

University of Wollongong - Research Online

Thesis Collection

Title: Pragmatic action, imaginative action, annihilating action: the quest for self-realization in three major dramatic phases of the West (Elizabethan Renaissance, European nineteenth century, and the theatre of the absurd)

Author: Bahee Hadaegh

Year: 2009

Repository DOI:

Copyright Warning

You may print or download ONE copy of this document for the purpose of your own research or study. The University does not authorise you to copy, communicate or otherwise make available electronically to any other person any copyright material contained on this site.

You are reminded of the following: This work is copyright. Apart from any use permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part of this work may be reproduced by any process, nor may any other exclusive right be exercised, without the permission of the author. Copyright owners are entitled to take legal action against persons who infringe their copyright. A reproduction of material that is protected by copyright may be a copyright infringement. A court may impose penalties and award damages in relation to offences and infringements relating to copyright material.

Higher penalties may apply, and higher damages may be awarded, for offences and infringements involving the conversion of material into digital or electronic form.

Unless otherwise indicated, the views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the University of Wollongong.

Research Online is the open access repository for the University of Wollongong. For further information contact the UOW Library: research-pubs@uow.edu.au

University of Wollongong

Research Online

University of Wollongong Thesis Collection
1954-2016

University of Wollongong Thesis Collections

2009

Pragmatic action, imaginative action, annihilating action: the quest for self-realization in three major dramatic phases of the West (Elizabethan Renaissance, European nineteenth century, and the theatre of the absurd)

Bahee Hadaegh

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ro.uow.edu.au/theses>

University of Wollongong

Copyright Warning

You may print or download ONE copy of this document for the purpose of your own research or study. The University does not authorise you to copy, communicate or otherwise make available electronically to any other person any copyright material contained on this site.

You are reminded of the following: This work is copyright. Apart from any use permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part of this work may be reproduced by any process, nor may any other exclusive right be exercised, without the permission of the author. Copyright owners are entitled to take legal action against persons who infringe their copyright. A reproduction of material that is protected by copyright may be a copyright infringement. A court may impose penalties and award damages in relation to offences and infringements relating to copyright material.

Higher penalties may apply, and higher damages may be awarded, for offences and infringements involving the conversion of material into digital or electronic form.

Unless otherwise indicated, the views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the University of Wollongong.

Recommended Citation

Hadaegh, Bahee, Pragmatic action, imaginative action, annihilating action: the quest for self-realization in three major dramatic phases of the West (Elizabethan Renaissance, European nineteenth century, and the theatre of the absurd), Doctor of Philosophy thesis, Faculty of Arts, University of Wollongong, 2009.
<https://ro.uow.edu.au/theses/3147>

Research Online is the open access institutional repository for the University of Wollongong. For further information contact the UOW Library: research-pubs@uow.edu.au

NOTE

This online version of the thesis may have different page formatting and pagination from the paper copy held in the University of Wollongong Library.

UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

COPYRIGHT WARNING

You may print or download ONE copy of this document for the purpose of your own research or study. The University does not authorise you to copy, communicate or otherwise make available electronically to any other person any copyright material contained on this site. You are reminded of the following:

Copyright owners are entitled to take legal action against persons who infringe their copyright. A reproduction of material that is protected by copyright may be a copyright infringement. A court may impose penalties and award damages in relation to offences and infringements relating to copyright material. Higher penalties may apply, and higher damages may be awarded, for offences and infringements involving the conversion of material into digital or electronic form.

Pragmatic Action, Imaginative Action, Annihilating Action

**The Quest for Self-realization
in
Three Major Dramatic Phases of the West
(Elizabethan Renaissance, European Nineteenth Century,
and the Theatre of the Absurd)**

A Thesis Submitted

In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for
The Award of the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

From the

University of Wollongong

By:

Bahee Hadaegh

Faculty of Arts
University of Wollongong

2009

DECLARATION

I, Bahee Hadaegh, declare that this thesis, submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, in the Faculty of Arts, department of English Language, University of Wollongong, Australia, is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. This document has not been submitted for a qualification at any other academic institution.

