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عنوان المحاضرة: تنظير الدراما الحديثة

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Theorizing modern drama

In his book *Theory of the Modern Drama*, the professor of comparative literature Peter Szondi examines drama from the Renaissance to the present. He demonstrates how the birth of modern play in the age of Renaissance was related to larger social processes and represented some of the early modern European values. This was represented in the assumption that form was a historical, requiring just the right subject matter to do the form justice. However, the form of drama began to shift in the late nineteenth century, giving rise to the new varieties of play distinctive of the twentieth century. Szondi provides a highly innovative view of this change, connecting it to the birth of an epic form that stresses the isolation of the individual.

Based on Hegel's theory, Szondi considers that a play is artistically compelling when its form and content are identical. Szondi takes and subsumes this form-content congruence from Elizabethan and French neoclassical plays, defining the plays' features as absolute Drama, which serves heuristically as his starting point. Based on Aristotle's Poetics, Szondi considers that drama, as opposed the epic consists of the following three requirements: The dramatis personae portray autonomous individuals who are driven b) to address their interpersonal conflicts through dialogue. c) The discussions play out in front of the audience, who is watching the actors, in a linear time sequence. Around the year 1890, contemporary society began to erode and eventually abolish the concept of autonomously acting subjects, and therefore the ability to resolve via meaningful talks. As a result, Ibsen, Chekhov, Strindberg, Hauptmann, and Maeterlinck violated the traditional notion of drama in which the dialogue is seen at its center and introduced epic elements in their plays. Szondi argues that drama entered an age of crisis. However; It was up to playwrights like Brecht, Ferdinand Bruckner, Pirandello, O'Neill, Wilder, and Miller to attempt solutions for the crisis by explicitly incorporating epic elements into their works, thereby sublimating the dialectical rift between form and content that had occurred a generation before.

20th-century drama witnessed the emergence of many trends and currents. The most important and prominent aspect of modern English drama is Realism. Early 20th-century dramatists were interested in Naturalism, and it was their goalto deal with real-world issues in a realistic manner in their plays. Henrik Ibsen, a Norwegian playwright, is credited with making Realism popular in modern theater. In a genuine way in his play, he addressed issues from actual life. In their plays, Robertson Arthur Jones, Galsworthy, and G. B. Shaw all followed his lead. Those playwrights employed theater to change the social conditions that prevailed in their day, such as the conflicts between capital and labor and issues with marriage, justice, law, and administration. Modern theater is mostly a drama of ideas as opposed to action. Dramatists utilize the theatre to promote ideals that they aim to propagate across society.

Modern drama dealing with life's difficulties has grown significantly more intellectual than it was previously in the history of theatre. With the presentation of real life, the play evolved into a drama of ideas, sometimes disguised in the main action, sometimes didactically performed. T.S. Eliot was the main dramatist who gave importance to poetic plays and was the realistic prose drama of the modern drama. Stephen Phillips, John Drink Water, Yeats, etc were from those who wrote poetic plays. Irish playwrights, on the other hand, contributed to the literary Celtic Revival. They started a new trend in Modern English theater. Drama lost its realistic aspect under the direction of Irish playwrights like Yeats, J.M. Synge, T.C. Murrey, and others, and started to convey the ambitions and aspirations of the Irish people from ancient times to the present.

According to traditional drama, the fourth wall is a theatrical technique in which actors and the audience are separated by an invisible, fictitious wall. While the audience can see through the wall, the actors are expected to act as if they couldn't. Breaking the fourth wall, on the other hand, is a technique in drama which means violating that conventional performance technique. It can be done by either directly referring to the audience, the play as a play, or the characters' fictionality.

The temporary suspension of the convention in this way draws attention to its use in the rest of the performance. This act of drawing attention to a play's performance conventions is metatheatrical.

According to modern theatrical theories, creative portrayal of reality can provide access to universal truths. Postmodern theatre, on the other hand, rejects the concept of make-believe, viewing theatrical performance as a real-life event or occurring in which the audience participates. Standard narrative devices and character development are reduced. This sort of theater incorporates many aspects of human experience and draws inspiration from history, society, and social concerns. To some extent, modern theatre is built on Aristotle's ideas, who claimed that theater may reveal universal truths. According to current theatrical theories, formal techniques such as plot, cause and effect, and character development can provide access to universal truths. However, depending on one's point of view, there are several conceivable truths in postmodern theatre. Playwrights, actors, and audience members all contribute to the creative process. Postmodern theatre forces the audience to reevaluate the boundaries between art and reality, and it discards the idea of theatre as a representation of life. Plays are intended to be events, as much a part of life, as any other event. Audience members are participants in postmodern theatre, with actors and audience engaging and co-creating the play experience. Furthermore, postmodern theatrical theory emphasizes that each individual perceives theatre through the lens of his or her own unique sentiments and life experiences, making it difficult to arrive at a single universal truth.

The theatrical means of achieving the dramatic tension departed the scenic frame and burst in daily reality, in a ritualistic, perhaps Hellenistic style. However, with the stated end of postmodernism, it remains to be seen if theatre will regain its grandeur or continue to be employed for the retheatricalization of individual life in society. To conclude, modern drama and postmodern drama are highly influenced by themes and innovative theatrical techniques, which are frequently combined to stage the lives of individuals.