

Performing the (Dis)continuity of the Self in Samuel Beckett's *That Time* and Edward Albee's *Three Tall Women*

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Beckett and Albee

Since his memorable debut with *The Zoo Story* at the Berlin Festival in 1959, Edward Albee has been classified as the absurdist playwright of America, his dramatic style being compared to that of Beckett by many scholars. To refer to just one device, that of the shaggy dog story at the heart of the first Albee play which encapsulates the crisis of communication portrayed by the whole, is profoundly reminiscent of the middle of *Waiting for Godot* where Vladimir's song about a dog returns to its beginning like Beckett's work itself does. Hardly a wonder, then, that in 1960, when *The Zoo Story* found its way home to the United States, the Greenwich Village Theater ventured to stage it as part of a double bill together with *Krapp's Last Tape*. Regarding the later Beckett and Albee, the manifold links between the two are discussed by Christopher Bigsby, with special attention to the shift in their works in the direction of experimenting with the modes of presenting consciousness. In the scholar's opinion, "Albee has been increasingly drawn to Beckett's minimalism. His, too, are characters for whom habit has become a substitute for being. The past presses on his characters not as in a Miller play, where it is evidence of a betrayal..., but as the source of an irony which must be neutralized" (135).

Albee's first play after a considerably long silence, the Pulitzer-prize winning *Three Tall Women* (1991) was commissioned by the English Theatre in Vienna, and received almost unanimous good reviews (Saunders 7). It demonstrates, yet again, affinities with Beckettian strategies: its three protagonists are called A, B, and C, like the voices in *That Time* (1974). The Beckett play orchestrates rhythmically patterned fragments which recall a few scenes from the life of an old man called Listener, the voices performing versions of his self through discontinuous narration. Albee's virtually all-female drama was inspired by the "lonely, bitter" personality and demise of his adoptive mother. According to the author's interpretation, the writing of the play functioned as "a kind of exorcism," with a lot of the dialogue deriving from his memories of what she had actually said, though he "was inventing her" at the same time (qtd. in Saunders 7). The second part of *Three Tall Women* shows A, B, and C engaged in the recollection of incidents and feelings from the various stages and corresponding experiences of the life of a fourth woman figure on stage, mute and lying in bed without movement, apparently on the verge of death. Subject to shifts in both time and re-imagined space, the thus presented material amounts to constructing an identity evolving rather than given.

The Character in Time

In her theoretically informed book, *The Death of Character*, Elinor Fuchs claims that in modern drama character portrayal undergoes a radical transformation: "there are clear signs that autonomous character is in retreat from its Hegelian apogee" (31). Consequently, the long-held ideal of the unified character has been replaced by the incentive to follow its dissolution, which has taken three major directions in dramaturgy, the "allegorical, critical, and theatricalist" (31-32). Elaborating on the last of these, Fuchs continues to claim that "Because of its ability to hold two or more planes of reality in ambiguous suspension, theatricalism has emerged... as a favored dramatic mode to express the relative and multiple nature of self-identity" (33). Confirmed by the history of playwriting, the strategies based on the theatricalist approach involve operation with the splitting of the dramatic character into two or more visibly separate parts that frequently appear in the very same scenes and even talk to each other.

Contemporary drama in English offers several examples for doubling one particular character into a past and a present version, which are juxtaposed or confronted, performing through their differences yet undeniable relatedness both the continuity and discontinuity of the self. In Hugh Leonard's *Da* (1973) the figure of the protagonist's son, Charlie is cast as a 40 year-old, established writer and also as a youth who is still before career-building. With the dead father conjured up, the evocation of scenes from the past in the context of which Young Charlie plays his role highlights the roots of the troubled parent-son relationship. At first the distance between the two Charlies is strongly felt, the present-day version looking at his bookish and too trusting younger self with unmistakable contempt. Young Charlie, both haunting and recreated, primarily enacts self-examination, commenting on as well as criticizing what his middle-aged self has become: "There's no jizz in you. The fun's gone out of you. What's worse, you're no good ... wouldn't even take him with you to London when me ma died.... I haven't got a tosser, but at least I've got a few principles" (56-57). In the course of the drama, however, by revisiting the turning points of his life in his mind, Charlie manages to accept his confused past and the choices he has made, and also become reconciled to the fact that his emerging self has necessarily gone through a variety of phases to arrive at where he is now.

