

**AT THE CROSSROADS OF MEMORY AND IMAGINATION: A  
POETIC IMAGE OF A WINDOW AT NIGHT IN  
BECKETT'S *A PIECE OF MONOLOGUE***

**MEMORIA E IMAGINACIÓN: UNA IMAGEN POÉTICA DE LA  
VENTANA ABIERTA HACIA LA NOCHE EN LA OBRA DE  
BECKETT *A PIECE OF MONOLOGUE***

Svetlana Antropova  
Universidad Villanueva

**ABSTRACT**

The pivotal objective of this research is to analyse a poetic image of an imaginary window at night as well as a “ghost” room in Samuel Beckett's play *A Piece of Monologue* through the binary lens of Gaston Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space*, and Beckett's biography. An absent onstage window, being part of an imagined reality created by the Speaker, becomes the nexus of this short play, and is discussed in relation to its *locus*, the writer's memory, and material imagination. Tightly linked to Beckett's life, childhood home and the instance of his birth, this image becomes a multi-layered construct, which gains a life of its own in the play and represents the universal themes of birth, death, loss of loved ones and mourning.

**Key words:** Topoanalysis. Imagination. Poetic Image. Beckett. Theatre.

## RESUMEN

El objetivo principal de esta investigación es analizar la imagen poética de la ventana abierta hacia la noche, así como el escenario espectral de habitación en la obra teatral de Samuel Beckett *A Piece of Monologue*, utilizando el enfoque binario de *Poética del Espacio* de Gastón Bachelard y la biografía de Beckett. La ventana ausente en el escenario, que es parte del mundo imaginario del Orador, se convierte en el nexo de esta obra corta y se analiza con respecto a su *locus*, los recuerdos del escritor y la imaginación material. Aunque íntimamente ligado con la vida del Beckett, el hogar de su infancia y el origen de su nacimiento, esta imagen se convierte en una estructura multidimensional que recobra su vida en esta obra y representa temas universales como el nacimiento, la muerte, la pérdida de seres queridos y el luto.

**Palabras clave:** Topoanálisis. Imaginación. Imagen poética. Beckett. Teatro.

Fecha de recepción: 7 de septiembre de 2021.

Fecha de aceptación: 12 de octubre de 2021.

**Cómo citar:** Antropova, Svetlana (2021): «At the Crossroads of Memory and Imagination: a Poetic Image of a Window at Night in Samuel Beckett's *A Piece of Monologue*», en *Actio Nova: Revista de Teoría de la Literatura y Literatura Comparada*, 5: 93-117.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.15366/actionova2021.5.005>

## INTRODUCTION

The poetic image of a window at night in Samuel Beckett's play *A Piece of Monologue* (1979) is analysed in this article. Absent onstage, albeit evoked by the Speaker, it becomes an ephemeral instance of a “ghost” place which challenges the spectators' sense of perception and transports them to another reality of the character's and, perhaps, the writer's intimate world. The references to window scenarios are abundant in the writer's correspondence (Fehsenfeld et al., 2017) and his official biography (Knowlson, 1996); and since windows define the inside/outside of human existential spatiality, they become closely connected to the places which were dear to Beckett, and which somehow represented his life's turning points. Therefore, these window scenarios may be discussed as the containers of the writer's memories and the source of his inspiration<sup>1</sup>. However, it was his imagination that transformed them into something eternal and vibrant in his oeuvre.

[Beckett] would draw henceforward on his own inner world for his subjects; outside reality would be refracted through the filter of his own imagination; inner desires and needs would be allowed a much greater freedom of expression; rational contradictions would be allowed in; and the imagination would be allowed to create alternative worlds to those of conventional reality (Knowlson, 1996: 319).

The subtle play between the writer's memories and his imagination in the creation of a poetic image of a window at night is the subject of the present research. What is the role of places, in particular Beckett's childhood home, in the creation of this poetic image? Where is the borderline between the writer's memory and his imagination in its creation? What are the characteristics of this window scenario and how are they related to the “ghost” reality of a room created by the Speaker in *A Piece of Monologue*? How does this poetic image contribute to the general understanding of this play?

To answer these questions this window scenario and the “ghost” room are analysed through the binary lens of Beckett's biography<sup>2</sup> and Gaston Bachelard's poetics of

---

<sup>1</sup> The views from the window of rue de Favorites in Paris inspired two of his novels *All Strange Away* (1976) and *Stirring Still* (1988).

<sup>2</sup> Beckett's official biography by James Knowlson, *Damned to Fame* (1996), as well as his correspondence in four volumes, *The Letters of Samuel Beckett* (2017), edited by Martha Dow Fehsenfeld, Lois More Overbeck, George Craig, and Dan Gunn, are used in this piece of research.

imagining<sup>3</sup>, which provides a powerful tool for the discussion of this image in relation to its location (space and time), memories *per se*, and material imagination in creative writing. For Bachelard «el texto es el lugar irrenunciable, pues ve en sus estructuras la codificación lingüística de la psicología individual y de las conexiones entre sujetos, en procesos intersubjetivos de encuentro fantástico y pulsional» (Pujante, 2016: 223).

Bachelard's contribution to the phenomenology of space and the ontology of poetic image is undeniable; his book *The Poetics of Space* (1957) explores existential space (the places we love) in relation to memory, imagination and the psychodynamics of literary images. The philosopher goes beyond the concept of a three-dimensional space, as for him space is the container of consciousness and the abode of half-dreaming consciousness, or reverie. The latter, in turn, becomes the domain of memories and the cradle of imagination. Therefore, the writer's imagination and, hence, the creation of poetic images can be space-bound. Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space* opened a new horizon for the phenomenology of space, as further contributions were made by Otto Friedrich Bollnow's *Human Space* (2001; original German, 1963), and the chapter on space in Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *The Phenomenology of Perception* (1962; original French, 1945), which are also used in this research.

## 1. INHABITED SPACE AS THE CONTAINER OF MEMORIES AND THE CRADLE OF IMAGINATION

Hermeneutics of space, or *topoanalysis*, forms a part of Bachelard's philosophy of imagination, which he defined as the «consideration of the onset of the image in an individual consciousness» (Bachelard 1994: xix). This theory deals with the exploration of our relationship with the places which are significant to us, such as the house of our birth, which becomes the place of belonging, security, solitude, daydreaming and imagination. As «[l]ife begins well, it begins enclosed, protected [...] in the bosom of the house» (Bachelard, 1994: 7), our birth house can be considered the beginning of “being”. Dwelling in a house means much more than settling in a random place, it requires an effort: «to dwell means to have a fixed place in space, to belong to this place and to be rooted in it» (Bollnow, 2011: 124).

