ABOUT THE PHENOMENON OF THEATRE

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"Collected Articles"

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OR

A DIRECTORS' MERCILESS FIGHT FOR POWER AGAINST PLAYWRIGHT IN THE EUROPEAN THEATER

How can he do that? Is there not some law forbidding that?

That was a comment of a USA playwright Catherine Filloux, jury member of 2004 MESS festival, after a play Hamlet Dreams, directed by new star director from Ukraine Andrey Zholdak and inspired by Shakespeare’s Hamlet. She is from a country where people strongly protect intellectual property and where they consider a drama or a play intellectual property. She could not understand how a director could take someone's play, excerpt ten lines that were read from a speakerphone with mechanical voices, and have some people running and shouting, or sitting and waiting, or taking off their clothes and swimming in foam on the stage for three hours, with no connection to the original plot of the play. She could not understand how he could still keep the title of the play without any legal consequence! At the end of the festival, she understood the situation in the European theatre:

• Firstly that a performance in the European theatre is completely a private property of directors
• Secondly that a play or drama is expelled from the performances in the so-called high art?

PLAYWRIGHT OR THE DETHRONED OLD KING

From Ancient Greece until the middle of the 20 century playwright was an undisputed king of the European theatre: in Ancient Greece or French (neo) classicism playwright was officially proclaimed as the leader of the theatre. When in Ancient Greece arhont chose a play for Dionysus festival, playwright was in charge – he was organizing, financing, directing, acting, singing, dancing and – most important – he received an award for the production. Even in the period like Elizabethan time, when producer led the theatre and public considered playwrights to be craftsmen, they kept an important place in the theatre. Other periods without strong or important playwrights (like Italian renaissance) were understood as interregnum relying on other “craftsmen” (like street actors in commedia dell’arte) in keeping the theatre alive until the real artist, playwright, could restore his strength.

Then, at the end of the 19th century, a new theatre profession started to appear – the director. First, as in the Saxe-Meiningen troupe, he was a person who was in charge of the organization of a

2- High art (or high culture) – art accepted as worthy in certain period of time and place. Opposite is low art, something that is not considered as art but just craftsmanship, entertainment or some other worthless kind of arts.
play as a logical artistic combination of all parts (to put the play together) of the performance. Soon he became the interpreter of the play (Stanislavski), and parallel with it, Edward Gordon Craig and Adolphe Appia began a process of theatre director becoming creator of the performance. Although these second line of directors-creators tried to take charge of the performance, directors and playwrights remained more or less even until the middle of the twentieth century. Ibsen, Chekhov, Pirandello, Brecht and the theatre of absurd were the most important representatives of playwright’s theatre of 20 century. Playwright’s theatre means that a playwright has the power to make important decisions about staging of the play and to change the conventions of the theatre, demanding new styles of acting and directing.1

After the theatre of the absurd, creators-directors took over European theatre completely. The second half of the twentieth century – was marked not only by the supremacy of directors’ aesthetic visions, but also by the directors’ big boys’ club of power in the theatre.

What does that mean?

Power in the European theatre has two levels. First deals with who has – the power over the performance that is to say who own the performance. On the other hand, on aesthetical level, it means who has the right to make decisions about the performance - to define the meaning of the performance, level of communication with recipient, audience and change conventions. In other words, who is perceived as the author of the performance.

At the beginning of the twenty first century directors’ victory is obvious, they are in charge of the performance on the aesthetic level and can do whatever they want with it (as Zholdak did with Hamlet). They change the conventions (how it will be staged), and - create styles which their clones or pupils accept and diffuse.

Second level of power in theatre concerns with who own the theatre, meaning who has the right to make important decisions about functioning of the theatre, who is on the governmental position in theaters (managers, intendants) or festivals, who decides about repertory, invites people to work in the theatre, decides who is working in particular show or who sits in the juries. This part of the owning of a theatre is not always obvious, but it is very important. Directors took those positions but not any directors, just big boys’ club directors. Membership in the big boys’ club opens doors of big festivals, good theatres, fellowships and awards that are confirming success.

In Anglo-American theater, audience’s interest is a proof of success, in the European theatre situation is different. The government heavily funds the theatres so they do not depend on audience’s money. Therefore, the criteria of proving success in European theatres are:

• awards
• invitations to the festivals
• invitations abroad (a performance or an artist)
• critical response

Playwright is definitely excluded from place of power and from most of these criteria. Since it was not an overnight undertaking, I will show the strategies and weapons used, explain negative consequences and suggest a discussion about some possible reasons for situation in question.

PROOF NR.1:
THEATRE EXCELLENCE OR AWARDS FOR DIRECTORS

The European Theatre Prize, presented from 1986 onwards under the auspices of the European Union, is a kind of European theatre Oscar. It was organized by Taormina Arte in Taormina until 2005. After that year, the award moved from town to town (2006 Turin/Italy, 2007 and 2008

1- Artistic convention is agreement between artists and audience about form and subject of the art. For example: in Ancient Greece the convention was that chorus cannot be active, in Elizabethan time there was no scenography so one tree was presenting whole forest in Machbeth or actors were caring transparent with note This is Cyprus! In France in 17 century audience was sitting at the stage, in 19 century it was normal for the audience to come only for the famous aria in opera, in realism conventions of a fourth wall was introduced and so on...
2- Intendant is a manager of a large theatre, usually called national theatre (the one that at the most times has opera, drama and ballet together) or the most important theatre in country.
Thessalonica/Greece, 2009 Wroclaw/Poland, 2011 St. Petersburg/Russia). The most powerful European theatre institutions founded the award: European Theatre Union, European Theatre Convention, IATC – International Association of Theatre Critic and Festival D'Avignon. The board and the jury comprised of managers of the biggest (or richest) European theatres, heads of the most important festivals, big boys' club directors, influential critics...

The main award for theatre excellence was given to 11 theatre directors: Peter Brook/Great Brittan, Luca Ronconi and Giorgio Strelter/Italy, Pina Bausch and Robert Wilson/USA; Ariane Mnouchkine/France, Lev Dodin/Russia, Robert Lepage/Canada, Krystian Lupa/Poland, Peter Zadek and Peter Stein/Germany – with four exceptions: two playwrights Heiner Müller (Germany) in 1994 and Harold Pinter (Great Britain) in 2006 and two French actors (Michel Piccoli in 2001 and Patrice Chereau in 2008).