Marsha Norman's *Getting Out* (1979) casts Arlene and Arlie, a present and a past version of the same lower class protagonist, who can be seen on stage juxtaposed but not communicating with each other as two on-stage characters. Using the full first name and a nickname referring to the respective selves of the woman contributes to the effect of emphasizing the gap between one stage and another in her life. After spending a term in prison, Arlene is shown as a changed woman, who seeks personal liberation by trying to reform her relationships and considering to start in a job other than the former one, prostitution. Yet the memories constituting her psychic history voiced through Arlie signify that the past can barely be eradicated in a short time, if ever, and the experiences of the earlier years keep on interfering with the present. The climax occurs when Arlene is pushed by an increasingly aggressive Arlie to the tormenting recollection of her suicide attempt in prison, which involved the partial loss of her self, the division of her identity. Arlie, then, duly fades out of act 2, to return only at the end to laugh away at some memory in duo with Arlene for the very first time, which suggests the possible renewal of the

self through the integration of the past: “(Arlene has begun to smile during the story, now they say together, both standing as Mama did, one hand on her hip.) Arlie, what you doing there?” (65). Thus in Norman’s drama the doubling of the protagonist is a device to articulate the process whereby the protagonist learns to come to terms with and absorb her own psychological history.

The present paper addresses *That Time* and *Three Tall Women* to explore the multiplication of their respective characters into three versions as the essential part of their dramaturgy. I wish to point out that both Beckett’s and Albee’s plays focus on the self in its becoming “discernable through, not despite its history,” to borrow words from an analysis of alternative identities in the literature and culture of the modern era (Brooks 18). At the same time, attempts will be made to highlight that the plays are deeply entrenched in the Irish and American tradition.

“Never the same but the same”: *That Time*

Recycling themes and motifs from several other Beckettian works from *The Unnamable* (1953) to *Not I* (1973), *That Time* reshapes the technique deployed by *Krapp’s Last Tape*, in particular. Compared with the earlier drama there is, however, a development toward abstraction in the later play. While the voices testifying to the past in *Krapp’s Last Tape* are technically reproduced by the protagonist, a bodied character who walks and talks, *That Time* posits A, B, and C as spatially separated, disembodied voices. They all sound distinct though they are the same (Cave 118), and together dramatize the silent old man’s consciousness. Without direct communication between the voices, the past is evoked in a musically arranged aesthetic order, yet the fragments are interlinked in several ways. All use the distancing pronoun “you” in reference to the Listener, whose experiences they recall. Moreover, the short monologues share the feature of conveying “feelings of confusion, solitude, desolation and death” (Knowlson 601), as more and more is revealed not so much about the unfolding of the life’s course but about the versions of the self conveyed through the recollected experiences.

The reminiscences of A, B, and C are interwoven by means of references to certain generally outlined temporal, and more specifically drawn spatial frames. The interplay of the different levels of space and time in relation to self-construction through memory as the characteristic device of *That Time* can be viewed utilizing some relevant ideas put forward in Gaston Bachelard’s philosophical treatise, *The Poetics of Space* (1958). According to its argumentation,

In the theater of the past that is constituted by memory, the stage setting maintains the characters in their dominant roles. At times we think we know ourselves in time, when all we know is a sequence of fixations in the spaces of the being’s stability—a being who does not want to melt away, and who, even in the past, when he sets out in search of things past, wants time to ‘suspend’ its flight.... space contains compressed time. (8)

The respective tales of the voices engage in capturing time gone by through its being anchored in space. They evoke different locations, yet connect the experiences as those of one person: in all the three interlocking recreations of the disparate segments of the past the spatial image of “stone” or a similarly hard and cold surface

appears. Establishing continuity, a few other elements emblematic of personal history as part of a larger set of relations also keep on occurring across time and space, for instance the "old green greatcoat," which is mentioned by both A and C (232).

A depicts a scene from childhood, about hiding in a ruined tower, Foley's Folly, "where none ever came" and "no one was looking," sitting "all day long on a stone among the nettles with your picture-book" (229). While identifiably Irish, the "stone among the nettles" as the place of retreat gives the impression of one of the inner "drawings" a person "cover(s) the universe with," though not necessarily in the form of an exact picture (Bachelard 12). The child's memorable experience is narrated as involvement in an act of trying to make up a world for itself with "now one voice now another till you were hoarse and they all sounded the same well on into the night" (230). Set in a moment of the past, the incident encapsulates what the drama in the present embraces, that is the construction of the self through splitting it. This dialogue of selves can be associated with a powerful characteristic feature of modern Irish literature and drama, described by Anthony Roche as a tendency to move away "from the idea of a single leading man" (79), a single leading part of the psyche one may add in the context of this particular work.