---

<sup>3</sup> There is no evidence that Beckett was a connoisseur of Bachelard's work, however both lived in Paris in the same period (1937-1962), and their interests in philosophy in general and psychoanalysis (Freud, Adler, Rank, Jung) are well-documented as they allude to the same authors in their writings. Furthermore, both writers were interested in literature, poetry, and arts.

Martin Heidegger adds other characteristics of dwelling, such as preserving and sparing (Heidegger, 1971: 149), as through protection and safeguarding, one feels at peace and can preserve one's own nature and feel free. Bachelard avers that the security of «an old home» not only shelters our body but it also makes us more confident and inspires our daydreaming (Bachelard, 1994: 43). Not simply contained by space, human beings establish a relationship with this space, and, in the process of continuous interaction both space and a human being reshape each other.

Ergo, a house transcends the boundaries of a tangible world and becomes an intimate “psychic” place, or a psychological reality. For Bachelard, the house, as an abode of intimacy, does not lend itself to a simple description as it remains in the shadows of our memory; it is the domain of voices, secrets, unique odors, and sounds. In the same vein, Carl Jung discusses the house as a mental structure or, symbolically, an extended psychic body and, therefore, a tool of the analysis of human soul (Jung, 1928: 118-9). Bachelard may seem to be very close to Jung's intellectual enterprise, especially by his use of the term *archetype*. However, rather than being interested in explaining a cause-and-effect relationship, this author is more concerned with exploring the primitive encounters of a man with the world. Therefore, although Bachelard incorporates psychoanalysis in his phenomenology of space, he subverts it to his own use. Cristina Chimisso insists that *topoanalysis* is not a method to explore the psyche and Bachelard rather uses this theory of a house as «a simple image of a psyche» (Chimisso, 2017: 6).

With the house image we are in possession of a veritable principle of psychological integration. Descriptive psychology, depth psychology, psychoanalysis and phenomenology could constitute, with the house, the corpus of doctrines that I have designated by the name topo-analysis (Bachelard, 1994: xxxvi).

Integrating the elements of psychology, psychoanalysis and phenomenology, Bachelard discovers a metaphor for humanness in a house. The house becomes both the container and the contained, as it is not only our space of living but also the story of our life. A dwelling, as such, encompasses spatial and temporal dimensions (Bachelard, 1994; Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Bollnow, 2011) and the house of birth becomes a spatial centre, alpha and omega of a human life. Even when it is lost forever, it «continue[s] to live on in us; that [it]they insist[s] in us in order to live again, as though [it]they expected us to give [it]them a supplement of living» (Bachelard, 1994: 56) and we feel remorse for not having lived enough

in this place. Experiences, sensations, emotions, fears, and dreams of one's childhood still inhabit this "ghost" place; the house becomes the nexus of one's life. Likewise, Merleau-Ponty discusses space as a unifier of experience: on closing the eyes and going back in time the space is the same, albeit various experiences from different periods of time are engraved there (Merleau-Ponty, 1962: 258). Therefore, the linearity of life is challenged by other presences and experiences lived through in the same space, and «in its countless alveoli space contains compressed time» (Bachelard, 1994: 7).

With chronological unity lost, memories become fossilized and immobile, fixed in one specific place. The temporal tissue is disrupted, as there is no duration, hence time loses its essence in a Bergsonian sense, and instead of time it is the place which becomes the container of experiences, and therefore memory. «Contrary to Heidegger's hermeneutics, time for Bachelard is only a dimension of time and does not play any role, it is negated in his exploration of images» (Chimisso, 2017: 10). Thus, this philosopher substitutes the notion of time, *chronos*, by space. And it is the *locus* which becomes the subject and object of experiences.

One's house of birth, however, possesses more human domains than just experiences and thoughts. One specific value that Bachelard attributes to this inhabited space is that it «shelters a dreamer» (Bachelard, 1994: 6), transforming it into an oneiric place. From the moment we are born "home" is not only a place where we feel safe and protected, where we play and sleep, but it is also a place where we dream and imagine. Thus, when we want to return to this land of «Motionless Childhood» (Bachelard, 1994: 5) we relive these pleasurable moments of daydreaming. Constituting a new daydream, the memories of our dwellings are constantly modified and fused with imagination. Impregnated with a sense of unreality, memories are more than just visual images of things past, they intermingle our dislocated past and our dreams. Bachelard equates memory images to engravings, «for it is imagination which engraves them on our memories. They deepen the recollections we experienced, which they replace, thus becoming imagined recollections» (Bachelard, 1994: 32).

Recalling becomes a two-dimensional process, as we go back in our past and in our dreams. Therefore, a memory image is conjured up by the fusion of real and unreal elements and the process of remembering acquires a spectral quality. With our childhood home lost, we feel homesick and yearn for a return, which can only take place in our imagination. This return-home desire materializes in our dreams, and the childhood home comes to life and is

on the borderline between our personal history and imagination. Fantasy and reality are converged, and it is at the crossroads of the real and the unreal which Bachelard considers the onset of a poetic image. The house of our childhood becomes the root of imagination, «a nest for dreaming» (Bachelard, 1994: viii), as if by constant rediscovering of our childhood we open a «limitless future for our dreams» (Bachelard, 1994: 153). The memories that are linked to our former dwellings are relived in the form of daydreams, thus they remain with us continuously and may serve as the source of imagination.

For Bachelard, imagination is a cosmic force, and he distinguishes between two types of imagination: formal and material. Both types can be found in nature and in the mind, thus the world is also perceived through images. While formal imagination is at work in nature (the exquisite beauty of an orchid blooming, the freshness of dew on the grass at sunrise), material imagination is aimed at the creation of a reality which «illuminates the dream of things» (Bachelard, 1994: xiii). Bachelard's concept of material imagination is similar to Vico's *fantasia*, as the world is perceived not only through rational observation but also through its creative invention (Vico, 1988). Henceforth, imagination is core to our understanding of the world, connecting the subjectivity of human thought to the corporeal reality. By conjuring up images, which rely on the genuine roots from contemplative words, imagination mirrors different states of the human mind. From a phenomenological perspective, imagination represents different modes of perception of the world, and a subjective reality, condensed in a poetic image, can bridge the gap between a man and the natural world, and between Self and Others.

Our home, as an experienced place of daydreaming, plays a key role for the birth of imagination, as it possesses all the necessary qualities for a dreamer. First and foremost, it is the solitude of our home that becomes the engine of imagination and the condition of the reverie (Bachelard, 1994: 204). Being alone allows a person to detach himself from the external perception of the world and to reach the limbo of being. Only on the threshold of the two worlds do we feel free to dream and to imagine.

We are hypnotized by solitude, hypnotized by the gaze of a solitary house; and the tie which bounds us to it is so strong that we begin to dream of nothing but a solitary house in the night (Bachelard, 1994: 36-7).

