In The Hairy Ape symbolism runs throughout the play from the beginning to the end. Yank symbolizes a number of ideas. He symbolizes the most perfect individuality of a stoker. Secondly, he symbolizes the proletariat. Thirdly he symbolizes the animal nature of man, the instincts and impulses, which man has inherited from his biological ancestor, the hairy ape. Fourthly, he stands for the primitive in perfect harmony with nature of environment. Fifthly, he symbolizes every man.

Mildred Douglas symbolizes the rich capitalist class living an artificial life of comfort and luxury, enervated and anemic, incapable of any originality or vigorous action. The confrontation of Mildred and Yank symbolizes the modern class conflict, the confrontation of the rich capitalist class and the proletariat, gradually becoming class conscious and clamoring for rights. This confrontation results in Yank’s loss of belongingness, symbolic of the modern worker’s loss of harmony and creative joy in his mechanical work, a work in which the individual worker plays as insignificant a part as a clog in a machine. The stokehole, the foreman – castle, the Fifth Avenue sky-scraper, the cell in the prison all made of steel, are all symbolic of the ‘cage’ in which man is imprisoned in the contemporary materialistic and commercialized age.
No one has understood better than Eugene O’Neill that the soul at war with itself belongs nowhere in the world of realities. The soul that denies or seeks to escape from its own creative power sinks in misery. The language used is also symbolic. Mildred calls Yank a ‘filthy beast’, she treats him as a ‘hairy ape’. Yank feels insulted in the very heart of his pride. In The Hairy Ape we have a restatement of this theme in the rough and inarticulate regions of the soul, ending in death through the embrace of the beast. The Hairy Ape was written in 1922, combines realism with symbolic expressionism and relates man to the mysterious forces which tug at him and shape his destiny. Nothing like this dramatic achievement had ever been felt in the American theater. His was an incisive analysis of the American society and of the human situation. Like a genuine artist he wedded the aesthetics of dramatic form with the ethics of human values. He rejected the established strategy of a propagandist and with deep sincerity and honesty; he achieved a synthesis between theme and form, between purpose and design.

The Hairy Ape is written in eight short, abrupt scenes, and might almost be called an expressionistic tragic-comedy of modern industrial unrest. The hero is so unconventional a word can be applied to the leading figure of this play, is a mighty stoker called ‘Yank’, and we see him first, stripped to the waist, with the rest of his half-naked shift mates, in their forecastle bunkroom. He can out curse, outfight, out feel them all and he is proud of his powers, proud of his job as stoker at the heart of the ship and is proud to think that he is steel and coal and motion. “Twenty – five knots an hour! that’s me.” We next see the ultra – sophisticated daughter of the owner of the liner, lolling on the deck and pining for the sensation of going down to the stock hole to see
other half lives. Another change: the curtains part and out of the darkness gleam the rims of the boiler—doors. A bell clangs, the door swings open, a terrific red glare leaps out at the audience, and Yank and his mates heave in the coal. The bell clangs again, too soon, and Yank is cursing the engineer with terrific violence, when he turns to see the girl beside him. She almost faints at the sights of him, cries out that he is a beast and is dragged away, as he hurls his shovel after her with a horrid oath. Another change: we’re back in the forecastle to see Yank completely upset by the incident, brooding over the depths of social difference revealed to him, burning with hatred, rage, revenge. He is no longer steel, coal, speed, because he no longer is sure of himself. To make sure of himself, he is going forth on a mission of revenge.

We see him next on Fifth Avenue, the passers-by are strange, unreal automatons, wearing masks all alike. He makes no more impression on them than if they were dreams; all that happens is that a policeman beats him up and arrests him. Then we see him in a cell on the island. Out of the darkness come the snarls and oaths and horrid howls or other prisoners. One Prisoner reads from the New York Times an attack on Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) as a menace to civilization. The Hairy Ape resolves to join the Wobblies. When we next observe him he is trying to join, that he too may plant dynamite beneath the steel—magnate’s home. But the Wobbliest throw him out as an agent—provocateur. Finally, in his puzzled despair he reaches the gorilla’s cage in the Zoo. “Ah! A brother, a real hairy ape!” He lets the gorilla loose, to go with him on a pilgrimage of destruction. But the gorilla seizes him in a deadly embrace and tosses him into the cage, where dies behind the bars.
We find the return of the racial unconsciousness forming the basis of *The Hairy Ape* as in *The Emperor Jones*. O'Neill magnificently portrays the disintegration of Yank when he loses his sense of 'belongingness' in the stoke-hole of his ocean liner. O'Neill appears to be clearer now as to the symbolism of the sea than he was in the earlier plays—Paddy laments the old days when clipper ships sailed with fine strong men in them—men that was sons of the sea as if

'[twas the mother that bore them' 1

O'Neill explains Yank's hunger for group identification in terms of his brutalizing childhood. We also notice a few Jungian echoes in the play. Under the traumatic shock of being coiled a filthy beast and discovering a clean, neat world, which excludes him, Yank regresses to his primitive, animal unconscious. However, Yank is able to find belongingness again only at the Zoo in front of the gorilla's cage. In this work, O'Neil found a striking symbol and an impelling, expressionistic form in which to clothe his Jungian theme.

The characters and the problems are universal, not particular; generalization, with its extraordinary effect, in the case of O'Neill, of dramatic disintegration, has already begun. *Beyond the Horizon* is its first toll, despite the realistic treatment of farm life, which gives it a significant place in our dramatic development, and its idealistic aspiration, which also struck a new note.
The theme of man's search for a nice in the universe, for power to understand and express himself, re-emerges three years after Beyond the Horizon, in The Hairy Ape. It was a striking occasion in more ways than one, since it marked O'Neill's return, after a lengthy excursion into realism, to the expressionistic technique. The poetic and dreamy Robert Mayo becomes the turbulent, in articulate Yank, the Hairy Ape. But if Robert Mayo was a generalization of man, Yank is only the symbol of a force: the power, the strength which are the eventual source of all activity, all achievement — and which is found in one class — the working class. This symbolism is in itself sound; O'Neill nevertheless falls into the error of regarding what is essentially a social as a philosophical problem.

