

Tennessee Williams' *Camino Real* and August Strindberg's *The Dream Play*: expressionism in the Theatre

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ABSTRACT: The Swedish playwright August Strindberg, in *The Dream Play*, and the American Tennessee Williams, in *Camino Real*, presented metaphysical questionings and used expressionistic techniques to convey their meanings. Strindberg lived in a permanent search for the meaning of life, and in this pursuit he created theories and a new artistic technique: he was the father of expressionism. *The Dream Play* is considered the first expressionistic drama. In *Camino Real*, Tennessee Williams used expressionistic techniques, and the play is similar to Strindberg's *The Dream Play* in various aspects. This paper presents a comparative analysis of the plays, considering expressionistic techniques and views on mankind.

KEYWORDS: Theatre, expressionism, expressionistic play, comparative literature.

RESUMO: O dramaturgo sueco August Strindberg, em *The Dream Play*, e o americano Tennessee Williams, em *Camino Real*, apresentaram questionamentos metafísicos e usaram técnicas expressionistas para transmitir suas idéias. Strindberg vivia em permanente busca pelo sentido da existência, e nessa procura, elaborou teorias e uma nova técnica artística: foi o criador do expressionismo. *The Dream Play* é considerada a primeira peça expressionista. Em *Camino Real*, Tennessee Williams usou técnicas expressionistas, e a peça é similar a *The Dream Play* sob vários aspectos. Este artigo apresenta uma análise comparativa das peças, considerando técnicas expressionistas bem como visão de mundo.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Teatro, expressionismo, peça expressionista, literatura comparada.

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August Strindberg (1849-1912) is considered one of the most revolutionary playwrights, not only of Sweden,

his own country, but of the universal theatre. Each work was a starting point to him: he experimented with several types of plays and aesthetic styles in his quest for the most suitable way of conveying his ideas, and there was hardly a field of human thought to which he did not give some attention. He lived in a permanent search for the meaning of life, and in this pursuit he created very interesting theories and a new technique: he was the father of Expressionism. *The Dream Play* is considered the first expressionistic drama.

The American dramatist Tennessee Williams (1911-1983) was certainly indebted to his Swedish colleague: in his *Camino Real* he used expressionistic techniques, and the play is similar to Strindberg's *The Dream Play* in various and important aspects. The very title of Williams's play indicates that he was influenced by Strindberg, because among the Swedish playwright's expressionistic plays there is one called *Stora landsvägen*, which was translated into Spanish as *Camino Real*. This was Strindberg's last play.

Williams's *Camino Real* and Strindberg's *The Dream Play* were written under completely different circumstances. *The Dream Play* is the result of an entire life of experiments: it is the creative outburst of a genius's mind, near the end of his career. Strindberg already had some of the answers which he had pursued during all his life when he wrote this play. *Camino Real* is one of Tennessee Williams's first works. He wrote it in Mexico, while seriously ill and alone: Williams said (1960) that it was written to fight despair, and that it served as a spiritual purgation of confusion and lost sense of reality.

Nevertheless, the two plays have sufficient similarities to make a comparative analysis of them worthwhile.

Expressionistic techniques

Expressionism represents an effort to portray what lies underneath the surface meaning. Its purpose is to show our inner selves – representational projections of mental

realities – as well as our external reality, because certainly our inner part is a truer “reality” than the outer one. In expressionistic plays the dramatist tries to find a means to expose the minds of people – according to Wright (1972), unlike the realistic theatre, expressionism attempts to suggest far more of life than it portrays.

Martin Esslin (2001) affirms that it is a significant fact that the development of the psychological subjectivism that manifested itself in Strindberg's expressionistic dream plays was the direct development of the movement that had led to naturalism. It is the desire to represent reality, all of reality, that leads to the ruthlessly truthful description of surfaces, and then, one realizes that objective reality, surfaces, are only part, and a relatively unimportant part, of the real world. In Strindberg's dream plays, the shift from the objective reality of the world of outside, surface appearance to the subjective reality of inner states of consciousness – a shift that marks a passage from the traditional to the modern – is finally and triumphantly accomplished.

