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Cancelled Theatre Production by Olivier Frljić

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Prologue

In November 2013, the premiere of *Nie-Boska komedia. Szczątki* [*The Un-Divine Comedy: Remains*] as directed by Oliver Frljić was to take place at the National Stry Theatre in Kraków, one of the most esteemed Polish theatres, with its impressive tradition built by the greatest Polish theatre directors of the twentieth century. The premiere did not take place: less than two weeks before hand, the director of the Stry, Jan Klata, suspended work on the production. It was – at least this is how I understand this event – the most drastic act of censorship in theatre in the twenty-five year history of Polish democracy since the abolition of the communist system and delegalisation of preventive censorship.¹ This situation was brought about by the convergence of many factors and can be ascribed to the historical context of Poland's past and that of Polish theatre, as well as to current Polish affairs and social tensions or it is not simple to map them out in a way that can be understood by non-Polish readers, but it is worth the effort because the case of *The Un-Divine Comedy: Remains* markedly exposes the conjunction of ideology, power and aesthetic fundamentals in Polish theatre, while pointing to the political potential connected to its exposure and transgression. This potential arises from the form of political theatre made by director Oliver Frljić. My essay will focus on the reconstruction of this radical concept in the context of the cancelled production in Kraków.

Let me start by relating the situation of Jan Klata, whose appointment as director of the Stry Theatre in January 2013 drew negative responses from right-wing and conservative circles in Kraków. Klata is considered one of the young 'barbarians' of theatre who have introduced radical aesthetics, ruining the high standards of Polish theatre – though as a matter of fact Klata's progressive language of performance often hides surprisingly conservative messages, as shown in this issue of *PTJ* in Monika Kwaśniewska's article. Klata's plans for the Stry Theatre,

1 Six months later, another act of preventive censorship took place in theatre in Poland: at the Malta festival in Poznań, *Golgotha Picnic* under the direction of Rodrigo Garcia was called off under pressure from ultra-Catholic and right-wing groups supported by Catholic Church. This act of censorship was met with mass grass-roots citizen protests across Poland, with public readings and screenings of the censored production taking place. During this subsequent censorship conflict, the dangerous precedent set at the Stry Theatre under consideration in this article, where pressure by right-wing and nationalist circles had influenced the decision of the director to cancel the Frljić production, were often mentioned in the press.

which had won him the approval of the then Minister of Culture and National Heritage, who nominated him for its directorship, included the introduction of themed seasons centred on celebrated directors who built the legacy of the Stary Theatre. According to Klata's proposal, his point was to rework this legacy both creatively and critically; however, it is hard not to get the impression that this idea has preserved the modernist idiom of Polish theatre as high art: self-reflexive, duly separated from reality, mainly interested in itself.

Objections of this sort, formulated by Polish theatre critics, accompanied hasty judgements by right-wing circles² about damaging the legacy of Polish theatre-makers and profanation of national heritage. From the moment Klata took over as director of the Stary Theatre, the conflict about the theatre's direction continued to intensify. During one performance, an organized intervention took place, with a group of spectators shouting out the words 'shame' and 'disgrace'. It seems that Klata has been deliberately used by right-wing circles in Kraków as a 'constructed enemy', in order to close ranks and to appropriate the history of the Stary Theatre, which in any case cannot be fit within nationalist-conservative narratives as the protesters would want.

The focus of Klata's first season at the Stary Theatre, Konrad Swinarski, undoubtedly does not belong to such narratives. Bertolt Brecht's student and a radical interpreter of Polish Romanticism and the works of Shakespeare, Swinarski had created a critiquing theatre on a collision course with national mythologies, exploring a concealed dynamic of community life. It was a theatre of grand stagings and radical intellectual work, with a particular awareness of complex and understated links between classic texts and current socio-historical problems. Since his tragic death in a plane crash in 1975, Swinarski has been canonized as a national bard, thus becoming an empty signifier of the great Polish theatre tradition, with his real artistic biography erased and altered in order to assume the role of guardian of the national heritage. He was therefore suitable for the avatar of the ideological game between the Kraków right-wing movement centred around the *Dziennik Polski* newspaper and the new director of the Stary Theatre.

Indeed, it would be hard to imagine a better context for the work of Oliver Frlić, a Croatian director with a consistent interest in tracking nationalist and ethnic mechanisms of exclusion and violence, and creator of notorious, provocative and uncomfortable productions mark within the formula of radical political theatre. It would also be hard to imagine a more vexing practitioner and a more confrontational production for a theatre director in Klata's situation. The premiere of Frlić's production, planned for December 2013, was to reference Swinarski's 1965 adaptation of a classic of Polish Romanticism, Zygmunt Krasiński's *Nie-Boska komedia* [*The Un-Divine Comedy*]. The crux of the matter is that this dramatic work is both canonical and profoundly embarrassing for Polish culture, on par perhaps with *The Merchant of Venice* in the western theatre canon. The young Count Krasiński, known as a conservative catastrophist, offered a vision of inevitable disaster that a revolution must mean for western civilization. His text is permeated with a heartrending longing for a feudal order from the past, the restoration of which Krasiński did

² Their views are represented, for example, by the Kraków newspaper *Dziennik Polski*.

not believe in, understanding and exposing monstrous abuses that had led to the downfall of the old world order instead. At the same time, he showed revolution as a spasm of orgiastic-erotic liberation which had no constructive authority or power to call for a new world order. The history of humanity was an 'un-divine' history for Krasiński, a catastrophic result of the wicked use of will, knowledge and creativity by men on both sides of the conflict.³ Only in Krasiński's vision, in addition to the two feuding ideological camps profoundly devoted to their principles yet laboriously pushing the world towards a catastrophe, there is a tribe busying itself with destructive work alone, forever bent on annihilation of the Christian world. Krasiński refers here to Jews or, more precisely, the Neophytes (converts from Judaism): Jewish traitors, members of the old order presenting themselves as Christians, allies of Satan.

Thus Maria Janion, author of a monograph on Krasiński and the most renowned contemporary scholar of Polish Romanticism, called *Nie-Boska komedia* a 'tainted masterpiece', showing that Krasiński's work can be read as a foundational myth of modern Polish anti-Semitism.⁴ At this point, it is necessary to add that the anti-Semitic motif of *The Un-Divine Comedy*, though recognised and analysed by Polish literary specialists, became all but completely repressed from wider social consciousness. Krasiński's text is still part of secondary-education curriculum in Poland, and educational materials omit uncomfortable aspects and remain silent about the poet's anti-Semitism.

