



STOCKCERO TEACHING KIT (107)

TEXT: *Tres obras renovadoras del teatro español de posguerra*

AUTHORS: Buero Vallejo, Alfonso Sastre, Fernando Arrabal

EDITION: Annotated Spanish Edition (Stockcero)

PART 1: CONTEXT & CRITICAL ANALYSIS

(Based on the Introduction by Prof. Víctor Fuentes)

1. THEATER UNDER DICTATORSHIP:

- **Post-War Stagnation:** After the Civil War (1936-39), Spanish theater was dominated by bourgeois comedies of evasion (Benavente). These three authors broke that stagnation with "renovating" theater that addressed existential and social anguish.
- **Three Approaches:** The anthology contrasts three distinct responses to repression:
 - **Buero Vallejo:** Ethical realism / Symbolism (*Historia de una escalera*).
 - **Alfonso Sastre:** Radical tragedy / Social agitation (*Escuadra hacia la muerte*).
 - **Fernando Arrabal:** The Theater of Panic / Absurdism (*Cementerio de automóviles*).

2. THE WORKS:

- ***Historia de una escalera* (Buero):** A generational drama set on a staircase of a tenement building. It explores frustration, the passage of time, and the inability to escape poverty and social inertia.
- ***Escuadra hacia la muerte* (Sastre):** A military drama about a squad of soldiers sent on a suicide mission. It deals with existential dread, authority, and rebellion. It was quickly banned by the regime.
- ***Cementerio de automóviles* (Arrabal):** A surreal, chaotic play combining elements of the Passion of Christ with a dystopia of rusted cars. It represents the "Panic" movement: confusion, humor, and terror.

PART 2: TOPICS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

- **Realism vs. Absurdism:** Compare Buero's *Historia de una escalera* with Arrabal's *Cementerio*. How does each author use space (a staircase vs. a car graveyard) to convey entrapment?
- **The Role of Censorship:** How did censorship shape these plays? Why was Sastre's play banned while Buero's won the Lope de Vega prize? Discuss the debate between "Posibilismo" and "Imposibilismo."
- **Existentialism:** All three plays deal with the human condition in extreme or limiting situations. Connect them to European existentialism (Sartre, Camus).

PART 3: SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- **Fuentes, Víctor.** *Introduction to Tres obras renovadoras*. Stockcero, 2009.
- **London, John.** *Reception and Renewal in Modern Spanish Theatre*. W.S. Maney, 1997.
- **Sastre, Alfonso.** *Drama y sociedad*. Taurus, 1956.



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PART 4: QUIZ BANK (Multiple Choice)

1. Which play in this collection won the Lope de Vega Prize in 1949, marking a turning point in Spanish theater? A) *Escuadra hacia la muerte* B) *Historia de una escalera* C) *Cementerio de automóviles* D) *Bodas de sangre* **Correct Answer: B**

2. Alfonso Sastre is associated with which type of theater? A) Theater of the Absurd B) Commercial Comedy C) Theater of Social Agitation / Radical Tragedy D) Romantic Drama **Correct Answer: C**

3. Fernando Arrabal founded which theatrical movement? A) The Panic Movement (Movimiento Pánico) B) The Generation of 98 C) Neorealism D) The Theatre of Cruelty **Correct Answer: A**

4. *Historia de una escalera* focuses on: A) A war battle B) The lives of neighbors in a tenement building over 30 years C) A royal court D) A futuristic society **Correct Answer: B**

5. What common theme unites these three diverse plays? A) They are all comedies B) They all celebrate the Franco regime C) They all renew Spanish theater by addressing existential and social anguish D) They are all set in the Middle Ages **Correct Answer: C**

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