Strindberg says in the introductory note to *The Dream Play*:

In this dream play, as in his former dream play *To Damascus*, the author has sought to reproduce the disconnected but apparently logical form of a dream. Anything can happen; everything is possible and probable. Time and space do not exist. On a slight groundwork of reality, imagination spins and weaves new patterns made up of memories, experiences, unfettered fancies, absurdities, and improvisations. The characters are split, double, and multiply; they evaporate, crystallize, scatter, and converge. But a single consciousness holds sway over them all – that of the dreamer. For him there are no secrets, no incongruities, no scruples and no law... (apud Esslin, 2001, p.352-3)

In the Production Notes to his play *The Glass Menagerie*, Tennessee Williams (1981, p.229) gives us his explanation about the purpose of using unconventional techniques:

Expressionism and all other unconventional techniques in drama have only one valid aim, and that is a closer approach to truth. (...)The straight realistic play with its genuine frigidaire and authentic ice-cubes, its characters that speak exactly as its audience speaks, corresponds to the academic landscape and has the same virtue of a photographic likeness. Everyone should know nowadays the unimportance of the photographic in art: that truth, life, or reality is an organic thing which the poetic imagination can represent or suggest, in essence, only through transformation, through changing into other forms than those which were merely present in appearance.

Williams (1981) further explained that when a play employs unconventional techniques, it is not trying to escape its responsibility of dealing with reality, or interpreting experience, but is actually attempting to find a closer approach, a more penetrating and vivid expression of things as they are.

In *The Dream Play* and *Camino Real* the playwrights used expressionistic techniques to expose their views on human society. Both were pessimistic, as the image of hell dominates their plays.

The two plays share their most striking feature: they have the fluid form of a dream. Time and space do not exist or are not specified, and anything may happen. Both works contain a great number of symbols and, as in a dream, some characters have allegoric names.

In his search for the meaning of existence, Strindberg, who had been a materialistic sceptic, became a believing mystic. *The Dream Play* belongs to this later phase of his life. And as he had always believed in the vital significance of dreams, in *The Dream Play* this conviction became a new and wonderful dramatic technique, through which he could expose his mystic theories about life on earth.

Tennessee Williams was so ill when he wrote *Camino Real* that he thought he was going to die. Perhaps this feeling made him reflect profoundly about our condition, and he utilized Strindberg's technique to convey his feelings to

the audience because expressionism is very suitable to express feelings. Williams (1966) explained that he intended in *Camino Real* to give an idea of something wild and unrestricted that ran like water in the mountains, or the continually dissolving and transforming images of a dream.

Using expressionistic techniques, both playwrights were able to speak more personally and with a greater degree of self-revelation than they could have done in a "well-made" (realistic) play.

The two plays discard straight story lines. Before the Prologue of *The Dream Play* there is a little note called "A Reminder", in which Strindberg (1913) explains this play as an effort to imitate the form of a dream. The dreamer is mentioned in this note, and his dream unfolds before us; but we do not see his physical body – only his subconscious is presented to the audience. In the beginning of *Camino Real*, D. Quixote (one of the several legendary characters that appear in the play) says that he is going to sleep and dream; and he specifies that his dream will be a pageant. When he wakes up (at the end of the play), another character makes the following remark: "It would be in bad form if I didn't take some final part in the pageant" (Williams, 1966, p.226). Throughout the play, the audience sees D. Quixote sleeping against a wall on the stage. So we can interpret the whole play as being a dream of D. Quixote's.

As there is no plot in either play, the dramatists used devices to hold the scenes together. Williams divided his play into sixteen "blocks" on the *Camino Real* – as the characters go through this road their lives are spent. In doing this, Williams mixed the concepts of time and space. There is also a character who is present in all "blocks" – Mr. Gutman – and he announces the beginning of each "block". This is enough to link the scenes: a frail connection in accordance with the mood of the play. In *The Dream Play*, the link is the Daughter of Indra. In the Prologue, Strindberg (1913) lets us know that she, as the daughter of a god, has descended to Earth to see whether human complaints are justifiable. The Daughter is present in al-

most all the scenes, and exclaims the refrain “Men are to be pitied” at intervals, thus helping to maintain the unity of the play. There is a character in *Camino Real* with the same role as the Daughter: Kilroy. This character is present in eleven of the sixteen “blocks”; like the Daughter, he “falls” into hell (the dramatist’s personal view of existence) and has to endure several hardships.

