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The Work of Poverty

Lance Duerfahrd

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Notes



Introduction

1. Samuel Beckett, *Proust and Three Dialogues with Georges Duthuit* (London: Calder, 1987), 122.

2. Beckett assumes poverty through the writing process in his work rather than through a vow, a Franciscan promise to align existence with a spiritual model. For an excellent analysis of Beckett's early relation to resignation and stoicism see Matthew Feldman, "'Agnostic Quietism' and Samuel Beckett's Early Development," in *Samuel Beckett: History, Memory, Archive*, ed. Seán Kennedy and Katherine Weiss (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 183–200.

3. Anthony Cronin, *Samuel Beckett: The Last Modernist* (New York: Harper Collins, 1997), 389.

4. Idiomatic translation of *petitio principii*.

5. Beckett's poverty focuses on evicted and vagabond characters and recognizes architecture's containing (imprisoning) function rather than the sheltering function. In his essay "Experience and Poverty" Walter Benjamin discusses the glass architecture as the forerunner of the new poverty. The domestic interior is put brutally on view, a situation that appeals to Benjamin via Brecht: "A neat phrase by Brecht helps us out here: 'Erase the traces!' is the refrain in the first poem of his *Reader for City Dwellers*. . . . This has now been achieved by Scheerbart, with his glass, and by the Bauhaus, with its steel. They have created rooms in which it is hard to leave traces." *Selected Writings*, vol. 2, 1927–1934, ed. Michael Jennings, Howard Eiland, and Gary Smith, trans. Rodney Livingstone et al. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 734.

6. This tenacity of inquiry overhangs even Kafka's correspondence, particularly as it comes to us today, because none of the answers have survived his questions: all of Felice's replies have been lost.

7. Beckett, *Proust and Three Dialogues*, 122.

8. Roland Barthes calls Brecht's theater "a moral theater, that is, a theater which asks, with the spectator: what is to be done in such a situation? . . . Brechtian invention is a tactical process to unite with revolutionary correction. In other words, for Brecht the outcome of every moral impasse depends on a more accurate analysis of the concrete situation in which the subject finds himself." Roland Barthes, "The Tasks of Brechtian Criticism," in *Critical Essays*, trans. Richard Howard (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1972), 76.

9. Clas Zilliacus, "Three Times 'Godot': Beckett, Brecht, Bulatovic," *Comparative Drama* 4, no. 1 (Spring 1970): 3–17. Brecht makes Estragon's German more colloquial through the addition of idioms (changing Tophoven's translation from "Schweigen wir ein wenig, ja" to "Halten wir das Maul") and the abbreviation of Estragon's verbs (*hätt', heut', werd'*). *Ibid.*, 6.

10. Beckett's characters are too far gone for cooptation. The contrast between the authors becomes apparent through a consideration of Brecht's poem, "Belonging to a Reader for Those who Live in Cities." Here Brecht advises his readers to erase their traces, cover their tracks ("Verwisch die Spuren"). To the underground political worker reading his poem, Brecht issues the imperative to pass by your parents as if they were strangers; to not show your face; to go in any house when it rains; to see to it that you do not have any gravestone inscription to betray you. Yet Beckett's figures already comply with these suggestions. The distance between Beckett and Brecht becomes apparent in the difference between unwanted anonymity (the state of Beckett's characters) and going incognito (Brecht's proposed strategy). *Poems 1913–1956*, ed. John Willet, Ralph Manheim, and Erich Fried (New York: Routledge, 1987), 131–40.

11. Zilliacus, "Three Times 'Godot,'" 8.

12. Elin Diamond, "Re: Blau, Butler, Beckett, and the Politics of Seeming," *TDR/The Drama Review* 44, no. 4 (Winter 2000): 38.

13. Since the author's death, the Beckett estate has continued as the official arbiter separating approved from outcast productions.

14. Everett Frost, "Letter to the Editor," *Beckett Circle* 16, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 5.

15. *Ibid.* Frost revealingly observes that liberties taken with the play in a performance at Lincoln Center are liberties taken with "Beckett's 'Godot.'"

16. Darko Suvin, *To Brecht and Beyond* (Sussex, UK: Harvester Books, 1984), 225.

17. Though Suvin does not elaborate the point any further here, "camps" refers most likely to refugee camps, detention camps, or concentration camps. The relevance of Beckett's work echoes in these laboratories of the modern world wherein the subject is dispossessed of rights, agency or movement, and human status.

18. Samuel Beckett, *Waiting for Godot* (New York: Grove Press, 1982), 27.

19. Vivian Mercier, "The Uneventful Event," *Irish Times*, February 18, 1956, 6.

20. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 60.

21. *Ibid.*, 7, 60.

22. Martin Esslin, *The Theatre of the Absurd* (New York: Anchor Books, 1961), xvii.

23. Herbert Blau, "On Directing Beckett," in *Sails of the Herring Fleet: Essays on Beckett* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004), 63.

24. David Bradby, *Samuel Beckett: "Waiting for Godot"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 163.

25. *Ibid.*

26. Quoted in Deirdre Bair, *Beckett, a Biography* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), 640.

27. George Craig, Martha Dow Fehsenfeld, Dan Gunn, and Lois More Overbeck

eds., *The Letters of Samuel Beckett 1941–1956* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 594.

28. Suvin, *To Brecht and Beyond*, 225.

29. Samuel Beckett, "The Capital of the Ruins," in *Complete Short Prose, 1929–1989*, ed. S. E. Gontarski (New York: Grove Press, 1995), 278.

30. Samuel Beckett, *Worstward Ho* (New York: Grove Press, 1983), 43.

31. *Ibid.*, 9.

32. Samuel Beckett, Whoroscope notebook, Nd MS 4000/1. Beckett Collection, University of Reading.

33. Georges Bataille, "Concerning the Accounts Given by the Residents of Hiroshima," in *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, ed. Cathy Caruth (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 232.

34. *The Kittredge Shakespeare's King Lear*, ed. George Lyman Kittredge, Irving Ribner, and Scott Foresman (New York: Blaisdell, 1968), 4.1.27–28.

Chapter 1

1. Quoted in James Knowlson, *Damned to Fame: The Life of Samuel Beckett* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 369.

2. Rick Cluchey, telephone conversation with author, September 20, 2011.

3. Esslin, *Theatre of the Absurd*, xvii.

4. *Ibid.*, 142.

5. *Ibid.*, 7.

6. *Ibid.*

7. *Ibid.*, xv.

8. *Ibid.*, 309. He claims that the reality given on stage in the dramas he discusses "is a psychological reality expressed in images that are the outward projection of states of mind, fears, dreams, nightmares, and conflicts within the personality of the author" (304).

9. *Ibid.*, 305.

10. *Ibid.*, xxiv.

11. Alden Whitman, "In the Wilderness for 20 Years," *New York Times*, October 24, 1969, 32.

12. Without explicitly referencing prison, Mary Bryden describes *Godot* as "wall to wall maleness." "Gender in Transition: 'Godot' and 'Endgame,'" in *Waiting for Godot and "Endgame": A New Casebook*, ed. Steven Connor (Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan, 1992), 151.

13. David Smith, "In Godot We Trust," *Observer*, March 7, 2009, 8.

14. See Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998). See also Theodor Adorno's discussion of "das bloße Existenz" in describing the life we see on Beckett's stage, "the absurdity into which mere existence is transformed when it is absorbed into naked self-identity" ("zu einem Absurden, in das bloße Existenz umschlägt, sobald sie in ihrer nackten sich selbst Gleichheit aufgeht"). "Versuch, das Endspiel zu verstehen," in *Noten zur Literatur* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1974), 287.

15. Samuel Beckett, "J. M. Mime," in *Samuel Beckett: An Exhibition*, ed. James Knowlson (London: Turret Books, 1971), 117. Roger Blin describes how this nudity of Beckett's work inspires both wonder and discretion: "Waiting for Godot struck me as so rich and unique in its nudity that it seemed to me improper to question the author

about its meaning." Quoted in Ruby Cohn, *From Desire to "Godot": Pocket Theater of Postwar Paris* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 150.

16. Jean Anouilh believed this point crucial enough to use it as the title of his review, "'Godot' or the Music-Hall Sketch of Pascal's Pensées as Played by the Fratellini Clowns," in *Casebook on "Waiting for Godot,"* ed. and trans. Ruby Cohn (New York: Grove Press, 1967), 12–13.

17. Adorno, "Trying to Understand 'Endgame,'" in *Notes to Literature II*, trans. Sherry Weber Nicholsen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 268.

18. Beckett, "Capital of the Ruins," 278.

19. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 58.

20. Beckett, *Proust and Three Dialogues*, 19.

21. Martin Puchner, *Stage Fright: Modernism, Anti-Theatricality, and Drama* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 159.

22. Tjebbe Westerdorp describes the apparatus Beckett constructs in order to keep actress Billie Whitelaw still as she performs Mouth in *Not I*. These resemble the devices employed to hold sitters immobile during the long exposure times of early photography. "All sorts of complicated constructions were used in the stage play to keep the head of the actress in its place—bars for the arms, for instance, formed a kind of iron trap." The speed of the performance tests these restraints at another level: Whitelaw says she "felt like an athlete crashing through barriers while chained and physically impeded." Westerdorp, "Catharsis in Beckett's Late Drama: A New Model of Transaction?" *Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui* 1 (1992): 109.

23. Jonathan Kalb, *Beckett in Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 79. Beckett also railed against productions that exceeded the haiku-like simplicity of *a country road, a tree, evening*. The Miami premiere, for example, set the play in a junkyard full of plumbing debris. As Beckett complained to Charles Marowitz about Peter Hall's 1955 production, "the stage was so cluttered the actors could hardly move." Quoted in Dougald McMillan and Martha Fehsenfeld, *Beckett in the Theatre*, vol. 1, *From "Waiting for Godot" to "Krapp's Last Tape"* (London: Calder, 1988), 82.

24. *The Theatrical Notebooks of Samuel Beckett*, vol. 1, "Waiting for Godot," ed. Dougald McMillan and James Knowlson (New York: Grove Press, 1994), 185.

25. C. Bandman, "The Play's the Thing . . .," *San Quentin News*, November 28, 1957, 2.

26. Quoted in McMillan and Fehsenfeld, *Beckett in the Theater*, 80.

27. Erin Koshal, "'Some Exceptions' and the 'Normal Thing': Reconsidering 'Waiting for Godot's' Theatrical Form through Its Prison Performances," *Modern Drama* 53, no. 2 (2010): 197.

28. McMillan and Fehsenfeld, *Beckett in the Theater*, 97.

29. Knowlson, *Damned to Fame*, 436.

30. Samuel Beckett, *Notes Diverse Holo*, ed. Matthijs Engelberts and Everett Frost with Jane Maxwell (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2006), 215.

31. Michael Harris, "Godot Presented at Quentin," *San Francisco Chronicle*, November 24, 1957, 23.

32. Richard Strayton, "Inmates Waiting for 'Godot,'" *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, May 8, 1988, 9.

33. Harris, "Godot Presented at Quentin," 23.

34. Sidney Homan, *Beckett's Theaters: Interpretations for Performance* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1984), 57.

35. In her negative review of the first Broadway production, the stage littered with debris from a dump, Marya Mannes collapses the play into the absent character and

puts the audience on stage, too: "Everybody recommends a hit. Everybody, that is, except that very special group, so proudly divorced from all others, that would wait for *Godot* here too, dump and all." Marya Mannes, "Two Tramps," in Cohn, *Casebook on "Waiting for Godot,"* 31.

36. Gregory's staging of *Endgame* channels the trapped situation of *Godot*. A chicken-wire fence encircled the stage, and the stage lighting made it difficult to see the characters through the fence. For details of this production see Walter Kerr's review, "Oh Beckett, Poor Beckett!" *New York Times*, February 11, 1973, 146.

37. Etaoin Shrdlu, "Bastille by the Bay," *San Quentin News*, November 28, 1957, 3.

38. Bandman, "The Play's the Thing . . .," 2.

39. "I was waiting for Godot and didn't realize it," says inmate Rick Cluchey. Quoted in Herbert Blau, *As If: An Autobiography* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2011), 230.