O'Neill envisions the working class trapped between two "worlds"; barred from the jungle, home of man in his completely unthinking state of brute force, by the consciousness of its power, and from the world of make believe for which it provides the foundation by its integrity and reality. At the start of the play Yank "belong," because he makes a real, irreplaceable contribution, to society, and therefore believes in himself. At that time Carl Sandburg was already hymning the magnificence of industrial America and the glory of the men whose sweat and blood had built her. There are passages in The Hairy Ape which are almost pure Sandburg:

"Hell in de stokehole? Sure! It takes a man to work in hell! Hell, sure, dat's my favorite climate. I eat it up! I git fat on it! It's me makes it hot! It's me makes it roar! It's me makes it move! Sure, o'ny for me everything stops. It all goes dead, get
me? De noise and smoke and all de engines movin’ de woild, 
dey stop. Dere am’t nothin’ no more! Dat’s what I’m sayiin’.
Everything else dat makes de woild move, somep’n makes de 
woild move, somep’n makes it move. It can’t move without 
some’n else, see? Den yuh get down to me. I’m at de bottom, 
get me? Dere ain’t nothin’ foither. I’m de end! I’m de start! I 
start somep’n and de woild moves! It- dat’s me! –de new dat’s 
moiderin’ de old! I’m de ting in coal dat makes it boin; I’m 
steam and oil for de engines; I’m de ting in oise dot makes yuh 
hear it; I’m smoke and express trains and steamers and factory 
whistles; I’m de ting in gold dat makes it money! And I’m what 
makes iron into steel! Steel, dat stands for de whole ting! And 
I’m steel – steel – steel! I’m de muscles in steel, de punch 
behind it!” CP (1920-1931) THA pp. 128-29.

Doris V. Falk has given an excellent psycho-symbolic interpretation of 
the pay. She has hinted at the similarity of the theme of the Hairy ape with 
Satrian Existentialism.

In ‘The Hairy Ape’ (. . .) O’Neill is saying that the motion and 
the spirit that impels all thinking things is the search for 
identity. In saying so he has extended the symbolism of Yank’s 
struggle beyond psychology to philosophy and, in a sense, to 
anthropology. The search for identity not only is a persoul 
and individual problem, but becomes the collective, universal 
problem of mankind. 2
O'Neill had explained this meaning in a letter he had written to the New Yank Herald Tribune in 1924. He strongly felt that "The Hairy Ape' was propaganda in the sense that it was a symbol of man, who had lost his old harmony with nature, the harmony which he used to have as an animal and had not yet acquired it 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'. This idea was expressed in Yank's speech. The public saw just the stoker, not the symbol, and the symbol makes the play either important or just another play. Yank cannot go forward, and so he tries to go back to 'belonging' either. The gorilla kills him. The subject here is the same ancient one that always was, and always will be the one subject for drama and that is man and his struggle with his own fate. Earlier, the struggle used to be with Gods, but here it is with himself, his own past, his attempt to belong. Even as early as 1922 O'Neill had explained the origin of The Hairy ape in an interview published in the American Magazine of November 1922:

"I shouldn't have known the stokers pf I hadn't happened to scrape an acquaintance with one of our own furnace from gang at Jimmy the Priest's. His name was Driscoll, and he was a Liverpool Irishman [...] the synonym for a tough customer [...] Driscoll [...]came to a strange end. He committed suicide by jumping overboard in mid ocean [...]. Why? It was the 'Why' of Driscoll's suicide that gave me the germ of the idea." ³

O'Neill's view of the human dilemma here suggests quite strongly that the Satrian existentialism. Man's very 'lostness,' his need to belong, is the
key to humanity. As soon as he has ‘belonged’ he has abdicated his manhood, has ceased to be an ‘existent’ and becomes a passive, vegetative being at the mercy of forces outside himself and beyond his control. And yet, all forces which offer him a secure environment in exchange for obedience and conformity—society, the authority of religion, of the state, of tradition—have been created by man himself. These have no existence of their own except by virtue of man’s existence. He is, in actuality, free from all outside authority in the determination of his fate, but he is also the lonely bearer of a terrifying responsibility for himself and the race. He has nothing to blame for his failures but himself. Human life has no intrinsic meaning or order—no harmony like that of nature except the meaning that man projects upon it. He must create his own values and impose upon his universe whatever significance and whatever moral order he expects to adopt as a basis for an ethical code. To seek asylum from this responsibility for his own destiny by accepting some established institution, as an absolute is to escape from self and from fears of its inadequacy. All man can really hope to belong to is himself. His ‘sickness up to death’ is not his loneliness and anxiety in making choices and bearing responsibility, but despair at willing to be oneself, the despair of Yank in *The Hairy Ape* and of a long line of protagonists in O’Neill’s plays.

In the opinion of Edwin Engel, *The Hairy Ape* is a deeply pessimistic play which hold no hope for the salvation of modern man and in which O’Neill rejects social reform as a possible answer to modern man’s predicament:
“O’Neill saw no salvation for modern man, a brute who continues-redundantly-to be brutalized by machinery and industry. If man is essentially still an ape he has also become a machine and, in self-delusion, thinks that elemental primitive forced which he has retained and converted into steel can be an adequate end in itself. He enjoys a false sense of belonging to something, of being a part of steel and of machinery, whereas he is actually their slave. In those instances where he is not enslaved he has lost his vitality and become completely enervated-a waste product in the Bessemer process inheriting the acquired trait of the by-product wealth, but none of the energy, none of the strengths of the steel that made it.”