In his earlier book *The Poetics of Reverie: Childhood, Language and the Cosmos*, Bachelard had already distinguished two domains of human life: the domain of “the diurnal life”

associated with reason and mind, and “the nocturnal” one, linked to privacy and daydreaming (Bachelard, 1971: 53-4). Solitude and night get interlinked in the domain of the home and are related to a “dreamland”, an abode of imagination.

Contrary to the zones of light, darkness/night distorts our senses of perception. Familiar in daylight space feels alien in darkness, and the boundaries between inside and outside are blurred, converting a night space into something unique. Alternating spatiality, night possesses the quality of unfathomable depth and immensity. Our perceptual being is isolated from the world of things: night «enwraps me and infiltrates through all my senses, stifling my recollections and almost destroying my identity» (Merleau-Ponty, 1962: 330). Darkness has a capacity not only to enclose but also to penetrate within (Bollnow, 2011: 213), it achieves the effect of fusion with self: one feels part of darkness. Merleau-Ponty described the night domain, applying the mystical concept of *mana* (Merleau-Ponty, 1986: 330): affected by a sense of unreality a human being is withdrawn into himself, into the domain of pre-logical thoughts, hence, connecting to the origins of our being. And for Bachelard, it is precisely this nexus which he considers the source of the creation of poetic images:

The primordial source from which the image springs cannot be fully rendered in accounts that only speak of roots and origins, or that think exclusively in terms of psychic mechanisms and archetypes. Rather, that source should be thought of as the primal and mysterious bond that holds together a human world and that draws human beings in fascination both to nature and to each other (Thiboutot; Martínez, 1999: 7).

## 2. THE CREATION OF POETIC IMAGES

For Bachelard, poetic images are the products of material imagination which sprout from the original state of reverie. It is the imaginative force of a writer that enables him to create new images instead of «adjusting to reality as given» (Kaplan, 1972: 3), thus his capacity to freely exercise imagination. Inner impulses and drives of the writer together with his ability to disconnect himself from the world lay the foundation for poetic function of imagination, which aims at giving new forms to the world. Herewith, images are not the direct representation of reality, they may be equaled to a subjective experience of the world; their beauty and poetic quality lies in being «deformed and detached» from the reality they represent (Kaplan, 1972: 3).



Bachelard pinpoints several characteristics of a poetic image: immediacy, unexpected nature, capacity for transformation, and novelty (Bachelard, 1994: xvi-xxvii). Stemmed from the naïve consciousness of our primitive being, the purity of an image lies in its simplicity and the innovative force of the language. A poetic image is rather short-lived, however in the momentum of its emergence its novel nature and freshness produce a long-standing emotional impact. All poetic images affect our senses and can be considered a sensual experience, since they are «the direct product of heart, soul, and being of a man» (Bachelard, 1994: xviii). Therefore, a poetic image communicates with the perceiver through its sensual appeal, as it is an emotion which lies at the origins of the creation of a poetic image. Overwhelmed by his own emotion, a writer communicates the object of his passion or desire through a poetic language, consequently, distorting the reality of this object by overrating its emotional aspect, and which Bachelard denominates as *valorization*: «Valorization thus asserts the creativity of the individual as over against objective evaluation. Here is “one of the great [ontological] principles of the Imaginative: *valorization decides being*” (Air, 90)» (Kaplan, 1972: 5).

Facing this unfamiliar subjectivity, the perceiver's emotional response comes first; the encounter with a poetic image is spontaneous, as well as passionate since we want to experience the image fully with all our senses. Hence, rational response or inquiry into psychological or psychic nuances of the writer's soul is temporarily postponed. While for psychoanalysis purposes «the image in its first appearance never presents the full truth», for Bachelard it is imagination, «not circumscribed by the unconscious», which allows «a more tangible encounter with the image» (Thiboutot; Martinez, 1999: 7).

Constituting another reality different from our perception of the world, a poetic image becomes «a pure, but short-lived subjectivity» (Bachelard, 1994: xix), which is an object of duration in our hearts. Duration as such is more a permutation of different aspects of a poetic image instead of a continuous repetition of the same imagined reality, which Bachelard denominates as *reverberation* (Bachelard, 1994: xvi). Through reverberation, an image creates a series of echoes which are both subject and object to transformability. On the one hand, a poetic image can elicit distinct types of response from different perceivers, and on the other hand, due to its subjectivity, an image *per se* is an object of variability and contradiction (Bachelard, 1974: xix). Thus, it becomes an entity on its own and brings about change in our being. After the original reverberation of a poetic image, a perceiver can experience resonances and reminders of his past and make this image his own.

Akin to the creative principle of the surrealists, for Bachelard a wholly unexpected nature of a poetic image does not necessarily have a cause-and-effect relation. Neither psychoanalysis nor psychology can fully explain it as there is a unique fusion between memory and imagination, «[t]he poetic image is a sudden salience on the surface of the psyche, the lesser psychological causes of which have not been sufficiently investigated» (Bachelard, 1994: xv). Being a subjective experience, it challenges a rational explanation. Connecting with the perceiver on a very intimate level, a poetic image goes beyond the rationalism as it allows us to capture an instant on the threshold which «separates being from nothingness» (Thiboutot; Martinez, 1999: 8).

However, «[t]o say that a poetic image is independent of causality is to make a rather serious statement» (Bachelard, 1974: xvii). As imagination is grounded on the premise that there is an interconnection between memory and imagination on a very intimate level: real and unreal elements can be interlaced in the creation of a poetic image. And although «[e]very great image has an unfathomable oneiric depth», personal past is undeniably another element to consider in its creation (Bachelard, 1994: 33)<sup>4</sup>. Thus, the roots of any poetic image plunge from the writer's dreams, memory and imagination, and an image *per se* can be a subject of phenomenological analysis.

### 3. COOLDRINAGH HOUSE: THE HOUSE OF BECKETT'S BIRTH AND YOUTH

During his life Samuel Beckett (1906-1989) had various permanent residences (Fehsenfeld et al., 2017; Knowlson, 1996), which somehow represented his life's turning points: Cooldrinagh House (birth, childhood and youth), his two permanent residences in Paris (rue de Favorites, 1938-1960; Boulevard Saint-Jacques, 1960-1989), and a cottage in Ussy-sur-Marne (bought in 1953).

Cooldrinagh House, the house of Beckett's «blue-eyed childhood» (Knowlson, 1996: 40), stands out among his other residences. Born and raised in this spacious Tudor-style manor, the writer moved out only after his father's death in 1933<sup>5</sup>. And although he

---

<sup>4</sup> Sandra Pravica states that notwithstanding the fact that Bachelard opposed to the analysis of poetic images from bibliographical perspective, surprisingly, parts of his oeuvre are rooted in his own life (Pravica, 2018: 52). For instance, in *The Poetics of Space* Bachelard uses his own houses in Champaña and Dijon to illustrate the topography of an intimate space.