40. Bandman, "The Play's the Thing . . .," 2.

41. "Workshop Players Score Hit Here: San Francisco Group Leaves S. Q. Audience Waiting for *Godot*," *San Quentin News*, November 28, 1957, 1. The prisoner's angle on realism differs from that of Daniel Albright. Commenting on how Vladimir pictures sleep in Godot's loft, he writes, "Godot hovers in the wings like the unrealizability of Realism, a tantalizing ghost. When Beckett told Roger Blin that Godot might be 'a pair of old army boots,' he suggested how strongly he identified Godot with a domain of earthy, comforting objects, as opposed to the spoof-objects present on stage." Daniel Albright, *Beckett and Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 51.

42. Colin Duckworth, ed., "Introduction," *En Attendant Godot* (London: Harrap, 1966), lxiii.

43. Esslin, *Theatre of the Absurd*, xvii.

44. Kalb, *Beckett in Performance*, 157.

45. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 24.

46. "Letters to the Editor," *San Quentin News*, November 28, 1957, 2. Adjacent to the reviews of *Godot* in the *San Quentin News* are columns on what privileges (improved cell assignments, for example) are open to prisoners with certain ratings. Medium-A inmates are allowed these privileges. The article continues, "Inmates with Medium A classification who have refused job assignment and who have never maintained a reasonably good work or conduct record will not be considered." "North Honor Block Now Open to Medium-A Inmates," *San Quentin News*, November 28, 1957, 1.

47. This letter of the curious prisoner should be contrasted with a letter to the editor of *Le Monde*, written by someone in recent attendance at the premiere of *Godot*. Titled *Manifestation au Théâtre de Babylone*, the writer describes how the director, Roger Blin, had to drop the curtain before the end of act 1 because of "sifflets, insultes, rien'ny manqué" ["whistles, insults, the works"]. The letter writer continues, "A l'entre-acte des discussions entre partisans et adversaires prirent un ton élevé, et ce n'est qu'après le départ en masse des mécontents, au début du second acte, que l'on eut loisir d'écouter tranquillement la suite de la pièce de Samuel Beckett." ["At intermission the discussion between the supporters and adversaries of Beckett's play took on a heated tone, and only with the discontented crowd's departure en masse at the start of the second act could one listen to the rest of Beckett's play in peace."] "Letter to the Editor," *Le Monde*, February 2, 1953, 36. The disappointed sophisticates make a show, or even a strike (*une manifestation*) out of their disappointment. By contrast, the prisoner who is forced to leave makes a plea to read the part he could not see.

48. For an essay illuminating the differences between *Godot* and *Huis Clos*, see Lois Gordon, "'No Exit' and 'Waiting for Godot': Performances in Contrast," in *Captive*

Audience: Prison and Captivity in Contemporary Theater, ed. Thomas Richard Fahy and Kimball King (New York: Routledge, 2003), 166–88.

49. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Bariona, or the Son of Thunder*, in *The Writings of Jean-Paul Sartre*, vol. 2, *Selected Prose*, ed. Michel Rybalka and Michel Contat (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1985), 85.

50. Piouk says, "Here it is. I would prohibit reproduction. I would perfect the condom and other appliances and generalize their use. I would create state-run corps of abortionists. I would impose the death sentence on every woman guilty of having given birth. I would drown the newborn. I would campaign in favor of homosexuality and myself set the example. And to get things going, I would encourage by every means the recourse to euthanasia, without, however, making it an obligation. Here you have the broad outlines." Samuel Beckett, *Eleuthéria* (London: Foxrock, 1998), 43.

51. Sartre, *Bariona*, 87.

52. *Ibid.*, 136. Earlier a character in the play, similarly with an eye toward the audience, says, "You should not keep from having children. For even for the blind and the disabled and the unemployed and the prisoners there is joy" (131).

53. Adorno, "Trying to Understand 'Endgame,'" 249.

54. The word, originally misprinted as "explication," appears in *Catastrophe*. Samuel Beckett, *The Collected Shorter Plays*, ed. S. E. Gontarski (New York: Grove Press, 1984), 299.

55. Joseph Roach, "All the Dead Voices," in *Land/Scapes/Theater*, ed. Elinor Fuchs and Una Chaudhuri (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 88.

56. James Knowlson, "Beckett's Production Notebooks," in *Beckett: "Waiting for Godot": A Casebook*, ed. Ruby Cohn (London: Macmillan, 1987), 52. This theme is also struck by Lois Gordon: "Imprisoned in a universe they cannot understand, Vladimir and Estragon are dressed as quasi prison inmates." Lois Gordon, *Reading "Godot"* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 137.

57. "Beckett the poet successfully evades abduction by worthy causes as a condition of his austere, ironic compassion. But *Waiting for Godot* does not evade history. As soon as the refugees that Peter Hall was the first to call 'tramps' begin to take stock of their rotten tubers along 'a country road' in an 'abode of stones,' history and memory come into play. They proliferate in the dramatic silences that *sensitized listeners* cannot but hear as choric" (emphasis added). Roach, "All the Dead Voices," 91.

58. Hugh Kenner puts this sharply when he says of the rapport between Vladimir and Estragon that "the reasoning behind the ritualistic dialogue . . . is of merely idiotic transparency, very appealing." Hugh Kenner, *Samuel Beckett: A Critical Study* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 73. Kenner's insight is that the transparency of the dialogue is onto something other than common sense.

59. Blau, "On Directing Beckett," 63.

60. Alan Mandell in a telephone conversation with the author, August 19, 2011.

61. Shrdlu, "Bastille by the Bay," November 28, 1957, 3.

62. Knowlson, *Damned to Fame*, 422. Knowlson also notes "[Beckett's] natural sympathy for those who were incarcerated" (566).

63. *Ibid.*, 566.

64. *Ibid.*

65. Mark Nixon, *Samuel Beckett's German Diaries, 1936–1937* (London: Continuum, 2011), 163. The iron bars of prison seem to fall somewhere between a window and the famed windowlessness of Leibnitz's monad.

66. See Beckett's brief contribution to Avigdor Arikha's exhibition catalogue: "Siege laid to the impregnable without . . . back and forth the gaze beating on unsee-

able and unmakeable. Truce for a space and the marks of what it is to be and be in face of. Those deep marks to show." Samuel Beckett, "For Avigdor Arika," in *Disjecta*, ed. Ruby Cohn (London: Calder, 1983), 152.

67. Enoch Brater notes that "Havel's 'subversive activities' included his membership in the Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Prosecuted (VONS) as well as his signature on the Charter 77 manifesto, of which he was one of the three original spokesmen." *Beyond Minimalism: Beckett's Late Style in the Theater* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 139. Brater's chapter "'Other Only' Images" remains the definitive piece on *Catastrophe*.

68. Brater, *Beyond Minimalism*, 144.

69. *Ibid.*, 145.

70. Blau, *As If*, 229.

71. Strayton, "Inmates Waiting for 'Godot,'" 9.

72. Bryden, "Gender in Transition," 152.

73. It is often because of what is missing rather than what is there that dictates the executive decisions around Beckett's play. Roger Blin, for example, was pondering which of Beckett's plays to stage in the Babylon Theater: *Godot* or the surreal multicharacter drama *Eleuthéria* (Greek for "freedom"). Blin chooses *Godot*: "I was poor, I didn't have a penny . . . and I thought I'd be better off with the *Godot* because there were only four actors and they were bums. They could wear their own clothes if it came to that, and I wouldn't need anything but a spotlight and a tree." Thus *Godot* premiered over freedom. Quoted in Bair, *Samuel Beckett*, 403.

74. Yet the desires of the audience cannot be managed, or predicted. The warden, focusing on the women absent from Beckett's stage, overlooked the boy who appears there. Blau writes that during the performance, as Vladimir took the boy downstage to question him about *Godot*, "there was an absolute silence in the audience, the men still and staring, then some beckoning hisses, before a voice from the back growled, 'C'mere, boy.'" Blau, *As If*, 230.

75. Adorno, "Trying to Understand 'Endgame,'" 248. "Gewacht wird darüber, da es nur so und nicht anders sei, ein fein klingelndes Alarmsystem meldet, was zur schweigt aus Zartheit das Zarte nicht minder als das Brutale" (Adorno, "Versuch," 289).

76. Herbert Blau, "In Memoriam," in *Sails of the Herring Fleet*, 24.

77. Samuel Beckett, *Murphy* (London: Calder, 1993), 43. The horseleech reference is from Proverbs 30:15: "The horseleech hath two daughters, crying, Give, give."

78. Kenner, *Samuel Beckett*, 182. N. Katherine Hayles defines entropy in these terms: "The first law of thermodynamics, stating that energy is neither created nor destroyed, points to a world in which no energy is lost. The second law, stating that entropy always tends to increase in a closed system, forecasts a universe that is constantly winding down." N. Katherine Hayles, quoted in David Houston Jones, *Samuel Beckett and Testimony* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 152.

79. Samuel Beckett, *Murphy*, 5.

80. Kenner, *Samuel Beckett*, 182. Herbert Blau drops into the middle of his essay on Beckett how *Godot* counteracts this law: "Someone cries, another weeps—by the sorcery of form Beckett defies the Second Law of Thermodynamics. Energy is pumped back into the dead system by having it come back from the other side of the stage, crippled and much the worse for wear, crying pitifully for help." Herbert Blau, "Notes from the Underground," in *Sails of the Herring Fleet*, 31.

81. Suvin, *To Brecht and Beyond*, 211. This raises the question whether *Terra Beckettiana* is an island or a universe, an island within a universe, or an island that constitutes a universe.

82. *Ibid.*, 212.

83. David Houston Jones brilliantly describes the science behind his literary analysis in *Samuel Beckett and Testimony*, 152–62.

84. *Ibid.*, 155.

85. *Ibid.*, 159.

86. *Ibid.*, 161.

87. Rick Cluchey, "My Years with Beckett," in *Theatre Workbook 1: Krapp's Last Tape*, ed. James Knowlson (London: Brutus Books Limited, 1980), 120. Cluchey might be misremembering *closed place* (*Endroit clos*), the first words of Beckett's *Fizzles 5*, since "closed system" only appears in criticism of Beckett, not within Beckett's work. This may be a creative misremembering since Beckett's term suggests a space you cannot enter, rather than one that keeps you in. For a discussion see C. J. Ackerley and S. E. Gontarski, eds., *The Grove Companion to Samuel Beckett* (New York: Grove Press, 2004), 99.

88. Alan Mandell in a telephone conversation with the author, August 19, 2011.

89. Edmund Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 43.

90. Ruby Cohn observes that Beckett's characters undergo "playlong dying." *A Beckett Canon* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005), 229.

91. The monadological nature of the institution transforms Beckett's play even before the performance begins. The San Quentin Drama Workshop begins with but a single copy of *Godot*. They use the version printed within the August 1956 edition of *Theatre Arts Magazine*, held by the prison library. Because of a mishap in the printing process, however, the pages are properly numbered but do not follow Beckett's script. Pages from act 1 have been improperly exchanged with pages from act 2. Though this disturbs the rhythm of the play, it does remarkably little to disturb its sense. A turn of the page entirely recasts who is or who is no longer on stage. At times the sequencing error creates a new dialogue and a different structure of call and response. In this recut version of Beckett's play, Pozzo's suggestion that Estragon invite him to sit down is followed by Estragon's statement as he looks at the tree, "Pity we haven't got enough rope." This demonstrates how performances in prison, like those during the siege and after the flood, must be measured by a standard other than fidelity or infidelity to Beckett's text.

92. Houston Jones, *Samuel Beckett and Testimony*, 153.

93. Cluchey, "My Years with Beckett," 121.

94. Adorno, "Trying to Understand 'Endgame,'" 251.

95. Cluchey, "My Years with Beckett," 121.

96. Sidney Homan, *The Embarrassment of Swans*, unpublished memoir, 19.

97. Blau, "Notes from the Underground," 33 (emphasis added).

98. Cluchey, "My Years with Beckett," 121.

99. Cluchey remembers his cellmate saying "everyone was puzzled until one guy came in with a rope around his neck and another guy whipping him and guess what his name was? Lucky! That spoke to everyone in the audience." Smith, "In *Godot* we Trust," 8.

100. "Two shapes then, oblong like man, entered into collision before me. They fell and I saw them no more. I naturally thought of the pseudocouple Mercier-Camier." Samuel Beckett, *Three Novels: Molloy, Malone Dies, The Unnamable* (New York: Grove Press, 1991), 297.