Eugene O’Neill also uses a number of expressionistic devices effectively. The bell rings for the stokers to go on duty [...] they all stand up, come to attention, then go out in a lockstep file [...] it is only symbolic of the regimentation of men who are slaves of machinery. In a large sense, it applies to all of us, because we are all more or less slaves of convention, or of discipline, or of a rigid formula of some sort. The scene of Fifth Avenue when Yank, the hairy ape, comes face to face with a little parade of wooden-faced church-goers who walk like automata and prattle of giving a “Hundred Percent American Bazaar” as a contribution to the solution of discontent among the lower classes. When Yank’s frustration expressionist:

(......) Paint and powder! All dolled up to kill! Yuh look like stiffs laid out for de boneyard! Aw, givan, de lot of youse! Yuh
don’t belong, get me! Look at me, why don’t belong, get me! Look at me, why don’t youse dare? I belong dat’s me (......) See that building going up dere? See de wsteel work? Steel, dat’s me! Youse guys live on it and think youh’re somep’n. But I’m in it see? I’m de hoistin’ enginendat makes it go up! I’m it-de inside and bottom of it! Sure. I’m steel and steam and smoke and the rest of it! It moves – speed – twenty-five stories up – and me at de top and bottom – movin’! Yuh’re de garbage, get me-de leavins – de ashes we dump over the side! (.....) CP(1920-1931)THA, Sc v, p.148

Even the use of masks has been made most dramatically from the opening of the fourth scene, where Yank begins to think he enters into the masked world. Even the familiar faces of this mates in the forecastle have become strange and alien. Skinner aptly remarks:

“Taken by itself, The Hairy Ape is a play of sheer terror of life covered with a mask of mocking pride. But like all other O’Neill’s plays, it cannot be taken alone. It catches the raw horror of a mood, and gives vent to that horror with a brutality almost unparalleled in dramatic literature. But even in its worst moments, it never wholly loses sight of things outside. There is always the vision of the Irishman, Paddy, and Yank’s strange understanding that in spite of everything, he is not a best, that his racial consciousness cannot go back to the jungle. When he does, even mockingly, seek comradeship with he best, it brings
death—another of those mystical deaths to an old self in which the O’Neill fantasy abounds [...]. But The Hairy Ape was not to be the end. It was to be a symbol of the dark despair that sometimes sweeps over the soul to disappear later in a triumph of sheer will."

What Yank himself thinks of life is beautifully summarized in his speech when he had been thrown out from the IWW’s headquarters into the street:

“So dem bodies don’t think I belong, neider. Aw, to hell wit ’em Dey’re in the wrong pew-de same old bull- soap boaxes and Salvation Army-no guts, Cut out an hour often de job a day and make me happy Tree square a day, and cauliflowers in de front yard-edal rights- a woman and kids-a lousy vote-and I’m fixed for Jesus, huh? Aw, hell What does dat yuh? Dis tings’s in your inside, but it ain’t your belly.....” CP (1920-1931) THA, Sc vii, p.159.

A careful analysis of Yank’s speech makes further comment unnecessary.

O’Neill presents his own reaction to the modern state of mechanized America through his character Yank:

“The machine has done something to man that wages, food, home, family, shorter hours and a lousy vote won’t remedy. As the machine created wealth it destroyed the joy of living, the
only thing that wealth is good for. O'Neill has presented the paradox of modern civilization with great insight into the fundamental tragedy. Like, Yank we all say, 'where do we go from here, and the answer is Hell.'

Eugene O'Neill is one of those American playwrights who has attracted volumes of criticism, both negative and positive, but all these comments, favorable or unfavourable, have granted that his efforts to create art for the theatre was Herculean. Whatever his short comings there is a general agreement that he is one American dramatist who has consistently written as a consummate artist. He can be ranked among those rare playwrights who leave their footprints on the sand of time due to their humanistic vision enshrined in their dramatic and living creations O'Neill's plays are not merely vital experiments in dramaturge but also explorations in the field of human values:

"... it is abundantly evident that a cast curiosity about life and art and a remarkable willingness to conduct experiments in a variety of style characterized the movement. And, as is well known, this tendency was most vividly exemplified by the career of the American avant-garde's chief discovery O'Neill."

O'Neill's attempt to move behind life by expressionist means is defeated for two reasons: As they are conceived, the characters are so primitive that they are in appearance what they are in essence. They are simple organisms, and no layers of sophistication mask them to be stripped away as Brutus Jones's "Emperor hood" is taken from him. The second
reason is that (O’Neill’s technical skill in depicting Yank and his crew is superb realism. Motivations are clear, strength and weakness of character underlie and make plausible all patterns of thought, and even Yank’s long monologues emerge convincingly from situation and character. Yank is more comprehensible as a man than as a symbol.

In the stokehole, Yank belongs. His credo – that he is the force at the bottom that makes the entire mechanized society move – is right. He is such a force until the meeting with Mildred causes him to doubt himself and sends him out in a frenzied effort to destroy the God of power he has served at his furnace – altar. When Yank moves uptown, briefly, the conditions change, and for one scene the non-naturalistic treatment has relevance. On Fifth Avenue, Yank moves amazed like a Neanderthal Alice in a hostile Wonderland. What an audience sees is a kind of reality but distorted as it might be when filtered through Yank’s consciousness. Yet the beginning of the scene, judged by the dialogue alone, is naturalistic. Yank and Paddy, joking and bumbling, explore a world they have not seen before. As the scene develops, however, and a Yank’s anger at the unseeing passersby mounts uncontrollably, the play becomes for a moment expressionistic. Yank’s fury at the masked creatures causes him to attack them brutally, but his blows have no effect. Instead it is he who recoils after each punch. Now it is the action and not the scenery which is being treated in a non-naturalistic way and for a moment, O’Neill writes completely in the expressionistic mode.
On December 24, 1921, wrote to Kenneth Macgowan:

The Hairy Ape—first draft—was finished yesterday... I don't think the play as a whole can be fitted into any of the current "isms." It seems run the whole gamut from extreme naturalism to extreme naturalism to extreme expressionism—with more of the latter than the former. I have tried to dig deep in it to probe in the shadows of the soul of man bewildered by the mechanistic development of society. And the man in the case is not an Irishman, as I at first intended, but, more, fittingly, an American—a New York tough of the toughs, a product of the waterfront turned stoker—a type of mind, if you could call it that, which I know extremely well . . . . Suffice it for me to add, the treatment of all the sets should be expressionistic, I think.

