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The Contradictions of Cultural (Theatrical) Memory

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Abstract: **In the late 1960s and 1980s, Slovak theatre was confronted with two sweeping social and cultural upheavals, a logical consequence of profound political repercussions. The former was connected with the events following the 21st of August 1968 (the invasion of Czechoslovakia by five of the Warsaw Pact armies), the latter with the democratic changes after The Velvet Revolution, in November of 1989. In the 1970s and 1980s, creative professionals shared a common theme (enemy) in an undemocratic social system; from the 1990s onwards, they have been on a quest for new themes. Particular attention is given to coming to terms with the past through an examination of personalities who shaped Slovak history.**

Keywords: **Slovak theatre, Jozef Tiso, Gustáv Husák, new drama**

"I don't feel like looking back,
At midnight, the old world comes to an end.
And even if it makes you mad,
You can't live in the past too long."[1]

In theatre, the historical memory of our contemporaries differs from real life. We are inclined to only pick bits and pieces of history, those that suit us. We often "forget" how facts are interconnected. Today, the facts about our past will not be read in books full of events and concrete examples, or in reputable encyclopaedia. The image of ordinariness is about getting information from publicly accessible internet portals and student papers. Oftentimes, such information is a loose interpretation of history. However, information covered by the media and presented in interviews with celebrities are oftentimes inaccurate. Publicists do not have time to verify facts. . Older persons wish to make their past more attractive. The younger generation will repeat what they have read or heard, without taking into account logical connections, which can alert them that what they claim may not be true. Journalists write and publish what creative professionals, and especially actors, tell them. If only they took the time to verify facts, they would realise that a lot of said facts are not accurate and that the actual world is different. Memory is neither a subjective nor a random process of the preservation

of certain traces of past experiences and events.[2] In order to preserve cultural memory, aesthetic, cultural, and historical phenomena in their interaction must be examined.

New media change the world. Traditional media, including print media (newspapers, magazines) or radio and TV, are on the decline. Internet servers, mobile applications, netbooks, tablets substitute a part of our communication. One should not forget that theatre and film are also media. They, too, disseminate information, provoke debate, and communication. The difference between traditional and new media is quite obvious. The content of old media is created by a team of pre-selected experts who have the right to decide on the type and form of information to be communicated to the reader, listener, or audience (editor, newspaper owner, drama advisor, director, producer). The content of new media will be created by all those who make their opinions and reactions public, and those who are active communicators via social networks (YouTube, Twitter, Facebook). New media have become a vital tool of global information exchange. Needless to say, they can be misused (well-known cases of photomontages of natural disasters, installed pictures of war conflicts, and the like). All those who post documentary photos, information and their views on websites and social networks write new, modern history. Given the fact that not all the information from past decades have been digitised, we lose historical connections. Hardly any journalist or blogger builds up their data base or takes the time to browse in archives or to leaf through the yellowish pages of old newspapers of the pre-internet era that have been recorded on film in the economically thriving countries.

The main diagnosis of our ordinariness is our constant lack of time and little interest in historical memory. In their reactions, the "creators" of the new history of Central European countries boasting a democratic system indulge in political debates. They not only screen politicians, but also everyone and everything else. Oftentimes, they are not bothered to obtain as comprehensive of information as possible on a given event and/or to consider it in a wider context. What does the future hold if it is correct to say that "New media are an effective tool to make the world a better place?" (Fridrich, 2011, own translation). Will they be able to leave our posterity with information that is a true reflection of reality?

Slovak theatre boasts rich experiences with the impact of political events on creative professionals and the greater theatrical culture. Let us recall two landmark events of the last three decades of the twentieth century, which have directly affected the development of theatre art in Slovakia. The first landmark was 1968, the year of the invasion of Czechoslovakia by five of the Warsaw Pact armies; the second one was The Velvet Revolution of 1989.

