

Stehlíková, Eva (editor); Vodička, Libor (editor)

Summary

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Summary

Although theatrical art has been accompanying mankind from time immemorial, the Theatre Studies, or Theatrology, belongs among the youngest academic fields. A specialized programme in the Theatre Studies dealing with theory and history of theatre was opened at the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, as late as in 1963. Its fiftieth anniversary has brought us to a small retrospective glance. The special issue of this journal briefly sums up the history of the programme and presents a list of seminar papers, Bachelor's, Master's, and doctoral theses, a bibliography, and a list of journal publications.

The history of the Theatre Studies at Masaryk University in Brno opens with the chapter on the **Early History**, a brief overview of activities connected with the study of drama and theatre since the beginning of the existence of the Faculty of Arts in Brno. A number of prominent professors – such as the classical philologists František Novotný, Karel Svoboda and Ferdinand Stiebitz, the English scholar František Chudoba, the Romance scholar Prokop Miroslav Haškovec, the German scholar Jan Krejčí, the comparatist Václav Černý, the musicologist Vladimír Helfert, the philosopher Josef Ludvík Fisher, and the Czech scholar Arne Novák – conducted lectures and seminars dealing with this topic for the whole of their involvement at the Faculty of Arts.

We must also remember Otakar Zich's (1877–1934) activities in Brno from 1920 to 1924, for it was in his lectures and seminars here that he formed a lot of the ideas from his *The Aesthetics of the Dramatic Art* (1934). Roman Jakobson's (1896–1982) lectures on the Czech literature of the Early Middle Ages also greatly influenced the Theatre Studies in the making; here his study on *Mastičkář* (*The Ointment Seller*), the Czech Medieval farce, found the grounds for its later fame.

Frank Wollman (1888–1969, the Faculty Dean in 1948–1950), was however the only one of the prominent professors to step away from studying drama to reach the threshold of Theatre Studies. He announced a seminar called “Reading and Interpretation of Theatrical Works” in the academic year

1934/1935. Although he was a founding member of the Prague Linguistic Circle, his methodology was primarily based on Roman Ingarden's literary-theoretical phenomenology. He also used Ingarden as a basis for his later attempts on expansion of the compulsory Marxist-Leninist conception of the theory of art and culture. Although Wollman was the first Masaryk University professor that allowed a specialized doctoral study in his **Seminar of Theatre Studies and Dramaturgy** (1945–1948), he did not consider himself a true Theatre Studies scholar. Nevertheless, his expertise and teaching practice made him a guarantor of the emerging field at the Faculty of Arts (the study was formally attached to the Department of Russian Studies) in 1948–1950, after the Theatre Studies was transferred to Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts (in the academic year 1950/1951). He raised a strong generation of graduates with expert knowledge in the Theatre Studies who were successful in their careers in the living theatre as well as theoretical and historiographical fields (such as Petr Adler, Josef Balvín, Karel Bundálek, Mojmíra Janišová, Zdenka Jeřábková, Viktor Kudělka, Ivo Osolobě, Libor Pleva, Jaroslav Pokorný, Ivo Pondělíček, Bořivoj Srba, Zdeněk Srna, Jiřina Telcová and others).

An overview of the further development is divided chronologically into periods according to Heads of the Department which was forced to migrate and associate with various other departments in different periods of time. Professor **Artur Závodský** was the most prominent personality of the Theatre Studies in Brno from 1963 to the late 1970s. In 1960s, Professor Závodský, together with his colleagues, managed to create an excellent department focused on Theatre and Film Studies, which was respected by experts in the field and produced a generation of systematically educated graduates. Olga Jeřábková, Jiří P. Kříž, Miroslav Plešák, Ota Roubínek, Ladislav Soldán, Stanislava Střelcová, Štěpán Vlašín and Libuše Zbořilová are among the most remarkable members of this generation of graduates. Professor Závodský's special personal attitude and contacts with other scholars made it possible for the students and teachers of the Department to reach out of the limited local context and explore more distant theatre areas and ideas. Regular visiting trips to regional theatres in Moravia, Prague, Bratislava and, within the bounds of possibility, abroad (Berlin, Warsaw and Kraków) together with his colleagues and students were one of the ways to broaden their horizons. The fact that he assigned research work of the German theatre in the Czech lands as his students' thesis topics was also exceptional in this time period.

