

The article is part of the bilateral research project of the Faculty of Dramatic Arts (UKIM, Skopje) and the Academy of Theatre, Radio, Film and Television (University of Ljubljana) examining Macedonian-Slovenian (and vice versa) theatrical relations. It contains the concluding observations about the specific theatre relations between both cultures, statistically processed in the three individual phases of the research, and a phenomenological study analysing the individual factors of influence of the Slovenian theatre to the Macedonian theatre production. The main focus is on the influence of the aesthetics of the Mladinsko Theatre (SMG), which is a constant guest at the Young Open Theatre (MOT) Festival in Skopje and the influence of several contemporary Slovenian theatre directors to the poetics and aesthetics of the Macedonian theatre.

Keywords: Republic of Macedonia, Republic of Slovenia, exchange, festivals, MOT, Mladinsko Theatre (SMG), Tomaž Pandur, Diego de Brea, Tomi Janežič

The Influence of Slovenian Theatre in Macedonia (from 1990 until the Present)

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Setting up the coordinates of the study

In the introductory text of the voluminous book *Writing and Rewriting National Theatre Histories*, edited by S. E. Wilmer, contemporary theatre theorist Erica Fisher-Lichte writes about the critical remarks of theatrical historiography and mentions the significance of periodisation, statistics and concretisation of the context (social and political) in order to establish an argued, well-maintained and serious history of a theatre (whether national or not, but especially emphasising the importance of national theatres). In her opinion, determining the exact time and space, as well as the significance of that time and space in relation to the creation of a theatre, a theatre play, a repertoire, a repertoire policy, as well as the creation of the theatre aesthetics (of a national or a community theatre) is extremely important and should be the foundation of any research ("Some Critical Remarks" 2–3). When it comes to presenting scientific research results, which implies comparing the aesthetics of two different cultures (which at one time of their existence were part of a joint multinational state), special consideration should be given to the suggestions by Fischer-Lichte, because the definition of time and space, as well as the context, can say a lot about a theatre or a theatre culture. When it comes to the influence that one theatre culture has on another, the time period, the social context and other important factors that help establish this relationship should be mentioned.

The bilateral project *Macedonian-Slovenian Theatre Relations (from 1990 until the Present)* explores the ways of achieving theatre communications between the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Slovenia in the period from when they declared their independence from the Yugoslav Federation (from the declaration of independence of the two countries) up to 2016. This part of the research refers to the ways through which this bilateral communication has been achieved in Macedonia in a quarter-century time span and therefore generates two optics.

The first optics includes the presence of different profiles of Slovenian theatre directors in the theatrical productions in the Republic of Macedonia. Through this optics, the direct influence of the contemporary Slovenian theatre tradition in the Macedonian theatre production is perceived within the time frame in which the research is set.

This influence is also recognised through the way the theatre in Macedonia is treated by the domestic theatre artists after a guest visit by some Slovenian author, as well as a director's influence on an ensemble which can be mostly seen by the way he/she can change the entire aesthetics of a theatre. Until now, this impact has been researched on a small scale, and because it exists and is recognisable, it is important to devote greater and more focused attention to the same. Till now, there have been a few papers/articles about these connections, but it has been researched as the main subject. Thus, this article is a starting point for further research about the influence of the Slovenian Theatre in Macedonia.

The second optics, however, is generally dedicated to the guest visits by Slovenian productions to Macedonian theatres and festivals. The procedures of the research project open two basic perspectives: the first, in which the data collected in the research is summarised according to a common method,¹ and the second, in which the dense places where the cooperation is realised are being analysed, that is, the theatre festivals where the Slovenian productions have most frequently visited. These frequent visits of certain Slovenian theatres to Macedonian theatre festivals have become initial points from which the detailed, direct influence of the Slovenian theatre (as a general determinant) into the Macedonian theatre production is further perceived.

There were 52 visits of individual artists and 69 festival participations in this period. These numbers led us to research the influence in two different ways: the direct artistic achievement of Slovenian theatre artists in the Republic of Macedonia and the influences of festival visits by Slovenian productions in the Republic of Macedonia.²

About the research data: the dense places of cooperation

When we look closely at the data gathered, we notice two significant topoi. The first refers to the participation of the Mladinsko Theatre (Slovensko mladinsko gledališče, SMG or the Mladinsko) at the Young Open Theatre Festival (hereinafter referred to as the Mladinsko and MOT, respectively), and the second, presented in the subsection on case studies, reveals the general framework for the impact that the Slovenian theatre directors have had on the Macedonian theatre, directly and indirectly. We can recognise the influence of the Mladinsko on the Macedonian theatre not only statistically according to the number of productions that have visited MOT, but also according to what each of those visits provoked, as seen in the Macedonian theatre

¹ The common method used by the teams working on the bilateral project: collecting the data about the different types of collaboration and putting them in different frames according to the subject of interest.