<sup>5</sup> In 1928 after his graduation Beckett moved to Paris where he took the lecturing job post in the *Ecole Normale Supérieure*.

made Paris his hometown, Beckett always came back to visit his family there<sup>6</sup> and his feeling of warmth and affection for his «old home» never faded. In a letter to John Hughes<sup>7</sup>, he writes: «If you ever meet my ghost in house or grounds, give it my regards» (Fehsenfeld et al., 2017d: 438).

This house and the memories of Beckett's childhood found way into many of his writings: his nurse's tales and common sayings (*Serena II*, *Happy Days*), goodnight prayers (*Dream of Fair to Middling Women*), even his teddy-bear "Baby-Jack" (*Molloy*).

Notwithstanding the fact that Beckett's childhood was a happy one, there is one particular memory that haunted him all his life: the memory of his birth. Beckett was born on the second floor of Cooldrinagh House in a room which would later become his bedroom: «I slept in the tiny room, originally my father's dressing room, beside the big bedroom with the bay windows (where incidentally I was born)» (Fehsenfeld et al., 2017d: 438). These bay windows and the views to the outside found way into his oeuvre as the markers of birth. For instance, the larches growing in the garden appear in *Watt*, *A Piece of Monologue*, *More Pricks than Kicks*. In *Company*, this window scenario is described as: «You first saw the light in the room you most likely were conceived in. The big bow window looked west to the mountain. Mainly west. For being bow it looked also a little south and a little north» (Beckett, 1980: 7). This bay window as the beginning of existence was the source of continuous inspiration for the writer. Even though during the psychoanalytic sessions with Wilfred Bion in 1933-34<sup>8</sup>, Beckett was able to "re-live" his intrauterine experience: the feeling of being trapped, alone, and in pain (Knowlson, 1996: 171), nevertheless, it is quite dubious that the writer would be able to remember the moment of his birth. Most probably this memory was reconstructed by the stories he heard from his mother (Knowlson, 1996: 572), which were later coloured by his own imagination. Furthermore, as Beckett was living in the same room till 1933, this window scenario became a constant presence in his life and other memories, and other emotions can be connected to it. During his childhood, for instance, it was the sound of a postman's bike on the gravel that brought young Beckett to the window

---

<sup>6</sup> While living in France, Samuel Beckett made a promise to visit his mother every year (Fehsenfeld et al., 2017a: 630).

<sup>7</sup> John Hughes was a schoolboy, who lived with his family in Cooldrinagh House. The letter is dated October 28, 1976.

<sup>8</sup> Wilfred Ruprecht Bion was a British psychoanalyst, who became president of the British Psychoanalytical Society from 1962 to 1965. In 1935 he was working in Tavistock Clinic in London. Beckett had to look for help after his father's death and his friend, Geoffrey Thompson, recommended Bion (Knowlson, 1996: 167).

early in the morning (Knowlson, 1996: 37); and at night, unable to sleep<sup>9</sup>, perhaps he was too conscious of the darkness pouring through the window.

“Window gazing” (Fehsenfeld et al., 2017c: 490) also became Beckett’s hobby during the times of creative writing, or distress and even lack of inspiration<sup>10</sup>. Beckett treasured solitude very highly (Knowlson 1996: 46, 218) and a quiet room was his private domain of creativity and reflection. The author started to write in his youth<sup>11</sup>, and during his creative writing, especially when imagination failed, he used to look out of the window. Thus, this bay window can serve as a unifier of many of his childhood experiences, fears and youth aspirations.

#### 4. A PIECE OF MONOLOGUE

Beckett wrote *A Piece of Monologue* at the age of 75. Looking back on his life full of losses, according to James Knowlson he was in the mood for «preparation for his own end» (Knowlson, 1996: 573). While working on this short play in Ussy, he writes to his friend: «Enjoying myself throwing everything out, books & other rubbish, not absolutely indispensable. All pictures out of sight including big Geer v. Velde, behind the piano» (Fehsenfeld et al., 2017d: 471). The walls of the house once full of reminders of his past, were painted grey and Beckett decided to leave them that way (Knowlson, 1996: 573). Knowlson, writing about the history behind the creation of *A Piece of Monologue*, states that it is deeply rooted in Beckett’s mood of approaching death, «Life here emulated art, or at least echoed the mood that inspired it» (Knowlson, 1996: 573). Extremely complex in completion, the play is «a lament for the brevity of human life, a threnody for primeval family, and a lyric about lyricizing» (Cohn, 2001: 355).

The immobile stage tableau in *A Piece of Monologue* is impressive in its minimalistic beauty: in faint diffuse light there is only a standard lamp with a skull-sized white globe and

---

<sup>9</sup> Insomnia is well-documented both in Beckett’s correspondence and in his official biography. His night fears started in early childhood. Knowlson avers that Beckett could not go to sleep without the lights on and his favourite teddy-bear, Baby-Jack (Knowlson, 1996: 36). In 1937, Beckett writes to MacGreevy: «I have had the old internal combustion heart & head a couple of nights, in the bed where I had it the first time almost 11 years ago» (Fehsenfeld et al., 2017b: 490).

<sup>10</sup> In the letter to Avigdor Arikha, Beckett writes from Ussy: «[m]y mind isn’t on Pim at all, and I’ve done nothing . . . I spent the best (!) part of my time looking out through the window, sometimes this one, sometimes the other» (Fehsenfeld et al., 2017c: 320).

<sup>11</sup> In 1930, after his return from France, Beckett published his first poem *Whoroscope* and was in the process of writing short stories which later formed part of *More Pricks than Kicks* (1934).

a white pallet bed onstage (Beckett, 1986: 425). The Speaker, dressed in a white nightgown and white socks, is standing off centre downstage and seems more a part of a scenery than a character. Ten seconds after the curtain is raised, he starts his solitary speaking; with no action onstage the Speaker's monologue becomes the engine of this short play. And although, he declares from the very start of the play that «words are few» (Beckett, 1986: 425), the words keep pouring out of him as he is there to tell his life story presumably before his imminent end.

The flow of melodic speech has a hypnotizing quality and transports the audience to another domain: the domain of the Speaker's past. As though having been enclosed in the same space all his life, the Speaker conjures up an image of a bedroom in his narrative: a room with a window, situated west, looking out on the darkness of the night; to the east - a blank wall once full of pictures, now torn to shreds lying underneath a brass bed; a standard lamp, and a chimney. Expanding the confines of the stage, this parallel world exists only in the domain of the Speaker's imagination and challenges the spectator's perception of the play. In the discussion of a complex relation between time and space in Beckett's plays, David Pattie raises a fundamental question: «Is a character in Beckett text occupying a world mapped out by the text or one delimited by the confines of the stage?» (Pattie, 2000: 393). For this author, the two settings (the real and the imagined), are not mutually exclusive: although existing in different dimensions, they are sequentially related and firmly rooted in the dramatic timespace. Therefore, the “ghost” room in *A Piece of Monologue* is «to be imagined [by the spectator] as only one of a number of simultaneously existing settings that together form the world described in the text» (Pattie, 2000: 394).

