

القرن العاري وآلة الإضافة:

أزمة هوية إنسانية

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الملخص:

تتخطى مسرحيتنا "القرن العاري" و"آلة الإضافة" الثيمات الاجتماعية لتدلفا في أعماق الهوية الإنسانية، حيث تطلّ العباء الذي يتقل به العصر الحديث كاهل الإنسان الذي لم يعد سوى كائنًا شبيهاً بالحيوان ينوء تحت عبء قدرته على التفكير. تعرض المسرحيتان كيف يمكن للمعرفة أن تشكل عبئاً منهكاً للبشر الذين يعيشون في عالم لا يقدم لهم إجابات أساسية أو واضحة حول ماهيتهم وأصلهم وماذا عليهم أن يفعلوا وإلى أين يذهبون، حيث تركّز كل مسرحية على شخصية تبدو للوهلة الأولى واثقة بنفسها وبأهمية موقعها في هذه الحياة، لكن سرعان ما يؤول بها المطاف كشخصية إنسانية تائهة. يشكل جلاء الوهم عن يانك وزيرو محرّك الأحداث الرئيسي، حيث يدفعهما لخوض سلسلة من الصراعات مع نفسيهما. يناقش سلافوي جيبيك هذه الفكرة في كتاباته، حيث يؤكد على أهمية الإيديولوجيا كآلية تخيل مهمتها مساعدة الأشخاص على الهروب من هاوية العدم التي تترصدهم دائماً. إضافةً إلى ذلك، تخلق عملية زوال الوهم إشكاليةً أخرى لكلا الشخصيتين اللتين تعيشان بحالة من الصراع مع فكرة الهوية والانتماء، فتطرح سلسلة من الأسئلة المتعلقة بأصل الإنسان، وهنا تأتي أهمية نظرية تشارلز داروين عن التطور، حيث أنها ترتبط ارتباطاً وثيقاً بعدم قدرة الشخصيتين على الشعور بالرفعة وشعورهما بالوحدة مع الحيوانات وأنهما "شيء" لا يمكن أن ينتمي لا أكثر. في نهاية الأمر، يدفع زوال الوهم عن يانك وزيرو بهما إلى الهاوية التي تقوم بدورها بتدميرهما. لا ينجح يانك في الانتماء لأي مكان، حتى عند موته، ويبقى زيرو عالقاً في العدم، حيث لا يستطيع أن يتجاوز كونه كائناً لا يملك أي معنى.

الكلمات مفتاحية:

الإنسانية، الهوية، العدم، الخسارة، الصراع، الانتماء، التطور.

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The Hairy Ape and The Adding Machine A Crisis of Human Identity

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Abstract:

The Hairy Ape and The Adding Machine transcend the social themes delving deep into the deepest level of the human identity. They address the burden humanity is afflicted with in the modern age when a human being is reduced into an animal who is burdened with his ability to think. The plays show how knowledge becomes a heavy burden for humanity in a world that does not tell them who they are, where they come from, and where they are going. Each play centralizes a character who seems sure of himself with his fantasies of centrality yet ends up a lost human being. The disillusionment of Yank and Zero is the catalyst that pushed both of them into a series of struggles with themselves. Slavoj Žižek discusses such an idea through giving ideology an important role as a phantasy mechanism that helps the individual to escape the abyss of the void lurking behind. Disillusionment brings forward a crisis for both characters who struggle with their identity and belonging. It opens up a series of questions regarding the origin of man where Charles Darwin's theory of evolution lies as a background. Darwin's theory is tied with the characters' lost sense of loftiness. They both feel that they are one with animals, and they are no more than a thing that can never belong. Deprived of their phantasies, Yank and Zero are propelled into the abyss that destroys them. Eventually, Yank could not belong even with his death, and Zero stuck in the void of being a meaningless thing.

Keywords:

Humanity, Identity, Void, Loss, Struggle, Belonging, Evolution.