Bahee Hadaegh

Date:

Acknowledgment

I would like to express my sincere thanks to my highly supportive and thoughtful supervisors, Prof. Anne Collett and Prof. Paul Sharrad for their unique knowledgeable supervision, scholarly suggestions, kindness, and encouragement during my study and research work in Faculty of Arts.

I would like to pay my regards to all the people who have contributed to the results presented in this thesis. I owe my success first to my devoted mother, who has been heroically supporting me to live and study. I dedicate my whole success to her. I should also remember my dear deceased father for whose sake I tried to attain a high academic degree. I should also express my sincere thanks for all the compassion and supportive attention my brother, Basir Hadaegh, has had towards me. I feel ashamed for all the stressful moments he experienced following my scholarship program back home. I would also like to pay my unlimited thanks to my uncle, Javad Hadaegh, who has been supporting me fatherly to come to Australia to continue my studies. I should take the opportunity to acknowledge that I am really indebted my whole success to Dr. Mohammad Mehdi Farhoudi who has been devotedly and fatherly supported me here so that I can live and study. I am deeply embarrassed for all the unique sense of responsibility, manliness, and kindness he has had towards me in every single moment of my stay in Australia. Definitely, without his miraculous help and encouraging supports, I couldn't continue my study. I will never forget his patient attention towards me in every single step and I owe my success to him.

I am also highly appreciative to Prof. Javad Farhoudi for all his supports and thoughtfulness. I am deeply thankful to Prof. Ommundsen, Prof. Castle, Prof. Wells, Dr. Jamieson, and Prof. Abjadian for all of their thoughtful support and wise suggestions.

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	1
Introduction.....	3
Literature Review.....	7
Significance of the Study.....	21
Structure of Thesis.....	28
Chapter 1: The Notion of the Quest for Self-realization in Renaissance Thought.....	36
Chapter 2: Pragmatic Action: The Quest for Self-realization in Tragedies of Marlowe and Shakespeare	54
Chapter 3: The Notion of the Quest for Self-realization in Nineteenth-Century Thought	99
Chapter 4: Imaginative Action: The Quest for Self-realization in Tragedies of Ibsen and Chekhov	120
Chapter 5: The Notion of the Quest for Self-realization in Twentieth-Century Thought.....	160
Chapter 6: Annihilating Action: The Quest for Self-realization in the Absurd Theatre of Beckett and Pinter	180
Conclusion.....	240
Bibliography.....	248

Abstract

This thesis argues that the quest for self-fulfillment is the recurrent motif of the three major dramatic eras of Western tragedy. This theme is a continuous but transforming tradition in which tragic heroes endeavor to approximate a more complete degree of self-realization respectively through outward action, inner imagination and an inaction that is also a reflective struggle to find meaning. Discussions of tragic theatre in the West have generally concentrated on a degenerative process of Western tragedy in terms of progressively atrophied dramatic action and gradual manifestation of passivity, nostalgia and nihilism. This thesis aims to show that, although the major course of transformation is from action to inaction, under the light of the continuous motif of the quest and the degree of success by which the characters approximate the wished-for self-fulfillment, Western tragedy is a regression in order to progress.

To demonstrate a connection across Western theatrical history, I look in turn at the three major dramatic eras of the Renaissance, the nineteenth century, and twentieth-century existentialist/ absurdist stages. The regressive progress of Western tragedy from the Renaissance active quest to the imaginative quest of the nineteenth-century dramatic characters is demonstrated through Nietzsche's understanding of Dionysian phenomenal-self forgetfulness, inwardness, suffering and rebirth. Such a progressive course is also evident when the seemingly negative inaction of the Absurd dramatic characters is viewed through the author's own cultural background, considering the very basic mystic concepts of self-annihilation and self-realization.