In *The Dream Play*, the dreamer is presented as being several characters. The first one is the Officer. He is imprisoned in a castle that grows towards the sun, having stable litter scattered on the ground around it. According to Brustein (1970), this castle is an image of life: the human spirit wants to ascend to the sky to free himself of his dirty body. In this scene, the Daughter asks why flowers grow out of the dirt, and obtains the answer: “Because they do not feel at home in the dirt, and so they make haste to get up into the light in order to blossom and die” (Strindberg, 1913, p.29).

As the Officer is imprisoned in the castle, so are the characters in *Camino Real* imprisoned in this unreal country. The idea of “no way out” is present throughout both plays. What we see of the *Camino Real* is a square that belongs to some tropical seaport. There is a luxury hotel on the left side of the square called “Siete Mares”; opposite this hotel is the poor side (the “Skid Row”) which contains the “Gypsy’s Gaudy Stall”, the “Loan Shark’s establishment” and the “Ritz Men Only”. There are three possible exits from this place: escape in an airplane named “Fugitivo”, going out through the desert of the “Terra Incognita”, and death – in this case falling in the hands of the sinister Streetcleaners.

Kilroy, a young American vagrant in his late twenties, got off a ship that came from Rio and found himself in the *Camino Real*. He does not know where he is, and nobody answers his questions.

Both the Daughter and Kilroy make horrible trips: along the way they see the worst side of human nature and are themselves victims of it. In *Camino Real*, Gutman

(a symbol of repression, authoritative power, and whose name may well mean “the man who has the guts” because of the nasty acts he performs) obliges Kilroy (this name sounds like “kill” and “royal” – death to the king?) to wear the uniform of a patsy, thus humiliating him. The loss of dignity of all men is concentrated in his character. In *The Dream Play*, The Daughter of Indra witnesses the agony of the Officer who waits for a bride that never comes, and asks a portress to wear her shawl – the portress says that in this shawl thirty years of agonies lie hidden, because she listens to the complaints of people. “It is heavy, and it burns like nettles” remarks the Daughter (Strindberg, 1913, p.40).

In this scene of *The Dream Play* there is a door that has an air-hole shaped like a four-leaved clover. The solution to the enigma of existence is supposed to be behind this door. Like the “Terra Incognita” in *Camino Real*, this door is a mystery: nobody is able to open it, as well as nobody knows what happens to the people who escape through the “Terra Incognita”.

Both Kilroy and the Daughter have frustrating romantic experiences. The Daughter marries the Lawyer and suffers terribly because they have different needs. She is imprisoned in their marriage because they have a son, and she feels suffocated by the situation. This feeling is represented in a metaphor: another character is pasting up all the cracks on the walls and makes the Daughter exclaim: “Air, air – I cannot breathe!” and “Oh, it feels as if my lips were being glued together” (Strindberg, 1913, p.52). In *Camino Real*, Kilroy is chosen by the Gypsy’s daughter to spend the night with her, but they do not understand each other.

At the end of the plays both Kilroy and the Daughter die. But the playwrights wanted to give some hope to the audience before the curtain fell: Kilroy resurrects and escapes with D. Quixote through the “Terra Incognita”, while a fountain that had been dry throughout the play begins to flow and a couple of lovers become reconciled to each other. The Daughter, before dying and going to where her father is, gives a mystic explanation about the origin of our suffer-

ings, and promises that we will be recompensated for our pains: "And in thy name their grievance shall be placed before the throne. Farewell!" (Strindberg, 1913, p.104). The Daughter, then, goes into the castle of the first scene. The castle breaks into flames, while a bud on the roof opens into a gigantic chrysanthemum flower. Strindberg seems to mean that dying, we will achieve peace and happiness.

Williams (1966, p.227) also uses the image of a flower to convey an optimistic feeling at the end of *Camino Real*: D. Quixote, noticing that the couple of lovers are reconciled to each other, exclaims: "The violets in the mountains have broken the rocks!". Love is the solution to our problems, according to this dramatist.

The Dream Play, as well as *Camino Real*, is a quest play. The characters strive to answer the basic questions: "Who am I?" and "What am I doing here?". In both plays, each character represents an aspect of human personality; by putting their separate quests together we realize what our needs are. The playwrights exaggerate and distort the human characteristic portrayed in each character: the grotesque is often present when the dramatist uses expressionistic techniques. This is done to emphasize the meaning that is to be conveyed to the audience.