A's monologue branches out into parts which revolve around the vaguely defined "that time," when a particular version of the self was mentally reconnected with the initial scene. In addition to re-imagining the lonely child's escape and hiding away, the story of A, as Beckett himself explained, is much rather that of "the man in middle age" (qtd. in Knowlson 601), trying to go back to a place of childhood in search of a long cherished experience. The text here is framed by the vivid recollection of spatial elements like the wharf and the rusty, disused tramrails, indicating movement and change through time. As part of rendering the past there is also, as S. E. Gontarski points out, "the present recollection/creation of that quest," the imagination activated so as to "reconstitute reality or constitute a self" (152). Both are taking place, in my view, simultaneously. The self emerges from the fragments of once lived and then recycled visions of reality transformed into fiction, which process is suggested to have its origin in the child's enacting multiple roles over his picture-book. As steps of self-creation, the later efforts are described as "making yourself all up again for the millionth time forgetting it all where you were" (234).

The attempt to travel back to the scene of childhood's self-multiplying and solitary day-dreaming leads to an epiphany of loss: "the truth began to dawn... all closed down and boarded up Doric terminus of the Great Southern and Eastern all closed down and the colonnade crumbling away" (231). Yet the past can be relived on the stage of personal memory: huddled on a doorstep "in the pale sun" (232) the protagonist resembles the one-time child, hearing "yourself at it again... drooling away out loud" (233). His subsequent determination never to return, caused by the disappointment over the failure of the actual trip to the ruin, is contradicted by the very narration of A, which does revisit the old scene through the imbedded story about the middle-aged self's mental journey back in time. Recalling the scene as "muttering away" in "the dark or moonlight" (233) offers a variation on the spatial/temporal qualities of the original, suggesting mysterious subjectivity underpinning the work of the imagination. At the same time it sharply contrasts with the re-

membering self's corporeal situatedness: he is out in the sun which can be associated with the external and objective.

The voice called B is the teller of a story of unconsummated love from the period of youth. Strangely, the man and woman involved neither face nor touch each other, though their attachment is being secured by the exchange of vows "every now and then" (229). In want of a culturally anchored reference, the Irish context is created through literary analogy here. Like the legendary Dermot and Dervorgilla in Yeats's *The Dreaming of the Bones*, the protagonists evoked by B's tale are "no better than shades" (231), and, nonetheless, it seems to be the intrusion of the past, "having whatever scenes perhaps way back in childhood" (230) that keeps them apart. The question arises whether they are also waiting for some outside help to redeem them from being thus paralyzed by memories. Yet, as Sidney Homan observes, the specific irony of the situation in this part of *That Time* derives from the fact that the rigid piece of stone the strange lovers use as their hardly comforting seat is surrounded by signs of procreation (164). Describing the scene, Beckett refers to "wheat turning yellow" and a sunlit "blue sky" with "the little wood behind," in opposition to the repressed passions of the protagonists (230, 228).

In B's section, following the pattern introduced by A, the later mental recasting of the scene is equally emphasized, and a richer variation in the spatial aspects of "making up" indicates greater intensity compared with the stories of A. Apart from the stone, the lovers are imaginatively placed "on the towpath" and "in the sand," making the scene up with them "always together somewhere in the sun" (230). Considering the complex and ramifying mental constructions the section displays, the words of Bachelard apply again: "Our past is situated elsewhere, and both time and place are impregnated with a sense of unreality" (58). The scenes of togetherness are revisited in the monologue with the protagonist being "alone on the end of the stone with the wheat and blue or the towpath alone on the towpath with the ghosts of the mules" or "alone on your back in the sand" (233). Images of decay like the "drowned rat or bird or whatever it was floating off" and "the sun going down" (233) further undermine the possibility of re-creating the dubious harmony of the past scene. Timing becomes less certain than ever, as the memories of memories converge into spatial unfixing: "you back in the old scene wherever it might be might have been" (233). The "glider passing over" (234) is a possible reminder of change in the larger context, which exerts its influence on rearranging the lines of the drawings in the protagonist's mind.