In 1990, new award was introduced - the new theatre reality, but situation did not change. The award went to 20 directors (Sasha Waltz, Christoph Marthaler, Thomas Ostermeier and Heiner Goebbels/Germany, Oskaras Krosunovas and Eimuntas Nekrosius/Lithuania, Pippo Delbono and G. B. Corsetti/Italy; Alain Platel/France, Anatolij Vasiljev and Andrey Moguchiy/Russia, Josef Nadl/Serbia, Alvis Hermanis/Latvia, Krzysztof Warlikowski/Poland, Guy Cassiers/Belgium, Rodrigo Garcia/Spain, Arpad Schilling/Hungary, Viliam Docolomansky/Slovakia, Katie Mitchell/UK, Kristian Smeds/Finland). It is nevertheless truth that the award went to eight theatre groups (Theatre de Complicite, Carte Blanche and Francois Tanguy – Theatre du Radeau/France; Theater group Hollandia/Netherlands, Societas Raffaello Sanzio/Italy, Rimini Protocoll/Germany, Teatro Meridional/Portugal, Vesturport Theatre/Iceland) but all of them were dominated by a strong directorial vision. Most of these groups did not collaborate with playwrights, some of them do not even use words in the performances. This award had only two exceptions – in 1999 the Royal Court Theatre from London received it for developing new plays and in 2007. Serbian playwright Biljana Srbijanovic received it.

To summarize, from 1986 until 2010 European Prize went to: thirty one directors, eight director-led groups, three playwrights, two actors and one theatre for developing plays - a score of thirty nine (directors) to six (everything else in theatre)! It is obvious which is the most important profession in European theatre!

The Award for theatre excellence has the power to affirm the poetic of awarded person as legitimate, while the new theatre reality award acknowledges people who create new trends in European theatre. In both cases the award is opening doors of big festivals, followed by invitation to direct in big European theatres or even position of an artistic director or intendant.

**PROOF NR. 2:**
**WHO IS MAKING A CHOICE OR HOW DO WE ANNOUNCE SEASONS OR FESTIVALS**

Most of today's theatre leadership in Europe is in the hands of directors. They are intendants, artistic directors or managers of theatres deciding about important questions like what will be staged and who is going to work in the theatre. Examples are endless, from Germany where Ostermeier became the youngest intendant of most important German theater - Schaubühne in Berlin when he was merely thirty, Marthaler, who after European prize got a position of intendant of Schauspielhaus in Zurich (Switzerland), to Eastern European names like Korsunovas (Lithuania) or Zholdak (Ukraine) who are at the heads of their theatres.

Even if directors are not at the head position of theatres, they shape the repertory according to their wishes. Very rarely theatres have a repertory policy based on plays or playwrights that they want to present, some common idea, topic or a theme! The common announcement of theatre season in my country is just a list of directors that agreed to work in a particular theatre. We had a much esteemed theatre director Paolo Magelli, who directed several Chekhov's plays in different theatres in nineties.

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1- The last award was decided for 2010 and will be given at ceremony in St. Petersburg 2011. Every award has a book with most important information about awarded people. Some awarded directors got the special edition from the award ceremony (with round tables and discussion about their work in it).
He made his own opus of Chekhov in Croatia regardless of a program (style or purpose) of these theatres. From serious drama theatre to Youth Theater, he did not change his style. On the other hand, theaters were happy to have him regardless of the fact if his style - coincides or not with the theatre. He is a big boys' club director and they know that with his performance theatre will have a production for festivals and awards! The same goes for other countries.

The situation is similar if we consider festivals, directors are mostly at the head of festivals, deciding who gets invited and directors' names shape the program. Dino Mustapic (a very talented theatre director and artistic director of Sarajevo International Festival MESS and for some time drama director at Sarajevo National Theatre) announced in his program for 2002: Among others the following will participate in this year's festival: Robert Lepage, Canada, Eimuntas Nekrosius, Lithuania, Sasha Waltz, Germany, Oskaras Koršunovas, Lithuania, as well as renowned directors from Poland, Slovenia, Croatia, the USA, France, Hungary, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and B&H.

Darko Lukic said that goal of Zagreb World Theatre Festival 2003 is to demonstrate top-quality world mainstream (…) by bringing the best of established and high-budget theatre and great directors such as Thomas Ostermeier, Robert Lepage, Jozef Nadj, Antonio Latella or Eimuntas Nekrosius.¹

Festivals all over the world (except Anglo-American world) are announcing their programs in the same way, by naming directors. Please note that the names invited to the festivals are the same names awarded with European Award! So it is obvious who is the most important in European theatre - no playwrights in highlights, not even actors (as in film festivals) the only stars of the European theatre are - directors, and these directors are not bringing playwrights along. MESS festival in 2004 had sixteen chosen performances and only two living playwrights (one Polish and one Bosnian play, but the last one was written by theatre director!) and one dead Bosnian classic (Muratbegovic). In 2004 edition of Zagreb World Theatre Festival, six of seven chosen performances were directors' vision of a classic play, novel or short story. They staged only one performance on contemporary text Cruel and Tender written by Martin Crimp, but it was an adaptation of the myth of Hercules and playwright wrote it under idea and lead of director Luc Bondy who was publicly announced in the playbill.

PROOF NR. 3:
WE DO NOT HAVE ANY PLAYS OR SECRET EXISTENCE AND SEDUCED CRITICS AND SCHOLARS

If an educated citizen of any European country wanted to name important new contemporary playwrights who appeared after the theatre of absurd and before the end of the twentieth century (excluding Anglo-Americans) how many might there be? Very few. German writers like Müller, Handke? On the other hand, we can name many important European directors.

As we saw from first two facts, playwrights were excluded from the places that are proving success and securing visibility like awards and festivals, but, the best is, everybody got the impression that there are no playwrights at all. Some countries even claimed that they could not find a talent for playwriting. These thoughts spread among theatre practitioners, critics and theoreticians.

In the framework of the Croatian centre of ITI, I set up an international drama colony which idea was to present contemporary playwrights. The idea was to exchange plays so I asked for collaboration from several European countries. When in 2000 I asked a Czech Theatre Institute to send me new and interesting playwrights they said that they did not have any playwrights - and sent me a director Jiri Pokorny instead - as the best young playwright!

Critics all over Europe were lamenting over the death of a drama as for example Ramune Marcinkевичute, when describing situation in Lithuanian theatre, said: The third feature of recent seasons is the death of Lithuanian drama. Since gaining independence, not a single new Lithuanian play worthy of notice has been staged.² This article is from Kalina Stefanova's book Eastern European Theater after the Iron Curtain that consists of essays on theatre in twelve eastern European

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countries. Every single essay names many - interesting directors. Every single one laments the lack of playwrights.

