

Extensive Reading

The theatre of the Absurd presents the anxiety of man that arises from the fact that he is surrounded by the areas of impenetrable darkness. In this chaos, he will never be able to know his true nature and purpose and no one can provide him the ready-made rules of conduct to follow. The most striking question is why should the emphasis shifted away from traditional form to new one? The appropriate answer may be because the play write no longer believe in presenting the clarity of definition and neatness of resolution. The social and spiritual reasons for such changes are manifold

and complex:

- Ø The decay of religious faiths which had a beautiful beginning with the Enlightenment and empower Nietzsche to speak of the 'death of God'.
- Ø The destruction of liberal faith in social upliftment as a result of First World War.
- Ø The marching steps into barbarism.
- Ø The breakdown of the hopes of racial social revolution as announced by Marx after Stalin had converted the Soviet Union into a totalitarian tyranny, mass murder, brief but cruel and harsh rule of Hitler during Second World War.

As a consequence, the spiritual emptiness spreaded in affluent and prosperous societies of Western Europe and United States. This emptiness gave birth to this new form of Drama. Absurd drama parodies the traditional features of a drama. Its failure in its early performance lies in audience's expectations of a well structured dramatic pattern. The same audience/reader, who found absurd drama non-sensical, enjoyed the senseless cross-talk of the comedians in music hall and equally appreciated the stories of 'Alice in Wonderland'. This was only because they had a habit to visit and digest such types of entertainment while absurd drama was something new and it will take time to have its roots. It took some time but the people began to praise absurd plays. The reason for its success lies in the fact that the audience went to this theatre because it had become fashionable to show astonishment and regret about them in parties. The unexpected success of *Waiting for Godot* by the convicts of San Quentin opened ways for such types of dramas. The contrary critics argued that the convicts praised it because they have no preconceived ideas and set expectations about the well established plays. That is why they neglected the mistakes like lack of

plot, suspense, puppet like characters, disintegrated language which were highlighted by well known critics. In spite of these claims, the theatre gained world-wide popularity and created its fascination in the theatre world. The great success and the wide acclaim given to the plays of Pinter, Adamov, and Inoesco proved that the nonsense plays have some sense which can be understood.

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