THE BEGINNING OF THE PERIOD OF NORMALISATION

On August 21st, 1968, the citizens of Czecho-Slovakia[3] were on their summer vacation. Theatres were having their summer break, too. Tank guns pointing at helpless citizens meant an invasion of all towns. The discontinuation of the process of social revival triggered by the internal reform of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, which for many years had been under Moscow's command, and the suppression of the freedom of expression, meant that for the next twenty years, one had to learn to live by self-preservation. Simply said, the revivalist process lifted theatre censorship, as it ushered in the staging of

Western and absurd drama, welcoming free travel to Western countries. From the 1970s onwards, "normalisation"[4] permeated all areas of culture and the arts.

Individual manifestations of protest and disagreement did not affect the normalisation process, which had a profound impact on the development of theatre. Before long, The Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Socialist Republic closed down two ensembles, the first being the *Tatra Revue* in Bratislava, in 1970, and a year later, *Divadlo na korze* (The Theatre on the Promenade). The grounds for closing down the former were "poor artistic standards" and "serious deficiencies in the ideology and content of programme activity" (Jaborník, 1999 : 36, own translation).[5] Ironically, the drama ensemble of *Divadlo na korze*[6] formally commenced its activity on October 1st, 1968. This happened less than six weeks after the invasion, at a time when the state border was again closed down, and those attempting to illegally cross the border to Austria or to West Germany were shot down. Young theatre professionals of this theatre had no formal programme. They were united by a common goal to use theatrical means to express their attitudes through dramatic source texts connected to the time in which they lived, even though the connection was purely metaphorical. The productions of *Divadlo na korze* were forthright manifestations of discontent with power and they were positively received by critics and the general public immediately after they were premièred. Two weeks after the première of Ostrovsky's *Les (The Forest),* The Ministry of Culture closed down the theatre on July 1st, 1971. In order to avoid queries about ideological and political motivations behind the measure, the Ministry made references to the Economic Code, basing its decision on a general statement: "This measure has been implemented as a consequence of a constant infringement of financial and economic provisions, and on grounds of ideological and artistic shortcomings in its operation" (Jaborník, Mistrík, 1994 : 81, own translation).[7] It should be noted that never before, and never after, has a cultural institution in Slovakia been abolished on "economic grounds".

Even in culture, normalisation sanctions were more moderate in Slovakia than in the Czech Republic. In the 1970s and 1980s, theatres were founded by The Ministry of Culture and their role was primarily ideological. The Ministry set the number of premières to be staged by theatres as well as the share they should uphold between the national dramaturgy and the plays from other socialist countries. An official list of banned authors and plays was non-existent, although almost anyone connected with culture was aware of its content. The Ministry of Culture approved the dramaturgic plan and, hence, the authors of new texts and the translators of plays. The State funded the theatres directly through a budget chapter of the Ministry of Culture (except for puppet theatres for a limited period of time). Unlike the present, the grant system was non-existent.

Archives contain ample documentary evidence of the role played by the Ministry of Culture. In light of the current "capitalist" free market system and democracy, many young people find such an encroachment upon the operation of the theatre network unacceptable, despite the fact that even today, theatre owners often determine focus (for instance, comedy genre, etc.).