The European Theatre Convention organizes-"Theatre Forum" since 1996. In 1999, in Saint-Etienne, France, the topic was Writing for the Theatre Today.¹ Most of the names mentioned were directors. For example, the essay on German theatre opens by mentioning the latest work of the country's old directors, then introduces every interesting new director (Zadek, Steiner, Kastorf, Marthaler, Ostermeier), with just a small note on contemporary playwrights at the end of the article. The situation is very similar in other articles. There are even articles (Slovenia, Macedonia and Bulgaria) that do not mention any playwright at all, in spite of the topic!

The situation with scholars is even worse. Can you believe that none of the IFTR (the International Federation for Theatre Research – organization that gathers professors and serious researchers on theatre) congresses from 1957 has had a drama or a playwright in its title! None! Instead, they have discussed topics as national theatres, dance, design, politics, performance theory, global vs. local, even television and entertainment! The closest they got to the playwright was the topic Don Juan and Faust in the twentieth century (1991, Prague, Check Republic) and Storytelling in Contemporary Theatre (2007, Krakow Poland).

An influential theoretical book on contemporary European theatre legitimizes this status - Post-dramatic theatre by Hans-Thies Lehmann, published in Germany in 1999. He explained that European theatre has faced the death of playwright in the twentieth century, and that important theatre lives in the realm of post-dramatic theatre - performances made without/against the play with other artistic means of communication. Lehman has a list of important names of authors of post dramatic theatre - where we can find thirty-eight directors' names, twenty-seven groups (led by directors) and several playwrights, all of which have worldwide fame and received European award. Mentioned playwrights are German: Müller, Handke, Goetz and Jelinek! Lehmann is a German, no wonder he does not know about any other writers. As I said, an educated European after the theater of absurd can name very few playwrights, even a very educated one as Lehmann.

Nevertheless, people do write plays all over the Europe! When they started the playwright's award in Lithuania in 1998, they got thirty-six new plays to the surprise of the organizers.² The jury for the Marin Držić Award, given by the Croatian Ministry of Culture, received fifty-eight newly written scripts for the 2003 award! Thomas Irmer said, that forty young playwrights were chosen to fit into the trend at the end of nineties (trend of New European drama which I will explain later) and this huge number was only a selection³.

So how is possible that playwrights are so invisible in the European theatre, why are they kept secret? Is it possible that the profession that had the position of the undisputed king for seven thousand years, from Eshil till Ionesco, all of a sudden, disappeared in merely fifty years and got replaced by the new king. Such achievement must have taken some very good strategy and strong weapons and it is logical to blame it on the new king on the throne.

WEAPON NR 1:
THEATRE CONVENTIONS – WE ARE ALL THE SAME OR THROWING OUT STORY – CHARACTERS - EMOTIONS

On the aesthetic level, directors were changing conventions by abolishing the usual components of the play – story, characters, catharsis, involvement of the audience, actors, even dialog... One by one, the components were dis/mis/placed from their usual or expected places. Directors were choosing components that were helping them in expressing their vision. That is legitimate, but the

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1- The 4th European Theatre Forum 1999 – Writing for the Theatre Today, all essays were published in special issue of the magazine Du Theatre, 11/2000, Paris
choice demonstrated that the place in the play is direct consequence solely of the directors’ wish (not, for example, consequence of the theatre nature or quality of a component).

In the process of changing the conventions, the fiercest battle was fought against play. They proclaimed all the elements equal, but the effort to equalize the components or rearrange them did not make a light designer more important in the performance. The only reason of “equalization” of performance’s elements or creative process was to expel the playwright. A battle against play and dominant position of the play in the performance was actually a battle against dominant position of the playwright in the theatre, on all levels.

WEAPON NR. 2: LINGUISTIC STRATEGY - CAREFULLY CHOOSING WORDS OR NOMEN NEST OMEN

In manifestos and interviews directors were offering changes of the language that was explaining theatre performance. Drama became a play and then they replaced both words by text because nomen is omem. Play or drama means creative, finished, significant, integral, personal work. Text is just something that you start from in the process of creation, it is impersonal and somewhat insignificant. However, that was not enough.

After text, the play became scenario, script, play script, libretto, pre-text or collage. As Max Stafford Clark, who directed Shopping and F*** and Some Explicit Polaroids for Out of Joint, said about Ravenhill: He enjoys writing with the actors around - so his scripts (underlined by S.N.) tend to be a bit messy when you first read them. Writers themselves, such as Anthony Neilson confirmed that: I would have less and less of the script finished by the time we went into rehearsal. And it got to the point when I was making it up as we went along. Please note the word script rather than play, from the playwright’s mouth! Moreover, word making up instead of writing or creating.

Today the destruction of play went - all the way, so we are talking about language or even more denying sound of words or language surface as Lehmann is calling the work of Elfriede Jelinek! With these terms they managed to chase any creativity or personality away. Creation is not in the domain of the playwright, one who is bringing the utensil of the creation – language or sound of words - but in the one who is using it (director).

The same happened with drama or play, meaning theatrical event. It became theatre performance, to avoid even homonymic sound of drama as a play, then just performance, to avoid theatre that is still connected with drama in the mind of theatre goers. At the end performance became a project. In the end, we ended up with no theatre connotations at all. Instead of staging a play, directors were staging their vision in new and exciting projects that are pushing the boundaries of the art. Directors, who started as primus inter pares became the author of the project, creator of the performance, visionary, wizard, or magician of theatre.

Linguistic change of directions in which the meaning of play and director went is obvious. The fact that play used to be a synonym for written text and theatrical performance was obviously showing what component was most important for it. Play and playwright were at the top. Now, they deny play as a text, and put it on the bottom, as a pure utensil. Director went in opposite direction. From someone who is helping around, he became magician, exited the human realm and entered into the romance, as N. Frye would say. These terms went from directors’ manifestos and interviews into the criticism and revues, and finally in the theory. The theoreticians defined dominant theatre aesthetic in European theatre as

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1- Max Stafford Clark “Planned offensive”, The Stage, 4 January 2001
2- Aleks Sierz, In-Yer-Face Theatre, London, 2000, p. 67
3- N. Frye, Anatomy of criticism, theory of modes. World literature is divided in five modes according to the power of hero. Myth mode has characters that are outside the realm of human (Gods), mode of romance has saints and heroes, humans with special powers, high-mimetic mode has kings (humans with special position in the society), low-mimetic mode has people like us and mode of irony is showing people that has less power/knowledge than we in the audience.
director's *theatre* in seventies and *post-dramatic theatre* in nineties, telling us who is the king or who is the one to be dethroned, because his time is over.