Professor Závodský's disciple, Professor **Zdeněk Srna**, was the Head of the Department during the difficult period of the Normalization and transition to the new order (1977–1992). The curriculum was strongly limited as a number of the Department's external collaborators were then *personae non gratae*, such as Bořivoj Srba, Miloš Hynšt, Alois Hajda and other figures associated

with theatre life in Brno of the preceding decades. In this period, members of the younger generation (Václav Cejpek and Ivan Němec), as well as staff members from other departments (Miloš Štědroň, Jaroslav Střítecký and Petr Osolobě), reinforced these external collaborators. Gradually, “banned” personalities, such as Bořivoj Srba and Milan Uhde, made their way back. In the academic year 1991/1992, Srba became the Professor of Theory and History of Theatre and the Department changed its name to the **Seminar of Theatre and Film Studies** for a short time. New courses were taught and studies conducted in the area of film and other media (such as the television and the radio). Rapid changes in the society, together with a natural generational exchange, brought a new quality of life to academic structures quite soon, too. They were accompanied by a radical change of the field that experienced a new birth after 1989.

Professor **Bořivoj Srba**'s arrival as the Head of the **Department of Theatre and Film Studies** in 1992 was followed with a radical reconstruction of the curriculum. First, he created a new staff: Eva Stehliková, Petr Oslzlý and Margita Havlíčková joined in as part-time employees; two Assistant Professors Leo Rajnošek and Jiří Voráč in the Film Studies track were supplemented by Jaroslav Blažejovský in 1999/2000. Professor Srba also won the best experts from other departments at the Faculty of Arts as collaborators of his staff members, as well as experts from elsewhere who then became permanent collaborators. A new situation allowed for international relations with the University of Vienna. W. Greisseneger, E. Furich, U. Birbaumer, K. Gruber and H. Haider from Vienna repeatedly lectured in Brno and also, together with colleagues from Slovakia, participated in the conference *Czech-Austrian Co-operation in Theatre Culture* (October 18, 1995) co-organized with the Austrian Office for Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. M. Esslin from London and D. Monmartre from Paris were also among important foreign guests. Lectures by prominent personalities of the Czech theatre (I. Vyskočil, V. Havel, L. Kundera and O. Krejča) were also welcome and some of these personalities also participating in seminars (J. Topol and P. Kohout). Kohout even presented a reading of his controversial play *Nuly (Zeros)* and discussed it with the students in the seminar on May 22, 1998.

The Department was first to introduce a credit-based system of studies of all Faculty of Arts departments. The system allowed students to make their own curriculum according to their preferences and combine lectures at the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, with lectures at Janáček Academy of Music and Performing Arts that were open for students of the Theatre Studies. This mutual accessibility turned to profit of students of both schools who benefited from the rich offer of the Department, which was oriented towards the theory and history of theatre, as well as of Janáček Academy, where the students attended lectures by prominent personalities (A. Přidal, J. Karlík, P. Scherhauser,

P. Švanda, B. Rychlík and V. Cejpek). The students also profited from the curriculum of the agile Film Studies that brought leading film directors and theoreticians of the field to the Faculty of Arts. A relatively low number of students lead to a rather specific tutoring system that gave rise to a close personal collaboration with undergraduate and doctoral students and motivated them to prolific international activities: they organized three conferences of young Theatre Studies scholars (in 1997, 1998 and 1999) and published three volumes of the proceedings. The Department continued to publish the journal *Theatralia Q* and students, who were also contributors to the journal, published the first on-line Theatre Studies journal *Yorick* for several years. The Universitas theatre group was established, where various groups of students staged their own productions to verify their theories about a theatre performance and staging practice.

The years **2000–2006** were the time of a great change in the history of the Theatre Studies; Professor Srba left and Jiří Voráč became the Head of the Department of Theatre and Film Studies. The Department was divided into two units – Július Gadoš was appointed the Head of the Theatre Studies unit and Jiří Voráč the Head of the Film Studies unit. The latter would become an independent Department of Film Studies and Audiovisual Culture (with Jiří Voráč as the Head), while the Theatre Studies unit would turn into the **Department of Theatre Studies and Interactive Media** (with **Július Gajdoš** as the Head) in 2003. Together with a transfer to a structured system of separate Bachelor's and Master's study programmes, new profiling arose. The amount of studying the history of theatre dropped, while contemporary theatre, theory of theatre and new trends (multidisciplinary artistic activities in the new media environment, the use of new technologies in theatre and performance, interactive courses and others) were accentuated.

