

The essay analyses the corpora of the dramatic or non-dramatic texts of contemporary authors (Simona Semenič, Milena Marković, Tim Crouch, Oliver Frljić, Katarina Morano and Žiga Divjak, Anja Hilling, Wajdi Mouawad, Dino Pešut and She She Pop) as a border area belonging to both the field of literature and theatre. While detecting the specifics of the interpretation of drama and theatre, the author uses eclectic tools offered by literary and performing arts studies to analyse the corpora of contemporary drama or no longer drama and performing practices. Focusing on a series of contemporary playwrights and theatre directors, he seeks answers to the question of how we can interpret the changes in drama and theatre. How did the specific return to the theatre of words, as defined by the French theorist of contemporary drama Élisabeth Angel-Perez, take place, and to which extent are today's theatre and drama still post-dramatic but nevertheless establish a new return to the dramatic and dramatised? How do these "experiments belonging to the so-called 'post-dramatic theatre' which is also a (post-)deconstructionist theatre, eventually, end up redramatising whatever it was they strove to un/de-dramatize" (Angel-Perez)? Thus, paradoxically, "'no-longer-dramatic' texts put forward a new dramaturgical form that subverts the dramatic representation of the world as a fictive whole and accommodates the 'unsurveyable present' (Lehmann) of the mediatised-globalised world".

Keywords: no-longer dramatic text, post-postdramatic, re-dramatisation, contemporary theatre and drama, neo-dramatic

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How Can We Interpret the 21st-Century (No Longer) Dramatic Texts and Theatre in Art and Theory?¹

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1. Contemporary Plays as Open Texts

In the essay, we will discuss the processes of the dangerous liaisons between drama and theatre in the corpora of dramatic and non-dramatic texts as a borderline area, belonging to the fields of literature and theatre, on the one hand, and to the theatre or performative work as the “interpretation” of a dramatic or literary work, on the other hand. We will also discuss the specific process of translation from the literary dimension into the performative one. In detecting the specifics of interpreting drama and theatre as well as the broader performance and literary practices in theory and art, we will employ an eclectic array of tools offered by literary and performance studies, applying them to the corpora of contemporary dramatic or no longer dramatic textual and performative practice (Simona Semenič, Milena Marković, Tim Crouch, Oliver Frlić, Katarina Morano and Žiga Divjak, Anja Hilling, Wajdi Mouawad, Dino Pešut and She She Pop), as it has been forming and transforming during the first two decades of the 21st century.

Let us start with a quote by Bruno Tackels, a contemporary theorist of the textual in theatre after 2000. In his excellent book *Les Écritures de plateau* (Stage Writings), he argues that recent texts intended for the stage “are mostly open texts, free prose that imposes nothing onto the actor, except the attention to language” (Tackels 117).² It is precisely language “that is the only thing leading the actor, a language consisting of voids and fills, imperfect language, full of contexts that leaves the actor a full range to embody a story. A story that did not exist prior to this and needs to be reinvented at any moment” (Ibid.). Tackels points out that the time in which we live is facing the fallout from the de-sacralisation of the text and that since 2000, we have been witnessing the implementation of a belief that it is only possible to write texts deriving from the full

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² Unless otherwise noted, all translations of quotations from foreign language sources are the author's.

range of possibilities offered by the theatre stage. Contemporary theatre is seeing a comeback of “stage writers”.

More often than not, artists today do not have any other text but the one being offered and developed directly on the stage, in time with the creation and rehearsals themselves. Such texts no longer derive from books as cultural monuments but rather from their own book, which unconditionally enters the space through the actors’ bodies. Moreover, they invoke words because they need them. The text is no longer the be-all and end-all of creation but rather something its creators look for on stage. It is something that drives them to lure the text onto the stage to find their own place inside it, no different from music, movement, light, props, set and images: stage writing finds inspiration in a whole range of scenic expressions:

The notion of stage writing allows us to “read” all of these yet unseen works. “Stage writing” actually presupposes the existence of a “stage reader”. We do not read the text but rather what the artist has created from it, the writing that derives from it. Stage writers share the belief that a performance can only really be completed in the imagination of all the people who are watching it. A theatre text is, therefore, an incomplete reality in becoming; it is “waiting” for a stage and stage realisation. Thus in theatre, the text once again becomes the starting point rather than the goal. It is like an equation that needs to be resolved via the stage (Tackels 55).

Tackels builds on the legacy of reading drama and theatre established by Anne Ubersfeld and her semiotic school headed by Patrice Pavis. This school emphasises that the theatricality of a text in contemporary theatre is no longer exclusively intrafictional. Instead, it is positioned in and counts on “an external communication system, on the space of interplay between the stage and the auditorium” (Poschmann 45). Such texts that could be defined by the term “no longer dramatic texts” or “theatre texts”, a term coined by Gerda Poschmann, enable the spectator to read a performance, or rather theatre, in the sense of Anne Ubersfeld and her syntagma “lire le theatre”, to experience theatre meaning as a process of construction of meaningful associations.

Thus in contemporary theatre, playwriting and performance arts, it often comes to what Tim Crouch “stages” in the metatheatrical discourse of his essay-play *The Author*: in it, the author takes us beyond postdramatic theatre, which was considered a hallmark of the deconstruction of drama at the turn of the century.

Thus we embark on the path towards what Anne Monfort dubs “neodramatic theatre”. However, this neodramatic theatre reversely takes us back to the 20th century and even to the end of the 19th century. It takes us back to symbolism and Maeterlinck’s model of modern drama as the watershed moment. Lado Kralj, in his essay “Maeterlinckov model moderne drame” (Maeterlinck’s Model of Modern Drama), pointed this out by demonstrating the fact that even today, we are still living out the legacy of *fin de siècle*

and the utopian models of new drama and new theatre (e.g., the concept of second-level dialogue) that formed at the turn from the 19th to the 20th century. On this path, we encounter a new type of lyrical subject and end up on a Steinesque landscape stage or inside a specific landscape play. This landscape play is halfway between theatre and performance. At the same time, it is documentary, verbatim and autobiographical, even though it paradoxically re-legitimises fiction, which suddenly finds itself in the centre of postdramatic theatre, thus creating a particular form of story and drama.

Drama in the 21st century derives from its “non-identical twin”, the drama of the 20th century, thus entering into dangerous liaisons with theatre. We will attempt to capture these liaisons in which the new drama and theatre enter to create new theatre configurations. These configurations let us know that we should reconfigure our understanding of the landscapes of artworks, spectators and readers, all in light of the blurred line between fiction, autofiction and authenticity. We also need to reposition our theoretical views of such artistic landscapes that sometimes appear indecipherable but tend to attract us precisely because of that.