Coming to grips with a Yankee individual's and individualist's Yank's—predicament

At a new stage of the "mechanistic development of society," the play is a puzzle in more ways than one. Its introductory setting both defines and distorts a real scene:

"The firemen's forecastle of a transatlantic liner an hour after sailing from New York for the voyage across. Tiers of narrow, steel bunks, three deep, on all sides. A entrance in rear. Benches on the floor before the bunks. The room is crowded with men, shouting, cursing, laughing, singing—a confused, inchoate uproar swelling into a sort of unity, a
meaning – the bewildered, furious, baffled defiance of a beast in a cage. Nearly all the men are drunk. Many bottles are passed from hand to hand. All are dressed in dungaree pants, heavy ugly shoes. Some wear singlets, but the majority are stripped to the waist.

The treatment of this scene, or of any other scene in the play, should be no means be naturalistic. The effect sought after is a cramped space in the bowels of a ship, imprisoned by white steel. The lines of bunks, the upright supporting them, cross each other like the steel framework of a cage. The ceiling crushes down upon the men's heads. They cannot stand upright. This accentuates the natural stooping posture which shoveling coal and the resultant over-development of back and shoulder muscles have given them. The men themselves should resemble those pictures in which the appearance of Neanderthal Man is guessed at. All are hairy-chested, with long arms of tremendous power, and low, receding brows above their small, fierce, resentful eyes. All the civilized white races are represented, but except for the slight differentiation in color of hair, skin, eyes, all these men are alike.

The curtain rises on a tumult of sound. Yank is seated in the foreground. He seems broader, fiercer, more truculent, more powerful, more sure of himself than the rest. They respect his superior strength – the grudging respect of fear. Then, too he represents to them a self-expression, the very last word in what they are, their most highly developed individual." CP (1920-1931)THA, pp.126-27

149
The element of enhancement is also manifest in Yank's presentation. While all the stokes possess long arms of tremendous power, Yank is the most powerful of all, he is the "most highly developed individual" of them all, their most robust self-expression.

In *The Hairy Ape* the dramatist's personal participation is fairly obvious; factual representation changes into the emotional presentation. Descriptive pictures are substituted by images involving or implying a simile: the shouting stokers are described in terms of furious beasts; they resemble the appearance of Neanderthal Man; the white steel framework of the tiers of narrow bunks gives the impression of a cage and creates the effects of "a cramped space . . . imprisoned by white steel." The final outcome of the stage directions, supported by the title of the play, suggests a dramatic contrast between wild animals' trapped, captured, and caged and explosive energy imprisoned, compressed, and contained.

In the compositional pattern of scene I, a major and a minor conflict evolve, apparently unexpectedly. The major contract concerns the opposition of two ways of life, indeed of two historical epochs. They are the periods of the sailing boat and the steamship, a small and a great degree of division of labor, relative unity with nature and absolute isolation from her, calm and speed, pantheism and industrialism. The antithesis is viewed by Paddy, the old Irish sailor, with elegiac yearning:

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 . . . . Oh, to be scudding south again wid the power of the Trade Wind driving her on steady through the nights and days! Full sail on her! Nights and days! Nights when the foam of the wake would be flaming wid fire, when the sky'd be blazing and winking wid stars... And there was the days, too. A warm sun on the clean decks. Sun warming the blood of you, and wind over the miles of shiny green ocean like strong drink to your lungs CP(1920-1931)THA, pp.126-27.

It is little wonder that Paddy hates the black smoke of the steamship smudging the sea and choking the lung. Yank, however, looks at the contrast with tough acceptance thinking that only work on a streamer makes sense. He is all for steel, fire, energy, movement, and speed; moreover, he, the mover of everything, is all these things:

I'm de ting in coal dat makes it boin; I'm steam and oil for de engines; I'm de ting in noise dat makes yuh hear it; I'm smoke and express trains and steamers and factory whistles; I'm de ting in gold dat makes it money! And I'm what makes iron into steel! Steel, dat stands for de whole ting! And I'm steel — steel — steel! I'm de muscles in steel, de punch behind it! CP(1920-1931)THA, pp.128-29.

Paddy extols the beauties of the past, yank supposes, because he is a part of the past. "He is old, in fact dead, but Yank." 10 Long is a socialist agitator who points out that it is the first cabin passengers, "the damned
"Say! What’s dem slobs in de foist cabin got to do wit us? We’re better men dan dey are, ain’t we? Sure! One of us guys could clean up de whole mob wit one mit. Put one of ‘em down here for one watch in de stokehole, what’d happen? Dy’s carry him off on a stretcher. Dem boids don’t amount to nothibn’. Dey’re just baggage. Who makes dis old tub run? Ain’t it us guys? Well de, we belong, don’t we? “We belong and dey don’t. Dat’s all .... As for dis bein’hell – aw, nuts! Yuh lost your noive, dat’s what. Dis is a man’s job, get me? It belongs.” CP(1920-1931)THA, p.125.

Delimiting the semantic field of “belong” in the play is evidently not a matter to be decided by consulting an average dictionary. Everywhere the verb goes with its adverbial government to it is used with a special semantic overtone. For example, Paddy flings it in Yank’s face that “T was them days men belonged to ships, not now”, he means those days when the sailors considered themselves “free men”, and looked upon their clippers as their natural homes, places where they “worked under the sky and ‘twas work with skill and daring to it.” Quite often, however, the “required” post-position to is
not required at all; it is in fact, dropped, and “belong” is used in a specific sense. When Yank separates the under deck stokers from the first cabin passengers saying “We belong and dey don’t”, he himself gives the explanation: “Dem bodes don’t amount to nothing.” He who makes the old tub run, belongs. Working on a steamship, Yank believes, “is a man’s job.