A Series of Chutzpah⁵ Scenes

In my opinion, Kłata's cancellation of the premiere of Frljić's *The Un-Divine Comedy: Remains* remains both an unexamined and a symptomatic affair, because it reveals a characteristic convergence of ideology, power and aesthetic which define Polish theatre. What I mean here is the particular relationship, still fairly imperceptible to us, which occurs concerning the ever dominant Romantic-Modernist ideological framework/context of Polish theatre, its institutional imperative and repertoire model, and the aesthetic which is possible or permitted within it. These elements constitute closely enmeshed cogwheels in which Frljić's production found itself – and it was not an accident, I think. In my view, the director intentionally situated his work in this critical field, thus correctly interpreting the mechanisms of Polish theatre's ideological apparatus and consciously taking up the subversive endeavour. The crux of the matter was to call upon and take advantage of the dominant ideological framework and mechanisms reproducing symbolic power in order de facto to profane theatre, in the sense of the term 'profanation' as defined by

3 Such an interpretation was proposed by Maria Janion. See Maria Janion, *Gorączka romantyczna* (Warsaw: PIW, 1975), pp. 410–414.

4 Maria Janion, *Bohater, spisek, śmierć. Wykłady żydowskie* (Warsaw: W.A.B., 2009).

5 Chutzpah, from Yiddish, extreme self-confidence or audacity (usually used approvingly).

Giorgio Agamben.⁶ It is an activity which will return to people a shared use of what is separated, untouchable and belongs to the sphere of *sa-crum*. According to Agamben: 'To profane means to open the possibility of a special form of negligence, which ignores separation or, rather, puts it to a particular use'.⁷ Thus profanation is not so much the abolition or contempt for the sacred as a category which structures social reality, but a rather 'entirely inappropriate use'⁸ of it, and Frljić's actions can be described in such a way: what he was doing on the Stary Theatre stage was 'negligent' and 'inappropriate' to the highest degree.

It is in precisely this way that Klata also justified his decision, inadvertently proving the effectiveness of the strategy used by Frljić. To be precise: he made his clarifications after the fact, from a safe perspective, when everyone had partly forgotten details and when it was easier to muddle and reposition meanings. The management of the Stary Theatre, in their first formal announcement, had explained that the decision to suspend work on Frljić's production was informed by a concern for 'the safety of the actors and the entire theatre'. This was also 'to ensure that the contents of the production would be the basis of an important discussion and would not become a reason for brawls, violence and aggressive behaviour towards the ensemble of the Stary Theatre. Half a year later it, was already apparent that Klata, as the theatre's director, made a conscious decision about cancellation of *The Un-Divine Comedy: Remains* due to its failure to meet necessary artistic standards. At the end of June 2014, he divulged that:

I am sorry that Mr Frljić uses every opportunity to relate how he was censored instead of beating his chest and considering if he really tried to create a production of Zygmunt Krasiński's *The Un-Divine Comedy* and not a series of chutzpah scenes with arbitrary themes.⁹

Thus Klata has revealed himself as a guardian of conservative values, armed with two most effective tools to enforce the stability of theatre as 'museum', in Agamben's sense of the word: the appropriate attitude towards the classic text and the appropriate use of aesthetics. These seemingly transparent but in fact ideologically extreme instruments of control and power are conveniently underspecified and always ready to be used, and serve to keep theatre in the safe, inert realm of high art which presents works of art for show, taking care for their 'value as an exhibit' in the first place. Thus theatre can only represent social conflicts, remaining divorced from actual experience and real political space, because it is protected from use and 'unprofanable'. Indeed, the censorial decision by Klata served the defence of this status quo.

Frljić's work always awakes controversy and resistance from various

6 Giorgio Agamben uses the term 'profanation' in *Profanations*, trans. by Jeff Fort (New York: Zone, 2007). Profanation, as one of the political strategies in theatre, has been written about by the following Polish authors: Paweł Mościcki, *Polityka teatru. Eseje o sztuce angażującej* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Krytyki Politycznej, 2008), Dorota Sajewska, 'Teatralny faszyzm przyjemności' in *Krytyka Polityczna* 2007, 13; Bartosz Frąckowiak 'Agon, namiętność, profanacja', in *Notatnik Teatralny* 2007, 45–46.

7 Agamben, *Profanations*, p. 75.

8 Agamben, p. 75.

9 'Klata: Są skargi, śliskie podgryzania, donosy. Normalnie' Gabriela Cagiel, in an interview with Jan Klata, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, Kraków, 27 June 2014, http://krakow.gazeta.pl/krakow/1,44425,16226215,Klata_Sa_skargi_sliskie_podgryzania_donosy_Normalnie.html#ixzz3RnoxCqqe, [accessed: 5 November 2014].

centres of power, but Poland was the first place where it was successfully stopped. A profound analysis of this situation is an important task. In this essay, I would like most of all to focus on the most important issue in my view, namely that of the relationship between the aesthetic and the political. Frljić has situated this at the centre of his project:

First, I have to face national myths which serve to strengthen ethnic cohesion and all the accompanying exclusions. Later, I fight conservative languages of theatre, the purposes of which are also exclusion. The field of aesthetic solutions is at the same time a field of an ideological battle. [...] Beauty and its other related categories do not exist in a political vacuum: they are the product of an ideological conflict and imbalance of powers.¹⁰

The question of beauty links in a fundamental way to Swinarski's production and Frljić's unrealized project. It was not the weight of ideological critique but the ostentatious lack of beauty (which could also be expressed in terms of practical inadequacy, lack of professionalism and intellectual sophistication) that led in the end to the censorial interdict stopping the work on *The Un-Divine Comedy: Remains*. On the other hand, the ostentatious presence of beauty in Swinarski's production made spectators overlook its meaning, as I will try to prove in my essay. Let us examine, therefore, the political potential of on-stage beauty realized in a dialectical relationship between its presence and its absence.

