Relationships of the Self: An Analysis of *Murphy*

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Abstract

The paper explores the notions of selfhood and the state of fragmentation as a way of exposing human paradoxes. This selfhood is revealed to be essentially fragmented. The complexities of actual self-experience in the modernist period have fragmented and fractured Man, who is overwhelmed with a sense of nothingness, non-connectiveness, and disengagement. This condition is what Samuel Becket tries to convey in *Murphy* (2000). The aim of this paper is to study the layers of self that are operating in the novel through Murphy's fragmented social and inner selves. Beckett parodies the traditional artistic and novelistic interest in human action. His novel, *Murphy*, undermines the characters' actions, and its language exposes the essential absurdity of its social subject. The construction of the self is seen in terms of the language used, the descriptive judgment of which is ultimately rendered meaningless. The disconnection between the mental and physical realms leads eventually to the creation of the isolated and alienated self.

Key Words: alienation, contingency, language, modernity, selfhood

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