

In what ways is the play Hedda Gabler by Henrik Ibsen conditioned by the staging ...

[Literature](#)



Hedda Gabler by Henrik Ibsen Hedda Gabler by Henrik Ibsen The staging and setting of Henrik Ibsen's plays is in such a way that the key developments of the 20th and 21st centuries have been reflected. Among the key depictions are the personal feelings of isolation and the real isolation from the society. The pressures that the society encounters in an attempt to make sure that its members conform to the set values are also reflected. Additionally, the plays reflect the barriers set by modern life against societal heroes. Henrik Ibsen wrote the play, Hedda Gabler, at 62 years of age (Faludi, 2001 pg. 67). The play was published in the year 1962. The play was set in Norway, and it is thus essential to examine the social status of this society between 1870s and 1890s.

Suicide is one of the fundamental themes that emerge from the play. During Ibsen's era, the rate of attempted suicide among women was four times that of their male counterparts. However, the rate of success was much higher in men compared to women. In the cases, women preferred to use means such as poison and drowning, which were less violent. Studies conducted in the nineteenth century seemed to point out that committing suicide by means of guns was a manly act. According to John Stuart Mill, women were considered to be extremely opposite of their male counterparts (Innes, 2003 pg. 45). Hence, rather than being governed by self-control and self-will, there were expected to be under the control of others.

The setting of the play is Hedda's house, and it is evident that the couple had returned from their honeymoon. Hedda Gabler's action takes place at a new villa of Tesman in the western part of the town. The actual location is Christiania, currently Oslo. A major characteristic of this town is that it was

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alienated or isolated from the key European capitals (Faludi, 2001 pg. 79).

Adaptation to a Modern Stage

In a modern stage, a set designer may consider the creation of a suitable setting rather than a home. Since Hedda and her husband have just arrived, the setting is an unclaimed space. Such a design emphasizes on the essence of the exterior environment. The act of privatizing rooms and then opening them increases the versatility of this space. There seems to be a form of formality associated with Hedda Gabler, hence, a contemporary set designer might aim at creating a cage that is beautiful. The room needs to have an aura of formality. A typical set design would play a vital role in highlighting the societal problems encountered during Ibsen's era. In the play, Hedda does not go outside her home. This presents a feeling of isolation or alienation from the rest of the societal members (Innes, 2003 pg. 32)

A modern stage can be set in such a manner that it clearly depicts this location. A notable suggestion is a big rectangular room with a small acting platform at the front. The room should have raked tiers on the sides facing the wall, where the audience would sit. Throughout the ceiling, there needs to be a grid whose main function would be to light the stage. A metal beam divides and dominates this grid. Such a space would work effectively with designs that are made in such a way that the acting platform is raised above the floor of the stage by at least one meter. With the current advancement in technology, it is possible to come up with such a design and setting.

Contemporary theatres have appropriate lighting and other aspects needed to create a desired stage setting and design.

Conclusion

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It is therefore evident that Hedda Gabler is a play that clearly depicts the events and developments witnessed in the 20th and 21st century. The play was originally set in Christiania, a town that was isolated or alienated from the rest of the capital of Europe. It is possible for a modern stage to be set in such a way that the isolation and alienation can be felt by an audience.

Privatization of rooms is one way of achieving this effect. The shape of the stage is also a fundamental aspect to consider when setting a contemporary stage. For instance a rectangular room is the most of appropriate for this play.

References

Faludi, S. (2001). *Forward to Henrik Ibsens Hedda Gabler*. New York: Groove Press.

Innes, C. (2003). *Literary Sourcebook on Hedda Gabler*. London: Routledge Publishers.