**WEAPON NR. 3:**
**THEATRE STRATEGY - OWNERSHIP OF THE TEXT OR DIRECTING ONLY CLASSICS**

Directors were taking away playwright's own core of existence - ownership upon text, and they were doing it very openly! Even from the old and esteemed ones like Roberto Ciulli who said: *The text should be rethought from my own point of view.* Speaking French, he said re-penser. The same idea applies to young ones too. Serbian director Nikita Milivojević said: *I must admit that I have always felt that somehow, from the moment I got a text and wanted to make a theatre production of it - the text become mine.*

The first sign of the ownership upon text was disrespect toward playwright's stage directions, and immediately following it, was giving the play a completely different meaning from the playwright’s vision, disrespecting of stile or even genre that playwright wanted for his play. They called it - reinterpretation of the text.

Playwrights did not always agree with that. Vlatko Perković forbaide opening night of his play *Blackmail*, in 1996 at Croatian National Theatre Split, because director Petar Vecek reinterpreted the play that was meant to be tragic into something completely different. The playwright considered reinterpretation of his text as a forgery of his work.

Instead of using plays of living playwrights who still think they have some rights and dare to object to the director's intervention, the directors started taking plays from classical plays. Directing mostly the classics was a sort of must be for any candidate for the *directors big boys' club*. As young German director, Thomas Ostermeier, said: *The domination of directors in the theatre has led to the expulsion of writers from the theatre. You were not really a director unless you put on classical texts.*

Manfred Beilharz, older and esteemed German director confirmed that too: *German directors up to 90ties directed mostly Shakespeare, Chekhov and Kleist... With two exceptions Peter Zadek, who staged Tankred Dorst, or Peter Stein, who staged Botho Strauss.* And that confirmed Peter Stein's statement about staging only classics - he cannot recreate the work of a contemporary playwright.

That was the fate of a play in the theatre after Ciulli re-thought it, and Stein re-created it. That is why dead classic were perfect. On one hand, dead people cannot object, on the other, classics (canon) can communicate with audience on certain level and audience can fill the gaps in the performance with their own meaning, like in Zholdak's deconstruction of *Hamlet*.

**WEAPON NR. 5:**
**HUMAN RESOURCE – FINDING COLLABORATORS OR WITH A LITTLE HELP OF DRAMATURGE**

Destruction of existing plays led to a creation of a new text, so called *text of the performance*. Although some directors were doing it alone, most of them needed an ally and they used the newest profession in the theatre - dramaturge.

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3. When I saw a two productions of American classics (*Streetcar Named Desire* 1997 and *Death of a Salesman* 1998) directed in Croatian National Theatre by American director Steven Kent, I realized that this is the first time that I saw a director following playwright's stage directions in European theatre!
5. Gordana Ostović, "Theatrical as a weapon for life (Kazalište kao oružje za život ", *Vijenac*, 15. 06. 2000.
Dramaturge has three functions in European theatre. First function is to read and choose plays for the theatre, as an adviser to artistic director or sometimes as artistic director himself. In Anglo-American theatre, this function is called literary manager. Second function is helping director in the staging of a play, meaning studying work and time of the play, talking with actors about it, writing text for playbills but also making some necessary adaptations in transfer of the play to the stage (usually some cuts) with the respect for the play itself. In Anglo-American world, that person is helping playwright in that transfer of the play to the stage.\footnote{Blaž Lukanc Slovenian dramaturgy (Slovenska dramaturgija), Ljubljana 2001.} However, the visionary directors were using dramaturges differently. The third function of the dramaturge in European theater is a collaborator in the process of reshaping and cutting the original play or making a text of the performance from different plays thanks to collage techniques. With no sense of guilt, the original text was so severely changed that sometimes, not even one sentence from original play stayed intact.

In the process of getting playwright as far as possible from the process directors were taking words from everywhere - from actors’ games that produced a play (Peter Brook), from newspapers or real stories (verbatim – Rimini Protocoll). Some realized that they do not need words at all to be kept in mainstream European theatre. It is completely legitimate for directors to make a theatre performance without words, make text of the performance from nonlinguistic elements and base a performance on visual tableaux (Bob Wilson), movement (Christoph Marthaler), or, as Zholdak's version of Hamlet, with just ten sentences from original play.

The Croatian director Damir Zlatar Frey staged in 2003, in Theatre ITD Zagreb, Divine Hunger by Slavenka Drakulić, a novel about a woman who eats her lover. He staged it without a word being spoken by the actors on the stage – he had a stage full of sand, two naked actors running on it and about 10 sentences coming from the speakers (aha, speakers again), read with very flat voice by the actors. He publicly said that he is considering the whole novel as a big monologue that can function as stage directions and assured us that in treating a novel in this way he was showing how good a writer Slavenka Drakulić is\footnote{Ivana Mikulic: "I'll Show that Slavenka Drakulić is as Controversial as Sarah Kane (Pokazat ću da je Slavenka Drakulić kontroverzna isto kao i Sarah Kane)". Jutarnji list, 30. 01. 2003.} so, he showed us how good a writer Slavenka Drakulić is, a woman who wrote several successful novels (published in Croatia and abroad), with a performance without any of her words! Of course, he had a dramaturge as important help. Well, no wonder directors were considered magicians!

Directors and dramaturges call that process, adaptation or even dramatization. Dramatization means a process of transferring a work written in prose into dialogues, actually into a play. Nevertheless, this term was used regardless of object director/dramaturge was working on (plays, novels or else) although, it is not clear how can you dramatize something already written in dramatic form. We had a case when a theatre critic, Mari Gotovac, signed her full name as dramatizer of one Shakespeare's play, not a dramaturge!

The end of that third line of dramaturges are so called director-dramaturge teams. In Croatia, we have a creative couple: director Bobo Jelčić and dramaturge Nataša Rajković. They are taking actors' private stories or people from the street and putting them into some sort of work in process. In this case, and in lot of others, director is the most important part of the team, he has an idea instead of a play and then a dramaturge verbalizes his idea. Dramaturge replaced playwright with a completely different position of power. Dramaturge is completely subordinated to directors. In mentioned team (Jelčić/Rajković) dramaturge is at least put on the front of the playbill together with a director, but in all other cases (Marthaler's dramaturge is Stefanie Carp, Ostermeiere's is von Mayenburg, Tomaz Pandur has his sister Livija) dramaturges are just one small line in the playbill.

