



## Modern European Tragedy

Exploring Crucial Plays

Annamaria Cascetta

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**'Modern European Tragedy' examines the consciousness of Europe in the twentieth century through the art of theatre, drawing a vivid picture of how one of the most violent periods of human history dealt with the fundamental structure of the tragic.**

*'Cascetta offers a synoptic vision that includes many of the twentieth century's most fascinating "tragic" texts. "Modern European Tragedy" should provoke new conversations on old and important topics.'* —Alan Ackerman, Professor of English, University of Toronto

The idea of the tragic has permeated Western culture for millennia, and has been expressed theatrically since the time of the ancient Greeks. However, it was in the Europe of the twentieth century – one of the most violent periods of human history – that the tragic form significantly developed. 'Modern European Tragedy' examines the consciousness of this era, drawing a picture of the development of the tragic through an in-depth analysis of some of the twentieth century's most outstanding texts.

### Readership

This book is well suited to university students and teachers, scholars in the humanities and readers with an interest in theatre, literature, philosophy and twentieth-century intellectual history.

### Contents

Introduction: The Tragic, Tragedy and the Idea of the Limit; Chapter 1: Hubris and Guilt: 'Genganere' ('Ghosts') by Henrik Ibsen; Chapter 2: Eve Becomes Mary: 'L'Annonce faite à Marie' ('The Tidings Brought to Mary') by Paul Claudel; Chapter 3: The School of Hatred: 'Mourning Becomes Electra' by Eugene O'Neill; Chapter 4: The Destiny of Man is Man: 'Mutter Courage und ihre Kinder' ('Mother Courage and her Children') by Bertolt Brecht; Chapter 5: The Tragic and the Absurd: 'Caligula' by Albert Camus; Chapter 6: Dianoetic Laughter in Tragedy: Accepting Finitude: 'Endgame' by Samuel Beckett; Chapter 7: The Arrogance of Reason and the 'Disappearance of the Fireflies': 'Pilade' ('Pylades') by Pier Paolo Pasolini; Chapter 8: The Apocalypse of a Civilization: From 'Akropolis' to 'Apocalypsis cum figuris' by Jerzy Grotowski; A Provisional Epilogue: Between the Experience and the Representation of the Tragic: Towards a Performative Theatre; Appendix: Chronology of Productions; Notes; Index

### About the Author(s) / Editor(s)

Annamaria Cascetta is a professor of theatre history and the former director of the Department of Communication and Performing Arts at the Catholic University of Milan.

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