When Paddy asks Yank ironically and rhetorically whether he wants to be a flesh and blood wheel of the engines, and wishes to belong to the hell of the stokehole, “caged in by steel from a sight of the sky like bloody apes in the Zoo!,” he merely seems to give voice to a personal opinion which Yank rejects. When Long curses the hellish lives of wage slaves, sweating, burning up and eating coal dust in the bowels of a steamship, his position may also is considered as a personal view. This, too, is immediately refuted by yank and the stokers. Nevertheless, after Paddy’s painful outburst, his mates are “startled and impressed in spite of themselves,” and at the end of Paddy’s lament even Yank cannot help “fighting some queer struggle within himself.

“And when eight bells sounds, “vibrating through the steel walls as if some enormous brazen gong were imbedded in the heart of the ship,” all the men, despite their display of strength, autonomy, and independence, “jump up mechanically, file through the door silently close upon each other’s heels in what is very like a prisoner’s lockstep.” CP(1920-1931)THA, p.129.

Yank may – and does – go on boasting, yet the impersonal power of the gong, the mechanical quality of the stokers’ movements, and the prisoner’s lockstep of the men suggest and constitute an objective counterpoint to their
subjective pronouncements and attitudes. The image of cage and the picture of prison prove to be leitmotifs. They also prove O'Neill's originality which lies, among other things, in what might be termed relative unpredictability. It is very difficult, often impossible, to predict what a scene, an act, or a play by O'Neill will be followed by. When, however, the next scene, act, or play have come, one feels their presence inevitable, their connection with their antecedents necessary, their unfolding organic and retrospectively justified.

Scene ii leads to a conspicuously different world. Two days have passed, and after the stokehole now we are on the promenade deck of the ship where Mildred Douglas, the daughter of the president of Nazareth Steel (chairman of the board of directors of the line) is seen reclining in her deck chair in the company of her aunt. Mildred took up sociology at college, did social service work on New York's East Side, and is now going to visit the poor in London to make her slumming international, as her aunt mockingly refers to her adventurous venture to be safeguarded by hired detectives.

In her protest against her aunt's malicious insinuation, Mildred characterizes her position with a mixture of genuine earnestness, weary bitterness, and mirthless laugh:

"Please do not mock my attempts to discover how the other half lives. Give me credit for some sort of groping sincerity in that at least. I would like to help them. I would like to be some use in the world. Is it my fault I don't know how? I would like to be sincere, to touch life somewhere..... But I'm afraid I have neither the vitality not integrity. All that was burnt out in our
stock before I was born. Grandfather's blast furnaces, flaming to the sky, melting steel, making millions- and little me at the tail-end of it all. I'm a waste product in the Bessemer process-like the millions. Or rather, I inherit the acquired trait of the by-product, wealth, but none of the energy, none of the strength of the steel that made it. I am sired by gold and damned by it, as they say at the race track- damned in more ways than one.” CP(1920-1931)THA, pp.131-32.

The contrast of generation described by Mildred with a sociological of an international social process represented in full epic details in generation novels like Thomas Mann's Buddenbrooks, Calswoothy's The Forsyte Sage, Corky's The Artamonov Business, or Martin du Card's Thibaults. The dramatic shortcut taken by O'Neill can be viewed as a generic reflection of a genetic development: the unfolding of industrialization and monopolization had an incomparably more dynamic character in the U.S. that it did in Europe in the last decades of the 10th and the first decades of the 20th century. On the other hand, the thematic, and not only generic, inclusion of the reduced process in the drama also betrays the dramatist's epic interest. So do the hardly playable but highly readable reflective parts of the stage directions introducing Mildred as artful, nervous, and discontented young lady, “bored by her own anemia” and presenting her aunt as a caricaturist type with a double chin, lorgnettes, and a pretentious dress worn “as if afraid her face alone would never indicate her position in life.”
She is herself a self-conscious embodiment of a self-portraying antagonism, Mildred, weak as she is, has a special power to antagonize practically everybody in her company and surroundings. She exchanges a few Shavian and Wildean unpleasantries with her aunt, the elderly lady exhorting her niece to observe due amenities and Mildred deliberately misunderstanding the word as inanities. After Mildred’s bitterly self-ironical survey of the degenerative development of the Douglas generations, her aunt observes superciliously.

“You seem to be going in for sincerity today. It isn’t becoming to you, really—except as an obvious pose. Be as artificial as you are, I advise. There’s a sort of sincerity in that, you know.” CP(1920-1931)THA, pp.132.

At the end of the scene Mildred slaps her aunt insultinglly across the face. She also shocks the Second Engineer who cannot dissuade her from descending into the stokehole in her white dress; and O’Neill reserves a separate scene to present the effect of her appearance on Yank.

Although scene ii it is thus far removed from scene I both in social share and in atmosphere, it is not unrelated to it. The relationship is one of obvious contrast and in a more surprising way – one of latent parallel. The contrast is between strength and weakness; while Yank is identical with steel, Mildred only possesses steel: The artificiality of the latter is focused a radiating sunshine:

“The impression to be conveyed by this scene is one of the beautiful, vivid life of the seal all about – sunshine on the deck
in a great flood, the fresh sea wind blowing across it. In the midst of this, these two incongruous, artificial figures, inert and disharmonious, the elder like a gray lump of dough touched up with rouge, the younger looking as if the vitality of her stock had been sapped before she was conceived, so that she is the expression not of its life energy but merely of the artificialities that energy had won for itself in the spending.” *CP (1920-1931)THA*, pp.130.

Similarities also crop up. “The loss of personal autonomy Mildred complains of is paralleled by a comparable reduction in life-style Paddy laments at.”

Therefore, the leitmotif of cage can appropriately express her predicament as well. When Mildred’s aunt finds it eccentric in her niece that she of all persons should be interested in finding out how the other half lives, Mildred apologizes with irony and self-irony: “Pardon me for my out-burst. When a leopard complains of its spots, it must sound rather grotesque.