As the threshold of two worlds, dreams and reality, symbolizing a passageway between them, the window has the significance of containing in its spatiality the musings about the love scene "to keep the void out just another of those old tales to keep the void from pouring in on top of you" (230). However, the fragment is stretched to the vanishing of memory into disbelief: the whole thing may never have happened only made up. Not unlike A's epiphany of frustration, B's narrative also reaches a point of deadlock: "that time in the end when you tried and couldn't by the window in the dark... no words left to keep it out" (234). After an owl's sinister hooting not a sound breaks the silence, and "a great shroud billowing in all over you on top of you" (234) signals the end of recollections. Mentioning "dark or moonlight" (234) to frame the last attempt, connection is made with the part of A's monologue which fictionalizes the childhood experience using the same words, thus questioning the finality of the scene by the window.

The equally multifaceted narration of the voice C reports about scenes having the middle-aged person in the centre, concerned with seeking a place in life. Correspondingly, it is locations belonging to the public space, the Portrait Gallery, the Public Library, and the Post Office, which together seem to recall a town (Dublin?) as the broader setting, and also nameless streets revisited. The rain and winter prevailing outside are emblematic of the relentless passing of time, which has resulted in a marked change from the sunlit field, sand and blue skies of B's fragments. More of a destitute wanderer in this section than in the others, the self's goal is, quite clearly, to escape from psychic solitude and physical exposure. Self-constitution is still determined by re-imagining scenes, but with greater emphasis on moving from place to place across the years. Doing "the old rounds trying making it up that way" (231), however, leads only to as many "frustrated attempts to find meaning... , to give significance to experience" (Cave 119).

Related to the terrains of art and communication, which are universally regarded as significant in the process of self-construction, the sites in C's narrative play their role in diverse ways and over different periods of time, undermining the possibility of a homogeneous effect. The incident crucial for identity as theme in the whole drama is set in the gallery:

Till you hoisted your head and there before your eyes when they opened a vast oil black with age and dirt someone famous in his time some famous man or woman or even child as a young prince or princess of the blood black with age behind the glass where gradually as you peered trying to make it out gradually of all things a face appeared had you swivel on the slab to see who it was there at your elbow... not believing it could be you till they put you out in the rain at closing time. (229, 231)

With the glass pane that covers the picture serving as a mirror for the protagonist, the experience articulates the kind of self-confrontation which is a key motif in several pieces of modern Irish literature like Joyce's *The Dead* and Tom Murphy's *A Whistle in the Dark*, forcing the figure involved to ponder and question his real identity. After the shock of realizing that he has seen none other but himself, Beckett's protagonist's paradoxical feeling "never the same but the same" (230) implies that the experience qualifies as just one of the changes and turning points in "your lifelong mess" (229), which has remained virtually the same since birth.

It is only in this section that the "I" appears beside the alienating "you," but only to expose the failure of self-identification: "could you ever say I to yourself" (230). Recollecting the incident in the museum also leads to meditation about "not knowing who you were" and "who it was saying what you were saying" (231), which enhances the impossibility of self-assertion. Like other pieces in the oeuvre of Beckett, *That Time* offers a critique of traditional notions of identity, being the product of "a peculiarly Irish cast of mind" (Kearney 293). The last lines of the play can be seen as the epiphany of C's narration, describing utter solitude by "not a sound only the old breath," echoing the end of B's monologue, whereas the space of the library being filled with dust associates death (235). There is no integration of the diverse selves manifesting their disjunct experiences through the recollected fragments of a life's random scenes, penetrated by the restaging capacities of the imagination. Yet, as Enoch Brater claims, the divergent details exist in time and the

selves recognizably belong to the same person (49), demonstrating continuity in discontinuity. The old protagonist suffers from the characteristically Beckettian dislocation, as the spaces its selves inhabit or mentally rehabit do not include the house or interior as home, a particular “psychic state” which would bespeak intimacy (Bachelard 72).

Three Tall Women Re-inventing One

Although sharing a sarcastic outlook on modern family life with many of his plays, the new Albee piece cannot be comfortably linked to any of the author’s former work. It is, perhaps, *A Delicate Balance* (1966) that comes closest to anticipating its subtly deep-reaching treatment of inner stories as subject to change yet retaining continuity over time. *A Delicate Balance*, according to the discussion of M. Gilbert Porter, underlines the characters’ “mutual dependency and estrangement,” whereas its middle-aged female protagonists Agnes and Claire become notable for their ability to replace “an old self with a new self” and Julia, the daughter “repeats the pattern of Agnes’s life” (169, 172). Tracing the chain of similarities with Beckett, *Three Tall Women* strikes us by the notion of different and same intertwined, foregrounded in the very form of this drama as well. There are two acts with the same three women figures playing in both, yet their roles change when they have crossed from one unit to the other.