101. Jonathan Boulter, *Beckett: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Continuum Press, 2008), 31. Like many critics, Boulter uncouples Beckett's compound word and inserts a hyphen to create the new word "pseudo-couple." Some exceptions to this tendency

to pseudo-ize the couple exist. In his gloss on the homosocial dynamics in Beckett's world, for example, Peter Boxall observes: "Like Holmes and Watson, [Vladimir and Estragon] may have breakfast together, but in the critical imagination they have remained resolutely straight." Peter Boxall, "Beckett and Homoeroticism," in *Samuel Beckett Studies*, ed. Lois Oppenheim (London: Palgrave, 2004), 110.

102. The quote continues, ". . . the little gasp of the condemned to life, rotting in his dungeon garroted and racked, to gasp what it is to have to celebrate banishment, beware." Beckett, *Three Novels*, 325.

103. Craig et al., *Letters of Samuel Beckett, 1941–1956*, 524.

104. Samuel Beckett quoted in Craig et al., *Letters of Samuel Beckett, 1941–1956*, 504.

105. See Walter Benjamin's argument about the importance attached by Dada to "its uselessness for contemplative immersion" and Benjamin's own project to introduce concepts into the theory of art "that are completely useless for the purposes of Fascism." *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1969), 237, 218.

106. Knowlson, *Damned to Fame*, 369.

107. *Ibid.*

108. "Let this same Lucky, the caricature of intellect with the white clown face, pound home fruitless insights into the ductile, malleable, impressionable force which may create, but never command the respect of the promoter-master." Bandman, "The Play's the Thing . . .," 2.

109. "The stage, with its windows high up on the back wall, has been interpreted as the interior of a human skull." Bair, *Samuel Beckett*, 467. The metaphor imposes itself over much of early criticism of Beckett. When the curtains are drawn in *Endgame*, writes Hugh Kenner, "this is so plainly a metaphor for waking up that we fancy the stage, with its high peepholes, to be the inside of an immense skull." Kenner, *Samuel Beckett*, 155.

110. For a discussion about how catharsis is theorized in *Hamlet*, see Stephen Orgel, "The Play of Conscience," in *Performativity and Performance*, ed. Andrew Parker and Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (New York: Routledge, 1995), 133–51.

111. The meshing of the criminal past with the theater is one of the recurring themes of *Shakespeare behind Bars* (Hank Rogerson, 2005). This documentary film, about a production of *The Tempest* in a Kansas prison, gathers its energy from the way confessions made by prisoners acting on stage are intercut with, and implicitly service, their confessions to the camera about their crimes.

112. The New Testament uses the term *skandalon* to describe an unforgiveable crime that throws a stumbling block (*skandalon*) before our judgment. These were crimes in excess of everyday trespasses (*harmatanein*). See Matthew 18:7.

113. Bandman, "The Play's the Thing . . .," 2.

114. "Weighing the pros and cons" is a citation from Vladimir's monologue about coming to the aid of his fellow man: "It is true that when with folded arms we weigh the pros and cons we are no less a credit to our species." Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 51. Unlike Vladimir, Bandman weighs this decision within the context of prison rather of species. Etaoin Shrdlu also picks up on this line from the play and doesn't bat an eye in literally weighing the cons in the audience: "The trio of musclemen, biceps overflowing . . . parked all 642 lbs. on the aisle and waited for the girls and funny stuff." Shrdlu, "Bastille by the Bay," November 28, 1957, 3.

115. See Martha Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness*, rev. ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 388–91.

116. Sergei Tretiakov, "Bert Brecht," in *Brecht: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Peter Demetz (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1962), 27 (emphasis added).

117. See Ciaran Ross's argument, contrary to my discussion here, that "the negative is always positive" in Beckett. *Beckett's Art of Absence: Rethinking the Void* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 130.

118. Quoted in Jean-Michel Rabaté, "Philosophizing with Beckett: Adorno and Badiou," in *A Companion to Samuel Beckett*, ed. S. E. Gontarski (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 102.

119. Bandman, "The Play's the Thing," 2. Bandman's opinion here echoes Beckett's opening statement to George Duthuit in their discussion of art: "Total object, complete with missing pieces, instead of partial object." Beckett, *Proust and Three Dialogues*, 101.

120. The errancy encouraged by Beckett also includes Bandman's response to it. He speaks oxymoronically, creatively, of how Didi and Gogo "finalize into precursors of doubt and death" (how does one finalize into a precursor?). Bandman, "The Play's the Thing . . .," 2.

121. Regarding pilgrimage in character: the first time Cluchey and Beckett arrange to meet, Cluchey arrives early at the Deux Magots in Paris. The "noticeable thing" Cluchey wears so that Beckett can single him out of the crowd is a bowler hat. "Do you always wear that hat?" Beckett asks. Cluchey, telephone conversation with author, September 20, 2011.

122. The warden concedes to a twenty-five-dollar yearly budget for makeup, almost ensuring that the workshop devote itself to Beckett's bare-boned productions. The San Quentin Drama Workshop is still active today.

123. "Lenin liked to think of prison as a university for revolutionaries." Michael Hardt, "Prison Time," in *Genet: In the Language of the Enemy*, ed. Scott Durham, *Yale French Studies* 91 (Spring 1997): 64.

124. Skip Kaltenheuser, "The Prison Playwright," *Gadfly*, September/October 1999, 5.

125. Years later Cluchey enumerates the minute sounds of man, machine, and object on stage as evidence for Beckett's detailed "orchestration" of the stage of *Krapp's Last Tape*. He speaks of orchestration rather than direction because Beckett was concerned with the relation between the weaker notes. "The opening of tins, the clink of a bottle, the opening and closing of the book, the sound of slippers on the floor." Cluchey calls these "every essence of the play." Cluchey, telephone conversation with author, October 18, 2011.

126. *Ibid.*

127. Rick Cluchey and Michael Haerdter, "*Krapp's Last Tape*: Production Report," in *Theatre Workbook 1: Krapp's Last Tape*, ed. James Knowlson (London: Brutus Books, 1980), 127.

128. *Ibid.*

129. *Ibid.*, 121.

130. In an interview, Cluchey says, "In practice, what happened to me in prison left such a lasting mark, I never get away from it. I'm condemned to that, you could say." Amanda Fazzone, "Walls within Walls," *Washington City Paper*, <http://65.79.227.222/articles/17051/walls-within-walls>. "What happened," that is, the overlap of theater and prison, left a kind of tattoo, a double mark on Cluchey.

131. Cluchey, *The Cage* (San Francisco: Barbwire Press, 1970), 8.

132. *Ibid.*, 9.

133. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 34.

134. Cluchey, *The Cage*, 32.

135. In his play, Cluchey wants prison to structure the theater. The stage directions for his play are issued through a PA system, not submerged quietly within the script.

Preceding the rise of the curtain and before the lights are dimmed, a voice loudly announces the types of things one might hear in a prison: "The following men have visits. Shirley 09742, Bowen 09582, Rced 09827 . . . etc." and "Attention on the yard. Attention on the yard. Warden Duffy has issued the following memo. 'Cell robberies in the North and West honor units are increasing. Any man caught in another inmate's cell will be brought before the Captain's line for disciplinary action. There will be no exceptions.'" Cluchey's name and number are listed among those men who are to "report to the laundry-room for work assignments." *Ibid.*, 6.

136. *Ibid.*, 13.

137. Homan, *The Embarrassment of Swans*, 2.

138. Blau, "On Directing Beckett," 96.

139. *Ibid.*, 95.

140. Cohn, *Casebook on "Waiting for Godot,"* 14.

141. McMillan and Knowlson, *Theatrical Notebooks of Samuel Beckett*, 1:239, 293.

142. McMillan and Fehsenfeld, *Beckett in the Theater*, 140.

143. Beckett's play (*Waiting for Godot*, 14) notes how its own dialogue cannot progress dialectically forward. Instead, each statement counteracts the previous one, and answers are jarringly misaligned with questions:

GOGO. Funny, the more you eat the worse it gets.

DIDI. For me it's just the opposite.

GOGO. In other words?

DIDI. I get used to the muck as I go along.

GOGO. Is that the opposite?

144. Homan, *Embarrassment of Swans*, 7.

145. Alain Robbe-Grillet, *For a New Novel: Essays on Fiction*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Grove Press, 1965), 115.

146. *Ibid.*, 121. Robbe-Grillet quickly adds, "Of course, this freedom is without any use."

147. Koshal, "'Some Exceptions,'" 188.

148. Cluchey, "My Years with Beckett," 121 (emphasis added).

149. Homan, *Embarrassment of Swans*, 12.

150. In his illuminating article "The Body as Object of Modern Performance," Jon Erickson leads us through a careful elaboration of the corporeal status of actor in role in Brecht's work. He writes, "Brecht's form of schizoid acting, designed to separate in performance the actor from the role, is meant to draw attention to the role, its socially constructed nature, and not so much to the actor himself. In that the disembodied style of the role is to be maintained throughout, the actor must maintain a critical attitude towards his role, even acknowledging dislike for the character he plays." Jon Erickson, "The Body as Object of Modern Performance," *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism* (Fall 1990): 234. In their moments of address to the characters, the prisoners seem to heal the schizoid potential of the moment. The roles acquire body in turning toward the summons of the audience.

151. Blau, *As If*, 230.

152. "To which another spectator evidently yelled, 'Because they don't have time.'" Alan Simpson, "First Dublin Production," in Cohn, *Beckett: "Waiting for Godot": A Casebook*, 34.

153. Knowlson also reports that spectators eagerly suggested "give him some rope" when Estragon asks Vladimir if he hasn't some rope with which to hang themselves. Knowlson, *Damned to Fame*, 374.

154. Homan, *Embarrassment of Swans*, 13.
 155. Koshal, "Some Exceptions," 203.
 156. See Fahy and King, *Captive Audience*.
 157. Kenner, *Samuel Beckett*, 13. Emmett Kelly was a circus performer who created Weary Willie, based on scruffy hobo types from the Depression.
 158. Beckett, *Eleuthéria*, 141.
 159. *Ibid.*, 136.
 160. Samuel Beckett, "German Letter of 1937," in *Disjecta*, 172.

Chapter 2

1. Knowlson, *Damned to Fame*, 439; Jean Baudrillard, *Screened Out*, trans. Chris Turner (New York: Verso, 2002), 45.
 2. In *On War*, Carl von Clausewitz coins the expression to "denote properly such a portion of the space over which war prevails as has its boundaries protected, and thus possesses a kind of independence. . . . Such a portion is not a mere piece of the whole, but a small whole complete in itself." *On War*, trans. J. J. Graham (London: N. Trübner, 1873), 94.
 3. Susan Sontag, "Waiting for Godot in Sarajevo," in *Where the Stress Falls* (New York: Picador, 2001), 299.
 4. *Ibid.*
 5. Martin Esslin, introduction to *Samuel Beckett: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Martin Esslin (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1965), 4.
 6. Bradby, *Beckett: "Waiting for Godot,"* 139.
 7. *Ibid.*
 8. Kalb, *Beckett in Performance*, 92.
 9. Adorno, "Trying to Understand 'Endgame,'" 248.
 10. Theodor Adorno asserts that "today this is the capacity of art: Through the consistent negation of meaning it does justice to the postulates that once constituted the meaning of artworks. Works of the highest level of form that are meaningless or alien to meaning are therefore more than simply meaningless because they gain their content through the negation of meaning." *Aesthetic Theory*, ed. Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedemann, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 154.
 11. Adorno, "Trying to Understand 'Endgame,'" 248. Despite Adorno's reservations about Beckett as a political witness, recent scholarship has explored how "Beckett's testimony consists precisely of 'writing differently,' and above all anti-referentially." Houston Jones, *Samuel Beckett and Testimony*, 2.
 12. Adorno, "Trying to Understand 'Endgame,'" 249.
 13. Rosette C. Lamont writes about Beckett's one revision to the original manuscript of *En Attendant Godot*: the erasure of the name "Levy" and its replacement with "Estragon." Lamont remarks that Beckett "obviously decided to give this central character a vaguely universal name, rather than a pointedly Jewish one." "Letter to the Editor," *Beckett Circle* 16, no. 1 (Spring 1994): 4.
 14. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 40.
 15. *Ibid.*, 28.
 16. Heidegger's title is a partial citation of Friedrich Hölderlin's "Wozu Dichter im dürftiger Zeit?" ("What Are Poets for in Time of Need?").
 17. Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language, Thought*, trans. Albert Hofstadter (New York: Harper & Row, 1971), 91.