Interesting thing is that all dramaturges are actually people with a writing talent that they suppress by serving to directors. Very rarely some of the dramaturges start to write their own plays (like von Mayenburg), most of them never.
WEAPON NR. 5:
PSYCHOLOGICAL STRATEGY – INFLUENCING PUBLIC OPINION OR TWO TRAPS FOR PLAYWRIGHTS

Despite of the directors taking over the power in the theatre, linguistic weapons and collaborators who could produce text of the performance from nonlinguistic sources, the need for a playwright as an important part of the theatre was still present. Cry for the playwrights, especially contemporary ones in their own countries, is and will remain permanent request from the audience!

First, as I said, directors were sending out impression that we do not have good playwrights at all. As we saw in awards, festivals and theatre repertoires – directors shut off playwrights from the power places and they were not visible on the broader level of European theatre. They were mostly local events, so it really seemed that there were no playwrights. In addition, there was also a news spread out that there will be no playwrights ever again. When I started festival that wanted to promote playwriting, everybody told me that I was wrong because the future of the theatre is in multimedia and nonverbal description of reality.¹, said Manfred Beilharz, one of the founders of Bonner Biennale.

Despite that, playwrights still existed, writing, and even worse, knocking on the director’s and dramaturge’s doors in an attempt to get their new plays on the stage. The big boys’ club directors could not shut the door to the playwrights who were bringing scripts but they could shut their access to the stage. For that, they needed a good excuse and some psychological tactic.

First, they were not reading their plays. Working as a journalist, many times I came across a statement who can read all that scripts that are crazy people bringing to me, uttered by dramaturges (who were paid exactly to do that – read plays!) and directors (who were supposed to stage these plays!). This could be seen as a sort of a joke but directors needed a serious public excuse for not staging plays, especially contemporary plays, and they found it by using two excellent traps.

First trap was most perfidious. It was declared that in Europe a playwright is not a craftsman (as in USA) but a genius. A good play is the consequence of the lightning flash of divine talent, not of a process of learning and development. As Jovan Hristic said: We are discussing the role and the function of the playwright in the theatre. I deeply believe that this is not a question decided by theatre directors, actors, or even theatre critics. It is a question decided by God. If he does not give us a great playwright, we have to do without text or take classical texts.²

Although the thought to be God’s favorites might sound flattering for the playwrights, this was a trap. Something God-given cannot be learned, or developed, so all over the Europe the Anglo-American model of playwright’s workshops was looked down upon as something completely unworthy. There is no legitimate place in educational system where you can learn how to write. No courses of creative writing and no study of it, but there were many new studies called dramaturgy.³

The young playwrights to be could study dramaturgy but they had to hide their wish to write! At web site of Zagreb drama academy you can find different possible jobs that you can perform after the study of dramaturgy – but you cannot find the word playwright at the list of jobs, you cannot find it anywhere in the program!

The situation was taken to the extreme: in the case of staging of a contemporary play, playwright was not allowed to sit in on rehearsals because he was too disturbing to the creative team (director and dramaturge)! Logically, he was not part of that process. Playwright was even not allowed to develop a play and improve it, to learn something from the production process and it is difficult to make a good play without that process.

They did not search for playwrights, helped them or discussed them, directors were just waiting for God to send them a genius. Of course, that sky was empty. Nevertheless, even when God did something, when some playwright dared to come and show his play, than the second part of the trap was activated. The IATC (International Association of Theatre Critics) symposium in Novi Sad in 1997 was dedicated to The Fate of the Text in Today’s Theatre but they were talking very

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1- Gordana Ostović, "Theatre as a weapon for life (Kazalište kao oružje za život ", Vjenac, 15. 06. 2000.
2- Jovan Hristić in The Fate of the Text in Today's Theatre, p. 154
3- At Osijek Arts Academy, Theatre department we are planning the first Playwrights MA study in Europe!
theoretically about the position of the text in theatre, describing director's visions with almost nothing about contemporary playwriting, as Nina Kiraly pointed out: Most of the discussion was about Shakespeare and Hamlet.¹

This is very logical because second trap was that every play, even the first, new, timid attempt by a young person, was compared directly with Hamlet - pure God's voice. No playwright had a chance compared to that! Moreover, nobody could raise the voice in defense of any particular playwright because who could dare to claim that playwright is a God's voice or author of a new Hamlet.

If it accidentally happened that some playwright was staged, bypassing the big boys club, and especially if the play was liked by audience, he was proclaimed a craftsman, not artistic enough and not worthy of the great director's consideration.² His play was left only in lower art, in genres – comedies, love stories, melodramas, SF, whodunit...

WEAPON NR. 5: CONQUERING ENEMY - COMPLETE OBEDIENCE FOR PRISONERS OR I AM NOT A PLAYWRIGHT

The situation mentioned before is not very encouraging for playwrights and they do not have many contra weapons to use. The case of Vlatko Perkovic and his forbidding the play did not end very well – he got court order to forbid opening night, but his play was never again staged, although he got the award on the contest of National Theatre in Split and is esteemed theatre person (playwright and director!). In addition, his playwright career did not flourish after case in question. So how could a new and unknown playwright dare to protest?

The situation in European theatre was not giving any chance to playwright, especially after big boys' club director proclaimed that the quality of the new play was not important any more, as a young Serbian director, Gorcin Stojanovic, admitted: ...as a theatre director, I do not need a great playwright. I need good performance material.³

If the contemporary, meaning living, playwright wants to become accepted by the big boys' club he must not fight, he must submit. Submission means that playwright had to be close to the directors – most important, aesthetic orientations but preferred are political and sexual too.

Aesthetic orientations means that the playwright has to accept to become good performance material, become invisible and resign from his former powerful place in performance. Playwright had to be willing to become either the dramaturge of his own play (to be willing to cut and paste his text endlessly according to a director's vision), or to write plays so open in form that it can be re-created endlessly, again according to director's vision.

That is why two most performed European contemporary plays in the second half of the twentieth century⁴ are Georg Bühner's Wayzeck (four unfinished fragments with no ending) and Heiner Müller's Hamletmachine (the political reinterpretation of Hamlet put in a five scenes on seven pages!). Both plays are open enough to any particular director's vision and creation.

