears, Reality vs Chicho. The 7 Sinners of Havenland.

<<http://www.enotes.com/drama-criticism/Ionesco-eugene.html>>
6 December 2009.

“Adam at Odds With Eve: Ionesco and Woman’s Mission.” C.E.J. Dolamore. *Journal of European Studies*, Volume 23, 1993.

<<http://www.questia.com/googleScholar.qst?docId=3002198967.html>> 18 May 2007.

“The Anti-Spiritual Victory in the Theatre of Ionesco.” Leonard C. Pronko. *Modern Drama*, Volume 2, No. 2, May 1957.

<<http://www.enotes.com/drama-criticism/ionesco-eugene.html>>
5 March 2008.

“Fear Degrees Paranoia Terror Feeling Perception Emotion Phobia...”
[Economic Expert.com](http://EconomicExpert.com) Wikipedia- 9 August 2010.

<http://www.economicexpert.com/a/Fear.Terror1/html>. 27 June 2010.

“Coaching; Paranoia and Paranoid Behavior.” Mary Carruthers. 2009-2010

Soulwork.net:Solutions for emotional issues and relationships problems.

<<http://www.Soulwork.net/sw-articles-eng/paranoia.html>.> 1
February 2010.

“The Zen Mind.” Adrian Cooper. Our Ultimate Reality, 25 October, 2009.

<<http://www.ourultimatereality.com/newsletters/251009.pdf>.>
25 February 2010.

“Ma-Tsu-Tao-1 and the Unfolding of Southern Zen.” Wahlen Lai. Japanese Journal of Religious Studies. 12 February 2003. The Zen Site.

<http://thezen.site.com/zen/Essays/Historical/Zen/MaTsu-and-the-unfolding-of-Southern-Zen.html>. 12 February 2009.

“A New Staging of the Chairs Alone Again, Unnaturally.” Barry Pineo. The Austin Chronicle. 27 July 2001.

<<http://www.austinchronicle.com/gynobase/Issue/story?oid=oid%3A82440.html>> 27 July 2010.

“Existentialism and Theatre of the Absurd at the Realm of Existentialism.” Katherine Eirhmann.

www.dividingline.com/private/Philosophy/Philosophers/Theatre/Theatre-of-the-Absurd.html 3 February 2010.

“Viktor Frankl.” From Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia.

<[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/vf¹/2](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/vf1/2)> 16 February 2009.

“The Theatre of the Absurd”: An Essay in Definition and the Yugoslav Variant. Jovan Hristic. The Impact of the Theatre of the Absurd on World Drama. Books Abroad 1972 Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma. [www.JSTOR](http://www.JSTOR.org): Books Abroad, Vol.46, No.3 (Summer 1972)

<<http://www.jstor.org/pss/40126282.html>> 16 November 2007.

“The Enactment of “Not” in Ionesco’s Les Chaises.” Richard Schechner. [JSTOR](http://www.JSTOR.org) Yale Studies. 1962. Yale University Press. No.29 (1962)pp-65-72. [jstor.org/pss/2929036](http://www.jstor.org/pss/2929036). <<http://www.springerlink.com/index/kq172781Q355221G.pdf>> 15 June 2010.

“Understanding Schizophrenia: Signs, Symptoms, Causes, and Effects” Melinda Smith, M.A. and Robert Segal, M.A. April 2010.

- [Helpguide.org](http://www.helpguide.org). A Trusted Non-Profit Resource - understand, prevent and resolve challenges. <<http://www.helpguide.org/mental/schizo-symptom.html>> 28 May 2010.

“Les Chaises.” Academic Dictionaries and Encyclopedias

<http://support@academic.ru.pda.version.<http://en.academic.ru/dic.nsf/enwiki/4193582.html> 28 October 2008.

“From Beckett to Stoppard : Existentialism , Death and Absurdity.

[<http://www.homesprintmail.com/lifeform/backstop.html>](http://www.homesprintmail.com/lifeform/backstop.html) 3
November 2009.

“Ionesco and the Comic Spirit.” J.S. Dubrovsky.

[<http://www.jstor.org/pss/3206384/ask.com.html>](http://www.jstor.org/pss/3206384/ask.com.html) 3 November
2009.

“The Function of Humor in Zen Religion.” Bruce Bigenho. Zen
Humor.google.com Date of Conrad M – Zen and Comic Spirit.

[<http://www.montefin.com/zen/zen-humor.html>](http://www.montefin.com/zen/zen-humor.html) 9 Jun2 2010.

“What can I Lexigram.” Lindaland-Linda-Goodman.com.12th December

2007.<<http://www.lindagoodman.com/ubb/Forms 8/001758html>>
28 November 2009.

“Mind is Buddha.” Geoffrey Shugen Arnold Sensei, Buddhadharma –
The Practitioners Quarterly. Spring 2005.

www.thebuddhadharma.com/issues/2005/spring/shugen.html. 27
October 2009.

“Bardo Thodol: The Tibetan Book of the Dead.” Asif Agha – Death
Reference

Website. <<http://www.bibliotecapleyades.net/mistic/bardo-thodol06html>>

1 March 2010.

“Death as Initiation in Exit the King.” M.S. Barranger.

<<http://www.jstor.org/pss/3206384-ask.com>> 1 March 2010.

“Survivor Guilt in Holocaust Survivors and Their Children.” Aaron Haas.

California State University , Dominguez Hills, California.