18. *Ibid.*, 93.
19. "Sottisier" notebook, Beckett Collection, MS2901, University of Reading.
20. McMillan and Fehsenfeld, *Beckett in the Theatre*, 139.
21. Juan Goytisolo, *Landscapes of War, from Sarajevo to Chechnya*, trans. Peter Bush (San Francisco: City Lights, 2000), 11.
22. Erika Munk, "Sontag Stages 'Godot' in Sarajevo," *Beckett Circle* 15, no. 2 (Fall 1993): 1.
23. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 17.
24. *Ibid.*, 25, 55. The grey twilight is the celestial backdrop to the poverty on Beckett's stage. Trying to tell time through observation of the stage set is a recurring moment of failure in Beckett's work. The moment in which Vladimir and Estragon struggle to describe the sky for the blind Pozzo echoes a situation in Beckett's early uncompleted piece, *The Gloaming* (dusk), featuring a blind beggar with a violin. This figure reappears in *Rough for Theater I*, and asks his companion in a wheelchair, "Will it not soon be evening?" The reply: "Day . . . night . . . It seems to me sometimes that earth must have got stuck, one sunless day, in the heart of winter, in the grey of evening." Beckett, *Collected Shorter Plays*, 72. In Shakespeare, beauty beggars description; in Beckett, it is the sky that does this and for a blind beggar.
25. Gilbert Moses, John O'Neal, Denise Nicholas, Murray Levy, and Richard Schechner, "Dialog: The Free Southern Theater," in *A Sourcebook of African-American Performance: Plays, People, Movements*, ed. Annemarie Bean (New York: Routledge, 1999), 102.
26. *Ibid.*, 107.
27. John O'Neal, "Motion in the Ocean: Some Political Dimensions of the Free Southern Theater," in Bean, *Sourcebook of African-American Performance*, 118.
28. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 42.
29. John O'Neal notes how all the questions posed to the Free Southern Theater "presumed education as a prerequisite for intelligence. The uneducated may lack certain specific skills but they are no less intelligent. Often the very absence of those skills forces people to greater application of creative facilities simply in order to survive competitively in a system loaded against their specific deficiencies." "Motion in the Ocean," 118.
30. It is easy to overlook how humorously colloquial Beckett makes his dialogue as it debunks theatrical tradition. For example, when Vladimir is trying to recall what he wanted to say, ("This evening . . . I was saying . . . I was saying . . .") Estragon replies with "I'm not a historian." Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 42. The historian on Beckett's stage is merely one who remains unafflicted by the forgetfulness of his fellow vagabond, and who can remember what the other person was saying. This is to say that there are no historians on Beckett's stage.
31. O'Neal, "Motion in the Ocean," 115.
32. Gilbert Moses, executive producer of the Free Southern Theater, recalls, "We wanted to see what would happen. We chose it because it's a great play, and we thought *Godot* would act as a barometer of the limits, the ceiling of this audience. It didn't operate that way. All we learned was that our audience can take *Godot*." Moses et al., "Dialog," 107.
33. *Ibid.*, 108.
34. *Ibid.*, 106.
35. *Ibid.*, 108.
36. *Ibid.*
37. *Ibid.*
38. Goytisolo, *Landscapes of War*, 10.

39. Susan Sontag, interview by Omer Hadžiselimović and Zvonimir Radeljković, "Literature Is What You Should Re-Read: An Interview with Susan Sontag," *Spirit of Bosnia* 2, no. 2 (April 2007), <http://www.spiritofbosnia.org/volume-2-no-2-2007-april/literature-is-what-you-should-re-read-an-interview-with-susan-sontag/>.

40. Sontag, "Godot in Sarajevo," 300.

41. *Ibid.*, 313.

42. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 51.

43. Sontag, "Godot in Sarajevo," 326.

44. *Ibid.*, 327.

45. Beckett, *Complete Short Prose*, 234.

46. Beckett, *Collected Shorter Plays*, 316 (emphasis added).

47. Sontag, "Godot in Sarajevo," 300.

48. *Ibid.*, 302.

49. *Ibid.*, 304.

50. Erika Munk, "Notes from a Trip to Sarajevo," *Theater* 24, no. 3 (1993): 28.

51. Sontag, "Godot in Sarajevo," 305.

52. Baudrillard, *Screened Out*, 45.

53. Director Haris Pašović encounters this in the process of organizing a film festival. He reverses the question in order to call attention to the way it sides with the aggressor. When asked, "Why a film festival during the war?" Pašović replies, "Why a war during our film festival?" Quoted in Kenneth Turan, *Sundance to Sarajevo: Film Festivals and the World They Made* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 105.

54. Sontag, "Godot in Sarajevo," 304.

55. Beckett, "Dante . . . Bruno. Vico. Joyce," in *Disjecta*, 24.

56. *Ibid.*

57. About *Work in Progress*, Beckett observes, "Here form *is* content, content *is* form. You complain that this stuff is not written in English. It is not written at all. It is not to be read—or rather it is not only to be read. It is to be looked at and listened to. His writing is not *about* something; *it is that something itself.*" *Ibid.*, 27.

58. *Ibid.*, 25.

59. H. Porter Abbott, "Samuel Beckett and the Arts of Time: Painting, Music, Narrative," in *Samuel Beckett and the Arts*, ed. Lois Oppenheim (New York: Garland, 1999), 11. Porter writes, "In Beckett's hands, such winnowing declares its arbitrary nature . . . just as the events recovered declare their gratuitous autonomy." *Ibid.*

60. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 46.

61. Estragon could also be asking "How would I know?" since Vladimir is wearing the thinking hat. In act 1, this hat instigates Lucky to "think aloud" when he puts it on and grows silent when it is removed from his head.

62. E. M. Cioran, "Encounters with Beckett," in *Samuel Beckett: The Critical Heritage*, ed. Lawrence Graver and Raymond Federman (New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), 334.

63. *Ibid.*

64. Erika Munk, "Reports from the 21st Century: A Sarajevo Interview," *Theater* 24, no. 3 (1993): 13.

65. *Ibid.*

66. Frost, "Letter to the Editor," 5.

67. The flurry of letters to the *Beckett Circle* all accuse Sontag of selfish exhibitionism. Rosette Lamont writes, "The trouble with Sontag (and Munk is a co-conspirator) is that everything is always: ME! ME! ME! She does the very opposite of what a great artist does. . . . The fine artists I have had the good fortune to meet never stand center stage . . . in order to call attention to themselves." Lamont, "Letter to the Editor," 4.

68. Sontag, "Godot in Sarajevo," 309.
69. Sara Villiers, "Beware of the Snipers," *The Herald* (Glasgow), August 20, 1993, 20.
70. Sontag, "Godot in Sarajevo," 312.
71. Munk, "Sontag Stages 'Godot,'" 2.
72. *Ibid.*
73. Kenner, *Samuel Beckett*, 155.
74. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 42.
75. The Sarajevo Youth Theater, where the performance takes place, is in a precarious state from the shelling. Sontag has the audience sit near the actors on stage because the auditorium is a potential death trap: "the nine small chandeliers could come crashing down if the building suffered a direct hit from a shell, or even if an adjacent building were hit." Sontag, "Godot in Sarajevo," 312.
76. For discussion of a prisoner, Ed Realart, forced to leave for work detail at intermission, see chapter 1.
77. Knowlson, *Damned to Fame*, 711.
78. *Ibid.*
79. According to Blin, Giacometti would come every night before the beginning of the play and, back stage, "change the position of a twig a little bit and then Sam would come later and he would change it." McMillan and Fehsenfeld, *Beckett in the Theatre*, 80.
80. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 55.
81. See illustration in Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. Wade Baskin (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959), 66–68.
82. Sontag, "Godot in Sarajevo," 313.
83. Munk, "Sontag Stages 'Godot,'" 2.
84. Sontag, "Godot in Sarajevo," 313.
85. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 45.
86. *Ibid.*, 11.
87. Where Sontag says that performing the entire play would be too much to ask of the audience, Erika Munk says that the reduction of the play does not demand enough, thereby counterbalancing Sontag's use of the term: "Given the topical references added throughout . . . even the candlelight, this reduction made for too—easy pathos. Perhaps that sounds odd, considering where we were. But in a whole city of Vladimirs and Estragons (and Luckys and black-marketeering Pozzos), pathos doesn't demand *enough* of its audience." Munk, "Sontag Stages 'Godot,'" 2 (emphasis added).
88. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 44.
89. Adorno is at his most Beckettian when he observes, "A thinking man's true answer to the question whether he is a nihilist would probably be 'Not enough'—out of callousness, perhaps, because of insufficient sympathy with anything that suffers." *Negative Dialectics*, trans. E. B. Ashton (New York: Continuum, 1973), 380.
90. Paul Chan, "Waiting for Godot in New Orleans: An Artist's Statement," in *Waiting for Godot in New Orleans: A Field Guide* (New York: Creative Time Books, 2009), 26.
91. Cauleen Smith directs a science fiction video, *The Fullness of Time* (2007), using sites in New Orleans abandoned after the flood: the empty spaces on which homes once stood, an abandoned and rusted amusement park, a ruined solarium.
92. Chan, "Waiting for Godot in New Orleans," 26.
93. *Ibid.*
94. Sigmund Freud, "The 'Uncanny,'" in *Writings on Art and Literature* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1997), 193–233.

95. Ibid., 210, 215.
96. Ibid., 213.
97. Ibid.
98. Chan, "Waiting for Godot in New Orleans," 26.
99. See Spike Lee's *When the Levees Broke* (2006) for a discussion of the term "refugees" used for denizens of New Orleans.
100. Chan, "Waiting for Godot in New Orleans," 26.
101. Bert O. States, *The Shape of Paradox: An Essay on "Waiting for Godot"* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 35.
102. Ibid., 34.
103. Mannes, "Two Tramps," 31.
104. Andrea Boll, "Puking My Puke of a Life in Waiting for Godot in New Orleans," in Chan, *Field Guide*, 241.
105. See Sontag, "Godot in Sarajevo," 305.
106. Boll, "Puking My Puke," 241.
107. Black actors playing Vladimir and Estragon, and white actors playing Pozzo and Lucky, was also the distribution in the 1980 Capetown production by Donald Howarth. See Bradby, *Beckett: "Waiting for Godot,"* 167–70.
108. Boll, "Puking My Puke," 240.
109. Ibid., 241.
110. Sontag, "Godot in Sarajevo," 312.
111. Ibid., 315.
112. Ibid., 309.
113. Ibid.
114. Erika Munk, "Only the Possible: An Interview with Susan Sontag," *Theater* 24, no. 3 (1993): 31.
115. Vivian Mercier, *Beckett/Beckett* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 48.
116. Ibid., 48, 49. In his taxonomical mania, Mercier counts Molloy's mentioning the *Times Literary Supplement* as an "unambiguously learned reference" yet ignores the fact that Molloy says he likes the *Times* because, using it to wipe his behind, it absorbs his farts better. Mercier mistakes this swipe of the *Times* with a swipe at the *Times*. Homeless people know newspapers more intimately than their subscribers do.
117. Ibid., 55.
118. Beckett, "Dante . . . Bruno. Vico. Joyce," 19.
119. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 9.
120. Paul Chan and Kathy Halbreich, "Undoing: A Conversation between Kathy Halbreich and Paul Chan," in Chan, *Field Guide*, 308.
121. Chan, "Waiting for Godot in New Orleans," 26.
122. Lois Oppenheim, *The Painted Word: Samuel Beckett's Dialogue with Art* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), 59.
123. Goytisolo, *Landscapes of War*, 11.
124. Franz Kafka, "The Silence of the Sirens," in *The Complete Stories*, ed. Nahum N. Glatzer, trans. Willa and Edwin Muir (New York: Schocken, 1971), 430.
125. Samuel Beckett, *Proust and Three Dialogues*, 93.
126. See Adorno's observation that in *Endgame* a "historical moment unfolds, namely the experience captured in the title of one of the culture industry's cheap novels, *Ka-putt*." "Trying to Understand 'Endgame,'" 244.
127. Sontag, "Godot in Sarajevo," 310.
128. The arrival of theatrical night is not part of a natural cycle of inevitability: its arrival seems as unlikely as Godot's. The gray dusk sky of *Godot* is the celestial

backdrop to poverty on Beckett's stage. The difficulty of describing this sky suggests how it "beggars description." Beckett reworks an early uncompleted piece, *The Gloaming* (dusk), as *Rough for Theater I*. This features a blind beggar with a violin. He asks his companion in a wheelchair, "Will it not soon be evening?" The reply: "Day . . . night . . . It seems to me sometimes that earth must have got stuck, one sunless day, in the heart of winter, in the grey of evening." Beckett, *Collected Shorter Plays*, 72. The blind beggar's question will emerge as Pozzo's in *Godot*.