Kilroy and the Daughter represent the common man and what he has to suffer and endure in life. There are other characters in *The Dream Play* who have a correspondent in *Camino Real*: Gutman, who represents the monetary power in *Camino Real*, is similar to the blind man in *The Dream Play*. Both lack sensibility and a more real sense. Byron in Williams's play, and the poet in Strindberg's, share the need of hard experiences for their spiritual development, and share their idealism, too. Byron says: "The luxuries of this place have made me soft. The metal point's gone from my pen, there's nothing left but the feather" (Williams, 1966, p.178). In Strindberg's (1913, p.61) play a character says, about the poet: "he is roaming about the higher regions so much that he gets homesick for the mud; and wallowing in the mire makes the skin callous like that

of a pig. Then he cannot feel the stings of the wasps". Both Jacques Casanova in Williams's play and D. Juan in Strindberg's are in love with faithless women, what is unexpected and makes us think of how weak and fool mankind really is. Williams's *La Madrecita* and Strindberg's *Mother* represent, obviously, maternal love.

The characters in *The Dream Play* are not called by proper names: their profession or their position in a family is mostly what names them. This is an expressionistic device similar to the existence of legendary characters in *Camino Real* – that is, characters are not full human personalities, but archetypes of certain basic attitudes and qualities.

Brustein (1970) affirms that the lack of an answer to the enigma of existence is the cause of a series of contrasts and paradoxes that are presented in *The Dream Play* and in *Camino Real*. In Strindberg's play we have the Body versus the Spirit, Fairhaven (a place similar to Paradise) versus Foulstrand (a picture of Hell), Winter versus Summer, North versus South, Beauty versus Ugliness, Happiness versus Unhappiness, Love versus Hate. In *Camino Real*, there is the Royal Way versus the Real Road; the rich side of the square versus the poor one; paradoxes such as Kilroy, who had been a box champion, dressed in the uniform of a patsy; Jacques Casanova, the eternal lover, crowned "The King of Cuckolds"; and the Gypsy's daughter, who sleeps with a man whenever a "fiesta" is needed to distract the people from the injustices they suffer, is supposed to be a virgin each time.

Tennessee Williams used a device which was not imagined by Strindberg. He makes the audience take part in his play: the actors frequently speak directly to the spectators and sometimes go through the aisles of the theatre. As Williams is exposing the narrator's subconscious mind, a dream of his, he may have wanted a greater proximity with the spectator.

The setting of the two plays is expressionistic. Both Williams and Strindberg use, with great creativity, lights, music, visual symbols and other effects to convey exactly

the mood of a scene; they also exaggerate or distort the lines of the scenery to express the mental or emotional distortion of the characters. Two good examples of these devices are the following: in *Camino Real*, Marguerite Gautier fails to escape in the “Fugitivo”. As it is taking off,

her figure is caught in the dazzling glacial light of the follow-spot. It blinds her. She makes violent, crazed gestures, clinging to the railing of the steps; her breath is loud and hoarse as a dying person's [...] There is a prolonged, gradually fading, rocketlike roar as the “Fugitivo” takes off. Shrieking cries of joy from departing passengers; something radiant passes above the stage and streams of confetti and tinsel fall into the plaza. (Williams, 1966, p.189)

All this gives the impression of a terrible nightmare. In *The Dream Play*, the setting for “Foulstrand” is

hills stripped of their trees by fire, and red heather growing between the blackened tree stumps. Red-painted pig-sties and outhouses. Beyond these, in the open, apparatus for mechanical gymnastics, where sick persons are being treated on machines resembling instruments of torture. To the left, in the foreground, the quarantine station, consisting of open sheds, with ovens, furnaces, and pipe coils. (Strindberg, 1913, p.58)

This is the place where the rich are, and it is as horrible as their moral imperfections.

Both dramatists managed to create dream-like plays: according to Lewis (1962), as in a dream, moments of recognizable objectivity vanish, converge, disappear; the scenes are short, rapidly shifting, with little regard for fixed positions; intensity is not on psychological depth but on images in motion.

Views on mankind

Concerning the dramatists' views on human society and the fate of mankind, both plays express their author's subjective views.

