

Krzysztof Pleśniarowicz draws differences between Western and Eastern European absurdism, points out similarities and adjacencies, and emphasises the function fulfilled by the theatre of the absurd in Eastern Europe: the representation of the drama of a man deprived of freedom. The author of this important book shows absurdity in the dramas of the 1980s “at the end of the Soviet bloc” as the only possibility of dramatic-theatrical embodiment of realism, as a metaphor for reality.

It is to the author’s credit that he shows the diversity of the “eastern theatre of the absurd” (from Russia, Czechoslovakia, Poland and Hungary) against the background of a common feeling of absence of the present, or even of “being knocked out of existence.” The book ranks high in the study of the theatre of the absurd, especially because of the fine, valuable analyses of the works cited and the interesting light directed into the area of lesser-known drama in the world. The publication of this book in English will broaden the knowledge of the face of the theatre of the absurd among the many audiences interested in drama, literary scholars, theatre scholars, but also historians.