



## 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).



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## 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.

## 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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