

The work presents esperpento of the Spanish writer Ramón del Valle-Inclán in the context of the evolution of European grotesque art. The first chapter of the work discusses esperpento in two dramatic plays: *Bohemian Lights* and *Mr. Punch The Cuckold*. The second chapter of the work focuses on the origin and evolution of grotesque literature and painting. Special attention is given to the thoughts of M. M. Bakhtin and W. Kayser. The third chapter tries to demonstrate close relation between grotesque and esperpento. It focuses on the continuous alternation of tragic and comic situations, presence of carnival elements, bipolarization of characters, and deformation of dramatic language, comparison between a human being and an animal or marionette.