Anaesthesia and a Want of Content

In order to prove the above claim, a critical reconstruction of Swinarski's production and its reception in Poland in 1965 is necessary. The historical context is essential here because Swinarski reached for Krasiński's 'tainted masterpiece' for exactly the reason of the repressed anti-Semitism of this text, which created exceedingly powerful references to both fundamental and recent repressed experiences of Polish society. The Holocaust had taken place before Polish citizens' eyes and was, as argued by Grzegorz Niziołek in his book *Polski teatr Zagłady*, an experience which was commonplace. Twenty years after the end of the Second World War, the Holocaust remained a profound trauma, the affective power of which was resistant to channeling it in official narratives about innocent co-suffering by the Polish nation sacrificing themselves through heroic acts of rescuing their Jewish neighbours' lives. Today, after the publication of ground-breaking books by Jan Gross, Andrzej Leder and Niziołek,¹¹ we have come to understand that the reality was far more complex. Acts of great courage and sacrifice happened, of course, often paid for at the highest price nonetheless Polish society en masse played an extremely ambivalent role of passive observers,

10 'Frljić: Teatr musi walczyć z kłamstwem', Grzegorz Giedrys in an interview with Oliver Frljić, *Gazeta Wyborcza*, http://wyborcza.pl/1,75475,16033334,Trwa_festiwal_Kontakt_Frljic_Teatr_musi_walczy.html?pelna=tak, [accessed: 10 October 2014].

11 Jan Tomasz Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community in Jedwabne, Poland* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Gross, *Fear: Anti-Semitism in Poland After Auschwitz* (London: Random House, 2006); Gross, *Golden Harvest: Events at the Periphery of the Holocaust* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Grzegorz Niziołek, *Polski teatr Zagłady* (Warsaw: Instytut Teatralny im. Zbigniewa Raszewskiego, Wydawnictwo Krytyki Politycznej, 2013); Andrzej Leder, *Przeżniona rewolucja* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Krytyki Politycznej, 2014).

'bystanders', sometimes also actively taking part in acts of genocide; most widely, they continued to take over Jewish property, getting their hands on homes and businesses of murdered Jews. In 1965, faces of Jews whose homes were repossessed by Polish families were still remembered, and those memories must have awakened repressed feelings of guilt and aggression.

The communist authorities perfectly understood the power of this mental state. After the war, the 'Jewish question' continued to be played because the new government manipulated social resentment by intentionally maintaining the construct of 'Jew-traitor' who could be blamed for every failure. This was all the simpler as many Jews who had survived the Holocaust then engaged in building the new communist system in Poland, seeing in this a chance to redevelop the nationalist order. This state of affairs was also characteristic of the entire socialist bloc. The time of reckoning with 'the errors and distortions'¹² committed by Stalinism led to drastic acts of violence on a massive scale in most countries of the Soviet bloc, while it was possible to avoid them in Poland. There, after 1953, anti-Semitic cleansing took place in all aspects of public life but this was minor compared with what happened during this period in the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Romania.¹³

However, in 1965, the situation had erupted again. It had become clear that the systemic overhaul promised by the ruling Party was not providing results. Polish society's disapproval, sense of betrayal and deep dislike of those in power was growing, as they had not meet their promises of liberal changes. The Party saw how to redirect collective sentiments and increased its anti-Semitic campaign. In 1967, after the Arab-Israeli Six-Day War,¹⁴ the situation would be aggravated in Poland, and propagandists started to create a vision of Jewish imperialism and the domestic threat posed by the Zionist Fifth Column. In 1968, when social discontent exploded and student protests caused a deep political crisis, the Party had no difficulty in finding a scapegoat. Anti-Semitic stereotypes were updated with the help of coarse propaganda, projecting frustration, destructive desire and a sense of guilt and failure onto the phantasmatic Other. As a result of brutal persecution, harassment and victimisation – including demotions and terminations in the workplace, and official chicanery combining anti-Jewish manifestations and disturbances organized by the Party – some twenty thousand Jews emigrated from Poland.

Yet again, in line with well-known mechanism of anti-Semitic activity, Jews were then charged with responsibility for violence they had suffered, and the community was thereby relieved from the duty of compassion towards the victims. Once more, like a reliable ace up the sleeve, a card was played denoting both the desired and unattainable identity and unity of the nation blocked by a mythical Jew responsible for the failure

12 Michael R. Dobbs, K. S. Karol, Dossa Trevisan, *Poland, Solidarity, Walesa*, published online by Elsevier, 22 October 2013, e-book. 'Today, in the jargon of Polish Communists, the period from 1948 to 1956 is still known as the "time of errors and distortions"', p. 27.

13 See Paweł Śpiewak, *Żydokomuna* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Czerwone i Czarne, 2012).

14 The Six-Day War was fought between 5 and 10 June 1967 between Israel and the neighbouring states of Egypt (known at the time as the United Arab Republic), Jordan and Syria.

of the project (this time around a socialist project), in order to create the unified, collective existence, and this anti-Semitic card was publicly used as part of political games. Maria Janion posits, after Slavoj Žižek, that this phantasm is 'a means' for the the ideology of national unity 'to be used in order to be able to accept in advance its own failure'.¹⁵ A mythical Jew is a ready construct, improved and updated for centuries, only waiting for the moment when it may be called upon to take the blame for the corruption of the world and the disintegration of the social fabric. Zbigniew Bujak, one leader of the workers' opposition, when analysing reasons for the mute acceptance with which anti-Semitic slogans had been met among workers, would speak with directness and frank shame about the then appealing power of this phantasm which gave the sense of regaining a subjective position. He would say that these slogans:

were proclaimed in a particular way which allowed to explain world events with Jewish actions. It was enough to know that the Jews are guilty of everything to suddenly realize that we understand the world, that we understand things which happen in it.¹⁶

Janion ends her analysis of Krasiński's 'tainted masterpiece' with a quotation from Marie Bonaparte that points to the basic mechanism of the projection in anti-Semitism immediately after the experience of the Holocaust:

Anti-Semites project on to the Jew, attribute to the Jew, all their more or less unconscious evil instincts; longings for bloodshed, riches, depravity, sensuality. Thus, by transferring these burdens to the Jew, they themselves are washed clean and seem to become radiantly pure. In this way the Jew serves as an admirable foil on which to project the Devil who, as it were, is only dragged from hell the better to live on earth. Thereafter, this fresh incarnation of Evil provides a focus for the aggression.¹⁷