129. Quoted in Bradby, *Beckett: "Waiting for Godot,"* 170.

130. Carrie Lambert-Beatty, "Essentially Alien: Notes from Outside Paul Chan's 'Godot,'" *Parkett* 88 (2007): 78. The second line is part of funerary custom of the New Orleans area: marchers move methodically in sync to the burial. The second line moves more idiosyncratically and festively in returning from the cemetery.

131. Jed Horne suggests that the play's setting only provides the differences in class and race to assert themselves again: "Whites ventured into a part of town that many of them, at least until Katrina, wouldn't have visited in a million years. Tickets were free, and so the poor were able to walk to the performance, while the gentry ventured downriver in limos and fancy rigs that were lined up along blocks now emptied of all but the scraped concrete slabs where houses once stood." "Is New Orleans Waiting for Godot?" in Chan, *Field Guide*, 242.

132. See Wolfgang Iser, "Counter-sensical Comedy in 'Waiting for Godot,'" in Connor, *A New Casebook*, 56.

133. Joseph Roach uses Blau's term while attributing critical origin of the term *tramp* to Peter Hall: "As soon as the refugees whom Peter Hall was first to call 'tramps' begin to take stock of their rotten tubers along 'a country road.' . . ." Joseph Roach, "The Great Hole of History," in *Reflections on Beckett: A Centenary Celebration*, ed. Anna McMullan and S. E. Wilmer (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009), 148.

134. "To call it site specific seems so limiting." Nato Thompson, "Destroyer of Worlds," in Chan, *Field Guide*, 58.

135. Emmanuel Levinas, *Existence and Existents*, trans. Alphonso Lingis (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 2001), 61.

136. *Ibid.*

137. *Ibid.*, 63.

138. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 44.

139. Adorno, "Trying to Understand 'Endgame,'" 251. "Die eiserne Ration an Realität und Personen, mit denen das Drama rechnet und haushält, ist eins mit dem, was von Subjekt, Geist und Seele im Angesicht der permanenten Katastrophe bleibt." Adorno, "Versuch," 292.

140. Antonin Artaud, *The Theater and Its Double*, trans. Mary Caroline Richards (New York: Grove Press, 1958), 24.

141. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 14.

142. *Rough for Theater II* remains Beckett's most Kafkaesque stage piece. Two men facing each other at a table read aloud from the sorry and confused life testimonies of the man standing on the window ledge in the room. The decision of the suicide leap must first pass a review board. *Rough for Theater II* in Beckett, *Collected Shorter Plays*, 77–89.

143. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 44.

144. Chan, "Waiting for Godot in New Orleans," 28.

145. Sontag, "Godot in Sarajevo," 316.

146. Residents of Gentilly, "What Are You Waiting for?" in Chan, *Field Guide*, 283–84. Following Katrina, Ray Nagin hires Ed Blakely as the executive director of Recovery Management for the City of New Orleans. As overseer of the recovery and re-

building process, Blakely earns the title of “Recovery Tzar.” Road Home is a housing recovery program designed to provide compensation to Louisiana homeowners affected by the hurricane.

147. *Ibid.*, 283. The Gently residents save the expression “waiting on” to describe money: “Waiting on my insurance company to give me more than a nominal amount of money; living in a damaged home because of unfair treatment by the insurance company” (*ibid.*). Credit that is forthcoming seems essentially nearer than Godot, who only issues vague promissory notes. Money has both a more luminous fantasy component and a more generalized application than Godot. Waiting on Godot would suggest a leisureliness that accompanies waiting on a friend (the Rolling Stones song of that name sounds, paradoxically, like a stroll).

148. *Ibid.*, 284.

149. “People that are there are in the trenches, and you shouldn’t be in the trenches in your retiring years.” *Ibid.*

150. *Ibid.*

151. Maurice Blanchot, “Literature and the Right to Death,” in *The Work of Fire*, trans. Charlotte Mandell (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1995), 329.

152. Sontag says that a side effect of coming to Sarajevo “would make it clear that [working here] was possible.” When the interviewer asks, “Possible, or desirable?” Sontag replies, “It’s only the possible that I can show.” Munk, “Only the Possible,” 31.

153. Tim Griffin, “Waiting for Godot,” *Artforum International* 46, no. 4 (December 2007): 51.

154. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 11.

155. *Ibid.*, 10.

156. *Ibid.*, 11.

157. *Ibid.*, 10.

158. *Ibid.*, 39.

159. Beckett’s stage directions are simple and precise: “Bare interior. Grey light. Left and right back, high up, two small windows, curtains drawn. Front right, a door. Hanging near door, its face to wall, a picture.” Samuel Beckett, *Endgame* (New York: Grove Press, 1958), 1.

160. See Kalb, *Beckett in Performance*, 79–81. Beckett issues an angry statement to the ART. Printed within a program insert, Beckett’s disclaimer reads, “Any production of *Endgame* which ignores my stage direction is completely unacceptable to me” (*ibid.*, 79). Akalaitis’s provision of a corpse demonstrates the risk of the directorial effort to incarnate meaning on stage. In *Endgame* Clov looks out over the audience through his telescope and intones, “All is . . . corpsed” (30). He does not say he *sees corpses* but rather the world struck in the image of one: the earth become posthumous. Akalaitis responds impatiently to Clov’s line. The staging blurts out “a corpse!” as if it were submitting to Beckett’s play as to a polygraph test.

161. Ilan Ronen, director of the *Waiting for Godot* production in Haifa, explains the situation that inspires him to stage *Godot* within the context of the Israel-Palestine conflict: “Nearly all the construction workers in Israel were Palestinians from the West Bank or Gaza. Each day, in the early morning hours, they left their homes, travelling in convoys to the cities of Israel. . . . This created an absurd situation in which the country, including the Jewish settlements in the occupied territories, was being built almost exclusively by Palestinians under the rule of Israeli occupation.” “‘Waiting for Godot’ as Political Theater,” in *Directing Beckett*, ed. Lois Oppenheim (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994), 240. As for the directors under discussion here, Ronen’s inspiration comes from a moment of irreconcilable absurdity in the world. Ronen spec-

ifies a moment that resonates strongly with the contemporary border policy of the United States: the military enforcement of national borders combined with dependency on states and rights-deprived immigrant laborers.

162. Bradby, *Beckett: "Waiting for Godot,"* 176. Bradby gives an excellent overview of what he calls "the play's special relevance in oppressive circumstances" (162). The *sans-papiers* are foreign laborers who work in France but without documentation, and hence they lack an identity in the eyes of the state. See Jacques Derrida, "Derelictions of the Right to Justice: But What Are the 'Sans-Papiers' Lacking?" in *Negotiations*, ed. and trans. Elizabeth Rottenberg (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2002), 133–46.

163. "To restore the image of drifters, of people excluded from the France of the 1990s." Bradby, *Beckett: "Waiting for Godot,"* 176.

164. *Ibid.*, 168.

165. Sontag, "Godot in Sarajevo," 322.

166. Anne Gisleson, "Godot Is Great," in Chan, *Field Guide*, 235.

167. *When the Levees Broke* is an anthology of this graffiti. "AS NOT SEEN ON TV" reworks the advertising phrase "As Seen on TV." The graffiti reads like the reverse of such promotion, suggesting the unadvertised, uncirculated, and undocumented extent of the damage to New Orleans.

168. Lois Oppenheim, "Playing with Beckett's Plays: On Sontag in Sarajevo and Other Directorial Infidelities," *Journal of Beckett Studies* 4, no. 2 (Spring 1995): 39.

169. Oppenheim takes issue with Sontag's claim that *Godot* is "about abandoned people, weak, vulnerable people, waiting for something to happen that they go on hoping against hope will happen, and yet it's perfectly clear it's not going to happen and that's the situation of the people of Sarajevo." Quoted in Oppenheim, "Playing with Beckett's Plays," 38.

170. Theodor Adorno, "Notes on Beckett," trans. Dirk Van Hulle and Shane Weller, *Journal of Beckett Studies* 19, no. 2 (2010): 178.

171. Alain Badiou approaches Beckett's reduction philosophically, in a way that authorizes the philosophical thinking of his work, and speaks of the need to "grasp the questions proper to Beckett's work, those that organize the fiction of a humanity treated and exhibited by a functional reduction oriented towards the essence or the Idea." *On Beckett*, ed. Nina Power and Alberto Toscano (Manchester, UK: Clinamen Press, 2003), 4.

172. Oppenheim offers *Catastrophe* as an example of Beckett's parabolic vision. She describes the "facile political interpretation" of the play as a "depiction of life under a communist regime" as myopic. She approvingly cites Antoni Libera's reading of the "mythological context" of *Catastrophe*. Libera understands *Catastrophe* as Beckett's "interpretation of the origins of totalitarianism" and the "philosophical diagnosis of its real nature." Oppenheim, "Playing with Beckett's Plays," 39. Parable then may suggest something closer to a parable of interpretation, a parable of the reading activity, rather than an opaque mirror held up to the world.

173. Elin Diamond argues that *Godot* explores the oppressive effects of identification's mirror relations. She says that Beckett's rejection of political identification entails a study of how one always falls short of that mirror image. That falling short is the basis of Lacan's notion of an asymptotic relation of self and image: "Thus [the infant's] identification with that image [in a mirror] is both self-fulfilling and self-alienating. Because the mirror image invites idealization, it dooms the infant to a frustrating rivalry at which it can only fail. The maturing subject will 'rejoin' its image only 'asymptotically'—that is, never." Diamond, "The Society of My Likes," in Samuel

Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui (series), *Samuel Beckett: Endlessness in the Year 2000*, ed. Angela Moorjani and Carola Veit (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002), 383.

174. Paul Chan, "Provocation: Next Day, Same Place. After 'Godot' in New Orleans," *TDR/The Drama Review* 52, no. 4 (Winter 2008): 3.

175. The intervention of logic, a predetermined course of failure, is ubiquitous in the Katrina disaster. The failure of the levee, and not the hurricane per se, should classify the flood as an engineering (and not a natural) disaster. Chan also refers to the "wholesale contradiction" between the neighborhoods around Tulane University left intact and those that are decimated by the hurricane. Chan, "Waiting for Godot in New Orleans," 25.

176. Sontag, "Godot in Sarajevo," 321.

177. Walter Benjamin, "The Author as Producer," in *Reflections*, ed. Peter Demetz, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Schocken, 1986), 231. Benjamin also speaks of "the procedure of a certain modish photography whereby poverty is made an object of consumption" (*ibid.*).

Chapter 3

1. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 11.

2. *Ibid.*

3. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 49. Ruby Cohn remarks on the similarity between Estragon's pose and yoga positions. Noted in McMillan and Fehsenfeld, *Beckett in the Theatre*, 119.

4. Beckett, *Three Novels*, 374. The expression "la pensée vagabonde" comes from *L'Innommable* (Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1953), 145. The confusion of the term has been multiplied in the first English translation of *The Unnamable*. There it reads "your thought's wander." The typo brings the wandering of thought into possession by thought. It has since been corrected to "your thoughts wander."

5. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 28.

6. *Ibid.*

7. Leo Bersani and Ulysse Dutoit, *Arts of Impoverishment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 19.

8. *Ibid.*

9. *Ibid.*

10. Walter Benjamin, "One Way Street," in *Selected Writings*, vol. 1, 1913–1926, trans. Edmund Jephcott, ed. Marcus Bullock, and Michael W. Jennings (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), 486.

11. Rainer Maria Rilke, "Primal Sound," in *Where Silence Reigns: Selected Prose*, trans. G. Craig Houston (New York: New Directions, 1978), 52.