2. Anja Hilling: Taking Apart Body and Speech

We will begin with the German drama of the first two decades of the 21st century. Danijela Kapusta, a theorist of contemporary drama after 2000, dedicated her book *Transformation of Persons: On the Construction and Deconstruction of the Person in German Theatre at the Turn of the Millennium* to shifts in German drama in recent decades. She finds out that for Anja Hilling and her contemporaries, the text is no longer something fixed but rather “material as the beginning of something that has not yet emerged” (Kapusta 64). At the same time, however, these plays following the postdramatic era are “strongly opposed to a cold and distant approach and attempt to find a way to change into something that has emotions and feelings” (Ibid. 64). As something that differs from the so-called postdramatic text.

Another theorist of contemporary “dramatic drama”, Birgit Haas, points out that Hilling’s play *The Black Animal Sadness* (2007) is “realistic, but almost too realistic” (The Return of Dramatic Drama 98). She speaks about the defamiliarised realism that could be interpreted as a critique of the clichéd aesthetics of television. Anja Hilling does not use deconstructive procedures (which can be found in Slovenia, for example, in the works of Simona Semenič, as well as Simona Hamer, Tibor Hrs Pandur and Varja Hrvatin) to get rid of the linear and synthetic structure of the narrative. However, she uses a critique of both dramatic and mediatised forms of the jargon of righteousness to reveal the banal but dangerous repetitions of society’s everyday spectacle. “While Brecht sought to achieve a productive dialogue between different strata of history by

choosing between them, Hilling achieves a productive interrogation of the aesthetic realm of television and theatre" (Ibid. 98).

With Anja Hilling, the text passes from monologue to dialogical form and the form of a side text, even an essay. The dividing lines between the main and the side text are blurred and unclear. Spoken text is not attributed to specific persons. *Didascalie* (stage directions) are no longer the only part of a dramatic text in which the author appears as a subject. The author is not absent but is present everywhere. Hilling deliberately tests different forms, and when they are no longer enough for her, she discards them and replaces them with others.

Hilling does not use sliding signifiers in their infinity but, at certain moments, begins to relate them to concrete signifiers of the author-subject and society. She thematises the problems of the individual and the margins and critiques modern, mediated society. Within this critique, she also thematises and problematises art and culture itself but does not spare the playwright.

Birgit Haas sees this specific post-Brechtian technique at work also in the works of other German dramatists belonging to the same generation, namely, Dea Loher. "Her work is a creative and productive revival of the Brechtian theatre in the context of the post-postmodern age, an age in which human beings have again reclaimed theatrical space" (Haas, "History through the Lens" 85).

To summarise, Hilling's work testifies to the fact that modern dramatic writing requires a specific type of theatre, acting technique and other segments of the theatrical sign system. It is the dramatic writing that, after a postdramatic turn (similar to, for example, the drama of the absurd in Samuel Beckett, Eugène Ionesco and Harold Pinter), again becomes that which generates theatrical procedures and aesthetics.

3. Simona Semenič: Deconstructing and Reconstructing Representation

Compared to her German colleague Anja Hilling, Simona Semenič is more radically opposed to representation. The dialogical form of her writing has ended up in the company of heterogeneous textual strategies: from stage directions to descriptions that are closer to novels and prose and to narrative, essayistic, theoretical and other techniques, reminding the audience that what they are reading or watching is no longer a realistic dialogue.

Let us begin our discussion with a quote from her play *the feast or the story of a savoury corpse or how roman abramovič, the personage janša, julia kristeva, age 24, simona semenič and the initials z.i. found themselves in a puff of tobacco smoke*:

yes, of course we are in the theatre, but this theatre is about to throw you a very special feast
a feast to which some eminent guests have been invited, we are going to sit them behind a table
(this of course doesn't mean that there has to be a real table on the stage, there can be, of course,
there can be a whole line of tables or a pile of them, the entire stage can be a table, the tables can
hang from the ceiling upside down or the other way around, there can also be a sign saying table in
one language or another, and there can be no sign anywhere and nothing anywhere; no table, no
chair and no soup tureen with delicious smelling stew, what i want to say is, the important thing is
that you, the distinguished spectator, can imagine our eminent guests having a feast in front of you
on the stage)
this feast is of a very special and also important sort
namely, our eminent guests are on the stage in front of you, respectable audience, they are feasting
upon the corpse
so, yes, dear theatregoers
every spoonful of the stew that the eminent guests put in their mouths, is a spoonful of the stew
cooked from the corpse
so the corpse you are looking at, this corpse is not a living character
(dramatis persona, if i had it my way)
this corpse once was a living character, once, before it ended up in the stew i'm about to serve at
tonight's feast
this character
character that's in front of you and that's being impersonated
(being breathtakingly impersonated)
by a true star actress

is a character that's actually cooked in the stew that's going to be devoured by the guests who are present at tonight's special and important feast that's going to start any second now
(Semenič, *the feast* 4).

As is clear from the quotation, Semenič proposes the structure of what Deleuze finds in Nietzsche's theory and names "a theatre of unbelief", in which "humour and irony are indispensable and fundamental operations of nature" serve "to ground the repetition in eternal return on both the death of God and the dissolution of the self" (*Difference* 11).

She does not produce a copy of the real in the sense of the dramatic work. Instead, she creates a post-Brechtian commentary dealing with the issue of narrative development, establishing a relationship with the past and producing a critical narrative of the present.

She constantly interrupts dramatic events with authorial interventions while exploiting Deleuze's procedures of repetition through otherness, which destabilises the reader. However, Semenič also offers them aesthetic pleasure and a unique alliance with the author. Nevertheless, this no longer dramatic text produces strong fiction and reader identification despite its densely populated metatheatrical and metadramatic commentaries. The dialogue form is persistently reworked through diverse textual strategies: from *didascalie* to descriptions closer to novels and fiction, narrative, essayistic, theoretical and other techniques that remind the audience that what they read or watch is no longer a realistic dialogue. But in doing so, her plays produce distinctly dramatic effects, which Haas would probably call "dramatically dramatic" (*Plädoyer für* 45) and, of course, Brechtian.