Swinarski in staging *The Un-Divine Comedy*, which preceded the events of 1968 by two years, evoked all the aforementioned mechanisms with obscene literalism. He displayed them in the public eye with an ostentation that confounds when observed from today's perspective. He drew out and fortified Krasiński's anti-Semitism, making it the fundamental ideological frame which pre-empted and conditions all levels of the symbolic structure of the production. As a result of dramaturgical interventions in the text, everything that took place in un-divine reality turned out to be a part of a plan to destroy the Christian world,

15 Janion, p. 112

16 Zbigniew Bujak, 'Robotnicy 1968', in *Marzec 68. Referaty z sesji na Uniwersytecie Warszawskim w 1981 roku*, a non-profit publication by the Polish organisation Otwarta Rzeczpospolita. Stowarzyszenie przeciwko Antysemityzmowi i Ksenofobii, Warsaw 2008, p. 80, <http://otwarta.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/Marzec-68-lekki.pdf>, [accessed: 12 September 2014].

17 Marie Bonaparte, *Myths of War* (London: Imago Publishing Company, 1947), p. 131.

realized by the Satanic-Jewish conspiracy.¹⁸ The Devil, played by Antoni Pszoniak (a role not in the original text, assembled from lines of the Bad Spirits, the Philosopher and, above all, the Neophyte who takes the protagonist on a tour of the revolutionaries' camp) became the *spiritus movens* of all events in Swinarski's production. The Devil, who wore a short black tailcoat revealing a raised tail, as well as a curly wig with red horns, controlled or rather directed the action, being constantly present on stage. He fed or repeated lines, somehow taking over the most important lines of the protagonists while bursting into satanic laughter. He led the secret sect of the Neophytes, Jewish devils with whips, hiding their horns under Phrygian caps and silently making weapons to be used in the proper Jewish revolution, the final bloodbath:

Ye ropes and daggers, clubs and hatchets, swords,

Works of our hands, ye only will appear

When needed to destroy our deadly foes!

The nobles will be strangled in the fields,

Hung in the forests and gardens, by the people.¹⁹

Pancras (Pankracy), the leader of the revolution, stylized to look like Christ with long, fair hair and beard, was also a devilish creation. Swinarski wrote a silent scene which unequivocally made the revolution the tool of Jewish conspiracy. In this scene, the Devil-Jew gives Pancras a handkerchief for wiping his face. Later, as with St Veronica's handkerchief, Pancras's face will imprint itself in the piece of cloth, and the Devil will show it triumphantly to his comrades as if boasting that he managed to appoint a false messiah as head of the revolution, who will be followed by the masses.

Swinarski explained in interviews that the opportunity to show Krasiński's drama using the framework of the morality play, contained in the text but somewhat erratically developed by the author, was what appealed to him in *The Un-Divine Comedy*.²⁰ Only the Devil-Jew was the true master of the world in this creation, in which the Eye of Providence hung over the stage for the duration of the performance, then was taken down in the finale in front of the audience by the technical staff and

18 It is important to emphasize here that the stage reading of the text did not come down to playing out the anti-Semitic motif but included a profound analysis of other issues in Krasiński's play and his dialectic relationships with modernity. Certainly, Swinarski worked on *The Un-Divine Comedy* in a similar way, so aptly analysed recently by Paweł Mościcki in 'Sprawdzanie tradycji. Konrad Swinarski i teatralny anachronizm', *Didaskalia* 2014, 121/122, p. 120. In his case, too, the work did not lead to 'explanations of the problems written down in classical texts but to their complications. Every subsequent reading has, after all, a new dimension of contradictions, which are present in the play' (Mościcki, p. 120). Nevertheless the motif of anti-Semitic projections constituted a framework determining the whole of the on-stage world.

19 Zygmunt Krasiński, *The Un-Divine Comedy*, trans. by Harriette E. Kennedy and Zofia Uminska (London: G. G. Harrap, 1924), p. 217.

20 Konrad Swinarski, 'Nie-Boska!', recorded by Krystyna Zbijewska, in: *Wierność wobec zmienności*, ed. by Marta Fik and Jacek Sieradzki, (Warsaw: Wydawnictwa Artystyczne i Filmowe, 1988).

cleaners, who suddenly arrived while the Angel remained immobilized in the aisle like a church statue. The director concocted the character of the Devil-Jew using the most primitive and, at the same time, enduring anti-Semitic stereotypes: of Jew as God-killer, the Devil being ever thirsty for Christian blood and representative of the mythical conspiracy of Judeo-Bolshevism (*żydokomuna*). He made this character the most important figure of his dramatic imaginarium. How are we to understand Swinarski's act? Was he violently confronting the audience's attachment to the generic image of anti-Semitic culture, which meant to prove the eternal guilt of the Jews, always taking precedence over the violence suffered by them, in order to maintain 'a pogrom in the state of possibility',²¹ to use the phrase coined by Joanna Tokarska-Bakir. Or maybe Swinarski allowed the audience to feed on this image of the Jew, satisfying their hidden desire to let go of past and future guilt and responsibility under cover of the authority of the Polish literary canon and his own stagecraft?

The texts on the reception of Swinarski's production have nothing to say on the above issue, thus providing perhaps the most telling response. Virtually none of them (with only one exception, which I will return to below) considered the phantasmic figure of the Jew located at the centre of the staging, and not one saw it in the context of the relatively recent, fundamental experience of the Holocaust. The chief impression recorded in these texts on the reception of Swinarski's production was its power of theatricality, which brought forth 'images of striking beauty', the director's skill in playing with conventions and codes, mockery, the deformation and artificiality within the ostentatious 'enchanted' aestheticisation.²² Jan Kott wrote that, 'first of all, Swinarski saw theatre in *The Un-Divine Comedy*. All oppositions are located in this theatre: brutal realism and tirades, lyricism and cruelty, constructed and performed dramatic text'.²³ Was the director's aim to build an aesthetic barrier effectively separating spectators from the images they were unable to accept as part of the truth about themselves, which at the same time would have allowed them to experience it in some way? It was a risky strategy because its result was the creation of a comfort zone related to the confirmation of the modernist high-art paradigm which served to strengthen belief in the integrity of the subject and its position in the symbolic structures. Such autonomous aesthetic experience was 'a phantasm of modernity', according to Wolfgang Iser.²⁴ Helmut Kajzar wrote about this aspect of Swinarski's production, presumably with a dose of irony, for an article published in the Polish journal *Teatr*:

21 Joanna Tokarska-Bakir, *Rzeczy mgliste* (Sejny: Wydawnictwo Fundacji Pogranicze, 2004), p. 37. Pogrom is a word of Russian origin meaning 'to wreak havoc, to demolish violently'. Historically, as a term, it refers to violent attacks by local non-Jewish populations on Jews in the Russian Empire and in other countries. See <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005183&title=Pogroms>, [accessed: 7 July 2015].