The stage tableau and the imagined room have elements in common, as there are references to the standard lamp, semidarkness and even the nightgown and the socks that the Speaker is wearing, which point to a possibility that this imagined room still exists onstage. However, the description of the dreamt-up room does not remain stable, the Speaker's imagination conjures up other elements which seem important to his past. Not only the residues of his childhood memories and the Speaker's lost loved ones still present in this imagined space, but this room is also a memory of its own. This “ghost” room becomes his private universe of thoughts and imagination and the container and the contained of his memories, which can be discussed in the light of Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space*. The essence of this imagined reality relies on images: as Enoch Brater affirms *A Piece*

of *Monologue* «makes us concerned with images, not actions», and «words become picture, and pictures become words» (Brater, 1990: 124).

The image which gains prominence in this monologue is an absent onstage window, which is poetically evoked by the Speaker: «Birth. Then slow fade up of a faint form. Out of the dark. A window. Looking west. Sun long sunk behind the larches. Light dying» (Beckett, 1986: 427). Bachelard poses a very important question in relation to the creation of a poetic image: «How can an image [...] be the concentration of the entire psyche?» (Bachelard, 1974: xxviii). And although the task at hand is very complex due to subjectivity of this poetic image, nevertheless its specific reality, or the essence of consciousness which foregrounds this image, can be seized.

Undeniably, the origins of this image lie in the bay window of the room where Beckett was born, connecting the “ghost” room in *A Piece of Monologue* to the house of the writer’s birth. Certain similarity can be drawn with the window description in *Company*<sup>12</sup>: both window scenarios being united by the same autobiographical elements such as “birth”, “west” and “larches”. However, the poetic image of a window in *A Piece of Monologue* acquires powerful and, perhaps, melancholic beauty: the emergence of a form, presumably a baby, out of the darkness of the mother’s womb to the darkness of the window. Contrary to the window in *Company*, which faces west, north and south, the poetic image of the window in *A Piece of Monologue* undergoes reduction – “west” becomes its only direction and opens the views on the sunset.

Regardless of the fact that this window is the marker of birth in Beckett’s oeuvre, the juxtaposition of the words “window” and “birth” is achieved in this image, as in these seven short phrases there are only two one-word utterances. “Birth” and “window” become two opposites, interconnected and dependant on each other. The dialectics of “birth”/ “seeing light” and «window looking west on the sunset» (Beckett, 1986: 427), on the one hand, encompasses Manichaeism<sup>13</sup> thinking on the dual nature of Man and the principles of Bachelard’s poetics of imagining, which have its basis in «la división de los símbolos en dos facetas contrapuestas del vivir humano: la de la luz y la de las sombras» (Pujante, 2016: 223).

---

<sup>12</sup> Both *Company* and *A Piece of Monologue* are written in 1979 and can be considered of autobiographical nature.

<sup>13</sup> «Manichaeism thinking, which is basically a form of Gnosticism, derives from Mani, its Iranian founder, who lived in the third century A.D. He advocated a dualistic doctrine that regarded the world as a fusion of Spirit and Matter, Light and Darkness, Good and Evil and saw man himself as torn between the forces of darkness and the forces of light» (Knowlson, 1992: xxi).

And, on the other hand, the dialectics of light/darkness points to the brevity of human existence. The latter is confirmed by the opening words of the play: «Birth was the death of him» (Beckett, 1986: 425). Henceforth, linking the window to the “west” acquires a new meaning in the text of the play. Due to the rich symbolism of “west”<sup>14</sup>, this window can also be seen as an entrance to the domain of death, which is further strengthened by the symbolic meanings of “night”<sup>15</sup>. Following Bachelard’s and Merleau-Ponty’s notion of a space as a unifier of experience, certain biographical similarities can be traced in the creation of this imagery. The window of Beckett’s birth, being a constant presence in his life, also “witnessed” the writer’s most heart-breaking event: the death of his father on June 26, 1933. After her husband’s death, May Beckett «insisted on the blinds remaining down in Cooldrinagh for weeks on end» (Knowlson, 1996: 167)<sup>16</sup>. Beckett, still deeply grieving his father’s death, albeit suffocated by the «black and silent» house (Knowlson, 1996: 167), left for Dublin. Thus, from now on the image of a blank dark window would be engraved in his memory and used as a metaphor for death and mourning<sup>17</sup>.

The window conceived as an image of death in *A Piece of Monologue* challenges traditional conventions, which are based on its functionality: the act of vision and the demarcation of boundaries between the inside/outside (Bollnow, 2011: 151). Henceforth, evocation of another metaphysical domain of death through poetic imagery and symbolism not only contributes to the unexpected nature of this image, but it also breaks the spatio-

---

<sup>14</sup> «If humans are seen as ephemeral beings, as creatures of the day, then their life follows the pattern of the sun» (Ferber, 2007: 68-69), thus west is associated with darkness and death in many cultures. In ancient Egypt, for instance, “west” was considered the portal to the netherworld, or death. In the Bible, Adam and Eve were expelled west from the Garden of Eden after their sin.

<sup>15</sup> In literature, “night” is a prelude of all existence, described by Milton as «eldest of things». It has been related to silence, solitude, dreams, ignorance and confusion. One of the literary symbolisms that stands out is its connection to death, which originated from the Bible (Ferber, 2007: 137-138).

<sup>16</sup> According to the Irish tradition after the death of a person, the blinds on the windows are lowered as a sign of mourning.

<sup>17</sup> In *Rockaby* (1980), an off-stage voice evokes the images of the windows with their blinds down, which represent death and human solitude. An incessantly rocking old woman onstage is looking for another «living soul»:

close of a long day  
sitting at her window  
quiet at her window  
only window  
facing other windows  
other only windows  
all blinds down  
never one up  
hers alone up (Beckett, 1986: 438).

According to Knowlson, this play was inspired by Beckett’s aunt, Annie Roe. Dressed in black, she used to sit in a rocking chair by the window in Cooldrinagh House (Knowlson, 1994: 583).

temporal boundary of the play: past/"birth" and future/"death" co-exist in the same dimension. Notwithstanding the fact that death is linked to the end of human life, Merleau-Ponty avers that both birth and death are «pre-personal horizons» (Merleau-Ponty, 1962: 250) which a man is unable to fully experience, for both states being out of human control and pre-existent to "being alive". From this viewpoint, the opposition of birth and death becomes blurred<sup>18</sup> in *A Piece of Monologue*, as they represent the state of nothingness.

