

## Beckett and Psychology

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In Samuel Beckett's works questions about mental reality are usually considered from an introspective point of view as his characters explore aspects of their own consciousness. The protagonists' journeys in *Molloy*, for example, can be interpreted as figurative representations of attempts at mental self-exploration.<sup>1</sup> But Beckett's approach is not always metaphorical. He is familiar with the works of a variety of psychologists, and in different places he refers to the ideas of Freud, Jung, Pavlov, William James, Kurt Koffka, and Wolfgang Köhler, among others.<sup>2</sup>

Such allusions have led some critics to analyze Beckett's writing in the light of specific psychological theories. Two of these critics are Barbara Shapiro and Raymond Riva, who discuss the Freudian elements in a number of Beckett's works.<sup>3</sup> But a third critic, G. C. Barnard, argues that the eccentric actions of Beckett's characters can be interpreted as symptoms of schizophrenia.<sup>4</sup> This leads to differences of opinion, especially when various critics apply their methods in interpreting particular aspects of Beckett's writing. Thus Riva and Shapiro suggest that the mother-son relationships in Beckett's fiction are Oedipal, but Barnard claims that they are typical of schizophrenic case histories.<sup>5</sup>

Looking to other critics for the resolution of such disagreements can lead to additional complications. André Marissel introduces a new factor in suggesting that repressed homosexuality is an important factor in the mother-son relationships; and there are other commentators who have still different views on the question.<sup>6</sup> At this point (unless one is prepared to defend the view that *Molloy* is a schizophrenic latent homosexual with Oedipal problems) it is worth considering whether any of these interpretations can finally be definitive.

For some of the psychological critics, a central argument is that events in Beckett's works correspond to some psychological theory or syndrome of mental illness. But it is usually rather difficult to prove that Beckett is really concerned with providing descriptions of classical psychological disorders. Moreover, many psychologists would agree that people whom they would not label abnormal can be troubled by feelings which, in more intense form, would be considered symptoms of mental illness. This may be the case with Beckett's characters, given the many disagreements about the psychological significance of their behaviour.

In some instances Beckett portrays characters who do seem to be deranged; Watt, for example, is confined in an asylum. But the apparent madness in such characters often turns out to be the eccentricity of genius, an idea Beckett invokes in defending Proust's concept of aesthetic contemplation.<sup>7</sup> It finally becomes apparent that characters like Watt have a stronger grip on reality than those who live outside the asylum.<sup>8</sup>

Since Beckett is so often concerned with universal issues, suggestions that his works incorporate fictionalized case histories can greatly diminish their scope by explaining away whatever seems odd or puzzling in them. If one assumes that Beckett's characters are demented, it easily follows that their words and actions need not be taken seriously. But Beckett is often satirizing what

passes for normalcy and pointing out how ordinary life is filled with bizarre events that most people choose to ignore.

Hence some of the most persuasive commentators on the psychological issues have been careful not to overstate the case for any single theory as a pervasive influence in Beckett's works. Lawrence Harvey, although he finds that occasionally alludes to Oedipal themes, warns against single-minded Freudian interpretations.<sup>9</sup> John Pilling, after giving a useful survey of Freudian and Jungian elements in *Molloy*, concludes that no Freudian or Jungian approach can unravel the novel's deeper meanings.<sup>10</sup> And Colin Duckworth, who takes a similar view about the dangers of misapplied psychological theories, goes on to point out specific weaknesses in Barnard's argument.<sup>11</sup>

In addition, Beckett sometimes gives hints in the works themselves which suggest that he is not using a conventional psychological approach. Readers are told that Murphy detests psychiatrists because of their "text-book attitude" and their "complacent scientific conceptualism."<sup>12</sup> Moran obliquely refers to Freudian terms when he speaks of the "Obidil" (a mirror reversal of "libido") and of the "fatal pleasure principle" (a blend of Freud's concepts of the death instinct and the pleasure principle).<sup>13</sup> Such transformations indicate that Beckett's underlying approach to Freudian thought is at least in some instances satirical.

A related idea emerges in references to what Beckett calls the "Davus complex."<sup>14</sup> Here the joke is based on a line in Terence's play *Andria*: when a character named Davus is unwilling to answer a question, he shrugs it off protesting that he is Davus, not Oedipus.<sup>15</sup> The Davus complex is Beckett's term for a deep-rooted reluctance to confront difficult questions.<sup>16</sup> It is a complex which can afflict both patients and their analysts, especially those who dispose of baffling symptoms by invoking a common psychological syndrome such as an Oedipus complex. Freudian theories are valuable; but Beckett begins to distrust them if they are used to terminate the investigative process prematurely.