The lack of an answer for the enigma of existence is their central point. But while in *The Dream Play* Strindberg explores this theme further and tries to express his personal views on all the important aspects of society, Williams restricted the meaning of his play. He said:

Camino Real is merely a picture of the state of the romantic nonconformist in modern society. It stresses honor and man's own sense of inner dignity which the Bohemian must reach after each period of degradation he is bound to run into. The romantic should have the spirit of anarchy and not let the world drag him down to its level... (Williams, 1966, p.5)

This “romantic nonconformist” is usually an outcast, and all outcasts are treated with extreme sympathy by Williams. Strindberg also dedicates an immense love to mankind: he has declared it through the characters of *The Great Highway* and it can be felt in *The Dream Play*.

The solution *Camino Real* offers may be achieved in this life – while the final message of *The Dream Play* is that only after death we can be peaceful and happy. Strindberg gives a mystical treatment to his subject; William's approach is more realistic and practical.

In both plays the rich and the powerful are severely criticized, and are presented as responsible for the main flaws of society. In *Camino Real*, Gutman, who represents this class, orders the killing of a man and does not even give an explanation of why he has done this. He tries to destroy whatever is decent in *Camino Real*. Gutman wants to forbid the use of the word “hermano”: this symbolizes the dominating classes' desire to extinguish solidarity among people. Gutman states that ideals and feelings (specifically love) are harmful: acting like this he tries to brutalize the people of *Camino Real*.

In *The Dream Play*, there is also a strong criticism of the rich. Some of them are in “Foulstrand” (a horrible place already mentioned). One has eaten so much “paté de foie gras” and truffles that his feet have grown knotted. An-

other one has drunk too much brandy: his backbone has to be put through a mangle. These physical deformations stand for their moral ones.

The rich and repression are inseparable in *Camino Real* (as they are symbolized in one person) and in *The Dream Play*: the scene of the coalheavers demonstrates this. The coalheavers' expressions show intense despair: they are suffering a heat of one hundred and twenty degrees Fahrenheit and cannot have a bath in the sea, because the police would not let them. Neither can they pick any fruit off the trees, because the police would get after them. One of the coalheavers, then, says to the Daughter: "We, who work hardest, get least food; and the rich, who do nothing, get most. Might one not – without disregard of truth – assert that this is injustice?" (Strindberg, 1913, p.78). The Daughter cannot answer this question; the coalheavers tell her that "those who are well off" think that everything is all right as it is.

This is a strong enough social criticism; but Strindberg goes further. The Lawyer tells the Daughter that all improvers end in prison or in the madhouse – sent to the first by the "right-minded" and "respectable", and to the second by their own despair when they realize the hopelessness of their efforts. The Lawyer himself has suffered the consequences of trying to help people: his degree of Doctor of Laws is not conferred on him because, in the Daughter's words, he "defended the poor, put in a good word for the wrong-doing, made the burden easier for the guilty, obtained a respite for the condemned" (Strindberg, 1913, p.48). There is here the same criticism made by Williams when Gutman forbids the word "hermano": solidarity is feared by the dominating classes.

But not only solidarity is feared: people's thinking is also a dangerous thing for the class that has the power, for obvious reasons. Both playwrights expressed this idea: in *Camino Real* Jacques Casanova tells Kilroy: "The exchange of serious questions and ideas, especially between persons from opposite sides of the plaza, is regarded unfavourably

here" (Williams, 1966, p.158). In *The Dream Play*, a policeman forbids the opening of the door behind which the solution for the enigma of existence is – what is meaningful enough – and a character exclaims: "Oh, Lord! What a fuss there is as soon as anybody wants to do anything new or great" (Strindberg, 1913, p.44).

Man's loss of dignity is represented several times in *Camino Real*. We see, for example, Kilroy dressed as a patsy, and the Streetcleaners: not even dying, man achieves a little dignity, because his corpse is pulled away like garbage by laughing streetcleaners.

Obviously in a world where solidarity, thinking and dignity are not encouraged, a serious inversion of values occurs. The Daughter says that the world is upside down, and in the other play, the Gypsy tells Kilroy: "The *Camino Real* is a funny paper read backwards!" (Williams, 1966, p.202). D. Quixote (*Camino Real*) says that Truth, Valor, and Devoir mean nothing nowadays; the Daughter (*The Dream Play*) says that Justice, Friendship, Golden Peace, and Hope, are sunken ships.