OPEN THEATRE IN A CLOSED SOCIETY

What seemed to be a tacit resignation of many theatres, created, in fact, an internal basis for their creative teams to escape the ordinariness and dreariness of socialist realism. This was achieved by seeking new forms and theatrical trends. Examples of that were sought and found in the modern avant-garde Czech and Polish theatre. Despite the fact that in the 1990s, young theatre critics and creative professionals rejected en bloc the previous period of real socialism, there were productions made that are still of interest to our contemporary theatre-goers. They offer a new interpretation of classical works by carrying a message for the modern man and his current worldview. The formal social function of theatre was brought forward in time, so that audiences familiarised themselves with modern theatre, with its passive protagonists and their antihero roles. Of such nature were several productions of *Divadlo Slovenského národného povstania* (The Theatre of the Slovak National Uprising) in Martin (today, *Slovenské komorné divadlo* – The Slovak Chamber Theatre), such as, for instance, Karol Horák's *Medzivojnový muž* (*A Man Between the Wars,* 1984) or *Baal* by Bertolt Brecht, 1989 (Podmaková, 2009). Especially the protagonists of Gogol's plays were caricatured images of period society (for instance, *Revízor – The Government Inspector – in Divadlo pre deti a mládež* (The Theatre for Children and Youth, in Trnava, 1978, today *Divadlo Jána Palárika* – Ján Palárik Theatre), leaning towards grotesque realism. A number of productions departed from the "veracity" of socialist realism. The younger generation sought new means of expression in order to capture the state of society. Let us mention the model production *Kvinteto* (*The Quintet,* 1985), which tabled the issue of the decomposition of expression as a self-reflection of young creative professionals (slow death in an enclosed space, the potential for internal revolt, and the creation of a new belief system). Even with a lapse of twenty-eight years from its production, *Kvinteto* has remained to be a model metaphoric expression of the state of a decomposed society.

Theatre is a living art. Unlike literature or film, it does not have a definite form. Each performance is different, although the production is fixed. It not only depends on the audience and their reactions, but also on the situation in which a performance is given. Until 1989, the most frequently used means of expression to present the then ordinariness had been through metaphors. Theatre acquired new attributes of "social" functions. Several creative professionals used the past to express their views of the future. For example, *Téma Majakovskij* (*The Mayakovski Theme,* 1987), produced by the theatre in Trnava, used the well-known revolutionary personality to present the conflict of two worlds: the old world and the new one. On the stage, officials in grey uniforms carrying briefcases are confronted with futurists, only to see the ideas of a better future lose their battle with the machinery of the state and the political red tape (Podmaková, 2006). Even today, such an image of contemporariness would provoke a keen reaction. The opening performance of a collective improvisation, the play *Predposledná večera* (*The Penultimate Supper,* June 30th, 1989), staged by the same theatre was indirectly a component part of the sweeping changes in Europe (refugees from The German Democratic Republic, the toppling off of the governments of East Germany, Czecho-Slovakia and Rumania). A decomposed report of the state of society, of its individuals seemed to have given the proverbial period after the normalisation process.

These were generational testimonies also found in other theatres, and demonstrated by generationally interconnected groups of creative professionals sharing a common vision of theatre and civil views and attitudes to Slovak theatre history. Let us mention the plays by Tadeusz Różewicz *Pasca* (*The Trap,* 1986), Marivaux's *Dotyky a spojenia* (*Touches and Connections,* originally *Spor*, *The Dispute,* 1988), or Brecht's *Baal* (1989) staged by the theatre in Martin. *Dotyky a spojenia* won the critics' award of *The Guardian* at the prestigious Edinburgh theatre festival (1991). Although *Baal* did not receive an award, its production signaled an opening up of a debate on the perception of the world by the younger generation, on its denial of ethical and social belief systems. The director, Roman Polák, conceived the character of Baal as a rock star, as a rebellious man, "whose incapacity to communicate with the world of conventions, hypocrisy and sordidness leads to aggressiveness" (Polák, 1989 : 4, own translation). The director admits that the production "is intended to act as shock therapy that arouses man from lethargy and breaks him away from daily routine" (own translation). His words, and the production itself, are suggestive of the generational behaviour of creative professionals in the early 21st century.

Other productions may also be listed, which by their method, visual devices and signs used, have become a hidden, or even visible, metaphor of the views of theatre professionals vis-a-vis the social system and interpersonal relations. This is caputred in Rose's *Dvanásť nahnevaných mužov* (*Twelve Angry Men,* 1977), or Jordan Radichkov's play *Pokus o lietanie* (*A Try to Fly,* 1980). In more audacious productions, theatre professionals bluntly expressed their views of the socio-political system, such as in Nikolai Erdman's *Mandát* (*The Mandate,* 1988) and *Samovrah* (*The Suicide,* 1989).