Hence, when Beckett refers to Oedipus or to Freud, it usually is in a context that has little to do with psychology. The references to the Davus complex make it clear that Beckett is more interested in Oedipus as a mythic riddle-solver than as a Freudian prototype. In other places Beckett praises Freud for a comment about Kant and uses the aged Oedipus as an example of an impotent ruler.<sup>17</sup>

Utilizing another type of reversal, Beckett sometimes gives descriptions of relationships that initially seem to be Oedipal; but he also includes details which indicate that he is not conforming to a Freudian pattern. There are references to potentially incestuous mother-son relationships in a number of works ("A Case In a Thousand," the unpublished story, "Echo's Bones," *Molloy*, and *Malone Dies*); but in each instance the sons make it clear that they consider their mothers sexually unappealing. At times Beckett's protagonists express violent anger towards their parents, but they usually speak about killing, not their fathers, but their mothers.<sup>18</sup>

Such reversals have led some critics to suggest that Beckett's characters are concealing less ambivalent feelings about incest and parricide, or that the absence of even references to Oedipal feelings indicates that they have been repressed. But these conclusions can never be more than

hypothetical; supporting arguments by citing a lack of evidence for them is not a very persuasive approach.

Some of the psychological critics also speculate about Beckett's psyche, implying that the author shares some of the symptoms he attributes to his characters. Given Beckett's well-known reticence about his personal life, the possibility that he is inadvertently including autobiographical revelations becomes remote. Beckett himself rejects author psychology as a legitimate form of criticism because, he says, the obscure inner tensions that give rise to a work of art are unavailable...."<sup>19</sup>

These are among the reasons why attempts to demonstrate that Beckett's characters conform to specific psychological syndromes so often turn into will-o-the-wisp pursuits. Certainly, Beckett would not deny that psychologists have offered very useful descriptions of mental activity. But their theories are typically no more than initial steps in an understanding of mental processes, fragmented bits of knowledge which should not be taken for universal principles.

Beckett has indicated that he considers mind and self as entities so nebulous that they cannot be defined. In *First Love* the narrator is even uncertain about whether the self actually exists; this is a question he assigns to "the hell of unknowing."<sup>20</sup> Beckett feels that if the self does exist, we probably can perceive only its most superficial aspects. This point came up in a conversation with Lawrence Harvey. The authentic self, Beckett told Harvey, is not the same as the self which is visible in the outside world. The deeper self is "a being somehow stunted, undeveloped, but more real, more authentic than the public man, who seems closer to the second or third person than to the first."<sup>21</sup>

His sense of a remote authentic self has led Beckett to chide other authors (Balzac, for example) for giving overly explicit descriptions of their characters' motivation.<sup>22</sup> Beckett provides few explanations about his characters' behaviour, and at times his narrators justify this reticence by arguing that information about the ultimate reasons for any human decision is unobtainable. Hence the narrator of *More Pricks Than Kicks* refuses to speculate about why Belacqua, the protagonist, has made up his mind to commit suicide:

How he had formed this resolution to destroy himself we are quite unable to discover. The simplest course, when motives of any deed are found subliminal to the point of defying expression, is to call that deed *ex nihilo* and have done.<sup>23</sup>

This narrator and those in the other early works refrain from discussing motivation, but they do refer to other psychological issues. In the later works one finds still fewer allusions to psychological concepts; here Beckett tries to understand the mind and its processes by relying more on insights that come as a result of introspective thought.

There is a transition in Beckett's later writing which runs parallel to this one: psychological ideas are dealt with artistically rather than intellectually, that is, they are integrated into the fabric of the work. One example of such a change comes when Beckett refers to the ideas of the Gestalt psychologist Wolfgang Köhler, first in *Murphy* (1938), and later in *Acts Without Words I* (1957).