When speaking about the autobiographical works *Jaz, žrtev* (I, victim, 2007); *še me dej* (do me twice, 2009); and *drugič* (the second time, 2014) of Simona Semenič, Gašper Troha points to this post-Brechtian feature of representation they produce as follows:

However, these plays do not depict to the reader/spectator a world that would be separated from them and into which they would supposedly have to immerse themselves or reflect upon it. Instead, Semenič keeps involving them in the dramatic action. She demands that the spectator take an active role, be it direct action within the live performance or an emotional response. This response crucially establishes the understanding of the play, which means that a kind of reciprocal functioning of both representation and presentation is at work here. What we saw as an opposition (see Fischer-Lichte) is entering this new cycle as a conjunction. The drama is bringing back referentiality and is able to produce a coherent message, while at the same time it is marked by the experience of the postdramatic (119).

Her texts thus produce a specific form of social criticism, which links the reader or spectator with the writer or performer in a specific autopoietic feedback loop producing the effect in which personal experience engages both at an emotional level.

Semenič thus performs a real post-Brechtian transformation of the *V-effekt*, which has several purposes, but it certainly goes beyond the self-referentiality of the metatheatrical. She is interested in what lies behind appearances and appearances of appearances, in reality, in all its contradictions. Therefore, her deconstruction of the dramatic and the fictional, which sometimes reminds us of Pirandello, produces a special post-Brechtian critique of the real. In this sense, she is interested in something similar to Anja Hilling: the different layers of truth.

I described these processes of dethroning the text as a specific procedure of Semenič in my essay "(No Longer) Dramatic Text for Theatre and Postdramatic Theatre", alluding to Hans-Thies Lehmann:

To Lehmann, however, postdramatic theatre as the liberation from the three-star model does not mean a theatre that lacks a connection beyond drama. It is but the process of decomposition, dismantling and deconstruction inside drama itself. He sees the future of theatre after drama as the future of theatre beyond the primacy of the dramatic author or rather as theatre after a chain of crises of the dramatic author, as successive stages of self-reflection, decomposition and separation of dramatic theatre (Toporišič 182).

Similarly to the works of Hilling and Dea Loher as well as that of Frljić and Mouawad or Divjak and Morano (as we will see later on), the theatre of Simona Semenič is "a theatre of empowerment, a politically engaged theatre that does not leave the bewildered spectator in front of a destroyed history" (Haas, "History through the Lens" 85).

4. Wajdi Mouawad: Intercultural and Intertextual Frames of Memory

Wajdi Mouawad is another author who opens up (no longer) dramatic writing to the intercultural and the intertextual. In *Incendies* (Scorched) (2004), for example, he tells a story about a brother and his twin sister who endeavour to discover the secret of their mother's past and her silence during her final years. Through a contemporary narration of the Oedipus myth, the performance explores what cultural, collective and individual memories make conscious of the travels of his characters, who are children of exile. The performance serves Mouawad as a public platform for staging his childhood trauma – war. He demonstrates how the artists who are children of exile endeavour to overcome the limitations of their memories (a combination of twisted memories of children and phantasies catalysed by family

narratives) and widen their exile imagination onto the cultural referents of their adopted lands.

The dramatic staging of *Incendies* is marked by historical images of war-stricken Beirut, which are tied to the author's simultaneous personal memories of the disaster. His theatre thus becomes a theatre connecting memory and hallucinations, false memories, dreams, monologues and the flow of immediate perceptions. All of this creates a specific metaphor of an inner theatre, the owner of which can be, at the same time, the actor, the audience and the playwright. In this sense, it produces a specific paradox, as the no longer dramatic creates a special form of intensive performativity resulting from Mouawad's structuring of his direction or performative text as a poetic statement or expression. However, in its centre, paradoxically, there is the author who figures as a poet-rhapsode and is simultaneously in the centre of the action. His plays and performances are thus conceived around the axis of poetic composition with a strong emphasis on tropes such as verbal and visual onomatopoeia, thematic and structural repetitions, dramatic and spatial metaphors, rhythmic patterning and tropes variations.

Wajdi Mouawad breaches the horizon of the reader's and spectator's expectations while simultaneously playing with Wolfgang Iser's concept of the implicit reader. His postdramatic plays and theatre of memory are saturated with conflicting discourses and styles, which keep changing in sudden and, at times, even confusing ways. Typical of his texts and performances is a special phenomenology of memory, which allows him to produce the feeling of a conflicting and traumatised attitude towards the past, reflected in the present. In her excellent analysis of Mouawad's plays, "Staging Memory in Wajdi Mouawad's *Incendies*. Archaeological Site Or Poetic Venue?" Yana Meerzon argues:

In its social and political stand, Mouawad's theatre tends to speak for (on behalf of) an imaginary community or an "exilic nation" of exiled subjects, those who share a mother tongue and the cultural customs different from the language and the customs of an adopted country. [...] In this context, *Incendies* serves Mouawad as a public platform to stage the testimony of his childhood trauma. It originates at the crossroads of poetic, fictional and historical narratives, and builds upon the fictional truth (poiesis) of a dramatic play and the historical truth (noesis) of the history of the region, as it is evoked by Mouawad's personal memory of the events (15-16).

While exhibiting a solid preoccupation with questions of memory, Wajdi Mouawad uses structures of repetition, conflation, regression, echoing and simultaneity that perplex the reader and spectator. While evoking the memories of individual and collective pasts, his plays and performances reopen tabooed discourses and thus bring a new engagement to the politics of memory. This engagement targets the audience

with a specific technique of the dialogue between the creation and loss of memories on both sides: that of the authors and the spectators or readers.

Mouawad incorporates the two forms of memory by resorting to a specific dramatic technique, which allows him to juxtapose memories and stories. The actions in his plays take place simultaneously, often even in very diverse temporal and spatial parameters, which are marked by the same scene on stage or in dramatic space. As an example, let us take a scene in which a notary invites the twins, Jeanne and Simon, to sign their mother's will, seemingly coincidentally also mentioning Nawal's "bus phobia" with this: Once during the war, she witnessed a group of gunmen setting the bus ablaze, burning its passengers alive. This scene in Lebel's backyard overlaps with a different scene, which happened earlier, in another space and time. Here Nawal tells her friend Sawda the truth: she was that bus's passenger:

I was on the bus, Sawda. I was with them! When they doused us with gas, I screamed: "I'm not from the camp, I'm not one of the refugees from the camp, I'm one of you, I'm looking for my child, one of the children they kidnapped." So they let me off the bus, and then, then they opened fire, and in a flash, the bus went up in flames, it went up in flames with everybody inside, the old people, the children, the women, everyone! One woman tried to escape through a window, but the soldiers shot her, and she died there, straddling the window with her child on her arms in the middle of the blaze, her skin melted, her child's skin melted, everything melted and everyone burned to death (Mouawad, *Scorched* 43).