Creating an image of a window at night and the child emerging from a mother's body (which may be seen as another window into life) discloses Beckett's attitude towards life in general. In a letter to Martin Esslin, Beckett explains the origins of *A Piece of Monologue* and includes a short poem that starts with «one dead of night in the dead still [...] from that dark to pour on other dark» (Fehsenfeld et al., 2017d: 500) that mirrors the play's opening words and links birth to never-ending darkness of thirty thousand sleepless nights<sup>19</sup> which bears close autobiographical connections<sup>20</sup> and transports the text into the nocturnal domain of the Speaker's dreams and imagination. Uprooted from the outside world, with no one to keep him company, the character creates a parallel reality of his imaginary room, where he is free to remember and to grieve. And as solitude and night, according to Bachelard, are the conditions for daydreaming, the Speaker evokes fragmentary images of his past life coloured by his imagination.

The first perception of the moment of birth and its *locus* shapes the Speaker's whole life, as he fosters bonds with this window. Eight times the Speaker summons up the window of his birth, which becomes the narrative axis of his monologue. Forming part of a "ghost" reality, the window is always present in his «night ritual» (Cohn, 2001: 356): first the Speaker stands staring out of the window, then approaches the lamp and strikes several matches, finally lighting the fireplace and the wick of the oil lamp. This scene is repeated seven times in the play, making the central image of *A Piece of Monologue*: the Speaker staring out, «[e]yes to the small pane gaze at that first night» (Beckett, 1986: 427) and every nightfall.

The gaze prevails over motion in this short play, since «Beckett subordinates movement to position, circumscribing motion within the bounds of invariant location»

<sup>18</sup> Beckett gave the final title to this play *A Piece of Monologue* only in April 1979. The initial title was *Gone* (Cohn, 2001: 355).

<sup>19</sup> Ruby Cohn states that Linda Ben-Zvi (1986) managed to translate 30000 nights into 82 years, calculated by Beckett in his manuscript (Cohn, 2001: 356).

<sup>20</sup> Beckett was suffering insomnia all his life. In 1937, he writes to MacGreevy: «I have had the old internal combustion heart & head a couple of nights, in the bed where I had it the first time almost 11 years ago» (Fehsenfeld et al., 2017b: 490).



(Garner, 1994: 72). The character's immobility on the stage «[s]tands there stock still staring out as if unable to move again» (Beckett, 1986: 428) foretells the description of the intense act of looking through this imaginary window; «eyes to the small pane» (Beckett, 1986: 428) register extreme proximity of the character to the barrier of the window, invisible to the audience. Two types of watching are present in *A Piece of Monologue*: “staring out” and “staring beyond”, which embody both the corporeal process of looking and spatiotemporal experience/remembering. Therefore, the direction of this gaze is two-fold: from the inside to the outside; and as the windowpane may serve as a mirror<sup>21</sup>, the gaze, reflected in the glass, penetrates the inner world of the character, his memories.

Creating simple geometric opposition between the enclosed space of the imagined room and the hostile outdoors, the window serves not only as an impenetrable shield, but also as a hole onto the outside world. And as for Bachelard, the profound metaphysics is rooted in implicit geometry (Bachelard, 1994: 212), on a metaphysical level the window can demarcate the boundary between the two domains in this play: “here” and “beyond”. In her research on the literary leitmotif of windows in contemporary literature, Gianna Zocco also pinpoints the metafictional potential of a window scenario as a means of constructing another reality affected by the perception of the viewer (Zocco, 2013). In the same line with Bachelard's concept of the construction of a poetic image, she stresses the role of subjectivity of perception in creation of «artificial realities» while gazing through the window:

When we look out of a window, we might get the impression of an objective access to the world, whereas the view we get is actually still influenced by our subjective imaginations, interpretations and projections, which we use to fill out the gaps in visibility (Zocco, 2013).

Desolate views unfolding from the “ghost” window in *A Piece of Monologue* - «[n]othing stirring in black vast», «starless moonless heaven» (Beckett, 1986: 427) - create another metaphysical domain of the void. Although filled with nothingness, the void can also be viewed as «a raw material for the possibility of being» (Bollnow, 2011: 218). And in *A Piece of Monologue*, it acquires an unfathomable oneiric depth, transporting the Speaker to a

---

<sup>21</sup> Zocco discusses the meaning of the German verb ‘reflektieren’ (English verb ‘reflect’), which discloses two acts of perception: 1) to throw back, to send an image of, to mirror; 2) to consider, to contemplate. (Zocco, 2013).

dreamland, or better said nightmare-land, where most of his memory fragments materialise out of this darkness: «till dark slowly parts again» (Beckett, 1986: 428).

The Speaker's gaze travels to other realms, «[s]tands there staring beyond» (Beckett, 1986: 427): his childhood, his loved ones, the sequence of funerals. Childhood memories are rather scarce in the Speaker's narration, there is only a description of the window of his birth, a memory related to his father: «Strikes one [match] on his buttock the way his father taught him» (Beckett, 1986: 426), and three unfinished fragments about his infancy: «At such first fiasco. With the first totters. From mammy to nanny and back» (Beckett, 1986: 425). Contrary to Bachelard's notion of a childhood house as a happy domain, the imagined room in this play acquires a nightmarish quality, as the rest of the Speaker's memories are linked to his losses. Concerning one's dwelling in a house, Bachelard pinpoints «a fusion of being in a concrete space» (Bachelard, 1974: 206), which he understands as a psychic communication with an intimate space of a house which goes far beyond a simple mental operation: in interaction with this space, we change our nature. Hence, affected by his countless losses, the Speaker moulded this imaginary room akin to his perception of the world - this space becomes the representation of mourning and grief.

Suspended in time and fragmented to the extreme, his monologue obtains a dream-like quality. In relation to Beckett's drama, Pattie states that his plays «rely on a reconfiguration of the conventional idea of time and space normally encountered in theatrical performance» (Pattie, 2000: 393) and time *per se* in *A Piece of Monologue* becomes compressed, and even non-existent. With chronological unity lost, all the memories are interlaced with the *locus* of the Speaker's birthplace: «Room once full of sounds. Faint sounds. Whence unknown. Fewer and fainter as time wore on» (Beckett, 1986: 426). As such, the room becomes the geometry of echoes of the loved ones' voices, now gone forever. This fragment of memory bears close connection to Beckett's own life, as the room and night were always the domain of lost loved ones for this writer: «My heart falls backwards down precipices every night, as it did when I was twenty followed by nightmares, back in the family, floods of tears, fists swinging into the faces of the dear departed [...]» (Fehsenfeld et al., 2017b: 310). Likewise, the Speaker in *A Piece of Monologue* is mourning all his losses, life for him is a succession of «funeral to funeral» (Beckett, 1986: 425) and his monologue becomes the crystallization of loneliness and grief.