² Slovenian theatre productions have participated in the following six theatre festivals in Macedonia: MOT in Skopje, Ohrid Summer Festival, IMPACT in Veles, Spring in Skopje, Risto Shishkov in Strumica, Monodrama festival in Bitola.

productions as well as in the work of some Macedonian theatre directors. For this purpose, the research of theatre reception and repertoires in Macedonia, especially those with younger artistic staff, imposes the conclusion that after numerous visits of this Slovenian theatre to MOT, a specially profiled aesthetics has been transferred.

The Mladinsko and MOT

MOT was created in the 1970s. According to one of its founders, Ljubisa Nikodinovski-Bish, the festival “expressed the spirit of the latest theatre aspirations in the world at the time and was an expression of the cultural ideas and endeavours of Macedonian alternative theatre artists, aesthetics and cultural organisers” (Nikodinovski-Bish 9). From the first plays shown in 1970 until today, MOT offers a contemporary, avant-garde, provocative theatre programme dedicated to the young people in Macedonia. This basic nomenclature of the festival is of course the most adequate for the aesthetics offered by the Mladinsko.

The baseline statistics highlight the participation of the Mladinsko at MOT on twenty-five occasions (in the time period being researched in our project), listed in the table included in the article on festivals by Sasho Dimoski and Zala Dobovšek published in this joint issue of the journals, indicating the similar profile of the two institutions. Namely, after the change in 1980 (up until then, it was a children’s and youth theatre), the Mladinsko profiled itself as an authentic type of scenic laboratory which nourishes innovative stage forms of performance. On the other hand, from its formation in 1970, MOT has also been profiled as a theatre festival for experimental theatrical forms and stage laboratories. This similarity makes MOT the most accessible platform for the presentation of the Mladinsko productions in the Republic of Macedonia. The first participation of the Mladinsko on MOT was in 1982 with the performances *Smrad opera* directed by Dušan Jovanović and *Mass in A Minor*, a theatre adaptation of *A Tomb for Boris Davidovich* by Danilo Kiš, directed by Ljubiša Ristić. In the article “Macedonian-Slovenian Theatre Relations/Makedonsko-Slovenske gledališke povezave”, Ana Stojanoska wrote about this first participation and its influence on Macedonian Theatre.

In 1995, when MOT celebrated its jubilee, several forums were organised. According to the text by Nikodinovski-Bish, “for the Slovenian theatrical moment, the performances of the Mladinsko Theatre and Glej, which are often present at MOT, were being discussed, as well as the director Matjaž Pograjc, who staged all three performances this year at MOT” (Nikodinovski-Bish 114). This forum, together with the thematic block called *Slovenian Theatre* from the ninth edition of MOT (1–23 September 1984), were the initial impulses for the theoretical description and determination of the

influence of the Slovenian theatre at MOT. The meaning of the Mladinsko in Macedonia is discussed in the portrait entitled “Contemporary theatre concept” from this block, in which the organisers of the festival emphasise the influence of the Mladinsko as “MOT’s greatest friend”. This romantic reference distinguishes the Mladinsko as a unique partner of MOT from the first reading, as a theatre that has had an enormous influence on the Macedonian theatre.

The influence of the Mladinsko can be closely studied in a contemporary theatre project through the way of treating the stage, the dramatic text and the relationship with the actors. The National Theatre “Jordan Hadji Konstantinov-Djino” from Veles had a direct cooperation with the Mladinsko in 2016. The immediate experience in the co-production *Fedra* (S. Dimoski/A. Ivanovski, 2016) clearly indicates the principle of work according to which the Mladinsko operates on several different levels, especially in the acting process. The co-production was accomplished through the exchange of artists: Maruša Oblak interpreted the title role in the play, while the Veles Theatre co-produced both the artistic and technical aspect of the co-operation. Already in the preparations for the production, the actor’s approach towards the dramatic text by Oblak is easily determined as a principle of self-referencing, that is, building an internal biography of a character through extremely personal and even intimate sensors. Since this is a play in which the body language dominates the verbal line, Maruša Oblak presented (during the rehearsals and the performances of the play) exceptional body articulation and a conscious body to which the spoken line is almost superfluous. During the rehearsals, the actress pointed out the importance of the Mladinsko ensemble in this regard and their dedication to the body and the possibilities for expression that it offers, as well as its consciousness and keeping it in full fitness and willingness for stage labs that have the body in focus. This is one of the rare experiences of direct cooperation which implies the influence of the Slovenian theatre on the Macedonian theatre practice.