This horrific episode appears in the play in the form of Nawal's memory of an event from 1975 that marked the beginning of the war in Lebanon. Meerzon points out that "the spatial/temporal simultaneity that characterises the theatrical enactment of Nawal's memories and the twins' journey to the East suggests the persistence of the trauma" (19–20) that "spills from one generation onto the next, no matter how large the temporal and spatial gaps may be" (Ibid).

Mouawad thus creates a counterpoint between two kinds of memory on the one hand and the collective betrayal of a particular system of values specific to the neo-colonial and neoliberal societies of today on the other. The exploration of the personal upon which he embarks often leads him to the complexities of the (geo)political history and present: as though the most distant memories of the personal are incomplete if we do not consider the wider context in which they occurred.

5. Milena Marković: Contamination with the Lyrical and the Post-Brechtian

Special changes in the discourse and form of drama texts are also characteristic of the Serbian playwright and poet Milena Marković. She enacts them as passages “from fragmentedness to lyricism, from the exhibitions of performance in the body of classical dramatic pathos to the cabaret of historical drama” (Kopicl), which we can find in Mouawad as well. All of these are characteristics which bring to memory comparisons to contemporary Slovenian female playwrights such as Simona Semenič, Simona Hamer, Žanina Mirčevska, Katja Gorečan, Varja Hrvatin, Maša Pelko, as well as contemporary German playwrights like Anja Hilling, Dea Loher, Ulrike Syha and Theresa Walser.

The writing of Milena Marković represents “poetisation” or lyricisation of dramatic form introduced in her stylistically diverse plays, from *Pavilions* (1997, staged in 2001) and *The Doll Ship* (2004) to *The Woods are Shining* (2005) and *Nahod Simeon* (2006). Marković considers herself to be primarily a poet. Thus, her plays all come in “the form of a poem in the sense of wholeness and completeness. They include their own rhythm and metrum” (Georgijev). Ivana Zajc interprets *The Doll Ship* as follows:

Her play *The Doll Ship* is about the life story of the Woman from adolescence until her death, including her funeral. [...] The teleological structure of this play is obfuscated by cyclical repetition: it appears to be goal-oriented. However, with each act, this orientedness seems to begin anew, which is connected to the final poem in which the protagonist is begging to be born again. In each act, the character is “reborn” into another fairy-tale character, while this structure at the same time makes up the life-story of the Woman (“Postmodernistično” 212).

The lyricisation of monologue structures in her plays combined with a specific form of post-Brechtian songs creates the distance and poetic space of freedom in which drama and lyricism as particular components of her plays coincide. Marković emphasises fragmentariness as a specific quality of her plays, as she believes that “the so-called fragmentary dramaturgy adds a special lightness, freedom and openness to plays as a particular genre quality” (Crnjanski 47).

Parallel to the lyricisation, episation also takes place, which adds to the structure of her play *Nahod Simeon* a special Rabelais-like quality that refers to a carnival and in which individual scenes do not serve to build up a whole but rather bear value by themselves, as they lead the spectator towards a special reflection on theatre, society and themselves. Marković thus establishes a special form of alienation by resorting to songs, poetry, lyricisation and episation. Let us recall the example of the Success Song from *The Doll Ship*:

I've arrived at that beautiful place
And they were all there
And they looked for me
And I was there
Then I was alone and I left
To fuck the barman
The barman was quick
Mama, can you see me now
Mama can you hear me now
Mama this was all
Because of you
Mama
Why don't you talk to me
Mama

(Marković, *Barčica za punčke* 28)

Milena Marković disrupts the illusion of art by directly exposing and demonstrating the theatre “machinery” that allows the performance to take place but remains hidden from the eye of the casual spectator. A similar thing goes on at the level of acting, where actors and actresses do not so much present their characters as elaborate them. Even the aesthetics emerging in this way often turn out to be the aesthetics of the ugly and the eclectic quotational and montage structuring of traces of diverse references from art, culture and society. Thus the processes of semiotisation and de-semiotisation take place parallelly, a crisis of identities in a world that the gods have long since abandoned. In the words of Ljiljana Pešikan-Ljuštanović:

In such a world, one has neither a mother nor homeland nor myths about gods and heroes, about the beginning and the end. Born in a country that “no longer bears that name”, in spaces that at multiple points have been desecrated by death and extinction, the protagonists of these plays cannot find a way out. This fundamental anthropological pessimism of Milena Marković manifests in the world's fundamental desecration, the abolition of meaning and purpose. Between a past that is being invented and unfulfillable utopian illusions of the future, her heroes are stuck in an everyday that could perhaps even change “IF ONLY THIS WIND WOULD STOP, IF ONLY THESE PEOPLE DISAPPEARED” (Marković) (“Ja eto žalim” 16).

6. She She Pop: Devised Documentary Text Full of Memories

Founded in 1998, She She Pop, a collective composed of six women and one man – Johanna Freiburg, Fanni Halmburger, Lisa Lucassen, Mieke Matzke, Ilia Papatheodorou, Berit Stumpf and Sebastian Bark, essentially stage themselves and their invited colleagues, engaging in open dialogue with the audience. In the performance *Schuhbladen* (“drawers” in German), they depart from their usual methods in several ways. They explore for the first time an explicitly national topic, namely, German unification, and they bring in outsiders. In this case, the outsiders were Easterners, as all members of She She Pop are from the West. Together, through rehearsals, sharing objects from their past and using those objects to incite dialogue, they collectively created a specific form of devised performance based on the techniques of documentary theatre: *Schuhbladen*.

They ask themselves and the public the questions: “Who were we? Who are we? Why have we turned out like this?” and thus, perform and comment on the historical dimension of German reunification in the drama. Three She She Pop performers of West German origin take their seats opposite their homologues from former East Germany. This gives rise to a radically honest experience, not dissimilar to couples therapy, during which the couples go through their old chests of drawers, retrieving a medley of diaries, letters from their youth, records, souvenirs and bedtime books. These items form subjective weapons in the battle waged between the six performers and enable them to write a unique, collective story, a theatrical essay commenting on contemporary life. In doing so, they create true relationships, far from East/West clichés.