The Speaker's imagined world is falling to shreds as his memory is failing. Desperately trying to visualise the images of his loved ones, whose photos once used to hang on the imaginable blank wall facing the window, he can only remember:

Could once name them all. There was father. That grey void. That mother. That other. There together. Smiling. Wedding day. There all three. That grey blot. There alone. He alone. So on. Not now. Forgotten. All gone so long. Gone (Beckett, 1986: 426).

The memories of his loved ones are blurred and unreal and the succession of his life's turning points reminds of the life of any man: father, mother, wedding, child. However, no personal details are added to this remembering. The fleeting images of the Speaker's loved ones seem to vanish after he mentions them as though devoured by the grey void, they become holes in his memory. Long-forgotten past and ghostly present are interlinked in this remembering as his present perception of the world influences his past.

From a psychoanalytic perspective, the whole play can be seen as an expression of an exclusive devotion to mourning. Comparing mourning to melancholia, Sigmund Freud states that profound mourning is:

the reaction to the loss of someone who is loved, contains the same painful frame of mind, the same loss of interest in the outside world – in so far as it does not recall him – the same loss of capacity to adopt any new object of love (which would mean replacing him) and the same turning away from any activity that is not connected with the thoughts of him (Freud, 1917: 244).

Although conscious that the loved objects are gone forever, the Speaker is unable or does not want to withdraw his attachment from the ones he lost, hence, neither time nor some other love can cure him. All his cathectic energy is spent on substituting the outside reality by a private microcosm of his imaginary room, where the Speaker's ego is tied up with the dear departed. Prolonging their existence, his memory becomes a constant repetition of the painful moments of his losses:

Into dark whole again. Window gone. Hands gone. Light gone. Gone. Again and again. Again and again gone. Till dark slowly parts again. Grey light. Rain pelting. Umbrellas round a grave. Seen from above. Streaming black canopies. Black ditch beneath. Rain bubbling in the black mud. Empty for the moment. The place beneath. Which .... He all but said which loved one? (Beckett, 1986: 428).

Knowlson attributes this memory fragment to Beckett's loss of his friend, George Divine in 1966 (Knowlson, 1996: 477), whose funeral brought together friends and family. Standing there in pouring rain «under streaming umbrellas» (Knowlson, 1996: 477), the occasion was extremely painful for Beckett. However, the nightmarish image created in the play, bare of all personal details, becomes a universal portrayal of any funeral. Gradually emerging from darkness, it substitutes the *locus* of the imaginary room and becomes the only object of remembering. At first seen from above, it is zooming towards the empty hole in the ground. “Rain” and “black” are recurrent elements in this description. Symbolically connected to “tears”, “pain”, “loss”, “sadness” (Ferber, 2007: 27-29, 65), they intensify the general atmosphere of mourning and death in the play. This image of a funeral encompasses all the other funerals the Speaker attended of all other loved ones, since its description starts with: «Gone. Again and again. Again and again gone» (Beckett, 1986: 428).

In comparison to other memories evoked in the play, the funeral memory fragment is the most precise and vibrant. In relation to memory, Merleau-Ponty writes that normally «a preserved fragment of the lived-through past can be at the most no more than an occasion of thinking about the past», and in order to reproduce the past, one should be «in direct contact with the past in its domain» (Merleau-Ponty, 1962: 480). Ergo, instead of remembering, the Speaker is reliving the funeral scene and his suffering has no end.

Furthermore, the time in this play is counted in terms of funerals: each thirty seconds there is another loss which the Speaker must face (Cohn, 2001: 357). And, as time according to Merleau-Ponty is «the relation of self-to-self» (Merleau-Ponty, 1962: 495), unable to come to terms with his past, the Speaker's identity is split. The narrative reflects the disintegration of self, as the Speaker refers to himself in third person singular, hence any possibility of “whole-ness” is rejected. «No such thing as whole», says the Speaker (Beckett, 1986: 428). Creating a mere illusion of existence, the character becomes a ghostly presence onstage, there is nothing which can sustain his imaginary world anymore: the window, the grave, the blots left from pictures on the blank wall are all gaping holes filled with darkness. His whole world is disintegrating. This window fails to demarcate a fragile boundary between the inner space of the imaginary room and the immensity of the outside world, which is gradually expanding as the light is dying out. The darkness coming from the outside disturbs the notions of spatiality, and the intimate closed space loses its clarity, thus, the border between the inside and the outside is blurred: «There in the dark that window. [...] Turn from it at the end to face the darkened room» (Beckett, 1986: 427). In relation to the dialectics

of the inside and outside, Bachelard states that «[w]hen human solitude deepens, then the two immensities (solitude and the outside world) touch itself and become identical» (Bachelard, 1994: 203). Though unable to achieve complete fusion with the outside void, the Speaker welcomes this darkness: «Dark whole again. Blest dark» (Beckett, 1986: 428), and is magnetically attracted towards the unfathomable void, groping to this window to stare out.

As dwelling has a plurality, «we share this place with our families (Bollnow, 2011: 126), with the loss of his loved ones the Speaker is craving for a return to the imagined home with his loved ones still there, where he can feel whole again. Unable even to summon up their dear faces in his dream-up room, he rejects the light and chooses the darkness coming from the imaginary window. The latter becomes his private escape into non-existence or death, where he can join his loved ones: «beyond that black beyond» (Beckett, 1986: 429).

## CONCLUSIONS

Having analysed the poetic image of a window at night in *A Piece of Monologue*, it can be concluded that many of the writer's memories are at the outset of the creation of this image. Beckett's official biography and the author's correspondence served as a useful tool to disclose numerous bibliographical connections in this play. These memories, although related to the author's experiences in his childhood house, are stripped of personal details and embody the major existential themes of any person.

Overwhelmed by his feelings of never-ending losses and the sensation of approaching death, Beckett creates an image of a window at night in *A Piece of Monologue*, which represents a subjective reality and intimately connects with the audience, appealing to their senses. Reverberating through the whole play, it unifies the Speaker's life and glues the play together. Although the origin of a poetic image of a window at night has autobiographical roots and resides in the consciousness of the writer's perception of the world at the time of writing of this play, imagination and poetic language transformed it into a different reality in *A Piece of Monologue*. Minimalistic language, universal symbolism and play-specific meaning contribute to its unexpected nature. Linked to "night", "west" and the act of gazing, this window scenario embodies the themes of loss, grief and mourning.

This same window, initially evoked as the marker of birth, becomes the nexus of the "ghost" room created in the play, which can be linked to Beckett's childhood home.