The features of Gorbachev's Perestroika were not outwardly transposed to Slovak society. New "Soviet" plays criticising the system and power instruments since the Great October Socialist Revolution could neither be published nor staged. Theatre in the USSR assumed a new social role, i.e., the mediation of true history. The Czechoslovak party and government bodies were unable to respond to these changes as flexibly as citizens would have expected them to.

THE BEGINNINGS OF "NEW" MEMORY

17th November, 1989, put an end to the period of normalisation. Debates about democracy moved from town squares into theatre buildings. Actors continued to stand or sit on the stage, but did not perform. Instead, they were engaged in discussions with audiences on an urgent need for change. Stages were turned into forums for expressing political freedom and ideas of/for the future. As time went on, life went back to normal but theatre halls were only half-full during performances. Audiences were only slowly finding their way back. This is logical, as in those few weeks, theatre as an institution, as a building, acquired a political function. This happened two more times in the years to come.

New socio-political conditions ushered in the free decision-making of creative professionals concerning their creation and multi-source funding. When the greater part of the "normalisation" activity of theatres was rejected across the board (for example, the staging of original Slovak drama by authors, who were active at the time of socialism), there was no one to define a new mission for Slovak theatre. Neither theatre

founders (the Ministry of Culture, regions, towns and municipalities) nor the "new" ideologists who took turns in managing the Ministry, based on the results of free parliamentary elections, managed to do that.

A lot of theatres exercised their democratic right to freely change their names. The first one was *Divadlo pre deti a mládež* (Theatre for Children and Youth) in Trnava. After this theatre had been abandoned by one of its trend-setting directors (Blaho Uhlár, 1st September, 1989), namely, a co-founder of an acclaimed team of author-based theatre, it was turned into a theatre with mediocre quality. Only as late as 2003, Divadlo Slovenského národného povstania (The Slovak National Uprising Theatre) in Martin decided to go back to its original name, Slovenské komorné divadlo (The Slovak Chamber Theatre), which was used in 1944. By its productions focusing on the identity of the Slovak people, theatre gradually joined the process of creating the nation's new collective memory.

The new socio-political system eroded the old belief system. Communication waned; individual attitude and memory were favoured, while facts, and especially connections, were discounted. A number of the representatives of the middle and younger generations repudiated the past without an honest analysis of its problems and strengths. It took several years for the new generation of theatre critics and the younger generation of citizens to admit that even at the time of normalisation (1969-1989), numerous notable theatrical productions were staged. Regrettably, only a handful of them have been preserved in the form of TV recordings. There are a few video-recordings from the 1980s shot using only one camera. Fortunately, photographs and elaborate theatre critique published in newspapers or magazines serve as witnesses of their value. On the one hand, the younger generation of the 1990s rejected the past, through unable to formulate its goals. In the 1970s and 1980s, theatre professionals had a common enemy (The Iron Curtain, undemocratic system). However, in the 1990s, the only common theme that united them was their disagreement with the decisions of the Ministry of Culture.

After 1989, there is no mention of a single theatre being closed down; on the contrary, new ones were founded, supported by private funding.[8] A number of theatre professionals believed that with freedom and democracy, they could have their own concept of theatre, and the State would continue to subsidise them without having a say in their artistic or financial matters. In February 1997, the councils of the theatre unions of Slovakia went on strike in response to lifting the legal personality of some theatres. It was a sign of protest against appointing theatre directors without a tender. They were also dissatisfied with the draft amendments to authors' rights and theatre law. Neither the government nor the Minister of Culture reacted to their objections. This resulted in an industrial action in fourteen drama and puppet state theatres. Theatres did not give performances which impacted their income. The general public did not support the strike which lasted for a month. Given the country's economic hardships, citizens had problems to support their own families. It was Michal Kováč, the President of Slovakia, who helped end this stalemate. He called upon the actors to end the strike. On March 24th, 1997, the strike was over, however, the demands of the strike were not heard. Four years after Slovakia gained its independence, actors/creative professionals experienced for the very first time how it felt to lose their position as social leaders.