Köhler, a German national, found himself interned on Tenerife at the outbreak of World War I. There he began a series of experiments at the Anthropoid Research Station established by the Prussian Academy of Science. His discoveries led to the publication of *The Mentality of Apes*, where he showed that apes, unlike most animals, are capable of learning how to use tools.<sup>24</sup> In one famous experiment Köhler suspended a banana above an ape's head; nearby were a number of boxes. The ape eventually discovered that by piling the boxes on top of each other it would be able to reach the fruit.<sup>25</sup>

In *Murphy*, an allusion to Köhler's experiments comes in an exchange between the hero of the novel and a character named Neary. Neary explains to Murphy that his need for a certain Miss Dwyer can be understood as an example of the Gestalt psychology figure-ground concept. Murphy is not very impressed. When Neary speculates about the benefits of even a short interlude with Miss Dwyer, Murphy sarcastically responds: "And then?... Back to Teneriffe and the apes?"<sup>26</sup>

Murphy's sneer at Neary's psychological ideas (and indirectly, at Köhler's) is only part of the joke. As it later turns out, Murphy is no less given to psychologising than Neary—only he happens to follow the line of the Külpe school, a precursor of the Gestalt movement.<sup>27</sup> Beckett's point is that Neary and Murphy deserve to be mocked if they imagine that their smattering of psychology will lead to successful self-analysis.

In *Acts Without Words I* Köhler's Tenerife experiment is a source for the setting. A carafe of water is suspended over the stage, just out of reach of the play's only character; and then some boxes are lowered to the floor. The hero, like one of Köhler's apes, piles the boxes on top of each other and tries to reach the bait. But the unseen figure who controls this experiment is crueler than Köhler was: each time the protagonist climbs onto the boxes the carafe is pulled out of his reach. If the experiment has any point, it is to measure the degree of frustration the subject will endure before refusing the temptations that are—literally—dangled before him.

The play finally illustrates how easily the godlike experimenters whimsical exercise of power can demoralize the subject. Here Beckett is no longer concerned with the ideas of Köhler or the Gestalt psychologists. Indeed, Köhler's discoveries are ignored as Beckett turns the framework of the experiment into a metaphor for the human condition.

Even in Beckett's early works there are indications that he has reason to question not only specific psychological theories but scientific methodology generally. In his first published essay he refers to Vico's description of two antithetical modes of expression: philosophical language and poetic language.<sup>28</sup> Following Vico, Beckett argues that philosophical language (the language of logicians and scientists) introduces abstractions which tend to overemphasize rational concepts. Philosophical language imposes neatly delineated categories on an imperfectly understood world. Poetic language, on the other hand, avoids generalizations and focuses on the immediate details of an individual experience. Using the poetic approach means giving up the illusion that reality is intrinsically comprehensible and admitting that at best one can achieve only a partial understanding of isolated events.

This argument runs parallel to one in Schopenhauer's thought, a critique of logical or materialistic methods of apprehending reality. Schopenhauer rejects approaches based on descriptions of phenomena (interactions in the physical world) and attempts to understand reality by means of artistic contemplation, a form of Introspection that dispenses with logic and materialism in favour of a more intuitive, aesthetic approach. He concludes that phenomena are illusory, and that there exists a deeper level of reality, the realm of the thing-in-itself.<sup>29</sup> It is impossible to apprehend this level of reality directly; but the contemplation of great works of art can suggest how things-in-themselves underlie the appearances of the world of phenomena.

Beckett uses this argument together with those of Vico to point out the limitations of investigative methods based on materialism, logic, and causality.<sup>30</sup> Such methods originated in descriptions of interactions in the physical world; but Beckett believes that mental reality operates according to a different set of rules.

This theme emerges when Molloy speaks about mental laws, "the laws of the mind . . . of my mind, that for example water rises in proportion as it drowns you...."<sup>31</sup> Molloy's observation, which stresses the differences between mental and physical processes, is ironically phrased like a scientific law. When Molloy corrects himself, saying that he will not speak about the mind but about his mind, he is avoiding the type of generalizing that Vico says characterizes philosophical language.

At times, Beckett's sense of the distinctions between mental and physical interactions emerges in parodistic references to physical models of the mind. The narrator of Beckett's unpublished novel *Dream of Fair to Middling Women* admonishes readers who try to analyze mental events by connecting "the stimulus to the molecular agitation it sets up."<sup>32</sup> The same narrator considers Balzac's characters so predictable that they seem like "clockwork cabbages."<sup>33</sup> Narrators in other works jokingly speak of the mind as if it were an engine or a clock.<sup>34</sup>

Beckett's sense of the inappropriateness of using physical models in descriptions of mental reality is based on the idea, ultimately derived from Schopenhauer and Vico, that mental processes have unique aspects which make them very different from physical Interactions.<sup>35</sup> Schopenhauer's emphasis on introspection is also important for Beckett, and this marks the point where he abandons psychology.

Modern psychologists seldom use introspection when garnering data for analysis. Given that individuals have direct access only to their own minds, introspection does not provide the broad base necessary for generalizations. Hence, for scientists observation is usually the preferred mode.