The Mladinsko’s concept of observing the society and its critical approach can be seen through the projection of ideas by the contemporary Macedonian theatre after each visit. As it is stated in the founding determinants of the theatre that speaks loudly, a theatre that is intended for more than just viewing. When describing its theatrical concept, the Mladinsko states that it “critically observes our society, comments on it and strives to shape it. Mladinsko is a theatre organism that tries to penetrate into the public space from the stage, so that for us, the public space becomes an equal space for performance. MLADINSKO IS NOT JUST A THEATRE” (“About Mladinsko”). It is not an epigonic influence, but just like the basic maxims of both theatrical poetics, it is the critical thinking of the theatre and its placement at the centre of the artistic and critical approach.

Directors

The case studies in which we can directly see the influence that the poetics of Slovenian directors have on the Macedonian theatre production have been divided into two groups: *Immediate* – through the directing of theatre plays in the Macedonian theatres (such as the directing of Diego de Brea and Tomi Janežič), and *Indirect* – through the participation of notable plays at various festivals in the Republic of Macedonia (Tomaž Pandur, as a special stage poetics).

Tomaz Pandur

The process of creating a specific theatre, determined as *postdramatic* according to its characteristics, developed in three phases in Pandur's career (1963–2016). In the first, *Ljubljana phase* (1980–89), he sketched his poetics through stage labs and experiments. In the second, *Maribor phase* (1989–96), as the director of the Slovene National Theatre Maribor, he shaped it not only on the Slovenian, but also on the European theatre stage by developing the basic elements of his poetics in high-production stage spectacles; and the third, the *European phase* (1996–2016), in which he completed his approach in an authentic, paradigmatic, postdramatic manner. In addition to the four existing Chronotopes,³ Lukić determined Pandur's as an authentic, fifth, *sacral chronotopos* in order to define Pandur's poetics. Summarising his opus magnum in general determinants, and according to the alphabet of postdramatic theatre, the stage semantics in Pandur's plays are encoded in counterpoints: text/stage, word/movement, speech/action and sound/picture. Lukić called these four procedures (which resonate with each other in the unity of the theatre play) "a method of intellectual perfume distillation", which is actually a procedure for creating a hybrid stage language. Profiled for elitists, intended mainly for those viewers called second-level viewers by Eco (Eco 7), the high intellectualism in the plays touches the first-level viewers as well through powerful, heated scenic images that have an almost hypnotic effect on the audience and are reflected in the emotional apparatus of the viewer: one feels what cannot be interpreted.

The Macedonian audience has so far had the opportunity to see several plays by Pandur from all of his phases: at the sixth edition of MOT, *Heavy Curtains* by Slavko Grum, production by his own company *Tespisov voz* (The Carriage of Thespi), Maribor; at the seventh edition of MOT, 1982, *Dead Man Comes for His Mistress*, production by The Carriage of Thespi, Maribor; at the ninth edition of MOT, 1984, *Night Shifts*; at the fourteenth edition of MOT, 1989, *Scheherazade* by Ivo Svetina, production by the

³ In order to determine Pandur's stage poetics, Lukić defines the constitutional elements of his handwriting as a fifth chronotope. More about this online, at www.pandurtheaters.com.

Mladinsko; *Caligula* by A. Camus production by the Gavella Theatre, Zagreb, at Ohrid Summer Festival 2008; *Medea* according to Euripides (Dubrovnik Summer Games – Co-Production Company) at the MNT Fest 2014; and *Faust*, production by SNT Drama Ljubljana and Festival Ljubljana, again at the MNT Fest in 2016, posthumously. Finally, the direct and fatal encounter between the Macedonian theatre and Pandur happened on the occasion of his direction of Shakespeare's *King Lear*, at MNT, season 2016, for which the curtain never lifted.