“(In a mocking tone) Purr, little leopard. Purr, scratch, tear, kill, gore yourself and be happy- only stay in the jungle where your spots are camouflage. In a cage they make you conspicuous.” *CP(1920-1931)THA*, pp.132.

None the less, Mildred does set out to go down to what Paddy and Long name despairingly and deploringly hell and what she also calls tentatively and exploring hell: the stokehole.”
Her descent seems to prompt what her mocking tone suggests anyway: she considers even the habitual framework of her life a cage.

Scene iii is characterized by a masterful construction. The setting of the stokehole possesses the intensity of an expressionistic painting. Lighting is dim, provided by single hanging bulb piling up masses of shadows in the coal dust - laden murky air. The bulks of the furnaces and boilers are dimly outlined in the background. When the aligned stokers open the furnace doors, "from these fiery round holes in the black a flood of terrific light and heat purs full upon the men who are outlined in silhouette in the crouching, inhuman attitudes of chained gorillas." CP (1920-1931)THA, p.135.

The picture of gorillas carries on the leitmotif of ape, the imaginary and imaginative image of chains evokes the leitmotif of cage and prison. The painting is soon animated by the rhythmic emotions of the working stokers who handle their shovels as if they were part of their bodies, swinging as on a pivot from the coal behind them to the furnaces before them. "Their movements serve their work, but they also stylize and reshape the stokers' moves in an expressionistic fashion, emphasizing their mechanical quality and justifying, as it were" 12

Paddy's indictment that work on a steam vessel makes the sailors flesh and blood wheels of the engines. The expressionistic intensity of color, light, and heat, of rhythm, movement, and tempo is coupled with the expressive violence of discordant sounds:
“There is a tumult of noise – the brazen clang of the furnace doors as they are flung open or slammed shut, the grating, teeth-gritting grind of steel against steel, of crunching coal. This clash of sounds stuns one’s ears with its rending dissonance. But there is order in this, rhythm, a mechanical regulated recurrence, a tempo. And rising above all, making the air hum with the quiver of liberated energy, the roar of leaping flames in the furnaces. The monotonous throbbing beat of the engines.” CP(1920-1931) THA, p.135.

The passage does not only describe but also evokes a tumult of noise. A number of factors contribute to heightening the effect: the onomatopoeic quality of the one-syllable word “clang”; the auditory parallel between the cross-eyed rhythms of “clang” and “flung”, lending even “flung” an onomatopoeic overtone; and the additional cock-eyed rhyme of “grating” and “gritting”. The clash of sounds is also expressed by the series-connected elemental explosions of alliterated initial explosives in “grating” and “gritting” and “grind” distantly echoed by the delayed action blast of [g] in “against”; the grating noise of the [gr] sound combination in “grating,” “teeth-gritting”, and “grind” in which the difficulty and duration of pronouncing a cluster of consonants increases the impression of the teeth-gritting grind of steel against steel; the repeated detonations of the explosive[t] in “grating”, “teeth-gritting”, and “steel” (used twice); and the alteration and altercation of single and double stress in “grating”, “teeth-gritting”, and “grind”. Expressive noise is further increased by the screeching and creaking effect of the diagonally placed cluster[st] in “steel against steel” and of the long[i:] in
"teeth" (reinforced by two short [i]-s in "gritting") and in "steel"; the alliteration in "crunching coal"; and the roaring [r] in "roar" anticipated by the [r] in "rising," "liberated," and "energy" and followed, corroborated, and reinforced by the [r] in "throbbing." The rising flight and unimpeded leap of liberated energy are sensitively suggested by the liquid consonant [l] in "all", "liberated," "leaping," and "flames," by [r] in the above listed words, and by a number of spirants such as [h] in "hum" or [f], emphasized by alliteration, in "flames in the furnaces." The fluent pronounce ability of liquids and spirants helps to brings home the impression of the unobstructed release of energy, and is opposed to the blocked pronunciation of stop consonants and the affricate [tf] expressing "the grating, teeth-gritting grind of steel against steel, of crunching coal." The "order," "rhythm," and "regulated recurrence" in this rending dissonance are repeatedly rendered by the reiteration of the consonant [r] in these very words, by the approximate equality of duration and prosodic bars to be heard in the "monotonous / throbbing / beat of the / engines /; as well as by the grammatical parallel between "flung open" and slammed shut."

Color, light, heat, movement, and noise all combine in conveying the atmosphere and quality of feeding the furnaces. The stoking process is led visibly by Yank, who encourages the men, and invisible by an engineer, whose whistle irritates the stokers. Yank is able to transmit his enthusiasm to his mates; in his incantatory chanting the rhythm of collective work, of nascent verse, and of sexual gratification pulsate in a unified pattern of exultant joy:
“Dat’s de stuff! Let her have it! All togedder now! Sling it into her! Let her ride! Shoot de piece now! Call de toin on her! Drive her into it! Feel her move! Watch her smoke! Speed, dat’s her middle name! Give her coal, youse guys! Coal, dat’s her booze! Drink it up, baby! Let’s see yuh sprint! Dig in an gain a lap! Dere she go-o-es”.

Pleasure prevails in the act of creation. Myth is magic. The world is humanized by work. Yank has the last word. The engineer’s whistling is of no consequence.

“Him and his whistle, dey don’t belong. But we belong, see!”

A number of signs, however, seems to contradict Yank’s self-assured conviction. Firstly, the stokers’ work is awkwardly mechanical.

Secondly, the engineer’s whistle is gaining growing command over them. When it is first blown, Yank curses without resentment. When it sounds again, it elicits cursing rage from the stokers. When it is heard for the third time, it drives Yank into a red-hot cursing fury. A continuation of the enormous gong sounding eight bells at the end of scene I, the whistle has become a leitmotif of the anonymous command of an imposed order.