<[http://www.Survivor 20 Guilt%20m%20Holocaust%20-html](http://www.Survivor%20Guilt%20m%20Holocaust%20-html)> 6

March 2002.

“Small-Cast-One-Act.” Guide online.2009.Wiki.Sadism and Masochism-

as-medical-terms <<http://www.wapedia.mobi/en/Sadomasochism-as-medical-terms.html>>

17 March 2009.

“Tragic Farce.” John

Simon. answers.com <<http://www.answers.com/topic/the-chairs-play-6.html>> 3 January 2010.

“The Chairs: Review of a 1998 Revival of Ionesco’s play.” Lahr

Review.enotes/the chairs/review of a 1998 revival of his play.

www.enotes.com/of-and-a-studyguide-chairs/essay.html> 28

November 2009.

Zen Centre of Syracuse . Hoen-ji. Summer 2008.

<http://www.zencentreofsyracuse.org/teisho.html> > 5 May 2010.

“Eugene Ionesco. The Lesson.” City Garage Theatre 1999-2010. Eugene Ionesco. Comic Drama/ Backstage West – Critics Choice. LA Times Recommended.

<<http://www.Citygarage.org/past-productions/the-lesson.html>> 8
January 2005.

“Eugene Ionesco.” The Art of Theatre No. 6. The Paris Review – Shusha Guppy 1984.

<<http://www.theparisreview.org/media/2956-Ionesco2.Pdf>> 15
November 2006.

“What Made This Man? Mengele.” Robert Jay Lifton. N.Y. Times – July 21, 1985 Section 6; page 16, column 1. 1985 N.Y.T. Co.

<<http://www.wellesley.edu/Polixi/wi/100/mengele.html>> 14
November 2009.

“The History of the Third Reich. The World Stands United.” Hans. Alabama, U.S.A.

<<http://www.thirdreich88.blogspot.com/2009/.../adolph-hitlers-national-socialism.html>> 28 November 2009.

“Ionesco Beyond Absurdism.” Jessica Runde. Consciousness, Literature and the Arts. Archive – Vol. 8. 1st April 2007.

<<http://www.blackboard.lincoln.ac.uk/bbcswebdav/users/dmeryerdinkgrafe/archaic/runde-html>> 4 September 2004.

“Eugene Ionesco and the Search for Identity.” Dascalu Mihaela. 3rd December 2009. Scribd. <<http://www.scribd.com/doc/23848345/Eugene-Ionesco-and-the-Search-Identity.html>> 27 September 2009.

“The Chairs.” <<http://www.answers.com/topics/the-chairs-play-6.html>> 7 March 2007.

“Do the Wounds Ever Heal?” PTSD and Holocaust Survivors Andy Douillard. 5th December 2005 for Prof. Marcuse’s Lecture Course “Interdisciplinary Perspectives on the Holocaust.” University of California, Santa Barbara, Fall 2005. Prepared for Web by Harold Marcuse on 15th December 2005.
[www.history.ucsb.edu/faculty/marcuse/classes/33d/projects/survivors/Survivor PTSD-AN](http://www.history.ucsb.edu/faculty/marcuse/classes/33d/projects/survivors/Survivor%20PTSD-AN) 4 July 2010.

“Eugene Ionesco” – Introduction/Eugene Ionesco.1909-1994 enotes.com
www.enotes.com/drama-criticism/Ionesco-Eugene. 16 July 2010.

“The Rhinoceros.” <<http://runninginheels.co.uk/articles/EugeneIonesco.html>>
 24 March 2010.

“Sadomasochism.”
 <<http://www.artandpopularculture.com/sadomasochism.html>>
 7 March 2009.

“Exit the King” from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.

<http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exit-the-King.html>> 25 February
2010.

Television Source

“Oneness”. *Oneness university*, by Amma Bhagavan. Lecture. Amma Bhagavan. Episode 40, Sony T.V. India, 1 May 2007. Television.

<<http://www.onenessindia.org>>

NEHU LIBRARY
Acc. No. 104287
Acc. by. RHM
Date. 11/12/2012
Class by.
Sub-heading by.
Enter by.

Bio-Data

Naomi Bhuyan

Senior Lecturer, Sankardev College, Shillong. Since 1994.

Refresher Courses Attended

1. English Department. N.E.H.U. Shillong, June 2001.
2. English Department N.E.H.U. Shillong, November 2001.
3. C.I.E.F.L. Shillong, December 2002.

Seminars Papers Presented.- (orally only)

1. Students Seminar Competition, Fraternity Week, N.E.H.U., Shillong. 1989. Ionesco's *The Chairs*, Lecture-cum-demonstration. (Adjudged – 1st Position.)
2. Ionesco's *The Chairs: A Study in Schizophrenia*. N.E.H.U., Shillong, October 2001.
3. Ionesco's *Exit the King*, N.E.H.U., Tura, November 2003.
4. *Angst in Ionesco's Plays*, N.E.H.U., Tura, November 2006.

Papers Published

"Harold Pinter's Stanley Webber: A Victim of de' Sade". In: *Protocol: Journal of Translation, Creative and Critical Writings*, Department of English, N.E.H.U., Tura. Vol.1, No. 1, Spring 2007. ISSN 0973 9807

She is also a playwright and professional actress writing for and working on social issues through the media of theatre. She has acted in her original plays for stage, radio and Doordarshan television since 1987. Her ultimate aspiration is to complete her thesis on Ionesco the Father of The Theatre of the Absurd, to be a complete theatre specialist.