A, B, and C are distinct characters in act one, A being an elegant old lady plagued by various infirmities, bodily as well as spiritual, whereas B and C act as her nurse and her lawyer. The latter two, however, disclose little if any information about themselves, the old lady remains so overwhelmingly in the centre. Act 1 proves to be “practically a monologue” of A about her life, “one minute lucid and sharp, the next puddled and pathetic” in its rambling style, having an effect “both witty and distressing,” as a reviewer observes (Tanitch 9). At the same time her precarious state of health is exposed by various complaints and the frequent exits to the toilet. The act closes with A suffering a stroke, and in act 2 a dummy figure masked like her is displayed in bed, evidently in a coma. C, B, and A now, in this order, are transformed into incarnations of “A” at three different stages of her life: youth, middle age and old age. Aptly introduced by centering on a character’s mind in the monologue-dominated first part, what later follows resembles the Beckett play essentially: the respective performances of C, B, and A give voice to the sentiments and decisive experiences of the one protagonist, and also to the mode of recollecting them.

The three tall ladies chart the turning points of a life in conversation with each other, as if with the diverse selves’ interrelated stories responding to the question “A,” sometimes waking up from coma, formulates according to A, implying “who I was” (106). “We” is persistently used by all in addition to “I” or “you,” signalling the continuity they together represent, reinforced by a range of shared motifs. It is their common personal history following its linear advance from the beginning of adult life to the point of old age that the joint stories of C, B, and A convey. Peopled and cross-referenced with the figures of parents, sister, lovers, husband, in-laws and son, no unified picture is, however, produced, while the self’s story unfolds through its variety of relationships. The more the three ladies amass in terms of vividly drawn emotional adventures, entangled love-affairs, the vicissitudes of married life and motherhood, the less coherent the self appears. To assist mapping

this process in the drama some ideas of Nancy Chodorow's feminist psychoanalysis will be deployed, in view of which it is by encountering others that the self undergoes fundamental changes leading to the creation of "an inner world consisting of different aspects of an 'I' in relation to different aspects of the other" (157).

C, aged 26, is pronouncedly self-confident and future-oriented, embracing the belief that as she is "good" (though, as a modern girl, not a virgin any more), life is likely to bring happiness for her. Arguably, she harbours ideals inculcated by an American middle-class upbringing, pervaded by the lies of "parents, teachers, all the others" (93), allowing her to take pride in her ability to create an effective personal impression. She knows well "how to attract *men*" by making them "know there's somebody coming" (73), all the time with a keen eye for the best possible marriage that will settle her future satisfactorily. At the beginning of their threefold scrutiny of a life, she naively refuses that she can ever transform into the much experienced, shrewd and on occasion even cynical B aged 52, or the lonely A who is sinking into the infirmity of old age at 90. Without the sufficient amount of personal experience, as a still "drive-determined individual" C is stuck with an identity constructed "from universal and unchanging drives" leading to "a more abstract and universalist view" of the self (Chodorow 159). The initial stage she incarnates becomes revealed and also undermined through her doubly disjointed relationship with the two older tall ladies who expose and ridicule her childish expectations and illusions.

To complicate the picture, C turns arrogant and critical when she underscores the others' barely comprehensible remoteness from herself, who, after all, represents the origins of their own personal past: "(*To audience.*) They don't *know* me!... *Remember* me!" (72). Yet she also has to realize, with a shock, her own future otherness in their narrated deeds and attitudes: "How did I *change*?! What *happened* to me?!" (92). Her final monologue, as if to interpret these discrepancies, makes a distinction between experience and its mental reconstruction, casting a shadow of doubt on the seemingly omniscient superior position of the two older selves:

... I'm remembering, and what I'm remembering doesn't have to do with what I *felt*, but what I remember. The say you can't remember pain. Well, maybe you can't remember pleasure, either—in the same way, I mean, in the way you can't remember pain. Maybe all you can remember is the memory of it... remembering, remembering it. I *know* my best times—what is it? Happiest?—haven't happened yet. They're to *come*. Aren't they? (107)

Thus, the selective nature of memory, the "othering" of certain experiences while cherishing markedly different or opposing ones as important for redrawing the preferred psychic picture, has a great part in contributing to the discontinuities of the self.