22 Bronisław Mamoń, 'Nieboska komedia jako moralitet', *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 46, 14 November 1965.

23 Jan Kott, 'Diabelskie wątpliwości', *Dialog* 1966, 4, p. 120.

24 Wolfgang Iser, 'Estetyka i anestezja', trans. by Małgorzata Łukasiewicz, in: *Postmodernizm. Antologia przekładów*, ed. by Ryszard Nycz (Kraków: Wydawnictwo Baran i Suszyński, 1997), p. 535. The only work on aesthetics by Iser in English is *Undoing Aesthetics* (London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: Sage, 1997).

Animating the images satisfied both the eye and the mind because every image was loaded with content, intellectual associations, multiple meanings but did not cause emotional shock.²⁵

This comfortable situation was disturbed, however, by a worrying sense of 'inadequacy of the subject matter'²⁶ and proper problematization 'stifled by theatricality' as well as by a feeling of passivity because the protagonists are reduced to 'tools, instruments played by the emissaries of the two worlds' as Bronisław Mamoń wrote for the journal *Tygodnik Powszechny*.²⁷ Aestheticization was therefore supposed less to open up the space of autonomous experience of beauty than to anesthetize, to eliminate sensory stimuli according to the rule described thus by Wolfgang Iser in his essay 'Aesthetics and Anaesthetics': 'Aesthetic art aims to anesthetize²⁸ us from the world, which, without such a reprieve, we would see as scandalous (as an inverse of the best of the worlds)'. The surplus of aesthetic stimuli creates 'euphoria turning in the void and trance-like insensitivity'; the rule being: 'the more aesthetics, the more anaesthetics'.²⁹

The above tenet is clearly visible, for example, in what were reputedly the most violent scenes in *The Un-Divine Comedy*, depicting the revolutionaries' camp, which Swinarski adapted in the form of autonomous sequences. The director dug out from Krasiński's text visions of extreme revolutionary terror which haunted the poet, terror that only paupers exiled from the symbolic community are capable of, who burst into the space of politics, ready to destroy the social order completely. Yet despite his use of drastic effects, Swinarski shows them through aestheticization, which did not go unnoticed by Zbigniew Raszewski:

Every now and then the stage is crossed by marching people going in different directions. In the foreground a procession of paupers appears several times and encircles the camp in the state of utmost, ecstatic rapture [...]. This group [of characters] makes an astonishing impression due to their [...] uniquely fluid gestures and movement – the whole group appears to roll along rather than walk – [due to] the unspeakable noise [...], and finally due to the spectrality of the imagery.³⁰

Swinarski evokes here stereotypical images of Polish peasants' uprisings and revolts, together with a notorious scene showing the beheading of a master using a saw, his head falling down and rolling across the

25 Helmut Kajzar, 'Teatr cytatu i ironii', *Teatr* 1969, 11, p. 4.

26 Józef Szczawiński wrote that it was 'an interesting, fascinating production, in which despite evocative vision, excellence of directing and originality of staging you cannot escape the feeling of inadequacy of the subject matter in *The Un-Divine Comedy*'. See: Józef Szczawiński, 'Nieboska Swinarskiego', *Kierunek* 1966, 2.

27 Mamoń, 'Nieboska komedia jako moralitet'.

28 Iser, 'Estetyka i anestezja', pp. 523, 527. See also Iser, *Estetyka poza estetyką. O nową postać estetyki*, trans. by Katarzyna Guczalska, ed. by Krystyna Wilkoszewska (Kraków: Universitas, 2005).

29 Iser, 'Estetyka i anestezja', pp. 523, 527.

30 Zbigniew Raszewski, 'Nie-Boska komedia', *Dialog* 1993, 3, pp. 74–75.

stage: 'they sawed my grandfather in two'.³¹ Theatre reviewers wrote with relish about such images, perhaps because they referred to a broader area of conflict within the imaginarium of the noble class, a terrifying yet tame provocation in the Polish literary tradition, capable of obscuring other experiences and giving meaning to stirred, unrepresented affective energy.³²

At the time of Swinarski's production, only Jan Kott wrote of the unusual construction of its Jewish characters:

Swinarski miscalculated the use of the devils; one was not enough, he changed all the converted Jews into devils. [...] It was a very risky transformation. If treated seriously this means only one thing: Satan uses Jews to destroy God's Church. [...] If I were Swinarski I would have avoided such a masquerade. The production would have been perhaps even more risky, I would have increased the stakes. After all, this was not supposed to be a pleasant production.³³

Kott demanded that Swiniarski take the risk of treating the Jewish conspiracy as the current political allusion to 'anti-Semitism by gentle and good people',³⁴ as posited in 1960 by Tadeusz Mazowiecki, who claimed that there was no 'militant anti-Semitism' remaining in Poland. The experiences of the Second World War and 'a lot of authentic educational work' influenced 'the deeper, non-mechanical change of people's attitudes', although they did not completely eradicate 'the anti-Semitic residue' which silently infected the cellular structure of Polish society.³⁵ Swinarski reached into the heart of this mechanism, its dark, phantasmal core, revealing the aforementioned residue for what it truly was, which would shortly get through to the surface, and with such ease. However nobody in 1965, with the exception of Kott, was prepared to start a conversation on this subject.

A Spectacle – an Image – a Revolution

Oliver Frljić's work on *The Un-Divine Comedy: Remains* related less to Swinarski's production than, critically, to the communication situation in which it functioned and which it co-created. Frljić interpreted Swinarski's radical plan in order to show Poles, with obscene bluntness, the anti-Semitic core around which the Polish community is consolidated, but he also understood that the critical potential of theatre was neutralized because of mechanisms of the theatre medium. After the decision to suspend his work at the Słaby Theatre, Frljić said in an interview with Paweł Soszyński that:

31 This is a quotation from Stanisław Wyspiański's *The Wedding* (1901). The Groom in the play says: 'We've forgotten everything [the 1846 Uprising] / they sawed my grandfather in two! / We've forgotten everything.' (London: Oberon Books, 1998), p. 61.