Given the circumstances, it was difficult to catch the audiences' attention and herald new ideas. The pluralism of forms and styles has had a negative rather than a positive effect on finding a theme (and an identity) via theatre. The then diverse forms of art in a globalising society were unable to offer ample opportunities to evaluate the arts strictly based on aesthetic criteria. The new society did not set the evaluation criteria so as to make them acceptable by at least part of the artistic community. A lot of the theatre productions by younger creative professionals of that time revealed an artistic immaturity of the capacity to communicate views, attitudes, and emotions to a wider audience. For the sake of theatrical history in a wider cultural context, let us mention two strands of drama that have had a profound effect on the creation of the nation's cultural memory.

The first strand of contemporary drama is about coming to terms with the past via political personalities and events. This largely concerns original texts written for a specific theatre. The dramatist Karol Horák focused on the Slovak 19th century national revivalists: Janko Kráľ, Ľudovít Štúr, and Jonáš Záborský. Kráľ was an acclaimed Slovak national revivalist, one of the most notable poets of the so-called Štúr generation which represents a third generation of the National Revival from 1835 to 1848. Literary critics and historians refer to him as a poet-maverick. Horák's play about him titled *Divný Janko (Apokalypsa* podľa *Janka /Kráľa/, Strange Janko, Apocalyspe According to Janko/Kráľ/)* was staged by the theatre in Martin (1994). A production of the same theatre dedicated to Štúr "*...príď kráľovstvo Tvoje...*" (*"...Let Thy Kingdom Come…",* 1996), using a metaphoric language, gives an account of the complexities of time and its personalities. Štúr was both a linguist (he codified the Slovak literary language around 1843) and politician; he was a leading personality of the Slovak national revival and a member of the Hungarian Parliament. Horák returned twice to Jonáš Záborský (poet, novelist, playwright, historian, priest, theologian). In the play *Nebo, peklo, Kocúrkovo* (*Heaven, Hell, Gotham,* 1995, Slovenské národné divadlo / The Slovak National Theatre), he combined the turns in the life of Jonáš Záborský, with Záborský's own texts. The production stirred contradictory reactions and views from both critics and audiences, especially because the general public disapproved of the image of Slovakia, and of Slovaks, in this production of the total theatre type, full of constant commotion, yelling, fabrications, and abuse. The playwright's angle presented in these plays and their productions is of special interest to us. The protagonists, drily mentioned in textbooks, find themselves in the 1990s, and based on historical facts, many of their statements and historic events sound and look different. This is achieved by revealing the human side of the characters of the revolutionary 19th century, showing their strengths and mistakes. Figuratively speaking, the playwright alerted all the post-revolutionary politicians of the 1990s and the creators of Slovak modern history to a need to review their deeds, and a possibility that what was once considered heroic may quickly change to a quest of identity. Horák's plays alluded to crossing the borders between the actions of national heroes and sinners. Several other authors have attempted to capture the multifaceted personality of Milan Rastislav Štefánik, his influence on early 20th century European foreign policy closely linked to the foundation of the First Czechoslovak Republic (1918-1938).

However, the keenest interest of the general public was stirred by two productions dedicated to 20th century ex-politicians, the Roman Catholic priest and politician Jozef Tiso, the only president of the first Slovak Republic (1939-1945), and the politician Gustáv Husák, the President of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic (1975-1989).

Doctor Tiso is considered to be the most controversial personality of Slovak history. He signed a treaty with The German Reich and was executed for war crimes. His role during the war as a leader of a German satellite state causes a clash of opinions among contemporary historians. In order to avoid a distortion or simplification of history, the text of the play was strictly based on period printed information and other written documents enhanced by authentic radio recordings. Rastislav Ballek, the author and director of the play, conceived the play as a monodrama, i.e., a retrospective confession of an imprisoned man who assumes no responsibility for his collaboration with the Nazis. With Tiso's approval, the Germans deported tens of thousands of Slovak Jews to concentration camps. Until the very last of his days he stayed true to his ideals and to his service to the nation. The production portrays a quiet priest who preaches to church believers about the harmful effects of alcohol, teaching them the basics of hygiene, reminding them about loving their neighbours. However, gradually he turns into a man dangerous to some groups of citizens. In court, Tiso defended himself, and even when condemned to death, he did not regret his actions. His authentic statements uttered on the stage make one's flesh creep.