Thirdly, even when Yank is rebelling against the engineer’s revolting and anonymous superiority, he is pounding on his chest

“gorilla-like..... He whirls defensively with a snarling, murderous growl, crouching to spring, his
lips drawn back over his teeth, his small eyes gleaming ferociously.” CP (1920-1931) THA, p.137.

He perceives Mildred dressed all in white. As she looks at his gorilla face she protects her eyes, cries whimperingly,

“Take me away! Oh, the filthy beast!,” and faints. She descended into the hot hell of the stokehole in the hope that she had inherited immunity to heat from her grandfather, who had started as a paddler, and thus should be able to bear the reality of the nether world. When, however, she comes to be confronted with its naked, abysmal brutality, she is outraged, “her whole personality crushed, beaten in, collapsed.” Her attitude and remark provoke an unexpected reaction in Yank as well: enraged and bewildered, “He feels himself insulted in some unknown fashion in the very heart of his pride,” CP(1920-1931)THA, p.137.

and sends his “God damn yuh!” and shovel after Mildred and the two engineers who take her away from the stokehole, off the stage, and indeed out of the play. From now on, she will never appear in the scene in person; her spiritual death will only make itself felt as a living insult in Yank’s soul. Thus the outer confrontation and collision between Mildred and Yank triggers an irreparable inner conflict both in Mildred and Yank.

Fourthly, the above three factors attain a special significance of being linked at the end of the scene. When Yank’s shovel, hurled after Mildred, hits the steel bulkhead with a clang and falls clattering on the steel floor, its sound
being followed by the long, angry, and insistent urge of the invisible engineer’s whistle, then an instrument of human activity mediating and objectifying human aspirations becomes a mechanical, dead object, steel appears as an outer obstacle rather than as an inner drive; the whistle does prove significant and threatening not to be shrugged off; and the leitmotif of the ape is intensified in fearful and fateful proportions.

Scene iv is a pondering pause. Emerging from their watch, the stokers attempt to interpret what happened. There is reason to think; Yank is found in the position of Rodin’s “The Thinker,” his mates try to find an explanation; and the spectators are also puzzled over the possible reasons for Yank’s extraordinary, prolonged, and even retrospectively seething anger, especially if they are familiar with O’Neill’s earlier works.

The Hairy Ape is certainly not the first play where a character is called names, or is, in fact, called a hairy ape. In The Moon of the Caribbees Cocky tells Paddy “A’airy ape, I calls yer.”

Paddy takes offence but becomes reconciled in a minute, and the whole affair is no more than the usual flare-up or a squabble between the deck-hands and the “black gang” (the firemen of the stokehole). In Chris Christopherson (1919) one of the seamen, Mickey, is described as being “monkey-like in the disproportionate length of arms and legs.”

Chris himself is characterized by the mess room steward, Glass, as having “arms... like a hairy gorilla.” This, however, is a mere grumble after Chris, infuriated by one of Glass’s insinuations, has grabbed him by the shoulders and shaken him thoroughly. In the final version of the play re-titled
Anna Christie Burke, the stoker, calls himself “a clumsy ape” and names Chris an “old ape,” and “old baboon,” and again an “old ape.”

These momentary insults, however, even if on occasion they may provoke angry reactions, do not cut deep, do not break bones and do not offend the addressee in the very heart of his pride. But Yank is hurt that way.

Paddy points out that the social distance between a fine lady dressed like a white queen and the poor beasts in the stock hole Mildred went to visit:

“And there she was standing behind us, and the second pointing at us like man you’d hear in a circus would be saying: In this cage is a queerer kind of baboon find in darkest Africy. We roast them in their own sweat.” CP(1920-1931)THA, p.140.

Long uses an even stronger language:

“Hinsultin’ us! Hinsultin’ us, the bloody cow! And them bloody engineers! What right ‘as they got to be exhibitin’ us’s if we was bleedin’ monkeysn a menagerie? Dide sign for hinsults to our dignity as ‘onest workers? Is that in the ship’s articles? You kin bloody well bet it ain’t! But I knows why they done it. I arsked a deck steward ‘ o she was and ‘e told me. ole wants to see thd man’s bleedin’ millionaire, a bloody Capitalist! ‘E’s got enuf bloody gold to sink this bleedin’ ship! ‘E makes arf the bloody steel in the world! ‘E owns this bloody boat! And you and me, Comrades, we’re ‘is slaves! And the skipper and mates and engineers, they’re ‘is slaves’! And she’s ‘is bloody daughter and we’re all ‘er slaves, too! And she gives
‘er orders as ‘ow she wants to see the bloody animals below decks and down they takes ‘er! (There is a roar of rage from all sides.)” CP(1920-1931)THA, pp.139-40.

The climactic end of the scene finds Yank making an attempt to rush out of the room to force Mildred down on her knees and make her take base her word of insult. If she does not, Yank threatens to bust the face off her. The stokers bear Yank down to the floor, and Paddy calls him a great fool. The stokers’ attitude is not unfriendly, yet it shows a tipping over of the balance of power and self-control: earlier it was Yank who admonished his mates to behave reasonably, and how it is the stokers who try to keep Yank from doing something dangerously unreasonable.

All these explanations contain a part of the truth. But even if they are taken together—and O’Neill does present them in interaction—they do not offer a totally satisfactory justification for Yank’s extraordinary frenzy. Yank seems to be overreacting, and his apparent overreaction suggests either that he has set out to run amok or that he is driven by a larger cause, as yet unspecified, or he is not simply a hurt stoker with an apish face but a seeker of truth on a fate-marked course. The task of scene iv is not to decide the issue but only to foreshadow it.

As a result of Yank’s bewilderment, the scope of reference of the symbolic leitmotif of “belonging” is also modified. Earlier, When Yank had as unshaken belief in his unit with industrial civilization, he had no doubt whatsoever about who belonged and who did not: he did, and the first cabin
passengers did not, they were just lifeless things, mere baggage. Even now, when his old confident bravado returns, he professes the same view:

"I'll show her I'm better'n her, if she on'y Knew it. I belong and she don't see! I move and she's dead! Twenty-five knots a hour, dat's me! Dat carries her but I make dat. She's on'y baggage. Sure." CP(1920-1931)THA, p.142.