The influence that Pandur's poetics has in the (Macedonian) theatre is very strong, especially through the entire stage speech of the plays from his last phase, and is easily recognisable in many performances staged by Macedonian directors, for example, in the performances of Dejan Projkovski. Still, Pandur's influence is not recognised in the density of the semantic knots diluted in a theatre play, but in the copied solutions, adapted in plays with different titles that can easily carry a working subtitle – *inspired by Pandur*. For example, Projkovski directed *On the bottom* at National Theatre Shtip using Pandur's spatial organisation and semantics, applying water as a prime element of the scenography, as well as noir-labelled costumes as seen in Pandur's *Caligula*.

There are many plays that may be subject to such a comparison: *Prometheus* (Turkish Theatre, 2016, Skopje, Aeschylus/Projkovski); *The Tempest* (Podgorica, Montenegro, 2017, Shakespeare/Projkovski); another example is the influence that the structural elements of the stage hybrid language of Pandur had in the play *Romeo and Juliet* (National Theatre Istanbul, 2017, Shakespeare/Projkovski). Projkovski took the solutions for space shaping directly from the authentic hybrid stage language of Pandur: he uses water (which is a principle of Pandur, rather than a circumstance/condition on stage) as an amorphous mass around which he places various solutions already seen in several plays of Pandur: he also places a swimming pool in which a part of the dramatic action takes place – a solution that Pandur offers in his *Medea*. Through this visual building of a part of the stage language, Projkovski clearly indicates the influence that Pandur had on him, and shows as well as cites it in his own production. As general manager of MNT, Projkovski surely met Pandur in 2016 – since Pandur was his choice for directing *King Lear* in that season. This parallel is only one of many that can be found in a number of directors. A more appropriate influence might be one in which the director creates his own, authentic hybrid language, following the example of the technology of creating a play, uniquely recognisable for Pandur, who melted himself in his works through creating an incredible stage poetry⁴ and disappeared, leaving a great mark.

⁴ "When the artist somehow melts himself into an artwork and then he himself disappears, then that is incredible poetry." – Pandur in an interview for *Dnevnik HRT*, a few hours before the premiere of *Medea* (28. 07. 2012).

Diego de Brea

Diego de Brea (1969) is a Slovenian director with unique postdramatic theatre thought who directed three plays on Macedonian stages: on the stage of the National Theatre – Bitola, *Crime and Punishment* from Dostoevsky (2016) and Shakespeare's *Othello* (2014) and on the stage of the Turkish Theatre in Skopje, *King Lear* (2017). In the poetics of de Brea, the theatre play is seen as a reduction of the dense scenic semantics performed through a textual reduction of the basic story/problem. Produced through a reduction procedure of this type, the dense scenic semantics are actually an approach to the text through which the form becomes a sign of the historical impossibility for a tragedy in five acts (Lehmann 75). His primary research for each play, in his words, starts from the idea that “the purpose of the theatre is to open things that are deeply hidden, embalmed when man is relaxed” (Toporišič).

In the dramaturgical procedure on the texts for the plays, de Brea thickens the play's dramatics through re-textualisation as a procedure of the post-dramatic theatre. Re-textualisation, which rests on the integral text (in the case of *Othello*) is performed by assembling textual collages from the source in order to focus the play only on the basic problem (Lehmann 7). He does what Lehmann points out as the main feature of the post-dramatic theatre, “to violate the conventionalized rule and the more or less established *norm of sign density*. It is either too much or too little. In relation to the time, to the space or to the importance of the matter, the viewer perceives a repletion or conversely a noticeable dilution of signs. We can recognize here an aesthetic intention to make space for a *dialectic of plethora and deprivation*, plenitude and emptiness” (Lehmann 89). What Lehmann writes, de Brea does (regardless of the fact that he set these plays on other theatre stages as well, with the same or similar concept), thus setting up a new reduced, collected or sign-defined aesthetics of the Macedonian theatre.

De Brea also reduced the characters of the source, explicitly shown in *King Lear* (Turkish Theatre, 2017), where the dramatic action is built only by the directly affected characters, the royal family from Shakespeare's source: the king, his daughters and sons-in-law. In the audio-visual shaping, de Brea uses pure and clear semantic signs that facilitate the reception of the play, setting the actor's play (in the micro and macro format) as a dominant feature onstage.