Tiso (*Divadlo Aréna Bratislava / Arena Theatre Bratislava*, 2005) is an example of documentary theatre based on historic sources. The character of Tiso is played by an acclaimed actor to enhance the gravity of the theme. The play and its theatrical production show the importance of keeping the history of a small nation alive not only within the global European history context, but especially for the sake of the future development of smaller cultures. (Podmaková, 2011).

The concept of the play portraying the last communist president Gustáv Husák is more complex. Its author, Viliam Klimáček, was the first to attempt to stage a play about this controversial figure. The play's name is *Dr. Gustáv Husák* with a subheading *Väzeň prezidentov – prezident väzňov (The Prisoner of Presidents, the President of Prisoners).* Although the play is based on facts, it is also fictional to an extent, sequentially unveiling the story of Husák's life. The author portrays an overambitious man, a lawyer with left-wing ideas, who managed to move in political waters and attain topmost political positions, i.e., the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and President of the country, despite schemed allegations of bourgeois nationalism for which he was imprisoned for almost a decade. Husák's moving up the political ladder, his high state and party positions are overshadowed by his prisoner's fate, and the fact that though pressurised by investigators, he did not plead guilty in schemed trials. This saved not only his life but also the lives of other wrongfully accused party peers (Ladislav Novomeský, a prominent poet and journalist, and others).

Klimáček split up the character of Gustáv Husák into three different personalities and portrayals: Doctor Husák during the first Czechoslovak Republic

(1918-1939) and during the Slovak National Uprising (1944), when the Slovak nation took up arms against the Nazis (at the time of the Slovak Republic under Jozef Tiso's leadership, 1939-1945). This period of Husák's life was named Elegán (Dandy). The period of Husák's imprisonment (1951-1960, released on partial vindication) is named Väzeň (The Prisoner). The portrait of Husák as a "normaliser" is named Prezident (President). The play ends with Husák's abdication in December 1989, less than a month after November 1989 events.

The monologues and dialogues of the three portrayals of Husák overlap. Sometime, they speak in the first person, sometimes in the third, or engage in discourse with each other. Certain parts of the play contain fictitious monologues and dialogues from the past. The text is loaded with information. The author gives more space to the period of normalisation. Apparently this is so because it is the period of real socialism, best known to the younger viewers through the name of Gustáv Husák. The information has been passed over to young people by their parents, who lived and worked during Husák's "normalisation era" in Czechoslovakia and the connections and facts of this complex period remained hidden to the young audiences.

Watching national history unfold through complex personalities in our era of globalistion and migration is vital, especially for younger people who are creators of new media, as mentioned above. It expands our field of knowledge. The arts and theatre in particular, together with other scientific disciplines, such as philosophy, psychology, ethnology, sociology, political sciences, and aesthetics, contribute to the shaping of the "new history" of cultural memory. Even more so, when it comes to the social and artistic functions of theatre which cannot be dissociated from society. These functions ought to be shaped together with our society, as they go hand in hand with other areas.

NEW DRAMA: THE MIRROR OF OUR TIME

The second strand of contemporary drama texts is related to our recent past. Some texts are an outcome of the teamwork of various workshops (e.g., workshop on the November events and (un)fulfilled expectations – Michal Ditte's *Nežná (Velvet* [Revolution – D. P.], Slovenské komorné divadlo Martin, 2009). Other fall within the category of regularly written texts having deeper connections with past events, such as Viliam Klimáček's *Komunizmus* (*Communism,* Divadlo Aréna Bratislava, 2008), Jozef Gombár's *Tretí vek* (*A Third Age,* Mestské divadlo Žilina / Žilina City Theatre, 2009).