There are many candidates willing to submit one's own work to director, but in order to be chosen in the big boys' club playwright also has to renounce of his authorship, openly and publicly.

As the German playwright, Tankred Dorst said: It is said today that the author does not write a play but a text. We are becoming used to that. It used to annoy me and even make me very angry.⁵ It is not just words game, playwright had to resign from main characteristics of the play (story, characters, catharsis even dialogues) and be open enough to accept any interpretation possible. That is

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1- Nina Kiraly in The Fate of the Text in Today's Theatre, p. 160.
2- In Croatia we have a case of a playwright Miro Gavran who was staged all over Europe but considered as pure "craftsman" until the Bosnian professor Gordana Muzafferja wrote a book on his plays analyzing it with a postmodern theory apparatus.
3- Gorcin Stojanovic, in The Fate of the Text in Today's Theatre, p. 154
4- According to the editions om of ITI World of theatre The World of Theatre that is for several decades published by Bangladesh centre of ITI in the frame of ITI-Worldwide. Book is bringing essays about last season in at least fifty to hundred countries all over the world. Authors are always writing about theatre performances or events they consider the most important.
why Roberto Ciulli was quoting Heiner Müller acceptance of director Bob Wilson’s reinterpretations in staging *Hamletmachine* as the right attitude of playwright today. Müller replied: *I like it very much. My text is like the rock that a Bob’s performance discovered. Like the waves of the sea.*

Lehmann is included Heiner Müller as important post-dramatic playwright by quoting Müller’s attitude toward his own plays. Müller calls his post-dramatic text “description of the picture”, of “one landscape from another side of the death” and “explosion of a memory in one extinct dramatic structure.” Do I have to say that Elfriede Jelinek, also accepted in the club and quoted by Lehman, abolished all the elements of a play on the formal level — no characters, no story, no lines of particular character. Jelinek does not consider herself as a playwright at all, and she considers her plays as language as a material for composition. Nevertheless, Lehmann put her on the list of important post-dramatic playwrights and called her plays language surfaces.

If you are a playwright, aside from writing plays with no characters, logical lines, story or given meaning, aside from renouncing all your authorship, accepting inferior position and expressing the complete obedience to directors, you still had to pray to the mentioned God heavily to be chosen because directors were not taking them in big numbers. Remember the list of the playwrights in the program of the mentioned festivals.

**WEAPON NR. 6:**

**FIGHTING ENEMIES’ ALLY - DIRECTORS/PLAYWRIGHT’S ADVOCATES OR INVISIBLE OUTCASTES FROM THE CLUB!**

Of course, not all European directors in the second half of the twentieth century took such position towards playwrights. The directors who liked plays, especially contemporary plays, and wanted to stage them from the playwright’s point of view were expelled from the big boys’ club. A British director Lorne Campbell said that German colleagues told him that all British directors are sissies because they serve playwright. In Croatian language, they were called invisible directors — still nomen est omen. They were expelled from art into the realm of craftsmanship. That kind of director, playwright advocate, cannot get any position of power, and very rarely award or invitation to an important festival, even if they have excellent performances and work. On the other hand, members of the club are getting invitations even before the performance is made.

Everybody who was in favor of the playwright was considered old-fashioned or conservative, or populist, and it makes sense. If the main play’s elements were under label of craftsmanship or expelled, if playwrights seemed - non-existing or at least not worthy enough (not much around God’s lighting), advocating plays as an important part of the theatre must appear look as backward.

At the same time, we were all getting very clear idea about the value of the particular theatre, not just from directors’ mouths. Lehman calls post-dramatic theatre authentic testimony of the time. Few pages before he was talking about the death of the big ideas and evaluations (postmodern fashionable attitude), but when it comes to the aesthetic, he will give us very clearly a tip of fresh artistic idea and real artistic values. Therefore, we conclude that this theatre is only worthy of studying and talking about.

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1- Roberto Ciulli in *The Fate of the Text in Today’s Theatre*, p. 160.
2- Hans-Thies Lehmann *Post-dramatic theater*
3- Cornelia Niedermeier, in *New European Drama: Art or Commercial Product?*
4- Karolina Prykowska-Michalak, in *New European Drama: Art or Commercial Product?*
5- As an actor said for the performance *Jazz* (Croatian national theater in Rijeka 2004) they got invitation for several festivals before the opening night! He was so proud on that fact, didn’t see anything wrong about it! Do I have to say that the performance was directed by Ivica Buljan, one of the directors that had the power in Croatia—he is functioning as artistic director of Zagreb Youth Theatre and head of the most prestigious - Zagreb World Theatre Festival!
6- Hans-Thies Lehmann *Post-dramatic theater*
WEAPON NR. 7
FIGHTING ENEMIES' ALLY 2 - AUDIENCE SHOULD BE EDUCATED OR WE ARE ALL STUPID

There is one very interesting negative consequences of directors taking over the theatre throne in the second half of 20 century. Aside from magician-directors who are really geniuses like Robert Lepage (Canada), most of the big boys' club directors are making cold, emotionless, quasi/or/highly intellectual performances with very visual, incoherent, private and non communicative visions. It is difficult to communicate with someone's private and incoherent vision despite of little helping tips like Hamlet in the title of Zholdak play. It is not enough to take Hamlet and expect audience to fill completely incoherent row of living pictures with its own ideas about Hamlet, at least not for three hours. Therefore, very often, these big directors' visions were actually boring. Boredom is the logical consequence of facing something you cannot communicate and connect with your own experience. Listening to unknown language can put to sleep and that happens very often when following the visions of directors from the big boys' club.

Directors were defining their vision through very wise theories explaining to us that we are witnessing the deliberate death of former conventions like communication, catharsis, emotions, audience engagements, mimetic illusion and so on. Critics and theoreticians accepted that after some time - we had postmodern, deconstruction, post structuralism - all these theories were explaining to us very cleverly, that process of deconstruction is something very natural to our time. Awards were given, festivals invitation distributed, important positions were in the pocket, king was undisputed and everything looked well. However, there was a serpent in the heaven, the most important playwright's alay - audience.

