

## Post-modernist Tragi-Comedy: A Study of Tom Stoppard's "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead"

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**Abstract :** The death of tragedy is probably the most distinctive literary controversy of the twentieth century. There is common critical consent that tragedy in the classical sense of the word is no longer possible. Thinkers, philosophers, and critics such as Nietzsche, Durrenmatt, and George Steiner have all agreed that the decline of the genre in the modern age is due to the total lack of a unified world image and the absence of a shared vision in a fragmented and ideologically diversified world. The production of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* in 1967 marked the rise of the genre of tragi-comedy as a more appropriate reflection of the spirit of the age. At the hands of such great dramatists as Tom Stoppard (1937- ), the revived genre was not used as an extra comic element to give some comic relief to an otherwise tragic text, but it was given a postmodernist touch to serve the interpretation of the dilemma of man in the postmodernist world. This paper will study features of postmodernist tragi-comedy in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* as one of the most important plays in modern British theatre and investigate Stoppard's vision of man and life as influenced by postmodernist thought and philosophy.

**Keywords :** British, drama, postmodernist, Stoppard, tragi-comedy

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