But Strindberg attacks more aspects of human society: the Daughter declares that Theology, Philosophy, Medicine and Jurisprudence do not understand each other: one says the other is nonsense, and that is making man insane. Marriage is also bitterly criticized in *The Dream Play*. It is described as a life of common suffering, in which one's pleasure is the other one's pain. Life is a series of repetitions that annul all efforts in the direction of progress, change or development. Several aspects of human personality are critically shown: envy is seen as a highly destructive feeling that is present in the minds of all men. Logic is seen as silly, the world is seen as silly. Men's short memory is criticized, as well as the way old people are treated.

All this justifies the Daughter's refrain: "Men are to be pitied!" as well as Kilroy's remark: "I pity the world [...]" (Williams, 1966, p.211).

Although earth is considered a transitory place by the two dramatists, the solution for man's problems suggested

is each play is not the same. William's final message is that solidarity is what is needed to improve life's conditions. If it existed, people would not try to take advantage of others, and nobody would suffer. On "Block Ten", the character Marguerite Gautier compares love to violets, and says that the violets cannot break the rocks. Jacques Casanova replies that "The violets in the mountains can break the rocks if you believe in them and allow them to grow!" (Williams, 1966, p.192). Though at this time Marguerite does not believe him, in the last scene of the play she offers him her love and asks for his, what makes D. Quixote exclaim: "The violets in the mountains have broken the rocks!" Gutman says: "The Curtain Line has been spoken! Bring it down!" (Williams, 1966, p.227). So, there seems to be no doubt about Williams final message. D. Quixote and Kilroy go through the arch of "Terra Incognita", and thus escape from *Camino Real*. Clearly, Williams intends triumph for the "romantic nonconformist" that these two characters represent.

Strindberg's "dreamer" shows an ambiguous attitude towards romantic feelings. When the Daughter marries the Lawyer, she believes that loving each other, they will be able to face all difficulties – what proves to be wrong. In another scene, the immense love that unites a young couple does not help them escape their fate: to be thrown into a stove. The Poet, on the other hand, believes in the power of love: he declares that "love overcomes all, even sulphur fumes and carbolic acid" (Strindberg, 1913, p.65).

Although there is nothing behind the door that was supposed to hide the enigma of existence, in Strindberg's play there is a mystical explanation (through the Daughter) of how man's sufferings began. It is based on images of Buddhist and Indian philosophies: Brahma, the "divine primal force", was seduced by Maya, the "world-mother". The result was Earth – and as it is the consequence of the meeting of the divine primal matter with the earth-matter, it is composed of physical and spiritual elements, sacred and profane things, men and women. In order to free

themselves from the earth-matter, the offspring of Brahma seek privation and suffering (the idea of suffering as a liberator has been expressed earlier in the play). But this craving for suffering comes into conflict with the craving for love – and sex. So man is the victim of a conflict between his body and his spirit (his spirit wants to ascend to the sky, but his body is imprisoned in Earth because of lust). This is the origin of man's sufferings, and also of all the other contradictions that transform man's existence into hell.

In the end of *The Dream Play*, the Daughter dies in the flames of the castle, while a bud on its roof opens into a gigantic chrysanthemum flower. According to Brustein (1970), this means that through death man can achieve peace and happiness; because then, the spirit is free from the needs of the body.

August Strindberg and Tennessee Williams share, in spite of the distance in time and space that separates them, a great love for mankind, a deep anguish because of man's sufferings and lack of meaning in life, and a desire to express their feelings through an unconventional dramatic form which was coherent with their ideas and permitted a more personal approach.

The plays prove that both dramatists reached their goals: they convey both their love and their anguish through the use of expressionistic techniques. Strindberg and Williams viewed the world as an illogical disorder, so not only the subject-matter of the plays, but their form also, being dream-like, conveys this feeling. Ultimately, they try to find explanations and solutions for the world's paradoxes.

Being both great plays, *The Dream Play* is richer in meaning than *Camino Real*. Strindberg analyses more aspects of human society and shows the results of deeper thinking about man's condition. This may be due to the fact that *The Dream Play* was written at the end of Strindberg's career, and thus reflects a whole life of search for the final truth. But the impact of the powerful images

present in both plays is a lasting one. They give rise to metaphysical questionings in the audience, what is a genuine purpose of the theatrical arts.

As a last consideration, both plays possess universality of appeal. We seem to be very far from answering those basic questions: “*Who am I?*” and “*What is the meaning of my life?*”.

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