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The Hairy Ape and The Adding Machine are plays that transcend the social, political, and religious themes, delving deep into what it means to be a human being. Both plays are written in the shadows of a lost humanity where human beings find themselves in a shapeless arena. As a result, wherever they turn, they realize that they do not fit into any category. These plays are concerned with how thinking is a burden. They are concerned with how a human identity is but a name that is unattainable. The two plays are about human illusions and the implications of disillusionment. Moreover, they shed light on the scientific and religious incompetence in providing humanity with a satisfying answer about its origin and purpose. After refuting the religious claims about God and humanity, science reduces man into a cosmic waste that has no purpose on earth. Consequently, modern man is plunged into a crisis of identity where he/she does not know who they are as human beings. Yank and Zero symbolize man on a universal scale. These characters have illusions that make them feel significant and proud. Yet, they are both awakened through certain incidents and driven into disillusionment. As a result, they start off a journey in a desperate search for their roots and identities as human beings. These journeys are vertical within the deepest territory of the human self.

Eugene O'Neill's *The hairy Ape* starts with a setting in the fore-castle of a ship where a group of men are shoving coal into the engine. One of those men is a young powerful man, Yank, who appears as the leader of the group. Discussions take place among the group that show Yank as the know-it-all character who dismisses Long's Marxist remarks as well as Paddy's Romantic ones, making fun of both of them. Yank shows fierceness and strength, speaking as someone who belongs to iron and whose actions are propelling the whole ship forward. Yet, a female snobbish rich girl, Mildred, decides to go down and take a look at the fore-castle. Doing so, she fainted the moment she saw Yank, and she called him "filthy beast." This moment marks a new phase in Yank's life. It is what propels him into a struggle of identity. He loses his sense of certainty and feels no longer a man who belongs. Accordingly, he abandons the ship with Long who takes him to New York and shows him that all the upper-class people are like Mildred. Yank attacks people in the street and gets arrested by the police. After he is rejected by The Industrial Workers of the World, Yank goes to the zoo where he stands in front of a gorilla and converses with it about belonging. Eventually, the gorilla gets out of the cage, striking Yank and throwing him into the cage where he dies.

Instead of providing humanity with a charming scientific answer about the origin of human beings, the great scientific scrutiny of humankind in the nineteenth century complicates everything. Human beings are faced with the bitter fact that they descend from other species which contradicted their illusory phantasy of being lofty creatures. As a result, the religious claims of a lofty humanity and God are perceived as a strike of imagination. In a documentary entitled *Evolution: Darwin's Dangerous Idea*, it is argued that "To suggest that animals, plants, and us humans came into being in a natural law-like way in the way that planets move was to put in jeopardy the human soul" (Toth, Caroline and Andrea Cross 1:44:13-23). Thus, the stability that individuals used to have due to spirituality is jeopardized. This causes a huge gap in the bases of human identity. Some people start questioning who they are, and what they do on earth without coming up with a least satisfying answer. Because there is no satisfying answer, those people are plunged into a crisis of identity. This crisis stems from the fact that a human being can no longer fit into any category. He/she is a floating signifier without any signified.¹ Accordingly, O'Neill insists that a playwright should be concerned with this crisis describing it as "the sickness of today" which is caused by "the death of the old God." O'Neill argues that the playwright today must dig at the roots of the sickness of today as he feels it- "the death of the old God and the failure of Science and Materialism to give any satisfying new One for the surviving primitive religious instinct to find a meaning for life in, and to comfort its fear of death with. It seems to me that anyone trying to do big work nowadays must have his big subject behind all the little subjects of his

¹ In his paper "Differance," Jacques Derrida posits the idea that a word is an endless chain of signifiers that can never be pinned down to a specific signified. His coinage "Differance" is based on the idea of the absence of meaning (5-6).

plays or novels, or he is simply scribbling around on the surface of things and has no more real status than a parlor entertainer.’ (qtd. in Kehl 42)

