

Confession and Guilt: Moral Thought and the Character of Clamence in Albert Camus's *The Fall*

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ABSTRACT

The novel centres on Jean-Baptiste Clamence, a former lawyer from Paris who narrates his story to an unnamed listener. His self-image begins to collapse after a crucial incident when he hears a woman jump from a bridge into the river. He moves to Amsterdam, where he adopts the role of "Judge-penitent"; the paper invokes "theatrum mundi" in Sartre's moral theatre, "Theatre of Situations", and helps explain the moral drama in *The Fall*. His ethical struggle begins when he chooses to be a judge-penitent. After the confession of guilt, he manipulates it as a universalising guilt. Being guilty, he loses his soul by

transference of guilt. This paper also identifies the scope of theology in the novel. Original sin is a central idea in Christian theology. It brings out human beings' experiences of guilt, moral weakness, and a tendency towards sin. He serves as an inverted Christ figure who is a false prophet of no salvation and redemption.

Keywords: Theatrum mundi, Judge-penitent, Transference of guilt.