Even so, observation is part of a methodology that originally was developed for the investigation of physical reality. The introspective approach is useful in investigations of mental reality, especially for those who strive to avoid generalizations. In the arts introspective methods have often contributed valuable insights about human behavior—insights that psychologists often use to augment their observations. And introspection is finally the only way of experiencing mental reality directly.

There are still other advantages to be gained in using an introspective approach. Psychological information derived from observation may be biased because of the way subjective reality colours one's perceptions.<sup>36</sup> Introspection is therefore often necessary in evaluating the accuracy of one's sense of outer reality.

In observing other people, another difficulty arises: one cannot be certain that the version of the self an individual presents to the world is authentic. Even when aspects of inner reality are honestly communicated, they must be filtered through the distorting medium of language. Hence one tends to create subjective versions of others' personalities. If one discovers that the self that has been postulated for an individual is flawed, it can be revised; but one never possesses a version of another's self that is comprehensive and authentic.

A similar process takes place in attempts to understand ourselves. We use models of the inner self which must be revised when their inadequacies become apparent. The road to self-discovery is littered with images of the self that are discarded in the pursuit of new ones that promise to be superior.

Beckett often deals with such issues metaphorically. Many of his characters are engaged in difficult quests which represent journeys of self-discovery. In the *Three Novels* his protagonists attempt to track down figures who seem to be versions of their past or future selves. The names of some protagonists are changed when they move on to new stages of self-discovery, and some of them recall their predecessors in earlier works, indicating that they all may be versions of the same self.<sup>37</sup> A number of characters hear voices which urge them to undertake some action: these mysterious inner directives are Beckett's alternative to descriptions of the causes of motivation. In *How It Is*, the disputes between shadowy figures can be interpreted as inner conflicts in a single mind.

Such devices mark Beckett's increasing emphasis on an introspective approach, and with this shift he begins to refer less often to psychology. Psychological concepts are useful for raising questions about the nature of mental reality. But to those who are engaged in introspective processes, scientific concepts become reminders of the outside world and hence can be distracting.

For Beckett logic, rationality, and scientific analysis are tools which can initiate a process of inquiry about the most profound levels of mental reality. But investigating this reality introduces concepts that can no longer be dealt with logically. Hence there comes a time when one must give up rational tools and employ a more subjective approach. This is why, despite Beckett's many allusions to specific psychological concepts, it is difficult to prove that anyone of them has been influential in a significant way. If Beckett borrows a good deal from psychology, he also makes it clear that he is ready to abandon it when it is no longer useful.

## NOTES

1. This point was developed in my essay "Molloy and the Archetypal Traveller," *Journal of Beckett Studies* 5 (Autumn, 1979), pp. 25-44.

