

WELCOME

Samuel Beckett

WAITING FOR GODOT

Submitted To:-

Mrs. Mamta
Head Of Dept. of
English

Submitted by:-

Mrs. Puneeta Mehta
Asst. Prof.
Of Dept. of English

SAMUEL BECKETT - BIOGRAPHY

Born on April 13, 1906 in fox rock, south of Dublin. Beckett studied for his bachelor's in and Italian in trinity college, Dublin, in the year 1923-27.

By the end of the 1920's beckett had begun to publish his own work. For a short time, he taught romance languages but the appeal of academia was short lived.

After acquiring his master's degree from trinity Beckett settled in Paris in 1937.

On his way home with some friends one night in January 1938, beckett was stabbed by a pimp in the street. the blade just missed his heart, but one of his lungs was perforated during

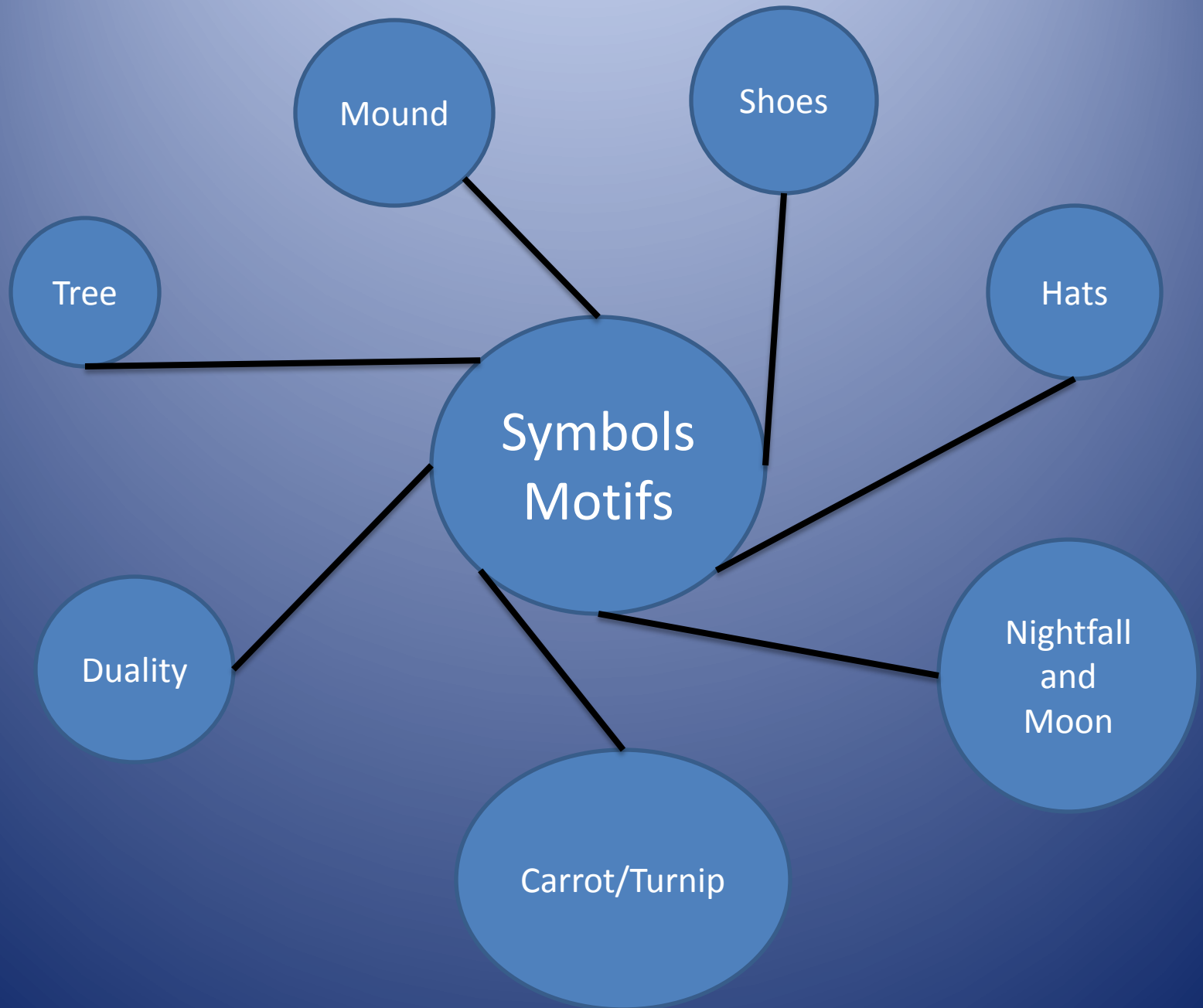
His stay in hospital recovering from the attack, one of Beckett's visitors was Suzanne Descheveaux –Dumesnil , a thirty-seven-year-old French woman whom he had met before socially. They married in 1961.

French became his written language, and the problem of expressing— expressing anything — became central to his aesthetic.

In 1940 France was invaded by the Nazis. When the German occupation began, beckett was ostensibly neutral as an Irishman, but he joined the resistance. He was almost caught on a number of occasions.

When waiting for Godot first appeared on the stage in the small baby lone theatre in Paris in 1953, the world of theatre was changed. The reaction was negative, particularly in Britain but gradually became established as a classic. Death and sorrow are responses to experience. Beckett kept vigil by both his mother, who died in 1950,

And his brother frank, who fell victim to lung cancer in 1954. both passing's weighed very heavily on beckett's heart, and he would remember them particularly in the ghostly voices of his later fiction and drama, in the dread of waiting and the search for comfort. Fame and accolades began to come in the 1960s. He won the nobel prize in 1969, and died in 1989.