The Department staff was rather small. The team (J. Gajdoš and P. Oslzly) was enforced by M. Vojtěchovský who lectured on Visual Studies and interactive media, and by the former doctoral students P. Klein and J. Horáková. There were also J. Vostrý, J. Hyvnar, Z. Silová and P. Drábek as external collaborators. Lecturers from abroad came to deliver single lectures. Instruction heavily depended on doctoral students who had to work hard while studying. New courses were introduced: “An Individual Seminar” where students were prompted on an individual basis to apply their knowledge of theory and history – as it had been in thesis seminars in the past; the course “The Project” provided students with a practical theatre experience from authoring a script to performance. “The Project” became the core of the study programme as it was assigned a large number of credits.

In **April 2006**, the Head of the Department of Theatre Studies and Interactive Media Professor J. Gajdoš was removed from office for grave reasons

by the Masaryk University Rector, and **Pavel Drábek** was put in charge. The study of interactive media was transferred to the Department of Musicology in 2006/2007, while the Theatre Studies became a unit of the Seminar of Aesthetics (with Associate Professor P. Osolsobě as the Head) for some time.

The independent **Department of Theatre Studies** was re-established on July 1, 2011. The first task was to settle the Theatre Studies in their original scope and win new collaborators. The existing lectures and seminars were enriched by courses offered by a number of external collaborators from various other departments of the Faculty of Arts and other institutions from and outside of Brno, as well as practitioners in related fields, and visiting professors from Europe and overseas (such as Platon Mavromoustakos, Walter Puchner, Manfred Pfister, Christian Billing, Dmitri Trubochkin, Veronika Ambros and Yana Merzoon).

The Department accredited Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral study programmes. Presently, it primarily focuses on the development of students' critical thinking about artistic artefacts as well as art as a whole and their ability to reflect upon an artistic shape and knowledge of the laws of dramatic and theatre structures in the process of their historical development. In this sense, a deeper knowledge of the theory and history of theatre in their interrelation becomes the aim of studies. Special attention is paid to a systematic research of theatre in Moravia, European drama, Early Modern theatre, musical theatre, theatricality of feasts and festivals, stage design, theatre production, audience reception, cultural politics and theory of theatre (with special attention to the Czech Structuralism).

A special "Profiling Seminar" offered to students in the Bachelor's programme aims at linking their studies with practice of theatre production and research. Students are instructed to work with sources, archival materials and oral history, and they learn to create bibliographies and cover topics that had remained untouched: theatre in Moravia in the 18th century, amateur theatre (usually in the area of a student's residence), estate archives (M. Hynšt and M. Kouřil), creation of a digital database of the Slovácké Theatre Archive, research in the history of the Theatre Studies in Brno, and so on. To broaden students' horizons, short trips are organized both in the Czech Republic and abroad (Wrocław and Kraków) that always include visits to theatre institutions (The Grotowski Institute and Cricoteka, Centre for the Documentation of the Art of Tadeusz Kantor) and performances.

The Department also organizes international conferences, such as "The International Seminar on Early Modern Theatre in Europe" in 2001 or "The Prague Semiotic Stage Revisited", first in 2011 and second in 2013, and a home seminar "A Structuralist Half Time" (2012). The three latter conferences were devoted to the Czech theatre Structuralism and attended by inter-

national leading experts dealing with the theory of theatre; they were organized as a part of the research project *Czech Structuralist Thought on Theatre: context and potency*. This research project (2011–2015) on the one hand focuses on historical aspects of the thought on theatre related to the Prague Linguistic Circle (research of J. Honzl's and M. Kouřil's personal estate archives) and the reception of Structuralism in the Czech environment, and on the other hand on the possible application of the method in theatre research. Besides proceedings, an annotated publication of an anthology of key theoretical texts in English and Czech will be the most substantial outcome of the project. For up-to-date information about the project, see <http://www.phil.muni.cz/kds/index.php?str=strukturalismus.php>.