As far as O’Neill is concerned, humans have a “surviving primitive religious instinct to find a meaning for life.” However, science fails to provide humanity with a meaning or a purpose of life after the death of the old God, i.e. the religious God. Accordingly, playwrights should concern themselves with this aspect. Otherwise, their plays are merely for entertainment. Moreover, O’Neill is concerned with the deep shadows of the human soul: “On another occasion, O’Neill said, ‘I have tried to dig deep...to probe in the shadows of the soul of man bewildered by the disharmony of his primitive pride and individualism at war with the mechanistic development of society’” (qtd. in Kehl 42). O’Neill then sheds light on this disharmony between what he calls a primitive sense of significance and individualism and the fact that society is becoming more and more mechanical. In *The Hairy Ape*, O’Neill delves deep into the human psyche revealing its struggle with the impossibility of belonging. This impossibility is caused by the failure of answering the question “who is man?” In the play, Yank is in a quest for finding an answer to that question. Moreover, Yank’s quest is an attempt to find a category where he can belong. Yet, he ultimately fails. Through this failure, Yank exemplifies the failure of humanity.

In both plays, there is a main character who is unaware of himself. Each one of them lives at first in peace by virtue of being alienated from reality. Their unawareness is caused by the illusions of self-significance. For instance, Yank believes that he belongs to iron and engines, and he is the reason why the ship moves forward. Similarly, Zero works for twenty five years, and he once gets a higher wage which boosts the illusion of his importance. So, through their works, Yank and Zero are mentally inactive. Yet, they are suddenly plunged into an identity crisis by being disillusioned through an incident. For example, Yank begins as a man who neglects every single intellectual concept. He makes fun of Paddy who represents a Romantic figure. For example, Paddy describes the natural harmony with man before industrialization where man belongs to nature “Oh, to be back in the fine days of my youth, ochone! Oh, there was fine beautiful ships them days--clippers wid tall masts touching the sky--fine strong men in them--men that was sons of the sea as if ‘twas the mother that bore them” (O’Neill 8; Scene 1). Yank rejects such an attitude “All dat tripe yuh been pullin’--Aw, dat’s all right. On’y it’s dead, get me? Yuh don’t belong no more, see. Yuh don’t get de stuff. Yuh’re too old. [Disgustedly.] But aw say, come up for air onct in a while, can’t yuh?” (9). Yank appears so sure of himself to the extent that he sees himself as the only one who belong.

Moreover, Yank rejects Long’s socialist views satirizing him and his beliefs “Sit down before I knock yuh down! ...De Bible, huh? De Cap’tlist class, huh? Aw nix on dat Salvation Army-Socialist bull. Git a soapbox! Hire a hall! Come and be saved, huh? Jerk us to Jesus, huh? Aw g’wan! I’ve listened to lots of guys like you, see, Yuh’re all wrong” (6). In addition, Yank does not mention his father or mother. Instead, he calls them the old man and the old woman “Choich, huh? I useter go to choich onct--sure--when I was a kid. Me old man and woman, dey made me” (O’Neill 28; Scene 5). All of these attitudes show Yank as being stripped of any conceptual framework. He does not belong to nature, nor does he belong to a socialist system of thought. He does not even utter the words mother or father because he does not belong to anyone. He is a raw material that has no past nor a present just like humanity itself. Devoid of his mental activity, Yank, at first, establishes his belonging on his body power. He thinks that his hyper power unites him with iron, coal, dust, and smoke. This fake belonging is arguably caused by the lack he feels after abandoning every ideological belief. In other words, rejecting an intellectual belonging, Yank deactivates his mental function, and his body power controls him. As a result, this power blinds him. This blindness is symbolized by iron with which Yank is in union.