Audience want plays, they want emotions, story, mimetic illusion, they want to feel and communicate with what they see on the stage. They are not willing to accept clever explanations instead of it, like theoreticians and critics are - so audience left. The end of nineties had a real crisis of audience throughout European theatre. Even the fiercest advocate of post-dramatic aesthetic had to admit that. Lehmann said that post dramatic theatre was accepted as the paradigm of the theatre, but he had to admit that this did not happen with a lot of sympathy and that most of the audience expect traditional theater.1

As theatre from the big boys' club visions could not get audience, directors came up with a way out of it. First, they embraced a theory that high art does not need a lot of audience, just chosen one. Actually, real art does not need audience at all! A lot of audience became a sign of populist, meaning craftsmen's theatre, low theatre with no artistic value. Remember, that is theatre with a playwright. All over the Europe audience is considered stupid, old-fashioned, conservative... not worthy to be heard or to be consulted regarding repertoire. Audience should be educated and influenced in taste and thinking.

Secondly, directors are deliberately making performances for small audience. Usually performance is performed on the stage, on small stages, in some environmental space (in cellars, in aisles of churches).... If they staged it on a regular big stage they would very often cover half of the rows in the theatre audience with pretext of some art-vision, in order to limit audience space, because these performances cannot face so called regular audience in the home theatre more than five times. However, if a director was member of the club, performance would travel around the world, mostly on festivals! These are so called festival-performances.

However, the problem is that theatre cannot survive without audience, so some managers (who are not directors) are intentionally putting on two of so-called festival-performance and two, as they say, just for the audience!

1- Hans-Thies Lehmann Post-dramatic theatre
WEAPON NR. 8
OK, WE WILL FIND A PLAYWRIGHT FOR YOU OR NEW EUROPEAN DRAMA

The problem with audience escalated at the end of nineties. It became so obvious in so many European countries that even governments perceived it as a serious problem. Therefore, the discussion about runaway of audience stirred up the narrow big boys' club realm and the demand for contemporary playwright, as savior who can bring the remedy to the theatre - became very strong. All of the sudden, at the peak of their power, theatre directors start to feel endangered, so they did something very clever. They started talking how we do need new playwrights and started to search for them.

The process was very strong in Germany. German, young and at that time not-known, director Thomas Ostermeier, who was a head of a very small Berlin theater called Baracque (barrack), started a search for new drama. At that time in Britain, among thousands of other plays, one new trend was causing a stir (plays of Sarah Kane and Mark Ravenhill). It was very violent and filthy language filled trend, about drug addicts, prostitutes, and emotionally and fiscally crippled people, very soon called in-yer-face drama or new brutalism. Because of explicit violence and low quality of the plays, it caused such severe reactions of audience and critics that theatre became the first page news and got prime TV time!

That trend got Ostermeier's attention so he staged some of the plays, got similar media attention (at the beginning against the plays) and proclaimed it as paradigm for New European drama, the only answer to the feeling of our time and new generations. Thanks to that, the young German directors found their entrance to the main stage. Theatres/directors started to search for young playwrights - but not the best ones, Ostermeier was searching explicitly for German Ravenhill or as Imer said: After Ostermeier got the media attention by staging the British brutalist, the general opinion changed and need for new plays become obvious when the main question was posed: "Who is German Ravenhill?" Not who is new Goethe!

From German festivals and through different networks (translators, workshops...) the picture of that kind of plays as new European drama went all over Europe and young directors all over Europe were searching for the same kind of plays. Young playwrights were bringing the Kane/Ravenhill plays - full of explicit but empty violence, which were causing a shock and reaction of the audience, becoming more and more excessive. On the other hand, they had empty characters, without any social environment (they could be from anywhere) whose only constant was their life in the world without possibility for any positive emotion or communication except violence.

Although the search was very strong and lasted for nearly a decade, and people were writing, directors did not find many playwrights. The biggest name outside British role models is Marius von Mayenburg, young German playwright, who was and still is a dramaturge of Ostermeier. There was also Biljana Srbjjanovic, a female playwright from Serbia who got European fame on that wave, helped by her position of a dissident to Serbian government.

Directors insulted all the opponents of the new trend as conservative, backward, old fashioned and even homophobe because most of the characters were gay. The cry for the basic human values, felling of insult to the pictures of direct blasphemy was called fascist. One by one opposed voice shut down. The ultimate argument for the trend was his fame in other, more advanced theatre countries. In Poland, they explained to the audience and critics that Germany is crazy about it; in Slovakia, that Poland has the best theatre full of productions of Sarah Kane and so on... As most of the people do not travel around, and the performances had proved of success (invitations to festivals and awards) what could a local audience member or a local critic say? Critics started to praise it (after Kane's death and her world fame even British critics renounced from their first impression about her work).

Because of the similarity of all chosen plays, and their lack of story/characters /catharsis replaced with some cold, violent scenes audience soon got fed up with the trend and left the theatre again.

The trend ended, left only progenitors as the stars (Kane, Ravenhill), and even playwrights renounced - Ravenhill is not writing that kind of plays any more. What is most important, the playwrights did not get their position in the theatre. Although there were some who entered the big boys' club and got real world fame, directors were still in charge. They were choosing them, shaping them (in the workshops) and directors were getting all the fame. The most important European production of Sarah Kane is Cleansed directed by Polish director Krzysztof Warlikowski (awarded one) which is far more famous for the director's impressive visual scenes of poetry of violence than for the text itself. The same thing happened in other countries where young directors got public attention and entered the club.

After a while, directors stopped searching for new playwrights, stopped even directing "discovered" playwrights and went back to the classics. Just look at the titles Ostermeier directed in the last five years: Shakespeare, Hauptmann, O'Neill, Wedekind, Büchner! The festivals after the trend kept the same type of announcements - names of directors, and the European award with exception of Biljana Srbljanovic who also joined the directors!

Everything remained the same with several exceptions:

1) Although the trend is dead in the centers (Great Britain, Germany) it is spreading as waves of a stone thrown in the water. The center is still but the waves are floating away. We still have many young people trying to write that kind of plays in hope of European glory, but now directors have excuse not to stage them - they are writing something that is history.

2) The good term, the term we all strived for (new European drama) was so spoiled that nobody wants to hear about it. The conventions changed - the tolerance for explicit violence, filthy language or sexual intercourse on the stage is much higher in the high art than before - up to the embarrassment of the audience.

3) Because of all that, audience is running away from the high art theatre again - running away to genres like comedies, melodramas, or even soap operas on TV. After the shock of new European drama, Sherezada is the real treat for the mind and heart!\

CONCLUSION

1) WHAT IS A PLAYRIGHT THAT WE CRY FOR HIM

I have already mentioned the need for playwright several times. Whenever we had golden era in history of the theatre, many people of different social status and age in the theatre, we also had strong playwrights. Even now in the realm of director's theatre and post dramatic theatre the cry for playwright is strong.