Members of the Department staff also form a team of a three-year grant project *Innovation of Art Studies at the Faculty of Arts (Education for Competitiveness Operational Programme, CZ.1.07/2.2.0044)*. The Department of Theatre Studies cooperates on the project with the Department of Musicology (the guarantor of the project) and the Department of Film Studies and Audio-visual Culture. As a part of the project, the Department offers new courses, home and international trips, student conferences, and so on.

The next chapter comprises of two dictionary entries about students' independent editorial works.

The first presents the on-line journal *Yorick* that was formed at the then Department of Theatre and Film Studies as an independent critical journal on theatre in the autumn of 1998. It was published by an eponymous civic association with a financial support from the Open Society Fund (1999), the Czech Ministry of Culture, and the Higher Education Development Fund of the Czech Ministry of Education (2000). It was founded by the doctoral students Barbora Uhdeová Schnelle and Libor Vodička, and Master's degree students of dramaturgy at Janáček Academy David Drozd, Hana Nejezchlebová Drozdová, Roman Sikora and Ondřej Hučín (the last of them worked as a researcher at the Theatre Institute in Prague at that time). The student of stage design Pavel Borák created the graphical layout and design, and the student of mathematics at the Faculty of Science, Masaryk University, Tomáš Skácel realized the technical solution.

The editorial board's aim was to create an open generational platform of critical thinking and theatre creativity. The choice of the on-line medium depended on the availability of the Internet connectivity at schools and also low operating and editing costs of the otherwise rather extensive issues (each issue consisted of several hundreds of pages). Authors clearly shared a critical disapproval of the widespread post-modernism in the Czech theatre and art, and common interest in political topics, which was manifest in their criticism of

the propositions of Neo-Liberalism, politicians' reluctance to form a national cultural politics, democratic deficits, corruption, bombing of the former Yugoslavia by the NATO forces, and so on.

The next journal, *RozRazil on-line* (*Veronica on-line*) – originally www.vetrnemlyny.cz/rozrazilonline, later www.rozrazilonline.cz, – was initiated by the publishing house Větrné mlýny in Brno in 2006. The idea was to create an on-line alternative to the printed stage periodical *Rozrazil* published by Větrné mlýny, which gave to the on-line journal its title as well as topics: literature, theatre, music, and graphic art. The journal, however, became to predominantly focus on theatre, which was due to the fact that students of the Theatre Studies in Brno Martin Bernátek, Zuzana Perůtková, Jitka Šotkovská and Iva Mikulová participated on the launch. The owners of Větrné mlýny, Petr Minařík and Pavel Řehořík, allowed journal contributors and editors to have a full control of the content.

Gradually, reviews and analyses of theatre productions became to predominate over solitary articles on the graphic art (the Prague Quadrennial), reviews of dramatic texts published by Větrné mlýny within the Contemporary Czech play edition, and blogs. The scope of topics began to widen in the sphere of articles on theatre, covering new performances not only in Brno but also in various theatres in the whole country. The original aim of being on-line as much as possible converged with the nature of theatre as an art, whose specificity lies in existing here and now. The “instantness” of the theatre artefact and Internet as a medium, thus, made various theatre festivals the main point of interest of the journal.

RozRazil on-line has become one of the major sources of on-line information from a majority of theatre festivals in the Czech Republic (Divadlo Plzeň, Ostravar, Encounter, Divadelní Flora) and Slovakia (Nitra, Martin) and an almost exclusive source of feedback for some of them (such as Miloš Movnar Festival in Šumperk). Contributors and editors of the journal often help with the edition of printed festival newsletters, for instance at the festival Divadelní svět Brno (Theatre World Brno).

The *RozRazil* web pages are archived in the Czech National Library and the Theatre Institute in Prague. Most articles will thus be preserved even after the journal eventually perishes. In 2010, 241 articles were published in total, 301 in 2011, and 245 in 2012. The average number of individual users that access the page is 50–60 per day with more than a hundred accesses during festivals.

The special and noteworthy period of time is described in the following chapter, when students of the Theatre Studies tested their theoretical knowledge in theatre practice under the label of the **Universitas** theatre. These activities took place under the supervision of the Department staff or independently.