12. Beckett, *Three Novels*, 40. Molloy sets his descriptive powers on the noise a little later: "It was a night of listening, a night given to the faint soughing and sighing stirring at night in little pleasure gardens, the shy Sabbath of leaves and petals and the air that eddies there as it does not in other places, where there is less constraint, and as it does not during the day, when there is more vigilance, and then something else that is not clear, being neither the air nor what it moves, perhaps the far unchanging noise the earth makes and which other noises cover, but not for long. . . . And there was another noise, that of my life become the life of this garden as it rode the earth of deeps and wildernesses. Yes, there were times when I forgot not only who I was, but that I was, forgot to be" (49). As in all of Beckett's writing, a certain

sobriety is used in describing movements of great discontinuity, underscoring the jarring pastiche of Molloy's expressions. The noise he hears is none other than the sound of a metamorphosis of his life merging with the life of the garden. Molloy here specifically does not speak of merging with the garden (two identities, in a sense). Beckett instead asks us to accommodate the idea of the garden being the space of a life independent of Molloy's. This is not a pastoral retirement. Prescient of the way we understand the earth's plates to shift over the surface of the planet, Molloy describes the garden in motion, riding the earth, with him as its oblivious passenger. For the purposes of this chapter, it helps note the way this sound is said to elude the vigilance of the day.

13. Molloy, looking forward to the murmurs again, hears instead a gong. "A horn goes well with the forest, you expect it. It is the huntsman. But a gong! Even a tomtom, at a pinch, would not have shocked me. But a gong! It was mortifying, to have been looking forward to the celebrated murmurs if to nothing else, and to succeed only in hearing, at long intervals, in the far distance, a gong . . ." *Ibid.*, 89.

14. *Ibid.*, 10.

15. *Ibid.*, 207.

16. Throughout Beckett's work, characters are split by the very pronouns by which the murmur addresses them (as well as the pronoun proper to the murmur itself: is it "they" or "it," the anonymous plural or the neuter singular?): "Now I'm haunted, let them go, one by one, let the last desert me and leave me empty, empty and silent. It's they murmur my name, speak to me of me, speak of a me, let them go and speak of it to others, who will not believe them either, or who will believe them too. Theirs all these voices, like a rattling of chains in my head, rattling to me that I have a head." Samuel Beckett, "Texts for Nothing," in *Complete Short Prose*, 120.

17. Beckett, *Three Novels*, 207.

18. In *Malone Dies*, Malone reports how the organization of the journal he is keeping is dictated by the wind: "But my fingers too write in other latitudes and the air that breathes through my pages and turns them without my knowing, when I doze off, so that the subject falls far from the verb and the object lands somewhere in the void, is not the air of this second-last abode, and a mercy it is. And perhaps on my hands it is the shimmer of the shadows of leaves and flowers and the brightness of a forgotten sun." *Ibid.*, 234.

19. The character Malone will insist not only on his own absence to his thought but also on not even being where thinking seeks him out: "Somewhere in this turmoil thought struggles on, it too wide of the mark. It too seeks me, as it always has, where I am not to be found." *Ibid.*, 186.

20. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 40.

21. *Ibid.*, 51.

22. *Ibid.*

23. *Ibid.*, 41.

24. *Ibid.*

25. Beckett, *Proust and Three Dialogues*, 83.

26. Beckett, *Three Novels*, 50.

27. *Ibid.*

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Ibid.*

30. Hegel describes the simultaneous inception of Western art and the historical subject in the Greeks' turning their ears away from the murmurs of the natural world and toward the sound that is made by the ear itself *in listening to* these sounds: "Eben-

so horchten die Griechen auf das Gemurmel der Quellen und fragten, was das zu bedeuten habe, die Bedeutung aber ist nicht die objective Sinnigkeit der Quelle, sondern die subjektive des Subjekts selbst, welches dann weiter die Najade zur Muse erhebt. Die Najaden oder Quellen sind der äußerliche Anfang der Musen. Doch der Musen unsterbliche Gesänge sind nicht das, was man hört, sondern sie sind die Produktionen des sinnig horchenden Geistes, der in seinem Hinauslauschen in sich selbst produziert." Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* (Stuttgart: Phillip Reclam, 1961), 336. "On the same principle the Greeks listened to the murmuring of the fountains, and asked what might thereby be signified; but the signification which they were led to attach to it was not the objective meaning of the fountain, but the subjective—that of the subject itself, which further exalts the Naiad to a Muse. The Naiads, or Fountains, are the external, objective origin of the Muses. Yet the immortal songs of the Muses are not that which is heard in the murmuring of the fountains; they are the productions of the thoughtfully listening Spirit—*creative while observant*." G. W. F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, trans. J. Sibree (New York: Dover, 1956), 235.

31. Beckett, *Three Novels*, 60.

32. In their analysis of capitalism, Deleuze and Guattari describe something similar to Beckett's suppositional universe. They write, "Unlike previous social machines, the capitalist machine is incapable of providing a code that will apply to the whole of the social field. By substituting money for the very notion of a code, it has created an axiomatic of abstract quantities that keeps moving further and further in the direction of the deterritorialization of the socius." Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, trans. Mark Seem (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 33.

33. See Roman Jakobson, "Two Aspects of Language and Two Types of Aphasic Disturbance," in *Language in Literature*, ed. Krystyna Pomorska and Stephen Rudy (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1987), 95–120.

34. Beckett, *Three Novels*, 60.

35. Paul Valéry, *Sea Shells*, trans. Mary Oliver (Boston: Beacon Press, 1998), 73. Adorno compares Beckett's characters to mollusks: "Modern ontology lives off the unfulfilled promise of the concreteness of its abstractions, whereas in Beckett the concreteness of an existence that is shut up in itself like a mollusk, no longer capable of universality, an existence that exhausts itself in pure self-positing, is revealed to be identical to the abstractness that is no longer capable of experience." "Trying to Understand 'Endgame,'" 246.

36. *Pensum* refers to a weight of wool given to female slaves to work off as a day's labor in Roman times. In Beckett's "Sottisier" notebook, he notes the following quotation from Schopenhauer: "Das Leben ist ein Pensum zum Abarbeiten: in diesem Sinne ist defunctus ein schöner Ausdruck." "Sottisier" notebook, 13r. ("Life is a pensum to work off: in this sense is defunctus an attractive expression.") Beckett is keen on the "zum Abarbeiten," materially worked off rather than "durcharbeiten" or worked through in the psychoanalytic sense.

37. Beckett ends his essay on Proust by commenting on the way in which the artwork in Proust's work reveals life to be a pensum, a rote lesson whose meaning is not entirely grasped because it is so mediated by habit: the experience of the narrator Marcel is one that bears witness to art, "sees in the red phrase of the Septuor: . . . the ideal and immaterial statement of the essence of a unique beauty, a unique world, the invariable world and beauty of Vinteuil, expressed timidly, as a prayer, in the Sonata, imploringly, as an inspiration, in the Septuor, the 'invisible reality' that damns the life of the body on earth as a pensum and reveals the meaning of the word: 'defunctus.'" *Proust and Three Dialogues*, 93. As with the word "defunctus" it seems that Beckett's at-

traction to the pensum is in fact its part in a dead language, a language that goes dead on the tongue and in which the image of our life is made.

38. See also the definition of “pensum” in the *Encyclopedia Acephalica*: “Few painters produce pictures other than by way of pensums, works imposed on them by an alien, and often hateful, hand. How many writers harness themselves to their novel and voluntarily reduce themselves to the rank of plough-horses, or asses, loaded, now with cereals, now with relics.” George Bataille, Michel Leiris, et al., *Encyclopedia Acephalica* (London: Atlas Press, 1995), 67. Leiris, the author of this entry, bemoans the pensum as a strictly rote task, a function of habit. For Molloy the pensum is the first and the last task, the impossible task to fulfill, because it is inaccessible to memory.

39. Beckett, *Three Novels*, 310.

40. *Ibid.*, 32.

41. Leo Bersani, *Balzac to Beckett: Center and Circumference in French Fiction* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), 59.

42. Beckett always distrusted the effort to redeem poverty and the viewing of failure as an opportunity. Praising the painter Bram van Velde, Beckett wrote, “The numerous attempts made to make painting independent of its occasion have only succeeded in enlarging its repertory. I suggest that van Velde is the first whose painting is bereft, rid if you prefer, of occasion in every shape and form, ideal as well as material, and the first whose hands have not been tied by the certitude that expression is an impossible act.” *Three Dialogues*, 121 (emphasis added).

43. I want to thank Arkady Plotnitsky for drawing my attention to this reference.

44. Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Birth to Presence*, trans. Elizabeth Rottenberg (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), 44.

45. Beckett, *Three Novels*, 296.

46. *Ibid.*, 67.

47. In *Malone Dies* the title character is bedridden and relies on a walking cane to pull objects from around the room nearer to him. He then observes, “How great is my debt to sticks! So great that I almost forget the blows they have transferred to me.” *Ibid.*, 185.

48. *Ibid.*, 350.

49. Badiou, *On Beckett*, 12.

50. *Ibid.*

51. Maurice Blanchot, *The Madness of the Day*, trans. Lydia Davis (New York: Station Hill, 1981), 9.

52. *Ibid.*, 12.

53. Beckett, *Proust and Three Dialogues*, 89.

54. Molloy does not turn toward things that appear before his eyes. The game he plays is one of turning away from that which is disappearing: “From things about to disappear I turn away in time.” Beckett, *Three Novels*, 12.

55. *Ibid.*, 53.

56. Foucault discusses these *hupomnemata* in his essay titled “Self Writing.” He summarizes: “The *hupomnemata* served as memory aids. Their use as books of life, as guides for conduct, seems to have become a common thing for a whole cultivated public. One wrote down quotes in them, extracts from books, examples, and actions that one had witnessed or read about, reflections or reasonings that one had heard or that had come to mind.” Michel Foucault, *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: New Press, 1998), 209.

57. Hugh Kenner pursues this line of thought in the chapter “The Cartesian Centaur,” in *Samuel Beckett: A Critical Study*. A typical observation: “The Beckett bicycle can orchestrate all the great themes of human speculation” (126).

58. Beckett, *Three Novels*, 326.

59. *Ibid.*, 22.

60. The full quote: "Let me tell you this, when social workers offer you, free, gratis, and for nothing, something to hinder you from swooning, which with them is an obsession, it is useless to recoil, they will pursue you to the ends of the earth, the vomitory in their hands. The Salvation Army is no better. Against the charitable gesture there is no defense, that I know of." *Ibid.*, 24.

61. Benjamin, *Selected Writings*, 2:668. Benjamin also writes in his *Berlin Chronicle* that a wealthy child of his generation "could picture the poor, it was, without his knowing either name or origin, in the image of the tramp who is actually a rich man, though without money, since he stands—far removed from the process of production and the exploitation not yet abstracted from it—in the same contemplative relation to his destitution as the rich man to his wealth." In *Reflections*, 11.

62. In *The Myth of the Birth of the Hero* (New York: Vintage, 1959) Otto Rank employs the term "abandonment myth" to describe those stories (i.e., about Moses and Oedipus) that achieve mythical status because their figures survive an exposure to death at an early age, after being abandoned and "given up for dead" by their parents. Rank describes abandonment as a condition that cannot be overcome or diminished. This is relevant to the way in which Beckett's characters are exposed. Rank observes that the figures of myth are exposed to not only the "natural elements" but to the merciless judgment (the "ecce homo") and laws of peoples and divinities.

63. Malone connects the understanding of time to the question of utility: "use" creates the idea of a future, a purpose, a goal. Accumulation and ultimate expenditure structure time for us. In contrast to this, Malone says he is speaking of a character who "could not employ [what he has accumulated], since he feels so far from the morrow. And perhaps there is none, no morrow any more, for one who has waited so long for it in vain. And perhaps he has come to that stage of his instant when to live is to wander the last of the living in the depths of an instant without bounds, where the light never changes and the wrecks look all alike." Beckett, *Three Novels*, 233.

64. Adorno, "Trying to Understand 'Endgame,'" 268.

65. Georges Bataille, "Molloy's Silence," in *Modern Critical Interpretations: Samuel Beckett's Molloy, Malone Dies, The Unnamable*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Chelsea House, 1988), 14.

66. *Ibid.*, 20.

67. *Ibid.*, 16.

68. *Ibid.*, 20. "Cette horrible figure se balançant douloureusement sur ses béquilles est la vérité dont nous sommes malades et qui ne nous suit pas moins fidèlement que notre ombre nous suit . . . spectre qui hante le plein jour des rues." Georges Bataille, "Le silence de Molloy," *Critique* 7, no. 15 (1951), 394.

69. Beckett, *Three Novels*, 91.

70. *Ibid.*, 22. This sentence is not translated in the French version of Beckett's novel. Perhaps Molloy's existence inhabits that same space of ethical impossibility as the current debates about assisted suicide.