2. Beckett refers to Freud in his unpublished novel, *Dream of Fair to Middling Women* (typescript in the collections of the Dartmouth University Library), pp. 132, 193; to the Id in Watt (New York: Grove Press, 1959), p. 51, and in Murphy (1938; rpt., New York: Grove Press, 1957), p. 218. The idea of a girl who had ‘never been properly born,’ taken by Beckett from one of Jung’s lectures, is mentioned in Watt p. 248; and in *All That Fall*, in *Krapp’s Last Tape and Other Dramatic Pieces* (New York: Grove Press, 1960), p. 84. For a description of Jung’s lecture, see Deirdre Bair, *Samuel Beckett* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), p. 209. Pavlov is mentioned in ‘Dante... Bruno. Vico.. Joye,’ in Samuel Beckett, *et al.*, *Our Exagmination Round his Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress* (1929; rpt., London: Faber and Faber, 1972), p. 13. Koffka is mentioned in *Murphy*, p. 48. Here Beckett also refers to William James’s idea that the world—until ordered by consciousness—is a place of ‘blooming buzzing confusion.’ See William James, ‘The World We Live In,’ in *The Philosophy of William James* (New York: The Modern Library, 1953), p. 76, and *Murphy*, pp. 4, 29, 245. I am grateful to Prof. Lawrence Graver for identifying this allusion. Koffka and members of the Würzburg school (also known as the Külpe school) are mentioned in *Murphy*, pp. 48, 80-81. Beckett’s references to Köhler’s works will be discussed in detail later in this essay.
3. Barbara Shapiro, ‘Towards a Psychoanalytic Reading of Beckett’s *Molloy*,’ Part I, *Literature and Psychology*, no.2, 1969, pp. 71-86; Part II, *Literature and Psychology*, nos.3-4, 1969, pp. 15-30. Raymond T. Riva, ‘Beckett and Freud,’ *Criticism* 12, 1970, pp. 120-132.
4. G. C. Barnard, *Samuel Beckett: A New Approach* (New York: Dodd, Mead, 1970).
5. Barnard, discussing the mother-child relationships in Beckett’s works, writes (p. 6): ‘Frequently the child who later on develops schizophrenia had a mother who was overpossessive, domineering, and either rather hostile or apt to exploit for her own advantage the emotional mother-child relationship.’ As this passage suggests, Barnard considers schizophrenia a developmental ailment and not a psycho-chemical dysfunction (although the latter is a widely held view).
6. André Marissel, *Samuel Beckett* (Paris: Éditions Universitaires, 1963), pp. 59-60. Shapiro reaches a similar conclusion; Shapiro, Part I, p. 71. One of the most interesting of the alternative views is David Hayman’s. He begins with a Freudian interpretation of the mother-son relationship, but parts company with Shapiro and Riva by suggesting that Molloy’s mother can be interpreted as a symbolic representation of Freud’s id. See David Hayman, ‘*Molloy* or the Quest for Meaninglessness: A Global Interpretation,’ in Melvin J. Friedman, ed., *Samuel Beckett Now* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. 149.
7. See Beckett’s comments on the *amabilis insania* of Proustian artistic contemplation; Proust (1931; rpt. New York: Grove Press, 1957), p. 70.
8. A more detailed argument in favour of Watt’s sanity is given in my essay ‘Watt from Descartes to Schopenhauer,’ in *Aspects of Irish Literature*, ed. James Brophy and Raymond Porter (New Rochelle, N.Y., Iona College Press. 1972), pp. 278 and ff. -

9. Lawrence Harvey. *Samuel Beckett, Poet and Critic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), pp. 263 and ff.; and p. 267.
10. John Pilling, *Samuel Beckett* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976), p. 42.
11. Colin Duckworth, *Angels of Darkness* (London: George Allen and Unwin., 1972), pp. 44, 57, 67-68.
12. *Murphy*, pp. 176-77.
13. *Molloy*, (New York: Grove Press, 1970). pp. 222, 135.
14. *Watt* p. 251; 'Denis Devlin,' *Transition* no. 27 (April-May, 1938), p. 290.
15. Terence, *Andria*, line 194 ('Davus sum, non Oedipus'). Oedipus, of course, is famous for solving the riddle of the sphinx.
16. In Beckett's essay on Denis Devlin, those who find the poet's works too difficult suffer from the Davus complex; in *Watt* (p. 251) it is the protagonist.
17. Freud is mentioned in 'Three Dialogues,' reprinted in *Samuel Beckett, A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Martin Esslin (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc.. 1965), p. 18. The reference to Oedipus is in *Proust*, p. 58.
18. See *The Unnamable* (New York: Grove Press, 1958), p. 146; *Krapp's Last Tape*, pp. 18-19; 'From an Abandoned Work,' in *First Love and Other Shorts* (New York: Grove Press, 1974), p. 44. According to Lawrence Harvey, it is likely that the poem which begins 'I would like my love to die' is about Beckett's mother; see *Samuel Beckett, Poems in English* (New York: Grove Press, 1961), p. 61; and Harvey, p. 229.
19. Lawrence Harvey, 'Samuel Beckett on Life, Art, and Criticism,' *Modern Language Notes*, 80 (December, 1965), p. 557.
20. *First Love*, in *First Love and Other Shorts*, (New York: Grove Press, 1974), pp. 32-33.
21. Harvey, 'Samuel Beckett on Life...', p. 556. Beckett's comment about the surface self versus the authentic self resembles Schopenhauer's idea that a person's existence in the world of phenomena is inauthentic in contrast to one's existence as a thing-in-itself; see Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea*, in three vols., tr. R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp (1883, rpt. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1964), 1, 231-234 and ff .
22. In a book review Beckett praises the complexity of Proust's characterization and contrasts it with 'plane psychology a la Balzac'; 'Proust In Pieces,' *The Spectator*, 152 (June 22, 1934), p. 976. There is also a derogatory reference to Balzac's characterization in *Dream of Fair to Middling Women*, p. 105.