32 I refer here to Greenblatt-Lyotard model of theatre, proposed by Niziołek in *Polski teatr Zagłady*. See in particular the chapter 'Źle zobaczone' (Warsaw: Instytut Teatralny im. Zbigniewa Raszewskiego, Wydawnictwo Krytyki Politycznej, 2013).

33 Kott, p. 121.

34 Tadeusz Mazowiecki, 'Antysemityzm ludzi łagodnych i dobrych', in: *Przeciw antysemityzmowi 1936–2009*, ed. by Adam Michnik, (Kraków: Universitas, 2010), p. 471.

35 Mazowiecki, p. 471.

Swinarski wanted to hyperbolise latent anti-Semitism present in popular representation of Jews. This could also be read as an ironic comment on the anti-Semitic layer of Krasiński's text. And we should not forget that his adaptation premiered three years before the events of 1968 which resulted in the exile of Jews from Poland. [...] We had to understand what Swinarski had been trying to do. It was not easy because of the noise in communication with his work that was constantly produced by all these attempts to make a saint out of him.³⁶

Thus the theatre as a medium found itself within the field of critical work: its specific historical form still dominates in Poland, though it is in profound crisis, and Swinarski's theatre remains its phantasmal ideal. It is a theatre that still tries to operate within the modernist idiom of high art, realizing an artistic mission under conditions of the professional repertoire-style institution, accustomed to creating original, aesthetically and intellectually sophisticated productions; an institution in which the critical potential is almost immediately transformed into the elitist 'cultural commodity', in which the critique of collective myths is constantly adapted into celebrations of the national community and its great cultural heritage. It is thus an institution that is national because it works for a nation-state and its phantasmal unity which ejects the modern world's class relations and colonial relations, with their accompanying injustices, from our field of vision.

Frljić makes us look at the medium of theatre as a contemporary universe of commodity spectacle in which the mechanism of servitude is based on dominance of the visual in the constant process of commodity production, which in turn creates the need for production of 'the spectacle as the image of those commodities turned into objects of desire'.³⁷ In a theatre subordinated to the spectacular visibility of the body, the signs also undergo this process: transformed into an exclusive cultural product yet presented at the same time as a discourse juxtaposed to other spheres of social life, an art space excluded from its defining laws, especially relations of production and associated power relations. Yet spectacle, according to Guy Debord, is 'a social relation between people that is mediated by images'.³⁸ The art then may be about not being 'distracted by the images, but to inquire into the nature of this social relationship'.³⁹ Therefore what remains most important for Frljić is working towards the transgression of logic of the commodity-spectacle.

Let us return for a moment to the final scene in Swinarski's production, as it creates a unique link with *The Un-Divine Comedy: Remains*. The stage is suddenly occupied by technical staff and cleaners who begin to dismantle the set and start clean-up work, to the sound of the famous Italian song 'Quando, Quando'. One can see in this drastic disillusioning of the stage world something more than just another ironic gesture. Swinarski showed an actual landscape after the modern revolution

36 'Drogą do wolności jest konflikt', Paweł Soszyński in an interview with Olivier Frljić, Dwutygodnik.com, <http://www.dwutygodnik.com/artykul/4908-droga-do-wolnosci-jest-konflikt.html>, [accessed: 15 November 2014].

37 McKenzie Wark, *The Spectacle of Disintegration: Situationist Passages Out of the Twentieth Century* (London and New York: Verso Books, 2013), p. 5.

38 Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1995) p. 12.

39 Wark, p. 5.

populated by anonymous, alienated wage slaves whose mechanical activities implement the idea of separating desire from work carried out only in order to receive remuneration, which can never repay the value of the time spent on it, allowing only participation in a commodity-spectacle. In their free time, clearly separated from work, they would finally be able to give themselves over to satisfying their desires for commodities and sex, as promised in the Italian song. Swinarski thus ripped apart the surface of the seductive spectacle, which he had constructed as such, in order to locate another image under it: a representation of the masses liberated by the people's revolution, harnessed to the cogs of an ever-strengthening, spectacular economy.

Diversity – Conflict – Agonism

Oliver Frljić understands that in order for critical practice to bring any real results and oppose the process of commodifying the performative organization of life, it is necessary to have a systemic critique of the medium of theatre, which would also operate on all its levels: it would be a true profanation of his theatre. Frljić aims to abolish the separation of art and life expressed as the opposition of the process of production and representation, which would have to be its effect. This is why he makes the process taking place within the theatre team – in which director, dramaturges, actors, assistants take part as autonomous subjects – the fundamental moment of his work. Instead of building a controlled representation and executing his authority bestowed by the institution of theatre, Frljić focuses on the materiality of the encounter and creates conditions for analysing the form of social relations, within the framework of which the performance arises, in particular the relationship between power and all participants' individual responsibilities for the message generated. This stage is always prone to direct thematization in a production. The team's 'ideological worldviews', in the light of which the most urgent social problems take shape, remain the basic matter of the director's work and the production that emerges out of it. As Agnieszka Jakimiak writes:

The micro-community of the team talks about itself and makes its own diagnosis and the director looks for spaces in which members of the team differ from one another and are conflicted in the ideological field or represent the temperature of the current ideological debate in a given society.⁴⁰

The fundamental directive for all members of a theatre team should not be the readiness to follow the director's vision, then, but what Hannah Arendt (whom Frljić often invokes) called 'the reflective power of judgment'.⁴¹ This kind of thinking posits independence and being true to one's self, as well as the ability to accept the standpoint of other people – empathy which becomes the basis of communal sense. A thinking person understands that it is not only him or her who thinks and judges the world, but that there are others who do it in even more radical ways, thus he or she accepts the principle of human diversity: *pluralitas*. Thinking,

40 Agnieszka Jakimiak, 'Ta dziwna instytucja zwana spektaklem', *Didaskalia* 2014, 119, pp. 23–24.

41 See, for example, Seyla Benhabib, *The Reluctant Modernism of Hannah Arendt* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2003), pp. 189–191.

understood this way, guarantees the acceptance of the fundamental condition inscribed in the essence of social life: cohabitation on Earth by human diversity.⁴² None of us may decide with whom we will cohabitate the Earth: Arendt's fundamental thought, in Frljić's theatre, is constantly tested among contemporary communities in specific, historical situations.