71. Beckett, *L'Innommable*, 22; Beckett, *Three Novels*, 300.

72. See the second section of *Molloy*: "Gaber, Gaber, he said, life is a thing of beauty, Gaber, and a joy for ever. He brought his face nearer mine. A joy for ever, he said, a thing of beauty, Moran, and a joy for ever. He smiled. I closed my eyes. Smiles are all very nice in their own way, very heartening, but at a reasonable distance. I said, Do you think he meant human life?" Beckett, *Three Novels*, 152.

Chapter 4

1. Beckett, *Proust and Three Dialogues*, 112.
2. Leo Bersani and Ulysse Dutoit title their chapter on Beckett "Inhibited Reading" in *Arts of Impoverishment*, 11–92.
3. Adorno, "Trying to Understand 'Endgame,'" 243.
4. Quoted in McMillan and Fehsenfeld, *Beckett in the Theatre*, 15.
5. Beckett, *Proust and Three Dialogues*, 125. Beckett's creation of an art withdrawn from any economy with reader, society, or artist stymied Brecht's attempts to enlist *Waiting for Godot* into the class struggle.
6. Quoted in Bair, *Samuel Beckett*, 606.
7. Steven Connor, *Theory and Cultural Value* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1992), 81.
8. *Ibid.*
9. Quoted in Peter Boxall, ed., "*Waiting for Godot*" and "*Endgame*": *A Reader's Guide to Essential Criticism* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 97.
10. *Ibid.*, 98.
11. *Ibid.*, 97.
12. *Ibid.*
13. Adorno, "Trying to Understand 'Endgame,'" 243.
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.*
16. Bersani and Dutoit, *Arts of Impoverishment*, 15.
17. Beckett, *Disjecta*, 145, 55.
18. James Knowlson and John Pilling, *Frescoes of the Skull: The Later Prose and Drama of Samuel Beckett* (New York: Grove Press, 1980), 255.
19. Samuel Beckett, "The End," in *Complete Short Prose*, 91.
20. In an interview with Tom Driver, Beckett describes how he was once pestered at a party about "why I write always about distress. As if it were perverse to do so! He wanted to know if my father had beaten me or my mother had run away from home to give me an unhappy childhood." Beckett decides to leave the party as soon as possible and gets into a cab. He says, "On the glass partition between me and the driver were three signs; one asked for help for the blind, another help for orphans, and the third for relief for the war refugees. One does not have to look for distress. It is screaming at you even in the taxis of London." "Tom Driver in 'Columbia University Forum,'" in Graver and Federman, *Samuel Beckett: The Critical Heritage*, 221.
21. Vladimir's soliloquy ("To all mankind they were addressed, those cries for help still ringing in our ears! But at this place, at this moment of time, all mankind is us, whether we like it or not" [Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 51]) embodies the existential side of this dilemma, rather than the posthuman form it assumes in Beckett's later work.
22. Beckett, *Proust and Three Dialogues*, 121.
23. Beckett, *Three Novels*, 274.
24. Beckett's much quoted observation that van Velde is the "first to admit that to be an artist is to fail, as no other dare fail" is frequently taken as an exclusive description of the artist's goal or task. I take "dare" and "fail" to be transitive verbs. The artist dares the reader; we run the risk of failing that cry "made ill." *Proust and Three Dialogues*, 125.
25. Such late prose works as *Ill Seen, Ill Said* further develop this medical diagnostic of the call.

26. Samuel Beckett, "Intercessions of Denis Devlin," in *Disjecta*, 91.

27. *Ibid.*

28. Samuel Beckett, "Cascando," in *Collected Poems in English and French* (New York: Grove Press, 1977), 29.

29. Beckett, *Three Novels*, 311. "Décidément il semble impossible, à ce stade, que je me passe de questions, comme je me l'étais promis. Non, je m'étais seulement juré de ne plus en formuler. Qui sait? Je tomberai peut-être, d'ici peu, sur l'heureux arrangement qui les empêchera à tout jamais de se formuler, dans mon, ne soyons pas pédant, dans mon esprit." Beckett, *L'Innommable*, 41.

30. Adorno, "Trying to Understand 'Endgame,'" 264. "Beckett jedoch entziffert die Luge des Fragezeichens: die Frage ist zur rhetorischen geworden." Adorno, "Versuch," 308.

31. Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (Cambridge, MA: Zone Books, 1990), 17.

32. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *What Is Philosophy?* trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 1.

33. Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays*, trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1977), 35.

34. "Die genannte Frage ist heute in Vergessenheit gekommen, obwohl unsere Zeit sich als Fortschritt anrechnet, die 'Metaphysik' wider zu bejahen." Martin Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1986), 2.

35. Roland Barthes, "The Last Word on Robbe-Grillet?" in *Critical Essays*, 202.

36. The essay concludes with an observation about the way Robbe-Grillet's characters frequently point to unspecified objects: "This, they say. But what is this—this what? Perhaps all literature is in this anaphoric suspension which at one and the same time designates and keeps silent." *Ibid.*, 204. Barthes's assignation of an interrogative function to literature and theater continues his thinking in his introduction to *On Racine*: "To write is to jeopardize the meaning of the world, to put an *indirect* question that the writer, by an ultimate abstention, refrains from answering. It is each of us who gives the answer, bringing to it his own history, his own language, his own freedom. . . . There is no end to answering what has been written beyond hope of an answer: asserted, disputed, superseded—the meanings pass, the question remains." Roland Barthes, *On Racine*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1983), ix.

37. Beckett's thirty-second play *Breath* features a light illuminating for five seconds a stage scattered with debris, a brief cry, a ten-second intensification of the light accompanied by an "inspiration," then "silence and hold for five seconds." Then there is a ten-second "expiration" with a decrease in light, followed by the same brief cry. (Beckett, *Breath*, in *Collected Shorter Plays*, 209.) Though clearly broken into segments, the constitutive elements are not easily separated. The breath, the cry, and the light are dependent on each other rather than in a hierarchical order: to quote the play, the play would have to be quoted in its entirety. The play is designed so that no element excludes any of the others, and to discourage any immodest interventions by the critic.

38. In *Allegories of Reading* Paul de Man focuses on the break between grammar and rhetoric. This break appears most visibly around the *rhetorical question*, notably Yeats's line, "How can we know the dancer from the dance?" One of the consequences of de Man's analysis is a radical questioning of questioning, an immersion in the rhetorical quandary of the question. Unlike Beckett's work, which produces active questions, de Man's analysis seems to register the ways in which the only proper reply to

Yeats's poem is *another rhetorical question*. "Confronted with the question of the difference between grammar and rhetoric, grammar allows us to ask the question, but the sentence by means of which we ask it may deny the very possibility of asking. *For what is the use of asking, I ask, when we cannot even authoritatively decide whether a question asks or doesn't ask?*" Paul de Man, *Allegories of Reading* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982), 10 (emphasis added).

39. Beckett, *Three Novels*, 307.

40. For a discussion of *petitio principii* see John Woods and Douglas Walton, *Fallacies* (Providence, RI: Foris Publications, 1989), 29–42.

41. Brater, *Beyond Minimalism*, 128.

42. Hans Robert Jauss, *Towards an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Timothy Bahti (New York: Harvester Press, 1982), 43.

43. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 55. Pozzo says to Estragon, "A moment ago you were calling me Sir, in fear and trembling. Now you're asking me questions. No good will come of this!" *Ibid.*, 20.

44. *Ibid.*, 21.

45. *Ibid.*

46. Samuel Beckett, *What Where*, in *Collected Shorter Plays*, 312.

47. "En réalité, le texte beckettien est hors des questions, au sens traditionnel: il n'en pose, ne s'en pose pas plus qu'il n'en laisse à l'écart." Bruno Clément, *L'Oeuvre sans qualités: Rhétorique de Samuel Beckett* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1994), 52.

48. Samuel Beckett, *First Love and Other Shorts* (New York: Grove Press, 1995), 60.

49. It is interesting to note that each novel of the trilogy isolates a list of questions, often numbered. These dissipate the force of the question by trying to bring the banal necessities to the level of knowledge. Often, it is not clear how some of the questions can be numbered among others. For example, in *Malone Dies*, Malone is bedridden and writes down a list of questions for a man who he believes visited him and hit him on the head with his cane. Among the questions for the man, if he is to return, are: "1. Who are you? 2. What do you do, for a living? 3. Are you looking for something in particular? What else? . . . 7. It was wrong for you to strike me. 8. Give me my stick. . . 12. Why has my soup been stopped? 13. For what reason are my pots no longer emptied? 14. Do you think I shall last much longer? 15. May I ask you a favour? 16. Your conditions are mine. . . 18. You couldn't by any chance let me have the butt of a pencil? 19. Number your answers. 20. Don't go, I haven't finished." Beckett, *Three Novels*, 272. Such lists truly dissipate the form of the question by, as it were, tightening it. The stringency of the question contains the possibility of the answers that, Malone specifies, he wants the stranger to number. The greatest questions are truly asked by the bedridden, and this is possibly why Beckett's vagabonds usually flee from asking questions.

50. *Ibid.*, 18.

51. *Ibid.*, 218.

52. Lawrence Harvey, *Samuel Beckett, Poet and Critic* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970), 249. See also Beckett's letter to Axel Kaun in which he writes, "Grammatik und Stil. Mir scheinen sie ebenso hilfällig geworden zu sein wie ein Biedermeier Badeanzug oder die Unerschüttlichkeit eines Gentlemans ("Grammar and Style. These seem to me to be as weak/invalid/outmoded as a Victorian bathing suit or the imperturbability of a true gentleman"). Beckett's choice of the word "hilfällig" brings his statement closer to law and order as it is also a legal term describing a law or an argument that is no longer valid or that is defunct. "German Letter of 1937," in *Disjecta*, 52.

53. A similar statement is found in *Malone Dies*: "A minimum of memory is indispensable, if one is to live really." Beckett, *Three Novels*, 203. Beckett's prose is "ambiguous" exclusively around the issue of the adequate and the minimum, which is to say that the ambiguity is not to expand our possibilities of reading but to make us question what minimum—and how small a minimum—is actually accorded a necessity by Beckett. It is not clear whether Malone is saying that "really" living requires some memory or, rather, next to no memory. This minimum is marked as much by its meagerness as by its ineradicability. The "indispensable" aspect of this minimum of memory is that which cannot be used, used up, but also dispensed with. It is this uselessness of the minimum that makes it necessary.

54. Israel Shenker, "An Interview with Beckett," in Graver and Federman, *Samuel Beckett: The Critical Heritage*, 148.

55. *Ibid.*

56. When the traveler reaches the immobile Pim, they press their bodies together. Here the traveler communicates with Pim through a series of physical signs (not unlike the system devised by Molloy with his mother): "table of basic stimuli one sing nails in armpit two speak blade in arse three stop thump on skull four louder pestle on kidney five softer index in anus. . . ." Samuel Beckett, *How It Is* (New York: Grove Press, 1964), 69. This then progresses to questions scratched in Pim's back with a nail.

57. *Ibid.*, 7.

58. Christopher Ricks, *Beckett's Dying Words* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 83.

59. Beckett's cultivation of weakened syntax led him to experiment with the meager structure of Western Union telegraphs. Toward the end of 1983, Beckett receives a query from the *New York Times* about his hopes and resolutions for the new year. Beckett telegraphed this reply: "RESOLUTIONS COLON ZERO STOP PERIOD HOPES COLON ZERO STOP BECKETT." *Ibid.*, 87. Beckett's message dictates its own punctuation. He includes "colon" (twice) and "period" as punctuation to call attention to the incompleteness of his sentences. Beckett would not be outdone by the stop by which telegrams conventionally signaled the end of the sentence. The more one wants "colon" and "period" to function grammatically, however, the more they may acquire other connotations. "Period," for example, may mean, with finality, no hopes whatsoever, end of story. "Colon" may suggest where Beckett feels that hopes and resolutions may go.

60. Stanley Cavell, "Ending the Waiting Game: A Reading of Beckett's 'Endgame,'" in *Must We Mean What We Say?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976). 119.