Through the personal objects from their drawers that they put on stage, with which they tell each other about their youth either in the German Democratic Republic or in the Federal Republic of Germany, the performers of *Schuhbladen* can propose a different history of both Germanys, one that is a polyphonic, material and subjective history. However, the collective emphasises the playing dimension rather than the authenticity of their objects and stories. As Florence Baillet sums it up:

By taking part in the new rise of documentary theatre, the members of She She Pop do not aim to reveal a hidden historical reality. Instead, they try to show how reality is constructed. The fact that they consider narration from the perspective of its materiality, that is to say, by taking into account the process of narration and its concrete production, contributes to this concept of reality (“Objets” 265).

The text of the performance is created in a collaborative or devised system during which the actors or, rather, the company, do not separate the process of writing from that of directing. The writerly text in the sense of Roland Barthes can be understood in the sense the French playwright and theatre director sees it: “I do not write plays,

I write performances [...] the text is what comes afterwards, and what remains after the theatre" (Joël Pommerat in Pavis, *The Routledge* 250).

In their theatrical documentary stage-essay, *She She Pop* invites audiences and participants to approach history and memory, the written facts of the past and its reenactment in the gestures of the present, as open scripts that can be executed in different ways and with differing content to produce new meanings and interrogate old ones. Thus they appropriate some of Brecht's epic theatre theories while mapping the post-socialist and neo-liberal condition in the form of an essay on stage. The collaborative fictional-documentary performance depicts German history and the present moment while paralleling two historical Germanies: the West and the East, with consequences for both East and West Germans through a specific postmodern problematising of the medium and institution of theatre. Matt Cornish describes these specific procedures in his book *Performing Unification: History and Nation in German Theater after 1989*:

Instead of approaching the archive, museum, and written history as stable, the productions showed all as contingent, as needing (if not requesting) our interaction and improvisation on those scripts, the same as memory. For the performances to be complete, we had to explicitly engage with the content of the pieces and the structure of the past. If we did not animate the scripts they presented to us with our own original, live variations, then the performances failed (167).

The texts that constitute the performances of *She She Pop* convey a specific quality that reminds us of the works of Oliver Frljić, Žiga Divjak and also Simona Semenič. They represent "'open' or 'writerly' texts [...] in the sense that they require spectators to become active co-writers of the (performance) text. The spectators are no longer just filling in the predictable gaps in dramatic narrative but are asked to become active witnesses who reflect on their own meaning-making" (McClelland 4).

7. Žiga Divjak and Katarina Morano: The Documentary and Engaged No Longer Dramatic Theatre

In the case of Simona Semenič, we concluded that she uses diverse forms of theatre tactics in her texts and performances to achieve the desired effects on the spectator. This could also be said about a whole series of contemporary theatre-makers, predominantly directors, e.g., Oliver Frljić, Nina Rajić Kranjac, Borut Šeparović, Janez Janša and the tandem Žiga Divjak and Katarina Morano, as well as collectives of actors/performers such as Betontanc Ltd.

As an example, let us take the creative tandem of Žiga Divjak and Katarina Morano. In the last decade, they have produced a series of resounding socially engaged projects in the framework of collaborative epic theatre pledging to the Brechtian ethical commitment. In their performances or devised projects, they examine the structure of today's society and the role individuals take in it through a dialogue with different textual corpora.³

In their projects, they compose their own versions of the so-called verbatim theatre, also deriving from the tradition of *Everybody for Berlusconi* (2004) by Betontanc and Junghollandia, Janez Janša (first and foremost his performance *Slovensko narodno gledališče* – Slovene National Theatre) and Oliver Frlijić (first and foremost his performance about the erased citizens of Slovenia entitled *25.671*). A special type of documentary theatre also implementing the procedures of verbatim theatre while at the same time deriving from Brecht's *Lehrstücke* and Augusto Boal's principles of the Theatre of the Oppressed was developed by Janez Janša in his performance *Republika Slovenija* (The Republic of Slovenia), produced by the Mladinsko Theatre and Maska Institute (2016).⁴

A type of documentary performance and verbatim theatre was explored by the performance *25.671* (Prešeren Theatre Kranj, 2013), which was also based on real-life events and documents, even though it interweaved these with fiction and even quasi-documentary material and a large dose of a metatheatrical essay. Thus, it radically questioned the position of a privileged narrator that is often all too quickly adopted by documentary and verbatim theatre. In the Slovenian theatre space, Oliver Frlijić is definitely the one director who has not settled for the elementary form of verbatim theatre but always relates it to other genres, particularly the theatrical essay.

In their performance *6*, Divjak and Morano also use a classical procedure for this kind of theatre, characteristic of other types of documentary theatre: they take transcripts of interviews, edit them and construct the text of the performance from them. The editing proceeds by reducing large quantities of collected material and reshaping them into an aestheticised and devised outline of a theatrical text. A working text is thus being created on the go and keeps on changing. Divjak and Morano preserve the

3 Already their graduation performance *Tik pred revolucijo* (Moments Before the Revolution) produced by the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television attracted attention. They followed this up with their first performance for the Mladinsko Theatre, *Človek, ki je gledal svet* (The Man Who Watched the World, 2017), the project *6* (2018), the performance *Hlapec Jernej in njegova pravica* (The Bailiff Jerney and His Rights) produced by Cankarjev dom Ljubljana, *Lungs* by Duncan Macmillan in the Slovenian National Theatre Drama Ljubljana, an adaptation of texts by Ivan Cankar *Ob zori* (At Dawn, Prešeren Theatre Kranj), *Gejm* (Mladinsko Theatre and Maska Institute), *Sedem dni* (Seven Days, City Theatre of Ljubljana), *Vročina* (Heat, Mladinsko Theatre and steirischer herbst).

4 Here, the documentary material is pushed to the very forefront and presented through diverse performative tactics in the form of a triptych. The first part is a witness account by a former military intelligence agent who is counting and sorting out banknotes of foreign currencies that disappear to an unknown location. Part two is in the form of a reading performance presenting a transcription of a meeting of the government at the time, discussing illegal arms trade. The final part presents a reconstruction, or rather, a reenactment, of the "Smolnikar affair" from the three perspectives of the individuals involved.

roles of actors, director, writer and other creative collaborators while simultaneously making them fluid, interchangeable and non-fixed. Devising a performance is, at the same time, done individually and collectively. The writer, or rather, Barthesian “scriptor”, is not separated from other members of the creative team. They are not a singular entity but rather part of the process. However, they participate in it mainly as a text editor, not so much as a playwright.

