

A POSTMODERN ANALYSIS OF ANTONIN ARTAUD'S "THEATRE OF CRUELTY" FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF PETER BROOK

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Abstract

Postmodernism as a new phenomenon has influenced different disciplines such as theatre, music, social sciences, and so on. It is considered as a reaction against modernism, manipulating minimalism and deconstruction. Unlike the realistic theatres, it has not been following a particular framework, but reconciling different thoughts and forms. The persistence of different approaches in art has had a direct relationship with the change in the structure of the world. The emergence of these structures can be considered crucial in the impact postmodernism has had on theatre.

The article focuses on Artaud as the progenitor of a form of theater whose aim is to unsettle and radically transform its audience and its culture, such as. Artaud called for an end to a drama of rationality, masterpieces, and psychological exploration. He thought that society and the world of theatre had become an empty shell. Advocating the "theatre of cruelty" in his work, *The Theater and Its Double* (1938), he was trying to revolutionize theatre - figuratively burn it to the ground so that it could start again. He was trying to connect people with something more primal, honest and true within themselves that had been lost for most people. He spoke of cruelty not in the sense of violent behavior, but rather the cruelty it takes for actors to show an audience, a truth that they do not wish to see. He believed that text had been a tyrant over meaning, and advocated, instead, for a theatre made up of a unique language that lay halfway between thought and gesture. Artaud described the spiritual in physical terms, and believed that all expression is physical expression in space. He is famous for the influence he exerted, through his writings and performances, on the way writers, directors, actors, and communal theater. Such a theater, according to Artaud, should employ expressive breathing, animal sounds, uninhibited gestures, huge masks, puppets, and an architecture that destroys the barrier between actors and audience in order to turn spectators into participants, and bring them to a level of experience Artaud deemed more profound than any experience accessible through passive understanding or absorption of language, plot, or coherently structured action. In this article an attempt is made to point out the role he and Peter Brook played in the postmodern theatre.

On the other hand Peter Brook, who had come to know the emptiness of contemporary theatre, believed that what had saved theatre earlier could not do so now. He established an inter-cultural theatre which would be in direct relationship with the audience. For this purpose he preferred using such elements like gestures, tone than the rational meaning of his drama.

Keywords: Postmodernism, double, minimalism, deconstruction, rationality, theatre of cruelty