Agreeing with the principle of diversity means readiness for permanent conflict. It is about revealing antagonisms and differences and not finding consensual unity which would finally turn into the false and violent affirmation of community. Consensus, as shown by Carl Schmitt, is always based on acts of exclusion, it would never be fully inclusive.⁴³ It is antagonism and not consensus which forms the basic principle of the pluralist nature of the social world and is the crux of what is political. Antagonisms are prone to dangerous, only momentary suppression in individualist and rationalist liberal ideologies because, as is argued by Chantal Mouffe, they are specific to human groupings and so are unsolvable within the framework of rational discourse. Instead of masking antagonism, it should be revealed and transformed.

In Frljić's work, the process of uncovering antagonisms within the team should be taken to its natural conclusion: as far as possible, yet without paralysing the work, allowing the production to materialize. It is understandable that under such conditions people who cannot accept the proposed mode of work and its direction would leave the project. From the outset, this would be put forward as a possibility by Frljić:

I do not want the actor to be patronised and only represent what the director or author say. But I do not force anyone to take on such a responsibility. When I start working on a production I tell actors that they can resign at any moment. It is their decision. It is not easy or comfortable but emancipation takes place through conflict.⁴⁴

The attacks on Frljić, accompanied by the withdrawal of part of the Stary Theatre ensemble, were the element of conflict which continued in the theatre, aggravated by right-wing circles and media. At the same time, they served as evidence of a lack of readiness to adopt a different mode of work by the theatre's team. Meanwhile, Frljić's openly offered possibility to leave also meant the necessity to make a decision about staying and accepting responsibility.

I would like to propose the theory that making regularly an independent decision to continue joint work on a production may become the basis for a bond which has the power to transform antagonism. It is joint work that forbids us to regard those people who do not share our views as enemies, who must be eliminated even when it becomes clear that their different standpoints cannot be neutralized in the process of negotiation. If approached this way, theatre may become a space in which

42 See Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (London: Penguin, 2006), p. 269.

43 See Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996).

44 'Bałkańskie strategie', Miłada Jędrzyk in an interview with Olivier Frljić and Goran Injać, *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 2 March 2014, <https://www.tygodnikpowszechny.pl/balkanske-strategie-21814>, [accessed: 10 July 2014].

antagonism turns into agonism, understood by Chantal Mouffe, as 'the we/they relation where the conflicting parties, although acknowledging that there is no rational solution to their conflict, nevertheless recognize the legitimacy of their opponents'.⁴⁵ More importantly, theatre does not actually represent agonism in the process activated by Frljić but stirs it into action within the team who have worked together for many years. What happens here is political 'mobilisation of passions',⁴⁶ which should spread to the auditorium. Antagonistic confrontation and mobilization of passions is essential in order to develop democratic politics which 'need to have a real purchase on people's desire and fantasies', says Mouffe.⁴⁷ She also argues that 'the danger arises that the democratic confrontation will therefore be replaced by essentialist forms of identification or non-negotiable moral values'.⁴⁸ Theatre can play an essential role in strengthening democracy which accepts and validates conflict, protecting it from suppression into authoritarian order. It is my understanding that Frljić believes the real agonism, revealed on stage and enveloping the audience (which, nevertheless, can result in creating a jointly created production), may contribute to reassessing and, as Mouffe writes, a 'disarming of the libidinal forces leading towards hostility which are always present in human societies'.⁴⁹

As a result, theatre becomes one of the institutions supporting democratic politics engaged in the process of establishing agonism. Interestingly, such a work process is possible only in repertory theatre because it is the only place where there is a team of people continuously working as a unique example of social metonymy. Only in repertory theatre is it possible to reveal the antagonisms developed during historical processes, the analysis of history's influence on subjects and the attempts of subjects to influence history. Frljić's idea of political theatre in this context is an idea which is strictly theatrical. According to Alain Badiou, 'theatre-ideas' are ideas 'which cannot be produced in any other place or by any other means'.⁵⁰ Such an idea has the power of an event⁵¹ and edges toward making repertory theatre into a different social practice, escaping the authority of 'spectacle'.

Agnieszka Jakimiak and Joanna Wichnowska described in detail the concept of *The Un-Divine Comedy: Remains* by reporting on the period of work when Jan Klata decided to halt the production, and by showing the most important mechanisms binding the critical work in the field of the theatre medium with the work within the space of social consciousness.⁵² I shall not, then, analyse a performance which never took place. I would only like to draw attention to those aspects which seem to me

45 Chantal Mouffe, *On the Political* (Abingdon, New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 20.

46 Mouffe, 'Introduction', in Simon Critchley, Jacques Derrida, Ernesto Laclau and Richard Rorty, *Deconstruction and Pragmatism*, ed. by Mouffe (New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 5.

47 Mouffe, 'Politics and Passions: the Stakes of Democracy', in: *Ethical Perspectives* 2000, 2-3, p. 148.

48 *On the Political*, p. 30.

49 *On the Political*, p. 26.

50 Alain Badiou, *Handbook of Inaesthetics*, trans. by Alberto Toscano (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2005), p. 72.

51 Badiou, pp. 72-73.

52 Agnieszka Jakimiak, Joanna Wichowska, 'Szkic spektaklu, którego nie było', *Didaskalia* 2014, 119.

most significant because of critical references to Swinarski's production and the model of theatre he was implementing. One of these aspects was undoubtedly a simplification, described by Paweł Mościcki in line with the thought of Alain Badiou, which does not mean a banalisation but a precise 'procedure of making understandable and recognisable what appears to be complicated'.⁵³ It is about the separation of everything superfluous in order to convey the coordinates of situations, ideological tensions and plans of social conflicts, and making visible what is invisible within a system. Therefore it is an activity opposed to the specific, aesthetic and intellectual barrier constructed by Swinarski's production thanks to his strategy of excess, or was perhaps allowed to be built thus by the audience wanting to protect itself from identifying unwanted or repressed subject matter.