The textual corpora of Divjak and Morano emerge in different ways. They themselves comment on this in the following way: “Each project is different and redefines the manner of our collaboration, but it is all a result of collaboration and complementing each other. We support one another and, at the same time, we encourage and even push each other to go further” (Divjak and Morano, “Med obupom” 15).

The postdramatic or no longer dramatic treatment of Cankar’s *The Bailiff Yerney and His Rights* results from the documentary research of real stories of rightless workers. Rather than staging well-tested plays and non-dramatic texts, they are more interested in “journalistic” research of issues. Thus they are convinced that the “power of theatre can sometimes reside in making you unable to look away, unlike the news in media that one can overhear or overlook” (Butala). The performance follows the trail of modern-day serfs and bailiffs encountered in the field by visiting firms, workers’ homes, associations, union confederations and workers’ counselling centres. Through documentary material that is minimally processed but edited into a series of repetitions and differences, we get acquainted with witness accounts by workers from the Port of Koper, cleaning ladies from cleaning companies, construction workers, truck and van drivers, nurses, and precarious architecture interns in architecture firms. This results in a rather crude material presented by actors in the rhythm of working behind a conveyor belt. Here is an excerpt of a witness account by a cleaning lady:

We used to have good times, we used to be a collective. You were working at one location only or, I don’t know, maybe at a school and an adjacent kindergarten, but they were the same institution, and you got to know the people. So we had a good time ... At the time it felt important what I did. It had meaning. And now, in this cleaning company, it’s just about doing it as fast and as much as I can so that it’s still acceptable (Divjak, *Hlapec Jernej* 15).

There is nothing spectacular in the editing and performative tactics, but according to the less is more principle, somehow one gets invested in the performance. Almost without noticing, one becomes a witness, also to precariousness.

Let us take a closer look at the project 6, in which the dramaturg-director team collaborated with actors (Iztok Drabik Jug, Alja Kapun, Katarina Stegnar, Vito Weis and Gregor Zorc) to research intolerance. They soon redirected from self-analysis towards the documentation of real-life events in the Student hall of residence Kranj

in February 2016. The story goes as follows: the principal of the student hall decided that an empty and unused floor of the student hall would host six underaged asylum seekers unaccompanied by adults. This triggered a chain of events, outrage and opposition from part of the parents and the local community.

The creative team was interested in the conflict between a part of the staff at the student hall “who, in essence, support the idea that it is necessary to help the fellow man and that the children need to be accommodated at the student hall, since, after all, it was basically built in order to accommodate underage youth attending school away from [...] their birthplace. But due to external pressures, they somehow start to doubt [...] this elementary belief of theirs that help is needed” (Pograjc). The team got in touch with the investigating reporter Maja Ava Žiberna and the student hall principal, Judita Nahtigal. Based on their research, they prepared the documentary material. The research lasted roughly four months and was part of the creative process during which they also attempted to contact the underage students in question and widened their focus to the student halls in Nova Gorica and Postojna. During the process, they started to connect documentary material to fictional material based on legitimate documents but derived from the actors’ imagination and improvisation. This is how they prepared both the script and the performance in which acting and non-acting are constantly intertwined.

In true Brechtian manner, the authors decided on a clear demarcation line between the protagonists and their roles:

The contrast and transitions between the roles are clearly delineated: the characters who side with the refugees are lit in warm light and sit in the front of the stage, while those hostile towards the newcomers are lit in cool, bluish hues and declare their convictions loudly via microphones set up in the interior of the stage (Norčič).

This heterogenous documentary and fictitious material is further supplemented by reading excerpts from orders and other legal documents issued by the municipalities played from recordings made by the underaged asylum seekers themselves. It was this documentary part of the performance that the creators found particularly important, as it affects the audience more directly and powerfully than fictional or dramatic treatment.

From all of the above, it can be clearly seen that Divjak in 6 (similarly to Frlić in his performance 25.671 about the erased citizens or his *Naše nasilje in vaše nasilje* (Our Violence and Your Violence) does not employ a pure form of verbatim theatre. It is instead a typical form of collaborative theatre with elements or partial procedures of the Theatre of the Oppressed.

The score, or rather the no longer dramatic text that emerged for and during the performance 6, received recognition for its literary or textual merit, as it was nominated for the Slavko Grum Award for the best new Slovenian drama.⁵ The proof of the critical public recognising important qualities in the structure of the performance can be found in an excerpt from the decision to award it the Grand Prix of the Maribor Theatre Festival for best performance:

The performance seamlessly combines documentary and fictional material that the creative team establishes in a dialogue of contrasts about the fear of “others”, which allows the audience eerie insight into the tacit social war taking place in the heart of Europe. [...] Using a seemingly simple stage mechanism, avoiding superficiality, the performance questions the procedures of objectivisation of migrants and refugees in an engaged way and sheds light on the tragic state of society in which community’s fears, racism and xenophobia awaken the demons with unforeseen consequences (Maribor Theatre Festival website).

Critic Rok Bozovičar also points out the specific blend of documentary and verbatim theatre with strong effects:

Director Žiga Divjak conceived of 6 in the format of documentary theatre that emphasises verbatim content with no outstanding stage effects. The performers [...] are in the forefront, positioned frontally in chairs, lending their voices to the employees who “absolutely, yes, no questions asked,” support the idea about accommodating the children in their student hall. However, once they relocate to the microphones, they embody the opposite – extreme dissatisfaction and outrage mixed with fear and insecurity (underscored by a threatening soundscape) that emanate from the parents’ letters (28).

The theatre of Žiga Divjak and Katarina Morano thus (in a similar vein as Oliver Frlijić and Janez Janša, from whom it undoubtedly derives) structures a specific no longer dramatic matrix, in which daring intertwining of the documentary and the fictional takes place, due to which the latter at times becomes more convincing than reality and the former more surreal than fiction. In this, Divjak, just like Frlijić, uses metatheatrical discourse that he intertwines into his performances-essays to “comment on the social positioning of the performance, the conditions of its production and possible political effects” (Juvan, “Od političnega gledališča” 556). Frlijić, Janša and Divjak prove that “documentary drama tied to immediate and pertinent national, global or even personal issues (if they are common) can, at the same time, offer useful and aesthetic values” (Reinelt, *Javno uprizorjanje* 291). Divjak and Morano are also the ones who perhaps best embody the basic definition of documentary theatre as elaborated by Peter Weiss in his discussion titled “Notizen zum dokumentarischen Theater”: “Documentary theatre shuns any invention, it uses authentic materials which it – albeit in a slightly processed form, but unchanged as far as content is concerned – represents on stage” (293–294).