It should be noted that both in the theatre in Bitola and in the Turkish Theatre, de Brea has completely changed the way of treating the stage, introducing novelty into the stage treatment in Macedonian theatre. In the Macedonian theatre practice, the National Theatre of Bitola is famous for its contemporary and current theatre, which is usually framed in a tremendous, rough and extensive scenography. The staging of *Othello* showed how the empty stage can be treated and opened the possibilities for the theatre in Bitola. The Turkish Theatre mainly stages plays that focus on the cultural

and authentic expression of the Turkish culture, along with the idea of profiling modern aesthetics based on a traditional culture. The arrival of de Brea showed how young actors from the ensemble could act, regardless of their cultural background, a practice which had been insisted upon over the years.

Overall, as a conclusion, with the directing of these three plays in the Macedonian theatres, Diego de Brea set an aesthetic principle of changing the contemporary and current theatre that “eased” the burdened, multi-signed, theatrical aesthetics which defined and interpreted the theatre to the spectator and turned it into the simplest, but strongest theatrical aesthetics conceived by Peter Brook in the last century: The theatre should make us imagine!

Tomi Janežič

Tomi Janežič (1972) appeared on the Macedonian theatre stage for the first time in 2004, at MOT (*The Three Sisters*) with the Mladinsko ensemble. Since then, the Macedonian audience had the opportunity to see his work twice more: in 2005, when he worked with the actors of the Macedonian National Theatre directly applying his poetics to the Macedonian acting sensibility in *The Blind*, and in 2013, again at MOT with another drama of Chekhov, *Seagull*, performed by the actors of the Serbian National Theatre, Novi Sad. Tomi Janežič is one of the most interesting European theatre directors of his generation and is internationally recognised as one of the experts in the field of creating new acting techniques, referring to psychodrama as a specific field of interest.

Janežič's directorial poetics are based primarily on the principles of the psychodramatic technique by Jacob Levy Moreno, but also communicate with all the predecessors who dealt with the study of play-acting, from Stanislavski to Brecht and Grotowski. The way that an actor in Janežič's performances achieves distancing from the character he interprets (a characteristic of Brecht's theatre) is through the principles of psychodrama. He is called upon to gain a psychological flexibility to interpret different roles that will allow him to develop different views of the given situation or story, to look at it from multiple perspectives and to be spontaneous and authentic according to the definition given by Moreno. Moreno does not identify spontaneity with a series of uncontrolled impulses; on the contrary, he thinks that it is focused on creativity, that it is the way we react to repeating patterns of life, templates, the routine which we often fail to avoid, and that ability to react again to a given situation is related to adapting to a new perspective, with a new role, by replacing the role, by a fresh outlook at things. In the productions by Janežič, the collective dynamics created in the theatre ensemble is of utmost importance. One cannot speak of Tomi

Janežič only as a theatre director, because he himself refuses to be defined as a director only, so it may be more appropriate to talk about a creator, a moderator who creates/provides space for exchange. In his approach to work, the actor constantly communicates with the character he interprets, at one moment, he distances himself and becomes a spectator, the character has the opportunity to directly confront his own pains that materialise in front of himself in a new character, in his antagonist, etc. What is actually happening onstage is a lively, active, creative analysis of the specific play. In this way, very specifically and very real, in front of our eyes, the dynamics, tensions and conflicts that are contained in the dramatic situation unfold. According to Janežič, stage does not imitate life, but it creates a life, and this is also reflected in his plays, which often last for hours. Janežič experiments with space, and this is mostly reflected in his staging of Maeterlinck's drama *Blinds*, but the focus always remains on the actor as the pivot of the play. Psychodrama, as an actor's technique with the help of which a certain character is built, still makes its way into the world of theatre art. It is somewhere halfway between art and therapy. However, in Janežič's poetics, psychodrama is more a foundation for a play than therapy. It serves to break down the personal and interpersonal blockages that arise among actors confronted with the creative process. The three plays by Janežič received an exceptional response by the audience, however, among the Macedonian directors one cannot find a counterpart for this principle of work. Janežič's influence is recognised in the interest of the younger generation of Macedonian theatre directors and their performances mainly working for independent productions.

