

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE STUDES

FACULTY OF ARTS

CHARLES UNIVERSITY IN PRAGUE

THEORY AND HISTORY OF ART AND CULTURE

VACLAV HAVEL'S PLAYS STAGED  
IN BALCAN REGION COUNTRIES

THESES

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1. The thesis could be regarded with two points: The first deals with constructing a historical context within Balkan theatre history for the creation and evolution of absurd plays and special production of Havel's plays in the Balkan countries before 1989, such as in Serbia. The second part establishes the production of Havel's plays after 1989 in Albania, Kosovo, Macedonia, and Bulgaria. The years under review for Albania are from 1993 to 1995, for Bulgaria from 1991 till 1999, for Serbia from 1980 till 1996, for Macedonia from 1989 till 1995, and for Kosovo from 1995 till now.
2. Through the historical, political and social context the productions of Havel's plays were analysed in different theatres and different Balkan countries according a time interval in every investigated country. There are very important sources – the notes of directors and studies which concern staging of Havel's plays. They speak about finding the proper way of staging the plays and of searching for the main topics and themes. The gathered material comes from: a) the Albanian National Theatre, the Academy of Fine Arts of Albania, the Dodona Puppet Theatre in Kosovo (Prishtina, Kosovo), the National Theatre in Belgrade, Atelje 212 Theatre in Belgrade, the Theatre Museum in Serbia, the Albanian Theatre in Macedonia, the Macedonian National Theatre, Theatre "Bulgarian Army", the State Satirical Theatre "Aleko Konstantinov", the National Theatre "Ivan Vazov", in all the archives of theatres, the National Libraries of Serbia, and Theatre Institutes of all those Balkan countries, and the Institute for Shorts and Docs in Macedonia. b) personal materials of Sanja Zivanovic, PhD, theatrologist at the National Theatre in Belgrade, Director of the Albanian Theatre in Macedonia Muzbajdin Qamili, Director of the Albanian Theatre Mehmet Xhelili, Director of the Kosovo Dodona Theatre Fatos Berisha, Director Goran Trenchovski from Macedonia, Olga Markovic, curator of the Art Museum Institute Belgrade, and translator Alexander Ilic from Serbian. c) Critics, DVDs, photos, and texts of Havel's plays translated into different languages; Havel's correspondence with directors of his plays in the Balkans.
3. The purpose was to compare the differences between the original translations which follow Havel's texts without differences with directors' notebooks (scripts) and concrete stage realizations – scenes, inventories, costumes, and descriptions of characters. How do they differ and why? Is it possible to find these reasons with the help of directors? First of all, we should consider the fact that operating between

diverse cultures and countries will bring different reasons for staging Havel but the research will be complicated due to the fact that some archives burned down during the war (Kosovo, Serbia, Macedonia).

4. Why couldn't it work in a different country with the same historical and social experience? Vaclav Havel entered the Balkan theatrical territory with an authority and big confidence. His plays were on the stages of many countries in the region and some of them were broadcast by the television theatre as well. Havel's plays appeared in the theatres of the Balkan region at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century which was a time of big political and social changes. These changes had their influence on the way art functioned and a need to generate new ideas appeared. The 'mass spectator' of the time is pressed by a gloomy day to day life and wishes to run away, to forget and to enjoy. Foreign and indisputably entertaining plays full of unexpected changes, smart and spicy situations were put on stage.
5. The Havel's dramas was produced and performed at the time that he was he was forbidden without any censorship objection in Former-Yugoslavia (until of the NATO Bombarding intervene) which also is one on the paradoxes at the Easter countries. The performances of Havel's plays was perceive different in different cultural politic and historic context. Because of the different historic contest with seems that we have one Czech and one international version of Havel. Generally, the Balkans is full of drama. That does not automatically mean good theater, but it does mean that theater has always had an important role in the life of this region. Both countries in the region share the common problem the country was struggling politically to come out of communist rule, which had a dramatic impact on the evolution of its arts.
6. Still with because of long transition for producer of Balkan the directors are choosing Havel plays to prepare a performances for a theatre with a "social message." Searching and analyzing materials in directorial platform, I highlighted that directors went to the deeper meaning of Havel's plays and in the most of cases the plays was stage with intention with some greater desire to influence the society.
7. The transformation in the theater includes some of Balkan countries after 89 with the rise of the Iron Curtain. Is visible that performances of Havel's play make an overview of the theatre's progress during the time that has since passed. The face of the

communist world has been dramatically changing ever since, and so have its stages – on either side of the former “curtain”. Plays were exported to the region’s theatre and theater critics were education in new forms of theater. Some of today’s most interesting theatre directors now live in questioned not only the efficiency of Communist regimes, but their goals and their morality.

8. The performances of Havel’s plays in some countries as Albania, Bulgaria were performed after 89, the determination of the status of the theatres led to at least two very significant consequences. From one side, this process had given an opportunity for formatting “own” public and auditory, whose expectations were matching with the repertoire and dramaturgy style of the particular theatre. On the other hand, it had abolished the long lasting and unreasonable label of the performances as “traditional” and “experimental”. This plays were produced to be indifferent to the reactions of the spectators, but concentrated on the elements of the adventure and the theatrical act. Until this period, the Albanian and Bulgarian dramaturgy world was somehow afraid to call the “experimental theatre” with its right words – author theatre. Even though, it has been obvious that all directors develop, step by step much differentiated, heterogeneous and consciously created new theatrical concepts. They had been unanimous in rejecting the supportive realism and offered a new type of communication between the stage and the spectator.
9. Having a look to the production of Havel’s plays in Balkan it is found out that the Audience and Unveiling are performed in Serbia, Macedonia, and Bulgaria. Audience is present in all countries. Audience is the most performed pay from student of Academy of Art. The exchange between artists in the region area like is the case of Beggar’s opera with artist from different countries of Balkan brought a new waves and a successful performance given and taken and offering to actors to researcher their acting resources.
10. It’s a work that will not end here. I will work to present bring into the frame of Czech readers in Czech version and also I will prepare the Albanian version for in the Albanian readership in order to offer this material other researchers to continue this research.

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