Frljić's team openly tackled the issue of anti-Semitism as one of the fundamental determinants of Polish national identity, and that is why they directly attacked the phantasmal structure and the key characters of the script, with the help of which Poles remained innocent victims and also constructed themselves in opposition to the Jew as 'the wicked Other'. After the announcement of this reconstruction of Swinarski's 'superb production', which despite its potential did not blow up the script, what actually happened was a brutal deconstruction of symbolic space and its most significant signs. The Polish national anthem, the flag of Poland, the altar, the Host, the Catholic wedding ceremony and the image of the Virgin Mary were profaned and meant to elicit sharp reactions in spectators; this was in exact opposition to satisfaction of eye and mind, devoid of emotional shock, as reported by Helmut Kajzar when witnessing Swinarski's performance. In the aforementioned sequence from Frljić's production, actors would start with their march on the stage, evoking Swinarski's excellent scenes of revolution which enchanted Zbigniew Raszewski. They would form a procession, a kind of paupers' parade, intensifying the performance of masterful imitation of pain, old age and sickness each time they crossed the stage. This great show of skilful acting was responsible for building an alienation effect when juxtaposed with other scenes in which the actors' task was to cross beyond rules of professionalism and canons of acting, responsible to a greater extent for the effect of anaesthesia, which neutralized the critical impact of Swinarski's production. During workshops with Frljić, one actor of the Stary Theatre proclaimed: 'What you show here can be called Community Centre Wróblowice',⁵⁴ thus thematizing this issue in the sequence of the production which was supposed to emerge from improvised discussions within the ensemble, revealing basic points of tension and disagreement.

The above-mentioned critique of Frljić's directorial strategies voiced by the Stary Theatre actor would have not been heard under different circumstances and assumptions. Politics, as argued by Jacques Rancière in his essay 'Politics of Aesthetics', is a conflict 'over the designation of objects as pertaining to the common and of subjects as having the

53 Mościcki, p. 47 and Badiou, pp. 72–73.

54 The Wróblowice district is mentioned as a synonym for provincality and bad taste. Jakimiak, Wichowska, http://www.didaskalia.pl/119_jakimiak.htm [accessed: 20 July 2015].

capacity of a common speech'.⁵⁵ The refusal to treat 'people as political beings has proceeded by means of a refusal to hear the words exiting their mouths as discourse',⁵⁶ writes Rancière, and we can relate his viewpoint to the position of the actor in professional repertory theatre.⁵⁷ The actor is a body and voice to be used and not a subject in the possession of discourse, responsible for his speech, 'a capacity to place the just and the unjust in common'.⁵⁸ However, in addition, the actor's position perhaps is or should be related to all excluded Others refused a voice by a community, and who are located in the centre of his theatre by Frljić. Art acts politically, 'bringing about a reframing of material and symbolic space',⁵⁹ putting the spotlight on silent and excluded groups. However, art is not politics if it is limited to announcements and feelings, communicated about the world order. Art also needs to operate within its own communication system. This is what happens in Frljić's theatre, which thematizes awareness and necessity of an ever-repeated battle with a medium, constantly submitting itself to the laws of 'spectacle'.

In November 2013, Klata found himself under considerable and mounting pressure from right-wing circles and media. He knew that the work of Frljić's team concerns particularly provocative issues. He came to one of the rehearsals of *The Un-Divine Comedy: Remains*. He saw several scenes, out of context. What made him decide to suspend the rehearsals and, as a matter of fact, censor the production? Did he not understand the politics of aesthetic assumptions in Frljić's theatre? Did he grow fearful that these would not be understood by the majority in the audience and that conflict within the theatre would be aggravated? I think that he made a conscious decision in the name of a theatre he pays homage to: an institution serving the professional production of beauty, which could also be encoded with 'profound thought', 'aesthetic consistency', 'honest craft'. It is all ultimately about producing 'spectacles' and not 'a series of chutzpah-like scenes'. What was Klata afraid of? It was the absence of aesthetic desensitizing, a refusal of anaesthesia, which meant surgery on a living organism.⁶⁰

55 Jacques Rancière, 'Politics of Aesthetics', in: *Aesthetics and Its Discontents* (Cambridge and Malden: Polity Press, 2009), p. 24.

56 Rancière, p. 24.

57 "My theatre focuses, above all, on the microcommunities of actors and their transformation from the director's or author's spokespersons into truly political beings" – this is how the director [Frljić] defines the foundation of politics in his theatre'. See 'Conflict Is the Road to Freedom', <http://www.dwutygodnik.com/artukul/4908-droga-do-wolnosci-jest-konflikt.html>, [accessed: 12 October 2014].

58 Rancière, p. 24.

59 Rancière, p. 24.

60 Klata's act of censorship proved its characteristic feature: counterproductiveness. The decision of the Stary Theatre director did not halt Frljić's work in the public domain. On the contrary, to a large extent this censorship popularised the forbidden model of work and of understanding of the political in theatre. In November 2015, Frljić will work on a new production as part of the Krakow POP-UP project, in which he will relate to the situation in the Stary Theatre. In the 2015 theatre season, Frljić will also work in Warsaw, and in 2017 he will curate the Balkan programme of the Malta festival in Poznań.

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ABSTRACT: The article analyses the notorious affair of the censorship imposed on Oliver Frljić's production at the Stary Theatre in Kraków, where in November 2013, a week before the premiere, the director of the Stary Theatre decided to halt work on the production *The Un-Divine Comedy. Remains*. The production invoked Konrad Swinarski's renowned 1965 version, focusing on investigating how the

famous director and his company worked with the anti-Semitic themes that permeated Zygmunt Krasiński's Romantic-era text. This issue, which continues to cause major controversy in Poland, together with the radical model of political theatre proposed by Frlić, led to the crisis that resulted in the censorial decision. The author argues that this is a symptomatic case for Poland, exposing factors of ideology, power and aesthetic that caused it. The analysis reveals the impasse at which critical theatre in Poland found itself, mostly due to a lack of consideration of the mechanisms of the theatre medium, the dominant aesthetic seeking to anaesthetise recipients using the category of beauty and professionalism. The article also aims to analyse the process of work and model of theatre proposed by Frlić as one of the ways to overcome the limitations it reveals.

KEY WORDS: censorship, political theatre, institutional criticism, anaesthesia, anti-Semitism, agonism