Plot synopsis

The plot of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* is simple to relate. Two tramps are waiting by a sickly looking tree for the arrival of Godot.

They quarrel, make up, contemplate suicide, try to sleep, eat a carrot and gnaw on some chicken bones. Two other characters appear, a master and a slave,

Who perform a grotesque scene in the middle of the play.

A young boy arrives to say that Godot will not come today, but that he will come tomorrow. The play is a development of the title,

Waiting for Godot. He does not come and the two tramps resume their vigil by the tree, which between the first and second day has sprouted a few leaves,

The only symbol of a possible order in a thoroughly alienated world.

Characters

Many ingenious theories have been advanced to provide satisfactory interpretations for the characters of Beckett's play.

Religious or mythical interpretations prevail. The two tramps Estragon (Gogo) and Vladimir (Didi) may be everyman and his conscience. Gogo is less confident and at one moment is ready to hang himself.

Vladimir is more hopeful, more even in temperament.

One thinks of the medieval debate between the body and the soul, between the intellectual and the non-rational in man.

Certain of their speeches about Christ might substantiate the theory that they are the two crucified thieves. Pozzo would seem to be the evil master, the exploiter.

But perhaps he is Godot, or an evil incarnation of Godot. The most obvious interpretation of Godot is that he is god, but Beckett tended to deny this.

Vladimir

The play's characters are Gogo {estragon} and Vladimir who are two destitute tramps- homeless, rootless, penniless, frequent to part. Ly beaten. They are physically suffering from various ailments, frequently confused , disoriented and forgetful, but not deranged. They are long time friends, who are passing the time together, waiting together , though Gogo periodically wonders whether it might not be better for them to part.

There are no physical descriptions of either of the two characters; however, the text indicates that Vladimir is likely the heavier of the pair. The bowlers and other broadly comic aspects of their personas have reminded modern audiences of Laurel and Hardy, who occasionally played tramps in their films. Vladimir stands through most of the play whereas Estragon sits down numerous times and even dozes off. "Estragon is inert and Vladimir restless. Vladimir looks at the sky and muses on religious or philosophical matters. Estragon "belongs to the stone", preoccupied with mundane things, what he can get to eat and how to ease his physical aches and pains; he is direct, intuitive. He finds it hard to remember but can recall certain things when prompted.

WHO IS GODOT?

“WHO IS GODOT?” The most obvious theory is that he is god. Beckett always denied this, but this might have been because he wanted to deny the obvious interpretation.

If Godot's god then he is a fickle and cruel god, more the god of the Hebrews and the old testament than the merciful one of the new testament.

Perhaps he keeps the men waiting because we can never know god, and we can never meet god in the flesh.

Another interpretation would be that Godot symbolizes death itself. Vladimir and estragon must wait because we all must wait for the inevitable.

In this context Estragon's desire for suicide makes a sense because it is the only way they will finally stop waiting.

Godot may also symbolize that part of our lives that always involves waiting. The mundane daily acts of waiting in dentist's and bus stops for buses that never come, or things we would rather avoid.

WHO IS POZZO?

Who is Pozzo? Some critics have said he might even be Godo, and the two heroes fail to recognize him when they see him.

We first meet him in the role of master and slaved driver. He seems cruel, harsh and indifferent to suffering. He talks about the two men being on 'his' land. He is literally and metaphorically connected to lucky so their characters must be considered in unity.

At first Pozzo is clearly the master, his abusive language, his physical control over Lucky, his superior language all seems to indicate his superior position. But then consider act 2. when he returns he is blind, lost and pitiful. He has lost all of his arrogance. In this context, he has now become dependent on Lucky.

Lucky is leading him. He is also more philosophical and has one of the most important speeches in the play, when he talks about, 'they give birth astride the grave' he is voicing one of the themes of the play.

WHO IS LUCKY?

Who is Lucky? Lucky must be considered in connection to Pozzo. He is the seeming slave in their relationship.

The rope and the abuse seem to make that obvious. But in Beckett appearances can be deceptive. He is almost completely silent except for his long mad monologue in the middle of the play and in the second act the roles are almost reversed when Pozzo becomes blind. He now leads the master, but then why doesn't he simply walk away from Pozzo?

This seems to indicate that they are in a dependent relationship, as are Vladimir and Estragon. Like Vladimir and Estragon, are they the same person? If so, what does each part represent? Are we potentially masters and slaves at the same times?

One provocative interpretation of Lucky is that he represents the figure of Christ. Lucky, chained with a rope, is the humiliated prisoner, much like Jesus was the prisoner of the Romans after Judas turned him in.

Estragon beats, curses, and spits on Lucky exactly as the Roman treated Jesus when preparing him for crucifixion. Lucky carries the burden of Pozzo's bags like a perpetual cross, and he is being led to a public fair where he will be mocked and sold.

Lucky slowly chokes as the rope cuts into his neck; crucifixion suffocated Jesus.

Comedy & Absurdism

In scene after scene the permanent absurdity of the world is stressed. In the scene, for example, between the master and the slave, Lucky is held on a leash by Pozzo.

He carries a heavy suitcase without ever thinking of dropping it. He is able to utter his long incoherent speech only when he has his hat on and when Pozzo commands him to think. **Theatre of the Absurd**

The two tramps of Beckett, in their total disposition and in their antics with hats and tight shoes, are reminiscent of laurel and hardy and the American burlesque comedy team.

Pozzo and lucky, the master and slave, are half vaudeville characters and half marionettes. The purely comic aspect of the play involves traditional routines that come from the entire history of farce, from the Romans and the Italians, and the red-nosed clown of the modern circus.

Thank you