⁵ In a similar way, Janez Janša’s performance *Slovene National Theatre* was also nominated.

8. Dino Pešut: Post-Postdramatic Meta-Play of the Millennial Generation

As a final example, let us examine the case of Dino Pešut, the dramaturg, playwright and novelist, representative of Croatian postdramatic metadrama of the millennial generation.⁶ In his graduation thesis at the Academy of Dramatic Art in Zagreb, he defined writing and drama plays in general in a very autobiographical, open and insightful way:

A dramatic text is just half-literature. A dramatic text is like the penguin in Herzog's documentary, which sets off onto a hill for no apparent reason to die there as if it needed to achieve something. A dramatic text is like a pencil, a young man in love who will find out that he must die. Thus, dramatic texts are merely half-literature and hard to analyse and talk about as separated from their performances. Drama texts are like the phoenix bird, so they must burn to become real (Pešut, *Deseta* 204).

This metaphor of the dramatic text as the phoenix bird that has to burn to become real speaks about the liminality and transitivity of drama writing among media in a picturesque but fairly precise way.

Pešut's plays are written as a proper Babylon of dramatic, prose, poetic and essay tactics combined with the author's substantial investment in writing down the often banal reality: "My real and artistic world is made up of banality. And I am no longer afraid of my banality. This text is banal. I talk about myself with a special meaning. I justify my own youthful enthusiasm. I try to connect it with my artistic path. And all that has already been written, revealed" (*Deseta* 209).

He is well aware that, in effect, everything has already been written down and that it is impossible to discover anything new in reality (and probably in art as well). It is, however, possible to interpret it in different ways, even authorial ones. In his plays, which are often written in free verse, Pešut keeps going back to Greek tragedy and mythology. He is interested in its contents and structure, but above all, in an intensive authorial metatheatrical dialogue with it. He feels very close to Greek mythology, gods, and the structure of Greek tragedy that inspires him in his disclosure, "stripping" of modernity. An example of this is his acclaimed generational play *H.E.J.T.E.R.I* (H.A.T.E.R.S.), successfully staged at the ZKM Theatre in Zagreb in 2020.⁷ In this play

⁶ Dino Pešut (Sisak, 1990) graduated in Dramaturgy in Screenwriting and Playwriting at the Academy of Dramatic Art in Zagreb. He works as a dramaturg in various theatres in Croatia and abroad. As a dramatist, he debuted in 2012 with the play *The Pressures of My Generation*, selected for the Forum of Young European Playwrights within Theaterbiennale Wiesbaden New plays from Europe. He won the national prize Marin Držić for the plays (*Pret*)*posljednja panda ili statika* ((Pen)ultimate Panda or Static), *Veliki hotel Bezdan* (Big Hotel Bezdan), *Stela, poplava* (Stela, Flood) and *Olimpia stadion* (Olympia Stadium).

⁷ KORANA: Isuse... Nisam partijala od... Ha! Ja sam Hera! Genijalno!

SANJIN: Da, zaštitnica braka između pedera i njegove hegije.

KORANA: Koja su djeca?

MAK: Nje i Zeusa? Hm...Ares, Hefest, Heba.

about the millennial generation that went through burnout and has been symbolically sacrificed at the altar of neoliberalism, mythology appears as a starting point for an authorial interpretation of modernity through ironic paraphrasing of the past. This is done to elaborate the story about a group of friends scattered all over the world in different life situations and with diverging dreams, but a common past and generational bond nevertheless. Their childhood was marked by war, and growing up in post-war poverty. Through the group and associations with the antique tragic experience juxtaposed to today's banality, Pešut interprets and topicalises the present.

It would appear that Pešut (as well as part of his own and even the younger generation) is turning back to the drama of language derived from absurdist plays and their verbal violence, however, incorporating all of this into a textual polyphony of voices, inner monologues and other speech planes, as well as a hypertrophy of external happening that can also be written in the way of dramatic dialogue, which however often changes into quasi-dialogues, long monologic structures, puzzle quotations or poeticised speech on a moment's notice.

9. Can We See Anything Beyond the Postdramatic?

In this essay, we have analysed the bodies of a dramatic or non-dramatic text as a border area belonging to the fields of both literature and theatre. While detecting the specifics of the interpretation of drama and theatre, we used eclectic tools offered by literary and performing arts studies to analyse the corpora of contemporary drama or no longer drama and performing practices. Focusing on a series of contemporary playwrights and theatre directors, we sought the answers to the question: How can we interpret the changes in drama and theatre? How did this specific return to the theatre of words, as defined by the French theorist of contemporary drama Élisabeth Angel-Perez, come about, and to what extent are today's theatre and drama still postdramatic but nevertheless establishing a new return to the dramatic and the dramatised? How do these "experiments belonging to the so-called 'post-dramatic theatre' which is also a (post-)deconstructionist theatre, eventually, end up re-dramatising whatever it was they strove to un/de-dramatize" (Angel-Perez)?

To put it a little differently: We were interested in the extent to which the selected

PAŠKO: Koja je to tajna veza između gej tinejdžera i grčke mitologije?

SANJIN: Pa nešto je utješno u tome da i bogovi imaju mane.

ROZA: I da se jebu i piju.

MAK: Ja kad sam bio mali i kad sam skužio da sam gej, mene je bilo ful sram. I

mislio sam da to moram sakriti. A onda sam počeo skrivati i bijes i ljutnju, tugu...