From the late 20th century and the early 21st, Slovak drama has been increasingly linked to other art genres (visual, film, new media). In the past, drama texts were squeezed into various "isms", up to post-postmodernism. Today, we use a simpler term, namely, "new drama". It is closely linked to European drama (especially to "in-yer-face" drama), although with some delay. Being trans-cultural in nature, it also has several strands. Free form predominates, and film cuts lack logical connections. They have no internal or external connections; oftentimes, loose dialogues are simply assigned to characters. The text structure is a reflection of society. Vernacular speech of the younger generation with vulgar words prevails. New drama breaks the classical forms of text: exposition, collision, crisis, and dramatic turns will not be found in it. It denies catharsis; it lives in a specific moment in time and is intended for a certain group of audiences.[9] The story is unimportant, the authors focus on themes

which until now have been neglected (e.g., violence, homosexuality). It goes without saying that there are also plays with a clearer philosophical message. However, they are limited in number. Fortunately, their authors focus on story, such as Jana Juráňová in *Reality snov* (*Reality of Dreamshow,* Bábkové divadlo na Rázcestí Banská Bystrica / The Puppet Theatre at the Crossroads Banská Bystrica**,** 2011), Iveta Horváthová's *Rodinné blues* (*The Family Blues,* 2011), Michal Ditte's *Psota* (*Poverty,* Divadlo Pôtoň / Theatre Pôtoň, 2012), and others.

November 1989 has left Slovak theatre with its windows wide open. Theatre is a reflection of society, it mirrors its state, its voidness (Lipovetsky, 2008), even lack of purpose. Prior to 1989, freedom had been a goal pursued by creative professionals and ordinary men. Today, a clear goal cannot be defined. It depends on the readiness of creative professionals to express their feelings and raise the curiosity of others through theatrical devices, to come up with a theme.[10]

ENDNOTES

[1] [1]Lyrics from the song of the popular Slovak singer Richard Müller.

[2] [2] Last Accessed [05.09.2013] <vyskumnovember89.blogspot.sk/2010/11/pamat-ako-kulturno-spolocensky.html>

[3] [3]From 1918 to 1992, Czecho-Slovakia was a common state in the territory of Czechia and Slovakia (except for 1939-1945). The Czech language was the official language in the territory of Czechia and Moravia, while the official language in Slovakia was the Slovak language. Until 1990, the name of the state was a single word, i.e., Czechoslovakia. According to the new grammar rules of the Slovak language, it is now spelled with a hyphen.

[4] [4]According to historians, the period lasted until 1989.

[5] [5]From the Decision of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Socialist Republic on the abolishment of Divadlo Tatra Revue, in *Divadlá na Slovensku. Sezóna 1969-1970*. Presumably, the author of the Foreword and of the quotation is Ján Jaborník.

[6] [6]Also known as Činohra Divadla na korze or, in short, Divadlo na korze. For more, see J. Jaborník.

[7] [7]Martin Porubjak in a discussionat a conference on Divadlo na korze, which took place in 1993, in J. Jaborník, M. Mistrík (ed.), *Divadlo na korze (1968-1971).*

[8] [8]According to the official statistics from the late 1980s, Slovakia had the most extensive theatre network in Central Europe (based on the number of seats per capita).

[9] [9]Texts are tailored to meet the needs of a concrete ensemble. They would only exceptionally be staged by another theatre ensemble.

[10] [10]This study was supported by the Slovak Research and Development Agency, No. APVV-0619-10, Artistic and Social Functions of Contemporary Slovak Theatre. Translation by Mária Švecová.

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[6] R. Polák, *Slovo tvorcu,* in Dialóg, vol. 1, no. 12, 1989, p. 4.

[7] Available: http://www.sme.sk/c/2069053/divadla-od-zajtra-opat-hraju-a-ostry-strajk-menia-na-vystrazny-co-povazuju-za-ustretove-gesto.html

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