Managers of the theatre can tell you that audience is always asking for plays, especially "domestic" ones. That need for playwrights is not just the need of ordinary audience - critics and scholars think like that too. Anna Lypkivska's cry about lack of contemporary Ukrainian plays starts with a sentence: Today, staging Ukrainian plays is extremely important. In addition, Polish critic Wojciech Majcherek finishes his essay on Polish theatre in 1999-2002 with a sentence: What it lacks
are contemporary plays that try to answer the question who we are, at the turn of the century.\textsuperscript{1} Reviewing the Croatian play (\textit{Priest's sons} by Mate Matic) staged in Moscow in 2004, theatre critics were so much astonished and delighted with a good story that they started complaining how their playwrights do not write stories at all – they are just succumbing to the postmodern fashion.\textsuperscript{2}

Where does that need come from and what is playwright to us that we cry for him so much?\textsuperscript{3} The answer is: It is immanent to the human being to communicate through story/character and emotion/catharsis. Normal and healthy psyche is functioning by associative model of unconsciousness that is always taking new facts and with help of some pictures putting them into the grid, into the network of a story. Emotional intelligence is filling that grid with emotions to make it stronger and more coherent. On the other hand, computer or photographic memory, the one based on mathematical and logical principal, is pathological. That is how a schizophrenic mind is functioning and that is the reason we must have the whole world organized in three types of stories: first, a story about our lives (biography), then a story about our world (history) and third a story about spiritual dimension (myth and religion).

You can abolish story/characters/emotions and write very wise philosophical books about it, you can fool critics, scholars, jury members and bureaucrats in the ministry of cultures who are giving money to the European theater - but you cannot fool audience. When audience is waiting in the dark for the performance, they want something they will communicate with and feel about: a logical story that is told through characters they can recognize, some conflict that matters and emotions they can empathy with. That is why we need mimetic illusion, because we need soul of the human exposed in front of us that we can recognize. That need is immanent to our nature. Cold, intellectual directors' visions are interesting for a moment, as an interesting new toy, but cannot last for a long time. Because of the all stated we need plays and playwrights in the theatre who will advocate the story.

2) POSSIBLE REASONS OR LET'S DISCUSS IT

Everything stated up until now are facts we are all aware of. However, the main question remains unanswered. If there is a need for playwright immanent to the human nature, if there are playwrights who write, how is possible that director's tactic and strategy was so successful? How is possible that this post/beyond/above dramatic aesthetic is dominant in mainstream theatre despite of audience running away? I can only try to name some possible reason and open a discussion.

1) Organization of the European theater – no need for audience

European theatre, from 17 century up until today, was and still is court theatre, meaning highly subsidized by court (government, county, city...) and independent from the audience money/profit. Ticket sale income in my country ranges from eight (national theatre) to twenty (satirical theatre) percent of theatre income. Therefore, to stay in the power in theatre you do not need to please audience but the representatives of the court.

Anglo-American theatres, on the other hand, with producers who are trying to make money, are oriented toward audience that is bringing money. Should I even mention that in Anglo-American theatre playwright is still dominant?

2) Metaphorical convention – no possibility to offend the king

You can please court representatives with visible signs of success – awards, invitations to the festival and critics response. It is not important that the court representatives like the performance, it is important that they do not dislike it. It can be disliked only if they understand what is happening on the stage and get offended. During communist regime, some contemporary plays had serious political problems in theatre in my country because the representatives of the power recognized themselves in the characters of the primitive communist leaders (\textit{Performance of "Hamlet" In the Village Of Mrduša Donja} by Ivo Brešan). Maybe that is why directors who are working and living in the countries of a "court theatre" developed that metaphorical aesthetic line that includes destruction

\textsuperscript{1} Wojciech Majcherek, "Poland", in \textit{The World of Theatre}(1999-2002), ITI, Dhaka, 2003, p. 265
\textsuperscript{2} Elena Jampolskaja “Time for birth”, \textit{Russkij kurer}, 21. sept. 2004
\textsuperscript{3} Paraphrase of Hamlet’s line about actors: \textit{What is Hecuba to him that he cries for her?}
of the play and cold, intellectual performances. Nobody was ever punished for non-mimetic, boring performance, just recognizable characters.

3) Closed circles or human fear of exclusion

How many people travel and have complete insight into European theatre? Most of the people read about what is happening in other countries and only informational tip of the iceberg is coming to us – awards, festivals, manifestos... When you hear that Zholdak was invited to all important European festival in last two years, that he got UNESCO's award for young directors (given by Georges Banu, very esteemed critic and professor!), how can you dare to say something against, even if you strongly dislike his work. So local critics are sitting in the audience, trying to defend what they see, because they are afraid that if they say anything against it they will admit that they do not understand something already approved in the European theatre. It is not easy to say emperor is naked when you do not know what is going on in the world and you want to be accepted into circles of power of your profession. Look what playwrights did to their own plays, they denied them, so why criticize critics who renounce their own taste!

4) Development of aesthetics ideas – let it be new even if it worse

Changing of the artistic convention always involves dynamic opposition. Every new period is fighting “old” conventions in two directions. One is abolishing old conventions, for example Aristotelian three rules in middle age and romanticism. Second stream is adding some new conventions, for example violence was forbidden on the stage for a long time, it could be just “clean” sword death in Elizabethan time or a “clean” shot in realism, but new European drama introduced explicit violence on the stage. As we are losing conventions one by one, we have to invent more and more “new” things. As the good ones were already used up, we ended up in the realm of shocking, cold and empty. I hope that we will find a way out – into some new romanticism, new sentimentality, something with emotions and story...

PS

• I am not against directors; the best play staged without serious director who is not only capable to connect all the elements to the aesthetic unit, but to bring coherent interpretation, sounds empty. A good play has many layers and simple reading of the lines will not bring them all out. There has to be someone who will make a decision which layer is dominant for us today. In today's theatre, that person is a director! I am just against forcing some boring, cold and fashionable performances as the ultimate art, I am against imposing ones' trends without any possibility to object (as it happened with New European drama), I am against that some people have exclusive right to proclaim the art and – exclude everyone else... I am in favor of theatre that can touch my soul, tell something to my mind, tell me something about the world and make me better person... Is that wish a crime in European theatre today?

1- In article about new European drama I showed how the process of critics' changing opinions. ("British Brutalism, the 'New European Drama', and the Role of the Director" NTQ, 83/2005, p. 255-272)
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