Sve. Ali onda je to povuklo i ljubav i sreću i sve... Onda sam krenuo čitati mitove. I to

me je spasilo. Njihov hejt. Fakat bacaju hejt na sve. I svadaju se. I ratuju i vole i

prekidaju. I napaljeni su. Tad je i Kylie Minogue izbacivala one spotove gdje se svi

ljube. Da bi volio, moraš malo i hejtati. To mora biti u ravnoteži. Nama zabrane da se

ljutimo. Onda nam kažu da smo nezahvalni. Ali to samo manjinama tako (Pešut, *H.E.J.T.E.R.I* 33).

authors take us beyond post-drama, towards neo-drama theatre (Anne Monfort), dramatic drama or drama drama (Birgit Haas) or post-postdramatic theatre (Angel-Perez)? To which extent the author maintains one's presence throughout the processes during which drama and theatre became rhapsodised, brought closer to lyrical poems, novels or essays? How does this new drama create new configurations of the languages of text and stage that allow us to creatively cross the boundaries between fiction, autofiction and authenticity? Or, to use the clear interpretation and statement that my dear colleague Aleksandra Jovičević chose for her Ljubljana introductory lecture titled "From Stage to Page: New Forms of the Performance Text":

For centuries, the theatre was accused of being extremely logocentric. The theatre play or drama was seen as a primary producer and transmitter of meaning and represented the main source for understanding the theatre performance. It also represented one of the basic documents in the history of theatre. But, needless to say, theatre and drama are two different phenomena and their relationship to each other remains unresolved. According to Bernhard Dort, the unification of text and stage never really took place, always remaining a relationship of oppression and compromise. Especially contemporary theatre confirms that a harmonious relationship between them is impossible but that there is rather a perpetual conflict between text and scene. Being a latent structural conflict of any theatrical practice anyway, this inevitability can now become "a consciously intended principle of staging" (Lehmann) (19).

Nevertheless (as Seda Ilter puts it), in contemporary plays or no longer dramatic theatre texts, "texts have an important, though relativised, position; the plays deconstruct the text's constitutive role and the dramatic mode of representation as a response to the contemporary world" (12). Thus, paradoxically "no-longer-dramatic' texts put forward a new dramaturgical form that subverts dramatic representation of the world as a fictive whole and accommodates the 'unsurveyable present' (Lehmann) of the mediatised-globalised world." (Ibid. 14).

In this kind of theatre, the author is not a classical writer but rather that which we could designate with the notion of a composer of a play. Thus, the text mostly resembles a scenario in the making. Documentary theatre persistently interchanges with fictional characters, and overwrites also allow for assemblage techniques: cutting, shaping and editing. It is easy to see how Reinelt's insight that a documentary "artwork adds to the search for knowledge and understanding, while it shapes its material into an aesthetic form and experience" (*Javno uprizorjanje* 291) can be applied to both the Divjak-Morano tandem as well as the She She Pop collective.

One could say that the artists discussed stubbornly persist in convincing the reader and/or spectator that they are not absent, that they are here, in their body and soul, and that they will not surrender to either the postdramatic or the immersive or classically dramatic and its illusions. Contemporary drama and no longer dramatic texts thus

often expose us to the deconstruction of the opposition between representation and presentation. Despite disturbances in the fictional textual cosmos, it simultaneously establishes a powerful process of re-dramatisation, intense complications and unfolding. It is as if the process of reintroducing the dramatic into the postdramatic fabric is taking place at the same time as the deconstruction of the dramatic. The dramatic thus coexists with the postdramatic, the post-postdramatic and no longer dramatic. Nor does the decomposition and rebuilding of the dramatic imply a lack of criticism or what Birgit Haas understands as a lack of three-dimensionality in no more dramatic texts as mere speech planes. On the contrary, they provide a new quality that sensitises both drama and theatre, both authors and readers and spectators.

The new playwrights, as well as authors practising devised theatre or authors writing for the stage, have developed a specific metatextual and metatheatrical consciousness. In doing so, they establish a close dialogue with readers and spectators. Their artistic practices and procedures can therefore be interpreted as a clear consequence, as well as the author's response to the crises of drama, as defined by Jean-Pierre Sarrazac in *Lexique du drame moderne et contemporain*:

1. The crisis of an unstable dramatic person.
2. The crisis of dialogue, which can be a quasi-dialogue, a quasi-monologue that turns into a secondary text or description, the author's commentary, a nod to the reader that surprises them.
3. The crisis of the relationship between the stage and the auditorium constantly reminds us that we are in the theatre, but at the same time, also within the realm of everyday life.
4. The crisis of the *fabula* is resolved by each of our authors in a specific way.

Sometimes the authors resolve these through a deconstruction and reconstruction of the *fabula* as a parallel event; sometimes through a gradual breakdown of the *fabula* or a specific re-fabularisation which nevertheless exposes the reader to communication disturbances, creating a distinct aesthetic in the process; and sometimes, through a simultaneous depoetisation and poetisation of drama, through various techniques of editing, related to the morphology of popular culture which produces specific duplications.

This means that – and let us end on this note – drama and theatre at the start of the 21st century point out the fact highlighted by Antoine Vitez in a note that is quoted and commented by Alain Badiou in his *Rhapsody for the Theatre*: “The real function of theatre consists in *orienting us in time*, in telling us *where* we are in history” (151).

The analyses and dialogues that we have carried out concerning the corpora of contemporary drama and theatre bear witness to the specificity of both areas

so precisely and pointedly highlighted by Badiou in his two books: *Handbook of Inaesthetics* and *Rhapsody for the Theatre*. Let us quote Mladen Dolar, who points out and reminds us:

[T]heatre has its own dispositive that is defined by its seven elements (space, text, director, actors, set, costumes, audience) which combine into a performance that is essentially repeatable, repeating evening after evening. However, each time in its "eventness" [...] Exactly because it is not contingent, it is generic and thus representative of the universal, of the public in general ("Gledališče ideje" 116).

Our basic aim was to record how the fact that performative practices in the 21st century, parallel to other types of live art and literature, have been subject to what Dolar calls "the century of gradual and catastrophically increasing mediatisation, as the media have, so to speak, covered and virtualised the notion of reality itself, wrapped it up into images and completely veiled it so that we have never before been facing a more severe crisis of representation" (Ibid. 118).

Thus in the 21st century, we find ourselves in a period which Alain Badiou, in conversation with Nicolas Truong in the book *Eloge du théâtre*, very accurately defines with the syntagma "particularly confused times", in which it would appear that we have succumbed to the feeling of being completely out of ideas: "This contemporary confusion is that of a profound nihilism, which not only declares that ideas have disappeared but adds that one can very well make do with this absence by living in a pure present, which doesn't at all raise the problem of reconciliation between immanence and transcendence" (69). In Badiou's opinion, the mission of theatre in confused times is "first of all to show the confusion *as confusion*" (Ibid. 70).

Using the examples discussed and following Alain Badiou's reasoning above, we can therefore assert the following preliminary thesis: Yes, we can interpret postdramatic theatre as a specific continuity and not primarily as a breakup with tradition. And yes, we can say that contemporary drama often exposes us to the deconstruction of the contrast between representation and presentation. Nevertheless, it establishes a powerful process of re-dramatisation, of injecting the dramatic into the postdramatic.

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