But now Yank is not so sure about things and even about himself as he used to be. When paddy recalls Mildred's and the Second Engineer's visit to the stokehole, and the officer's pointing at the stokers as if they were caged baboons from Africa, some of whom even like it when they are roasted in their own sweet, Yank does not reject the remark which obviously refers to him but only gives "a bewildered uncertain growl" Accordingly, when he observes that Mildred, standing right before him like a white apparition, "didn't belong," he does not mean that she was insignificant but, on the contrary, that she was fearfully significant:

"And dere she was wit de light on her. Christ, yuh coulda pushed me over with a finger I was scared, get me? Sure I thought she was ghost, see? She was all in white like dey wrap around stiff's" CP(1920-1931)THA, p.142.

Earlier she was unimportant for Yank because she is 'dead' impotent, inactive, impalpable. Now she important because she is 'dead': mysterious, ghastly, incomprehensible. Modified in meaning rather that merely repeated, 'belonging' prose a real leitmotif.
Scene v is Long's lesson. Three weeks after the affair in the stokehole he has taken Yank to Fifth Avenue, New York City, to demonstrate that Yank's individual experience is part of a general pattern.

"Yer been lookin' at this ere 'ole affair wrong. Yer been actin' an' talkin' as if it was all a bleedin' personal matter between yer and that bloody cow. I wants to convince yer she was on'y a representative of 'er clarrs. I wants to awaken yer bloody clarrs consciousness. Then yer'll see it's 'er clarrs yer've got to fight; not 'er alone. There's a 'ole mob of 'em like 'er, Gawd blind 'em!" CP(1920-1931)THA, pp.145-46.

The use of the mask in this concept is conditioned by an expressive and expressionistic projection of a state of mind. In this scene Yank's clash with the marionettes of Fifth Avenue is a dramatic collision of personal hatred with impersonal indifference, of natural force with artificial power. The opposition between the genuine and the artificial becomes even sharper when Yank, the hairy ape, perceives monkey fur in the furrier's shop window displayed for sale for two thousand dollars and admired by an absorbed chorus of delighted marionettes. Yank's fury is natural as sunshine and the object of his fury is unnatural.

In scene vi, Yank is in prison on Blackwells Island. The cells extend in a diagonal line from right front to left rear, as it were, endlessly.

"The dynamic device O'Neill applies in the composition of his setting is a scenic adaptation of the slanting axis, the epoch-making, structural innovation of Baroque painting, Baroque
expressivity being further developed by modern Expressionism.\textsuperscript{16}

Scene vii is characterized by intensely incongruous misunderstandings and grimly grotesque tragicomedy. Having served his term in prison, Yank visits a local branch of the Industrial Workers of the World wishing to join them. At first the Secretary accepts him and suggests he should sit down and read pamphlets. Yank thinks the organization is clandestine, and behaves as if he were in a romantically forbidden, secret territory. To show his good will, to prove his toughness, and to find his own vengeful satisfaction, he undertakes to blow up anything.

"Can't youse see I belong? Sure! I'm regular. I'll stick, get me?....Yuh wanter blow tings up, don't yuh? Well, dat's me! I belong," \textit{CP(1920-31)THA, pp.157-58.}

In composing the dramatic conclusion in scene viii of his play, O'Neill faced a three-fold alternative. "The first one was to lead Yank back to the company of his fellow-stokers, with his initial complacency gone, self-confidence broken, and self-esteem evaporated. In an early version O'Neill, in fact, chose such an ending.\textsuperscript{17}"

The second alternative was to follow the line of the 1917 short story and to make Yank find himself among the Wobblies. In 1921, however, O'Neill did not consider a consummation of this kind feasible. Thus only the third alternative remained open to the playwright; to find a solution whose climatic complexity was fitting and so could be fitted to the involved intricacy of the preceding scenes.
Accordingly, in scene viii Yank visits the monkey house at the zoo. He sees a mate in the gorilla, releases him from his cage, holds out his hand to the ape and plans to go with him to Fifth Avenue to knock the rich off the earth. The gorilla hugs Yank, breaks his bones, throws him into the cage, shuts the door, and shuffles off menacingly.

O'Neill partook in this general development with a special historical and personal background provided by the vigorous expansion of civilization in the United States after the Civil War, the unparalleled speed and spread of industrialization, the dynamic drive of monopolies, and the social and cultural contradictions inherent in the process, which were stepped up by World War I, enhanced by the period of depression, increased by the advance of fascism, and intensified by World War II. O'Neill experienced the course of events with passionate interest, tragic involvement, tragicomic sharpness, and psychic imbalance. His individual talent, social position, psychological makes up, and search for values combined into an ideal unity to give voice and ingenious expression to the tensions inside him that proved to be equivalents of outer objective contradictions.

Last but not least, the intellectually decisive leitmotif of "belonging" also plays a determining role in the dramatic coda of The Hairy Ape. As long as Yank considered himself an integrated and integral part of monopolistic mechanization and machinery, he supposed that he, practically all workers, steel, fire, speed engines and furnaces, all forms, means and products of modern industrialization "belonged." Exceptions were unimportant: Paddy was a weakling, Long was "Yellow". The first cabin passengers, to be sure,
did not “belonging,” but they did not matter either, they were just “baggage.”

Walter Pritchard Eaton quotes that The Hairy Ape is written in eight short, abrupt scenes, and might also be called an expressionistic era.
Works Cited


10. Mildred and her aunt “sitting in their deck chairs are as sadly incongruous as Paddy was down in the forecastle. Bitterly ironical contrasts like this are characteristic of this ‘comedy of ancient and modern times.” Tiusanen, T., O'Neill's Scenic Images (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968), pp.116-17.


16. T. Tiusanen points out the difference between diagonal settings from left to right rear and those running from right front to left rear. Tiusanen, pp.76,104, 233 n.16.