23. *More Pricks than Kicks*, p. 89. Another instance of the refusal to give conventional characterisations comes in *Dream of Fair to Middling Women* pp. 10-11. This reticence is justified by a remark that comes later in the novel: 'The reality of the individual,' says the protagonist, 'is an incoherent reality and must be expressed incoherently', p. 91.
24. Wolfgang Köhler, *Intelligenzprüfungen an Menschenaffen* (Berlin: Julius Springer, 1921). The English version is *The Mentality of Apes*, tr. Ella Winter (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1925).
25. Köhler, *The Mentality of Apes* pp.139-178. The German and the English versions of the book both contain illustrations showing an ape piling boxes on one another in order to reach some food-visual images that anticipate the setting of Beckett's play.
26. *Murphy*, pp. 4-5.
27. The narrator says, 'Murphy had some faith in the Külpe school,' and indicates that Murphy is familiar with the writings of Oswald Külpe, Karl Marbe, Karl Bühler, Henry Watt, and Narziss Ache, who are all members of that school (*Murphy*, p. 81). Beckett continues the joke about the figure-ground concept when Neary, having abruptly lost interest in Miss Dwyer, writes to another Gestalt psychologist (Kurt Koffka) asking for an explanation (p. 48). Historians of psychology usually consider the Külpe school a forerunner of the Gestalt movement.
28. *Our Exagmination*, pp.9-10. Here Beckett contrasts what he calls 'Metaphysics' with 'Poetry' and makes it clear that these refer to the language and thought of philosophers and scientists, as opposed to that of poets.
29. The argument that phenomena are illusory and that there exists beyond them a deeper reality is a central concept in *The World as Will and Idea*. See *The World*, 1, 354, 369-74, *et passim*; 11, 165-83. See also Schopenhauer's comments on rational knowledge, *The World*, 1, 68-75.
30. Some of these arguments are reflected in the 'Verticalist Manifesto' of 1932, which Beckett signed. Its opening paragraph begins, 'In a world ruled by the hypnosis of positivism, we proclaim the autonomy of the poetic vision, the hegemony of the inner life over the outer life.' Quoted by Sighle Kennedy in *Murphy's Bed* (Lewisburg Pa.: Bucknell University Press, 1971, p. 303). For Beckett's version of Vico's point about the superiority of poetic language, see *Our Exagmination*, pp. 9-13. Watt learns about the dangers of assuming that causality can explain human motivation when he mulls over the 'Tom, Dick, Harry and another' series; *Watt*, pp. 134-36. In *Proust*, Beckett refers to a number of ideas he borrows from Schopenhauer, and even his phrasing often follows that of his source. For examples see: on the thing-in-itself, *Proust*, p. 69 and *The World*, 1, 221; on the illusory nature of the physical world, *Proust*, p. 8 and *The World*, 1, 131; on artistic contemplation, *Proust*, p. 66 and *The World*, 1, 239; on the eccentric behavior of geniuses (*amabilis insania* etc.), *Proust*, p. 70 and *The World*, 1, p. 247; on music, *Proust*, pp. 70-71 and *The World*, 1, 333.

31. *Molloy*, p. 16.
32. *Dream*, p. 142.
33. *Dream*, p. 106.
34. In *Dream* the narrator speaks of a 'piston' and 'cylinders' in Belacqua's mind, pp. 2-3. The narrator of 'A Case in A Thousand,' alluding to the emotional problems of the protagonist, says that his heart 'knocked and misfired'; *The Bookman*, 86 (August, 1934, p. 241). A character in *More Pricks than Kicks* is described 'winding up the weights of her mind,' p. 54.
35. Beckett speaks of Proust's 'contempt for the literature that "describes," for the realists and naturalists worshipping the offal of experience... and content to transcribe the surface, the facade, behind which the Idea is prisoner,' Proust, p. 59. Later in this work, p. 69, he equates 'the Idea' and 'the Thing in itself.' It is clear from the context that Beckett's own views are similar to those he attributes to Proust; and that he is alluding to Schopenhauer's concept of the thing-in-itself: see pp. 66 and 70-71, and Schopenhauer, *The World*, 1, 221.
36. Beckett at times even goes so far as to agree with Schopenhauer that we ourselves create what we subsequently take to be the world; see *Proust*, p. 8.
37. There are allusions to *Murphy*, *Watt*, and *Mercier* in *Molloy*, p. 188; *Mercier* and *Moran* are mentioned in *Malone Dies* (New York: Grove Press, 1963), p. 63; *Murphy*, *Watt*, and *Mercier* are mentioned in *The Unnamable* (New York: Grove Press, 1958), pp. 33, 53. There are similar examples in a number of other works.