Central to the story of the character called B is marriage to a one-eyed, penguin-like man, which was made for money and because "he is funny" (83). Love and a mutually felt intimate understanding of the other do not seem to have been part of the decision. The subsequent experiences of family life have changed the character, and B represents the stage "of the object-relational self" which "derives from an appropriation and interpretation of personal relationships" (Chodorow 159). The saucy details of her infidelity in marriage reflect deviation from C's moral convictions

about monogamy based on lasting attachment, to counter the humiliation inflicted by her husband's adulterous behaviour. Her view of the other women in the family is shaped by an increasing sense of living in a web of fears, suspicions, envies, and even hatreds. Completing the distorting effects of all these there is parental failure, culminating in the untimely loss of the son who leaves the affluent hell of lies and pretences in which they live without even saying good-bye. By way of excuse, B refers to the impossibility of doing anything right when she must "stand up for your husband when he won't do it for himself" and "watch out for all the intrigue" (95).

Thus, B contemplates a bleak picture of the internal collapse of her materially based bourgeois marriage and family in the mirror the immediate past holds up to her, with the capacity of inviting despair. Yet to surmount the lurking sense of disillusionment generated by the erosion of one-time expectations as well as by the roles imposed on her to be acted out in the theatre of life's hypocrisies, she proclaims that her interest is anchored in the here and now, claiming that

This is the happiest time. Well, I can *live* with that, *die* with that. I mean, these things happen, but what I like most about being where I am—and fifty *is* a peak, in the sense of a mountain.... Standing up here right on top of the middle of it *has* to be the happiest time. I mean, it's the only time you get a three-hundred-and-sixty-degree view—see in all directions. Wow! What a view! (108-09)

B's treatment of experience notably deviates from that of C who, infantile as she has remained in her protective circumstances up to her mid-twenties, tries to avoid accommodating the unpleasant. Nevertheless, continuity is established through B's compulsion to view herself as if she were the sun of a private universe. Her monologue is a meaningfully orchestrated piece of compensatory clichés, having its obvious share of the American propensity for self-dramatization.

Discussing the biographical aspects and general thrust of the play, Albee said to his interviewer: "The audience is left with a warning at the end... live your life on the precipice. People get trapped in an image of who they are. Such falsity" (Saunders 7). His virtually one protagonist in *Three Tall Women* split into three is set performing to expose and deconstruct this falsity. After C's interest in the future and B's ambiguous fascination with the present, one would expect A to have her thoughts mainly in the past. Instead, rather unpredictably, she casts a cold eye on the sentiments as well as resentments of the earlier years of her life, even denies her former selves: "I'm *here*, and I deny you *all*; I deny every *one* of you" (107). The stage she occupies produces a completely new way of interpreting its implications: "There's a difference between knowing you're going to *die* and *knowing* you're going to die" (109).

A, the oldest of the ladies is by no means portrayed as an integrated sum of the shaping incidents and governing emotional forces of the personal past, but, having come to the end of it, is allowed to display a Beckettian turn. Her rambling sentences refer to the happiest moment of life, "when all the waves cause the greatest woes to subside," in terms of having finally reached the "point where you *can* think about yourself in the third person without being crazy" (109). And this is precisely what the whole of *Three Tall Women* enacts by demonstrating the continuities and discontinuities of the self, striving as it does toward a sense of individual dignity

instead of attempting to fuse the fragments into the false vision of a homogeneous identity.

Conclusion

Making similar attempts to undermine fictions about the fixed nature of the self and reveal how multi-layered it is, Beckett's and Albee's respective plays move one step further than the drama which splits the main character into a past and a present form with the result of pointing to psychological development. Deploying a strategy of performance that crosses multiple boundaries, they position the audience to read/look in unorthodox ways to achieve meaning when confronted with the self's fragmentation brought into focus as the underlying force of construction. In both *That Time* and *Three Tall Women* it appears to be the proximity of death which evokes the unflinching view of the parts building up the whole in a recognizable continuity, yet favouring the Lyotardian "performability over truth," and "pluricity over unity" (qtd. in Fortier 118).

Note

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