61. Beckett, *Three Novels*, 67.

62. "Quaqua" is Beckett's neologism for blather. In *Waiting for Godot* Lucky speaks of "a personal God quaquaquaqua with white beard quaquaquaqua outside time without extension" (28). We can measure the distance between *Godot* and *How It Is* by noting that the narrator of this work must seemingly take dictation from Lucky's monologue. The quaqua has left the isolated space of monologue, something to be listened to and endured, and assigns inscriptions to the text we are reading. Lucky goes from being a critic thinking on the stage to the secondhand author of *How It Is*.

63. Bersani and Dutoit, *Arts of Impoverishment*, 60.

64. "Abandon all hope, ye who enter."

65. Bataille, "Molloy's Silence," 17.

66. In 1970 the artist Geneviève Asse asks Beckett if he has a text that she could illustrate. Beckett gives her the work that, five years later, would become *For to End Yet Again*. Beckett visits her studio and, as Knowlson describes it, "The text did not have

a title until she had finished her work. One day, he suggested 'Abandonné' and asked specifically that it should be printed as if the letters were carved out of stone." The inspiration for this title comes from a statue Beckett passes on the way to Asse's studio, a monument "to Ernest Rousselle, the president of the French commission for children who are abandoned and in need. At its foot is a bronze statue of a curly-haired, young child with no shoes, reclining with his eyes closed and his head on a traveling bag. Beneath the statue a single word, 'Abandonné!' is cut out of the stone." Knowlson, *Damned to Fame*, 513.

67. Samuel Beckett, "The Calmative," in *Complete Short Prose*, 61.

68. Samuel Beckett, "From an Abandoned Work," in *Complete Short Prose*, 163.

69. Cohn, *Beckett Canon*, 217.

70. Beckett, "From an Abandoned Work," 156.

71. S. E. Gontarski, "From Unabandoned Works: Samuel Beckett's Short Prose," in *Complete Short Prose*, xv.

72. Beckett, "From an Abandoned Work," 159.

73. *Ibid.*, 163.

74. Beckett, *Three Novels*, 414; Beckett, "From an Abandoned Work," 162.

75. Beckett, "From an Abandoned Work," 160.

76. *Ibid.*, 164.

77. Adorno et al., *Aesthetics and Politics*, ed. Fredric Jameson, trans. Ronald Taylor (London: Verso Press, 1977), 191.

78. Derek Attridge writes that Beckett's texts are so "self-deconstructive" that "there is not much left to do." *Acts of Literature* (New York: Routledge Press, 1991), 61. The greatness of Beckett's work, however, originates in the way it leaves us feeling, at the same time, that there is *everything* to do.

79. Beckett, *Endgame*, 49.

80. Beckett, *Three Novels*, 139.

81. My translation is a modification of the Muir version. Franz Kafka, *Diaries*, trans. Willa and Edwin Muir (New York: Schocken Press, 1975), 398.

82. Paul de Man describes this condition of language as part of an imperative of language. Speaking of a scene in *La Recherche* in which Marcel's grandmother orders him to stop reading and go outside, de Man comments, "It seems that the language is unable to remain . . . ensconced and that it has to turn itself out." De Man, *Allegories of Reading*, 70.

83. Immanuel Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Oskar Piest (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1959), 33.

84. "Everyone says: Hunger is the best sauce; and people with a healthy appetite relish everything, so long as it is something they can eat. Such delight, consequently, gives no indication of taste having anything to do with choice. Only when people's needs have been satisfied can we tell who among the crowd has taste or not." Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. James Creed Meredith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 42.

85. Beckett, *Three Novels*, 87. The passage later continues, "And in this command which faltered, then died, it was hard not to hear the unspoken entreaty, Don't do it, Molloy. In forever reminding me thus of my duty was its purpose to show me the folly of it? Perhaps."

86. Adorno, "Trying to Understand 'Endgame,'" 265.

87. Beckett, *Three Novels*, 87.

88. This comes from Freud's description in *Interpretation of Dreams* of the reasonings of the unconscious, exemplified in the contradictory and excessive logic of the

man who, upon being accused of denting his neighbor's kettle, explained that (1) he did not dent the kettle, (2) there was already a dent in the kettle when he received it, and (3) he did not borrow the kettle. See Sigmund Freud, *Interpretation of Dreams*, standard ed., trans. A. A. Brill (New York: Norton, 1989), 120.

89. Kant's categorical imperative depends on the principle, "So act that the maxim of your action could become a universal *law*." Immanuel Kant, *The Metaphysics of Morals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 192. Beckett's minimalism and subtractive aesthetic interrogate the universality of the maxim and in this way take aim at Kant's ethical system. See Beckett's paratactic translations of the maxims of Sebastian Chamfort.

90. In *Company*, for example, Beckett writes about a murmur that a character hears in the second person: "A voice comes to one in the dark. Imagine. To one on his back in the dark. . . . Only a small part of what is said can be verified. As for example when he hears, You are on your back in the dark. Then he must acknowledge the truth of what is said. But by far the greater part of what is said cannot be verified. As for example when he hears, You first saw the light on such and such a day." Samuel Beckett, *Company* (New York: Grove Press, 1991), 7. This form of address has the effect of simultaneously describing a state of affairs that already exists and, through this description, of forecasting or informing a state to come.

91. Beckett, *Worstward Ho*, 9. Also see the first line of *The Unnamable*: "Where now? Who now? When how? Unquestioning. I, say I. Unbelieving. Questions, hypotheses, call them that. Keep going, going on, call that going, call that on." Beckett, *Three Novels*, 291.

92. The verb "say" is similar in this regard to the way "never" works in Beckett's text: "Never to naught be brought. Never by naught be nulled." Beckett, *Worstward Ho*, 32.

93. Richard Ellman, *James Joyce* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1959), 662.

94. Charles Baudelaire, *Oeuvres Complètes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1951), 884. "He makes it his business to extract from fashion whatever element it may contain of poetry within history, to distil the eternal from the transitory." Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*, trans. Jonathan Mayne (New York: Da Capo Press, 1964), 12.

95. Beckett, *Worstward Ho*, 9.

96. Beckett composed but did not air this broadcast.

97. Samuel Beckett, "The Capital of the Ruins," in *Complete Short Prose*, 278.

98. The character Nagg tells this joke in *Endgame*, and it provides the title for Beckett's essay on aesthetics, "Le Monde et le Pantelon." In brief, the joke tells the story about a man who brings his pants to a tailor and gets a different excuse as to why they are not ready each time he returns to the shop. His impatience at a breaking point, he informs the tailor that it took God only six days to make the world. "That's right," says the tailor, "but look at the world . . . and look at my TROUSERS!" See Samuel Beckett, *Endgame*, 22.

99. Beckett, "Capital of the Ruins," 277.

100. My interpretation here differs sharply from Lois Gordon's. Gordon writes about this passage, "Beckett exalts both the comfort to be drawn from the inward human capacity to surmount circumstances of the utmost gravity and the sustenance to be given and gained in moments of camaraderie." Lois Gordon, *The World of Samuel Beckett* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), 201.

101. Beckett, *Worstward Ho*, 22.

102. Beckett, "Sottisier" notebook, 23.3.81.

103. Beckett's other inheritance from Shakespeare is the bard's observation that beauty "beggars description." The phrase is used in reference to Cleopatra: "For her own person, / It beggar'd all description." *Antony and Cleopatra* 2.2. *The Tragedy of Antony and Cleopatra*, ed. Jonathan Bate (Middlesex, UK: Echo Library, 2006), 33. Shakespeare suggests that beauty incapacitates or disempowers description, reducing it to tatters as it attempts to transform appearance into language. Much of Beckett's oeuvre is an exploration of what happens to this derelict and impoverished state of description not only in its encounter with beauty but with misery and the beggar as well.

104. Badiou, *On Beckett*, 89.

105. Beckett, *Worstward Ho*, 32.

106. Badiou, *On Beckett*, 94.

107. Beckett, *Worstward Ho*, 21, 43.

108. Walter Benjamin articulates the soldier's encounter with World War I in terms of impoverishment: "Wasn't it noticed at the time how many people returned from the front in silence? Not richer but poorer in communicable experience?" *Selected Writings*, 2:731.

109. In his poem "No Worst, There Is None," Gerard Manley Hopkins writes, "No worst, there is none. Pitched past pitch of grief, / More pangs will, schooled at forepangs, wilder wring." Through his disheveled grammar, Hopkins comes close to Beckett's vision of a text of the ever worsening. Through pain, Hopkins achieves a sense of the nontranscendent worst. Hopkins's text takes up Beckett's rhetorical hyperbole literally: he speaks about being pitched past pitch. (The word "hyperbole" comes from the Greek meaning "to throw wide"). *Pitched past pitch* of grief means to turn the worse into a type of excess of movement: Hopkins's poem struggles with pitch as a thing and pitch as a verb. Gerard Manley Hopkins, *Poems and Prose*, ed. W. H. Gardner (London: Penguin Books, 1985), 61.

110. Bataille, "Concerning the Accounts Given by the Residents of Hiroshima," 232.

Afterword

1. For Proust's narrator, art facilitates new vision and exerts its aftereffect within the spectator. When gazed upon long enough, for example, the figures within a Renoir leave the frame of the painting and begin to lend their qualities to people and vehicles seen in the street: "Women pass in the street, different from those we formerly saw, because they are Renoirs, those Renoirs we persistently refused to see as women. The carriages too, are Renoirs, and the water, and the sky." Marcel Proust, *In Search of Lost Time: The Guermites Way*, trans. Christopher Prendergast (New York: Penguin, 2003), 325. Only by seeing Renoir in the world do we begin in fact to see what his paintings harbor. In like fashion, Proust's novel may sensitize us to Proustian moments in our world, to propagate the effects of his work through our own experience.

2. Of all the productions I've seen and been involved in, the setting that seems most fitting for Beckett's play would be a production on the Gaza Strip.

3. Harold Camping, an evangelist on the Family Radio Network, predicted that the world would end on May 21, 2011. When May 22 arrived without the righteous having ascended to heaven or the damned suffering fire, brimstone, and plagues on earth, Camping recalculated his prediction and gave the world an extended deadline until October 21, 2011. Between these two dates Camping suffered a stroke. Camping's followers had turned into Beckett characters, saddled with an expectation for something that not only did not arrive, but did not arrive twice, in two acts. One can

imagine a production of *Godot* staged outside Camping's radio studio, in which Didi and Gogo are two crestfallen apocalyptics who struggle with spirituality as a promise kept only at one end. The vagabonds would sweep up not after doom has arrived but after its prediction has failed.

4. Ross Douthat, "The Decadent Left," *New York Times*, December 4, 2011.
5. Quoted in Karen A. Frank and Te-Sheng Huang, "Occupying Public Space, 2011: From Tahrir Square to Zuccotti Park," in *Beyond Zuccotti Park*, ed. Ron Shiffman et al. (Oakland, CA: New Village Press, 2012), 8. On October 12, 2011, Michael Bloomberg, the mayor of New York City, came to Zuccotti Park to announce that the encampment would have to be temporarily removed in order to clean up the area. A concern for "sanitation" thinly concealed the politics behind the decision.
6. Samuel Beckett, *Three Novels*, 67.
7. The workers on strike in France in 1968 eventually refused to join the cause with protesting students.
8. Rebecca Solnit, "Civil Society at Ground Zero," in *The Occupy Handbook*, ed. Janet Byrne (New York: Back Bay Books, 2012), 297.
9. Chris Hedges, "A Master Class in Occupation," in Byrne, *Occupy Handbook*, 164–72. He writes, "The park, especially at night, is a magnet for the city's street population" (167).
10. Columbia University students protesting the Vietnam War occupied the president's office and other Columbia administrative buildings in 1968; ROTC headquarters have been occupied in Boston, New York, and Puerto Rico; the monument of Wounded Knee was seized in 1973 by Oglala Lakota protesting the US government's failure to fulfill treaties with Native American peoples.
11. Simpson, "First Dublin Production," in Cohn, "Waiting for Godot," 34.
12. Todd Gitlin, *Occupy Nation: The Roots, the Spirit, and the Promise of Occupy Wall Street* (New York: HarperCollins, 2012), 109.
13. Judith Butler, "Bodies in Public," in *Occupy: Scenes from Occupied America*, ed. Astra Taylor and Keith Cessen (New York: Verso, 2011), 193.
14. Samuel Beckett, "Les Deux Besoins," in *Disjecta*, 56 (author's translation).
15. Beckett, *Waiting for Godot*, 21.
16. *Ibid.*, 8.
17. Adorno, "Trying to Understand 'Endgame,'" 264.
18. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, 39.