Elmer Rice’s *The Adding Machine* is about a journey of a male character, Zero. At the beginning, he appears happy with his job as an accountant. However, his wife is full of ambition. She pushes Zero to ask for a higher salary. Zero is confident that after working for more than twenty years, he is a crucial employee. However, his boss refuses him and replaces him with an adding machine. After a while, Zero’s door was knocked by the police, and he confessed that he had murdered his boss. Zero was locked up inside a cage

where he was treated as an animal in the zoo. After his execution, Zero wakes up in the afterlife and finds a place just like his office on earth. He meets Lieutenant Charles who speaks like a philosopher and a wise man. Zero feels comfortable out there and refuses to go back to earth, but he is tempted by a beautiful woman who led him back.

In almost a similar case as Yank's, Zero thinks highly of himself. He thinks that he is an important employee who is central and of a high value:

'Boss,' I'll say, 'I ain't quite satisfied. I been on the job twenty-five years now and if I'm gonna stay I gotta see a future ahead of me.' 'Zero,' he'll say, 'I'm glad you came in. I've had my eye on you, Zero. Nothin' gets by me.:' 'Oh, I know that, boss,' I'll say. That'll hand him a good laugh, that will. 'You're a valuable man, Zero,' he'll say, 'and I want you right up here with me in the front office. You're done addin' figgers. Monday mornin' you move up here.' (Rice 199; Scene 2)

Zero is a zero man in the sense that he does not carry any conceptual framework. However, he suffers because of his society symbolized by his wife who appears as a haunting figure lurking in his mind. This is why he is afraid of talking in front of her and talks only behind her back. This shows how weak he is in his presence in society. He is not only obsessed with society but also afraid of it. For instance, in the heaven-like place, Zero reveals his social fear:

ZERO. You don't want him to see us layin' around like this,
do you?

DAISY. I don't care if he does.

ZERO. Well, you oughta care. You don't want him to think
you ain't a refined
girl, do you? He's an awful moral bird, he is.

DAISY. I don't care nothin' about him. I don't care nothin'
about anybody but
you.

ZERO. Sure, I know. But we don't want people talkin' about
us. You better
fix your hair an' pull down your skirts. (Rice 217;
Scene7)

If Yank is imprisoned by the iron Douglas manufactures, Zero is imprisoned by social concepts and conventions. His only recourse away from this brutal society is his work which alienates him. Work then for both Yank and Zero guarantees a disconnection from reality.

Yank and Zero go through a slightly similar situation when it comes to being unaware and blinded and then plunged into recognition and knowledge. For example, Yank is drawn into disillusionment by Mildred who extinguishes his ideology. She is the one who triggers off his exposure to reality. He descends from his former paradise which becomes hell for him because of the curse of losing his phantasy. Yank looks at himself as if for the first time. He gets bewildered, and he starts pondering Mildred's phrase "filthy beast" which drives him into questioning his own identity as a human being. After being the most energetic and confident man, Yank sits quietly taking the attitude of Rodin's the thinker and refusing to interact with the other workers: "Aw say, youse guys. Lemme alone. Can't youse see I'm tryin' to tink?" (O'Neill 21; Scene 4). Yank's body power now is vanished and his mind takes over control after being silenced. While Yank is thinking bewilderingly after being called a filthy beast, Paddy affirms to him the real intention of saying such words:

PADDY... If you'd seen the endearin' look on her pale mug
when she shrivelled away with her hands over her eyes
to shut out the sight of him! Sure, 'twas as if she'd seen a
great hairy ape escaped from the Zoo!

YANK. [Stung--with a growl of rage.] Aw! (24)

Slavoj Žižek centralizes the role of ideology as a phantasy mechanism that gives subjects a sense of control and stability in life. However, losing the phantasy is unbearable for subjects. It can destroy their sense of security and centrality. In *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, Žižek argues that “Fantasy is basically a scenario filling out the empty space of a fundamental impossibility, a screen masking a void” (141). This void is the trap onto which Yank was pushed. His fantasy is diminished once he was called a “filthy beast”, and he was faced with this “void” which sets him on fire. The moment of disillusionment is the trigger that ignites the struggle within himself, propelling him into the vicious circle of a void which eventually led to his destruction.