General determinants of impact

Each of these three directors brought changes to the Macedonian stages that are evident and easily recognisable. Regardless of whether it was done through directing a play in a Macedonian theatre or through a play that was performed at a Macedonian festival (mainly at MOT), every one of these three directors made a visible impact on the Macedonian theatre. The actors in these plays, the entire ensembles of the plays directed in Macedonia by these three directors, talk about their incredible experience from working with them, and the way their play-acting and the treatment of the theatre has changed. A testimony for this is the prizes that these productions received from festivals in Macedonia and abroad. The play *King Lear* by Shakespeare, directed by Diego de Brea won three important awards at this year's (2018) MTF "Vojdan Chernodrinski" in Prilep – the first one was for Diego de Brea's directing; the second one for best young actress for Ebru Musli, who played Cordelia; and the third one, which emphasises the influence of de Brea in the Macedonian theatre, was entitled: "A special award for contemporary acting expression and innovative approach to stage classics".

The play *Seagull* by Chekhov, directed by Tomi Janežič, shown at MOT festival, 2013, brought a theatre that was remembered for a long time. We can also talk about the phenomenon of Janežič and his influence on the Macedonian theatre. One of the play reviews cites the excitement of both the critic and the audience watching the play because, unlike when watching many other plays, the audience stayed until the very end and increased in number, despite the fact that it lasted seven hours. For this play, Liljana Mazova says that, "it delights everywhere with the implementation of the director's idea, with the complete performance that can simply be considered as a completely clever theatre". The performance is also an attraction because of its length – about seven hours. For example, it began at 5:15 pm on the stage of the Macedonian National Theatre and it ended at 0:30 am. The length is not an issue because this is a theatre that thinks, plays, the spectator is a participant, the actor is thinking through an actor's prism and through a prism of a spectator who watches that play. And something unusual happened: the play started with 100 spectators (the capacity of the old stage) and ended with 130!

Pandur's influence is most dominant in several directing instances of some Macedonian directors, especially, as pointed out by this text, in the directing of Dejan Projkovski. The idea to make a dream from the theatre, or as described by Darko Lukić, "dreams are the main key word. All seven plays [in the period 1989–1996] give the impression that they should be read as a book of dreams" ("Mapping Pandur's theatre"), and to break down the linearity as a feature of time, maybe the closest to the Macedonian audience and theatre, precisely because of the inheritance that we have and the specific relation to mythology and narration. Unfortunately, Pandur failed to direct a play in Macedonia, but his influence is visible and recognisable today, and his plays are mentioned all the time.

Each of these three directors has had a specific impact on the Macedonian theatre, and thus the connection between the two theatre cultures can be followed directly. Besides through the directors, the influence through the theatres or actors is also being followed. There are some cases⁵ where the acting approach offered by the Mladinsko actors through the treatment of body language in a crisis caused the development of the author-actor speech of this type and its implementation in several theatre plays, usually defined as aesthetic incidents in the Macedonian theatre.

The research of the relation between the Macedonian and the Slovenian theatre shows a direct and immediate, continuous influence that can be determined and theoretically explained. The influence is continuous from the first visit at MOT to the present and is followed directly in the Macedonian production. It is not the only case of influence but a part of the many different influences that enabled the Macedonian theatre to build its own author's aesthetics. Based on the ethno-theatre tradition and the folk drama,

⁵ The specific usage of the body as narrative instrument of the actor, shown in various performances of the Mladinsko.

the contemporary Macedonian theatre profiled itself with the help of the outside influences and created an authentic author's expression. The 1970s mark the creation of the new, current, progressive theatre in Macedonia, which, thanks to the outside experiences, especially from the Slovenian theatre (the Mladinsko as a direct initiator for the same), is today recognised by its author's practice and aesthetics.

The findings of the project *Macedonian-Slovenian Theatre Relations (from 1990 until the Present)* are further proof of the existence of the relationships between these two theatre cultures. In the spirit of the intercultural theatre thought, this influence is not rigid, and it is not focused on subordinating one culture to the other, but on the exchange of experiences, which is reflected in the mutual understanding of the two cultures. As defined at the beginning of the research, the period of the 1970s (when the aesthetic of postmodern theatre was developed in Europe and the Western world) was the time when this direct relationship began to develop, and the social context – the joint state, Yugoslavia, and then after the independence of Slovenia and Macedonia, the contacts that were created – shows that it is the dominant factor for such cooperation. The main potential for this influence was recognised in the existence of MOT as a festival of the new avant-garde theatre, and thus the opportunity to see plays from Slovenia that would influence the Macedonian theatre.

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