The theatre group called **Theatre Crescent** – also Divadlo Polokruh (Theatre Half-Circle), Teatro Medialuna, or Theatre Halvamen – was bilingual, performing in Czech/English, Czech/Spanish and Czech/Norwegian. Karolína Stehlíková (Theatre Studies) and Ondřej Schneider (English and American Studies) brought students from their respective programmes and aimed at entertaining audiences with no knowledge of these languages. They realized four projects in 1996–1998 – a night of staged readings of excerpts from the plays and poems by William Shakespeare, an English–Czech adaptation of a Middle English romance *Sir Gavain a Zelený rytíř/Sir Gavain and The Green Knight* (in a translation into contemporary English by Brian Stone and the first Czech translation by Michal Křístek), a stage production of poems and excerpts from plays by Federico García Lorca *Antologie/Antologia*, and a collage of Edvard Munch’s life, paintings and writing.

Another group, **Theatrum Cmundi**, emerged around Ladislav Stýblo, Andrea Jochmanová and Přemysl Hnilička. In the beginning, its activities were primarily limited to debates on theatre, students’ creative writing and presentation of their works, and preparations of future activities. It also organized a cycle of seven lectures. It worked from the late 1999 to 2002, when it transformed into the independent Čára (Line) Theatre. It created a free variety show *Vánoční merenda (A Christmas Rag)*, performed Apollinaire’s *The Breasts of Tiresias*, produced the first Czech staging of Euripides’s *Alcestis*, and had a successful performance of the Czech Medieval play *Mastičkář (The Ointment Seller)* by an anonymous author.

The next chapter consists of a **bibliography of periodicals** published by the Department of Theatre Studies at the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, or its predecessors.

First journal published by the Department was *Otázky divadla a filmu (Theatre and Film Issues)*, which borrowed the title of Jindřich Honzl’s theatrological journal from 1945–1949. Published in 1970–1974, it was part of the editorial series *Spisy filozofické fakulty – Opera universitatis Purkynianae Brunensis, Facultas philosophica (Journal of the Faculty of Arts)*. Increasing ideological pressure, growing censorship and purges during the Normalization period caused the growth of time needed to produce each of the journal issues, and it was eventually impossible to maintain publication of a theatrological journal at the Faculty – only three issues were published.

It was not before the late 1990s when Professor Srba began publishing a specialized theatrological journal at the Faculty of Arts: the *Q* series (*Theatralia et Cinematologica*) which focused on Theatre and Film Studies was published annually from 1998 with a subtitle *Otázky divadla a filmu (Theatre and Film Issues)* to stress a continuity with the preceding editorial series of

the Faculty journals. The journal *Theatralia*, the *Q* series of the Faculty of Arts journals (2002–2008), was published after the division of the Department of Theatre and Film Studies into two independent departments in 2001. This journal – originally a collection-type of publication – was transformed into a standard scholarly peer-review journal with regular sections in 2009 and is now published twice a year. Each issue has a special thematic focus (within the section “Yorick”), some issues are published in English only.

We have also included three “student” collections of works into the bibliography of periodicals. The collections are proceedings from three international student conferences organized by the then Department of Theatre and Film Studies at the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University, at the turn of the century. Contributions published in the proceedings map out the general state of thought on theatre, art, methodological issues and “period” topics in this era; they are also the first output of a generation raised after 1989.

The **bibliography of theses** written at the Theatre Studies, which are located in the Departmental Library, follows including theses related to the field of the Theatre Studies written and defended at the Department of Theatre Studies. Theses written after 1993 make the largest part of the collection, because the archiving rules were not so strict before the given year and the theses were not systematically stored; some of them were placed in the Central Library of the Faculty of Arts, but not all works have been preserved. We have also included students’ seminar papers from 1993–2003 into the bibliography, as in this decade, single-subject students were required to produce and defend a total of four seminar final papers and a Master’s thesis, which was often a synthesis of the four. Since 2003, students are required to defend their final Bachelor’s or Master’s theses, depending on their study programme. These theses and theses reviews are stored in a digital format in the archive of theses, which is accessible to the public (<http://is.muni.cz/thesis/>).