The ship represents life itself, and Yank is confident of being the crucial force in this life. Yet, when he is faced with reality, he realizes that he is but a mere animal that is being imprisoned in a small cage. Yank proceeds with his struggle in a desperate need to belong. O'Neill talks about this struggle describing it as a new phase in drama “The subject here is the same ancient one that always was and always will be the subject for drama, and that is man and his struggle with his own fate. The struggle used to be with the gods, but it is now with himself, his own past, his attempt to belong” (qtd. in Rundle 55). O'Neill earlier talks about the death of the old God. So, the struggle in the modern age turns into the arena of being as such. Yank is not in a struggle with God or fate. He is rather in the grip of a hollow area where he cannot find any category to fit in. He has no past to reflect on, nor a present to rely on. He is actually in a conflict with both. Throughout his journey, Yank's belonging to the ape is being increased. Ironically, it is increased by the people to whom Yank thinks he may belong. For example, in *The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW)*, where Yank sees a glimmer of hope, Yank is called an ape “Oh, hell, what's the use of talking? You're a brainless ape” (O'Neill 44; Scene 7). What is significant in the journey, however, is the change of Yank's attitude. At first, he is so happy by belonging to iron and being part of it. Yet, when he realizes the blindness and the encaging the iron causes, he decides to be fire that melts the iron “He made dis--dis cage! Steel! IT don't belong, dat's what! Cages, cells, locks, bolts, bars--dat's what it means!--holdin' me down wit him at de top! But I'll drive trou! Fire, dat melts it! I'll be fire--under de heap--fire dat never goes out--hot as hell--breakin' out in de night” (O'Neill 38-39; Scene 6). In addition, Yank destroys two bars of iron in the prison. This means that Yank takes an opposite stance altogether. He no longer accepts being encaged, blinded, and exploited. He wants, rather, to destroy every predicament that may prevent him from reaching the truth of who he is as a human being. This causes a shift in Yank's life. This shift is from the world of illusions into reality “I'm a busted Ingersoll, dat's what. Steel was me, and I owned de woild. Now I ain't steel, and de woild owns me. Aw, hell! I can't see--it's all dark, get me?” (45; Scene 7). He is owned by the world because he does not know who he is. All he knows is that he is a speaking ape who thinks, but who has no idea of where he comes from or where he goes. He is simply a being that fits nowhere.

Furthermore, Zero appears in the last scene as a total zero in the most literal sense of the word. He knows nothing at all. However, through his dialogue with the lieutenant, Zero gains knowledge gradually. The lieutenant, Charles, treats Zero as if Zero is the whole humanity. Moreover, the scene seems to offer a new reading of the human creation. Zero thinks that he will simply know everything about his human identity through asking Charles. However, Charles' answers complicate everything and show how humanity is lost by being ignorant of its roots and purpose in life. For example, Zero says he has been there, supposedly in prison, for twenty five years. However, Charles tells him that he has been there for thousands of years:

ZERO. You mean to say I've been here before—before the last time, I mean?

CHARLES. Been here before! Why, you poor boob—you've been here thousands of times—fifty thousand, at least. (Rice 219; Scene 8)

This statement alludes to the fact that humanity has been imprisoned since its existence. This prison is shaped by unawareness, slavery, loss, alienation, and machinery. Then, Zero asks him in a hopeful tone if he was a king which is again an ideal humane assumption. Yet, Charles makes fun of him and tells him that he was a monkey not a king. Moreover, Charles tells Zero that “the mark of the slave was on you from the start” (219). Such

statements demolish the ideal lens through which Zero sees himself and humanity. This conversation is a very strong technique through which the what-should-be is faced with the what-it-is. A human being should be a king not a monkey, an active not an owned thing, and a lofty soul not a commodity. Accordingly, the conversation is a universal case every human being may make with themselves. In an intriguing description, Charles offers an image of the course of existence over millions of years:

Charles. For millions of years the nebulous gases swirled in space. For more millions of years the gases cooled and then through inconceivable ages they hardened into rocks. And then came life. Floating green things on the waters that covered the earth. More millions of years and a step upward—an animate organism in the ancient slime. And so on—step by step, down through the ages—a gain here, a gain there—the mollusc, the fish, the reptile, then mammal, man! And all so that you might sit in the gallery of a coal mine and operate the super-hyper-adding machine with the great toe of your right foot!

ZERO. Well, then—I ain't so bad, after all.

CHARLES. You're a failure, Zero, a failure. A waste product. A slave to a contraption of steel and iron. The animal's instincts, but not his strength and skill. The animal's appetites, but not his unashamed indulgence of them. True, you move and eat and digest and excrete and reproduce. (220-221)

Charles, speaking as a modern scientist and a Darwinist, reduces man into a cosmic waste, a mere animate thing, a slave, a failure, and the animal instincts and appetites. This discussion touches upon a dilemma facing the human identity in the modern age. By refuting the religious remarks about God and the origin of man, science does not introduce for humanity a satisfying scientific substitution. Instead, science proves its incompetence by considering humanity as a product of a chain of a material evolution that has nothing to do with a purpose or a meaning. In 1871, Charles Darwin published his book *The Descent of Man* where he argues that “In a series of forms graduating insensibly from some ape-like creature to man as he now exists, it would be impossible to fix on any definite point when the term ‘man’ ought to be used” (129). This sequence of evolution within which man is an evolved creature negates all the religious claims about the purpose and meaning of life. A modern human being then sees himself/herself as a material thing that has no value which is where the play puts the emphasis. To be able to think in the grip of this hollowness is to realize how insignificant it is to be a human being. As a result, Zero refuses to go back to life. He wants to stay in his former paradise:

ZERO. [Fattening to his knees]: Then keep me here! Don't send me back! Let me stay!

CHARLES. Get up. Didn't I tell you I can't do anything for you? Come on, time's up!

ZERO. I can't! I can't! I'm afraid to go through it all again. (221)

For Yank, the words “filthy beast” was the threshold into the abyss of his disillusionment and void. Similarly, Charles’ speech pushes Zero into the same threshold where his fantasy of a centrality is destroyed. In an Adam-like tone, Zero feels the curse and burden of his vanishing illusions:

ZERO. What did you tell me so much for? Couldn't you just let me go, thinkin' every thin' was goin' to be all right?

CHARLES. You wanted to know, didn't you?

ZERO. How did I know what you were goin' to tell me? Now I can't stop thinkin' about it! I can't stop think-in'! I'll be thinkin' about it all the time. (221)

With his disillusionment, Zero returns back to the world where he will supposedly start a terrible life as a human being who has no identity nor a meaningful existence.

Being disillusioned, Yank sees himself as a slave. For him, iron symbolizes prison, and Yank has been imprisoned throughout the play. This prison exists inside his head, so he is a prisoner even outside the gates of the prison. The reason why he is a prisoner is because he does not see any value of himself as a human being. Like Zero, Yank is reduced to a mere being. He feels he is owned without knowing who owns him. He cannot find out what is the purpose of his existence. Indeed, he does not even know who he is as a human being. These facts shape a cage in which Yank is imprisoned. As a result, Yank's whole journey is an attempt to get out of that prison. Being out of the prison is the equivalent of being a free, valuable, and known human being. The word known here means a known identity, roots and purpose of human beings. In the final scene, Yank faces an ape which serves as a reflection of Yank himself. Yank tells the ape that he is in a prison that is much worse than the ape's: "So yuh're what she seen when she looked at me, de white faced tart! I was you to her, get me? On'y outa de cage--broke out--free to moider her, see? Sure! Dat's what she tought. She wasn't wisedit I was in a cage, too--worsen'n yours" (O'Neill 46; Scene 8). Yank is the prisoner of his thinking which is much worse than the iron cage of the ape. The insertion of the ape has several purposes. One of which is conducting a comparison between humans and apes, their ancestors. The fact that humanity has no idea of its purpose in life makes the ability of thinking a curse for human beings. As a result, Yank tells the ape that its life is much better than human's:

It's dis way, what I'm drivin' at. Youse can sit and dope dream in de past, green woods, de jungle and de rest of it. Den yuh belong and dey don't. Den yuh kin laugh at 'em, see? Yuh're de champ of de woild. But me--I ain't got no past to tink in, nor nothin' dat's comin', on'y what's now—and dat don't belong. Sure, you're de best off! Yuh can't tink, can yuh? Yuh can't talk neider. (47)

Apes simply belong to nature and to the wild life while humans do not belong anywhere. Apes do not think or talk which is a high privilege while humans are cursed with the ability of thinking. Yank describes talking and thinking as being useless and inadequate "But I kin make a bluff at talkin' and tinkin'--a'most git away wit it--a'most!--and dat's where de joker comes in" (47). A thinker is a joker because thinking leads nowhere in the search for an identity. Moreover, Yank sees himself as not being on earth nor in heaven. He is in the middle causing their separation "I ain't on oith and I ain't in heaven, get me? I'm in de middle tryin' to separate 'em, takin' all de woist punches from bot' of 'em. Maybe dat's what dey call hell, huh? But you, yuh're at de bottom. You belong! Sure! Yuh're de on'y one in de woild dat does, yuh lucky stiff!" (47). Yank's crisis of identity culminates in these lines. His body power is vanished, and he is reduced to a mere voice. He does not even belong to himself. At the end of his journey, Yank stands as a representative of humanity who is in disharmony with everything. He is not on earth because he is not in harmony with nature, nor is he in heaven because religions fail to guarantee spiritual harmony for him:

In a 1924 interview with the New York Herald Tribune, O'Neill said that Yank, as 'a symbol of man, ... has lost his old harmony with nature, the harmony which he used to have as an animal and has not yet acquired in a spiritual way. Thus, not being able to find it on earth nor in heaven, he's in the middle trying to make peace, taking the 'woist punches from bot' of 'em.' (qtd. in Kehl 39)

This position, the middle, is described as hell. In fact, hell means the place where the sense of belonging is not acquired at all. It is where man is a remnant being not a human being. This hell is called life. The end of Yank's journey is very pessimistic and disappointing. After several attempts, Yank ends up rejected by everyone, even by the ape to which Yank thinks he belongs. The moment the ape rejects Yank marks the end of Yank's journey with a desperate defeat. This defeat is the defeat of humanity. It shows its disability and weakness. In a voice whose desperation seems to echo the whole world, Yank asks "Christ, where do I get off at? Where do I fit in?" (O'Neill 48; Scene). Indeed, Yank fits in nowhere. When Yank dies, O'Neill writes "perhaps, the Hairy Ape at last belongs" (48). Death then is the only hope left for Yank and Humanity to belong. This is a very dark vision of life. If death is the last recourse, life then is really a hell.

In conclusion, the plays delve deep into the shadows of the human psyche in a search for belonging. This search leads nowhere but to a more destructive result. The plays show that human beings are cursed by having

knowledge in a world where they are valueless machines. In the grip of these distressing facts, Zero and Yank, representing humanity, reach a conclusion that a human being is but a remnant being on earth. A human being then is living in a hell due to the fact that he/she is an unknown entity on earth that has no past nor a present nor a purpose for his existence. The ends of the plays are so pessimistic. Life is depicted as a prison. So, escaping this prison is the only recourse for a desperate human being who is dragged into self-recognition.

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