Paradoxically, the infamous imaginary window, connected to the painful memory of birth, keeps haunting Beckett throughout his whole life and other traumatic memories are stored there.

Analysed through the lens of Bachelard's *topoanalysis*, the imaginary room in *A Piece of Monologue* is the Speaker's private microcosm and the abode of his imagination and memory. Being a psychic reality, it constitutes the character's whole life. Forming part of an imagined reality, the ghost window demarcates the fragile boundary not only between the inside and the outside, but also between different dimensions in this play: the theatrical present, the past (memories), and "the beyond" (future), achieving a spatio-temporal dislocation in the play.

The "ghost" room is impregnated with the echoes of the Speaker's loved ones and becomes the story of his losses. Achieving a complete fusion with the *locus* of an imaginary room, the Speaker is in a constant state of mourning. Paradoxically, his imagination never beckons another human being in this room; pathologically alone, the character is craving for a "home-return" to a once inhabited domain by his loved ones. Intrinsicly linked to the private space of a "ghost" room, this window offers conclusiveness to the Speaker, as it represents a possibility of an escape from the nightmarish domain of memory to non-existence/death. Thus, this poetic image of a window at night becomes a multi-layered construct which gains a life of its own in *A Piece of Monologue*.

## REFERENCES

- Bachelard, Gaston (1971 [1960]): *The Poetics of Reverie: Childhood, language and the Cosmos*, Boston, Beacon Press.
- Bachelard, Gaston (1994 [1957]): *The Poetics of Space*, translated by Maria Jolas, Boston, Beacon Press.
- Beckett, Samuel (1986): *The Complete Dramatic Works*, London, Faber & Faber.
- Beckett, Samuel (1983): *Nobow On: Company, Ill Seen Ill Said, Worstward Ho*, New York, Grove Press.
- Bollnow, Otto (2011 [1963]): *Human Space*, translated by Christine Shuttleworth, London, Hyphen Press.
- Brater, Enoch (1990): *Beyond Minimalism: Beckett's Late Style in Theatre*, Oxford, Oxford University Press.
- Cohn, Ruby (2001): *A Beckett Canon*, Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press.
- Chimisso, Cristina (2017): «Gaston Bachelard's Places of the Imagination and the Images of Spaces», in Bruce Janz (ed.) *Hermeneutics of Place and Space*, New York: Springer, 183-195. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-52214-2\\_14](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-52214-2_14)
- Fehsenfeld, Martha Dow, Lois More Overbeck (ed.) (2017a): *The Letters of Samuel Beckett: 1929-1940*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2017.
- Fehsenfeld, Martha Dow, Lois More Overbeck (ed.) (2017b): *The Letters of Samuel Beckett: 1941-1956*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2017.
- Fehsenfeld, Martha Dow, Lois More Overbeck (ed.) (2017c): *The Letters of Samuel Beckett: 1957-1965*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2017.
- Fehsenfeld, Martha Dow, Lois More Overbeck (ed.) (2017d): *The Letters of Samuel Beckett: 1966-1989*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Ferber, Michael (2007): *A Dictionary of Literary Symbols*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Freud, Sigmund (1917): «Mourning and Melancholia», *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIV (1914-1916): On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology and Other Works*, translated by James Starchey, London, the Hogarth Press: 237-258.
- Jung, Carl G. (1984 [1928-1930]): *Dream analysis: notes of the seminar given in 1928-1930*, Abingdon-on-Thames, Routledge & Kegan Paul.

- Heidegger, Martin (1971): *Poetry, Language, Thought*, translated by Albert Hofstadter, New York, Harper.
- Garner, Stanton B. (1994): *Bodied Spaces: Phenomenology and Performance in Contemporary Drama*, Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press.
- Kaplan, Edward K. (1972): *Gaston Bachelard's Philosophy of Imagination: Introduction*, in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 33 (1): 1-24.
- Knowlson, James (1996): *Damned to Fame: The Life of Samuel Beckett*, New York, Simon and Schuster.
- Knowlson, James (ed.) (1992): *Theatrical Notebooks of Samuel Beckett*, vol. III, London, Faber & Faber.
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice (1962): *Phenomenology of Perception*, translated by Colin Smith, London, Routledge.
- Pattie, David (2000): «Space, Time, and the Self in Beckett's Late Theatre», in *Modern Drama*, 43(3): 393-403. <https://doi.org/10.1353/mdr.2000.0070>
- Pravica, Sandra (2018): «Gaston Bachelard as surrealist», in *Metascience*, 27 (1): 51-54. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11016-017-0238-2>
- Pujante, David (2016): «El entramado simbólico en el drama 'Pelléas et Mélisande' de Maurice Maeterlinck. Una aplicación de la poética de lo imaginario», in *Actio Nova: Revista de la Literatura y Literatura Comparada* (80): 220-244. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15366/actionova2016.0>
- Thiboutot, Christian; Alberto Martínez (1999): «Gaston Bachelard and Phenomenology: Outline of a Theory of the Imagination», *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology*, 30 (1): 1-17.
- Vico, Giambattista (2011 [1710]): *On the Most Ancient Wisdom of the Italians: Unearthed from the Origins of the Latin Language*, translated by Jason Taylor, New Haven, Yale University Press.
- Zocco, Gianna (2013): «The Art of Watching. The Literary Motif of the Window and its Potential for Metafiction in Contemporary Literature», in *TRANS-Revue de littérature Générale et comparée*, 16: <http://journals.openedition.org/trans/833> (last access: 2/09/2021). <https://doi.org/10.4000/trans.833>





## SOBRE LA AUTORA

**Svetlana Antropova** is currently a full-time professor at Universidad Villanueva, Madrid, Spain. Her main area of expertise is memory and trauma in the post-dramatic theatre of Samuel Beckett. She was a member of a steering committee at the interdisciplinary conference *Trauma: Theory and Practice* during 2014-2015. Her recent contributions to Beckett criticism are «Filming Trauma: Bodiless Voice and Voiceless Bodies in Beckett's *Eh Joe*» (*What Happened? Re-presenting Traumas, Uncovering Recoveries*, 2019, E. McInnes and D. Schaub (eds), Brill/Rodopi), «De/Construction of Visual Stage Image in *Play*» (*Anagnorisis, Revista de Investigacion Teatral*, num. 22, 2020), and «Pacing as Repressed Memory of Embodiment and Enactment in *Footfalls*» (in *Beckett's Voice/Voicing Beckett*, 2021, L. De Vos, M. H. Tanaka, N. E. Johnson (eds), Brill/Rodopi).

### Contact information:

Universidad Villanueva

c. Costa Brava, 2

28034, Madrid

Phone number: 605 12 56 20

E-mail: [santropova@villanueva.edu](mailto:santropova@villanueva.edu).