

Trapped in Tradition: The National Theatres of Zagreb and Belgrade in the Context of Post-Socialist Cultural Policies and Organizational Models

JOSIP ZELIĆ

Department of Instrumental Studies and Composition with Music Theory,
Academy of Arts and Culture in Osijek, J. J. Strossmayer University of Osijek, Croatia

ABSTRACT: This research examines the role and transformation of national theatres in post-socialist contexts, with a focus on their institutional structures, cultural policies, and public missions. Through a comparative, interdisciplinary approach, the study explores how national theatres have navigated the transition from socialist to market-oriented cultural frameworks, and how these changes have influenced their artistic programming, governance models, and societal roles.

Drawing on qualitative methods, including policy analysis and semi-structured interviews, the research provides insight into how national theatres reflect, reproduce, or resist dominant cultural narratives in an era of shifting national identities. The study contributes to the broader field of cultural management and policy studies, offering a critical perspective on the intersections of performance, politics, and institutional change.

KEYWORDS:

national theatre, cultural policy, cultural management, institutional culture, performing arts, post-socialism, comparative analysis, qualitative methodology, interdisciplinary approach, art and identity

INTRODUCTION

In the transitional period from the 20th to the 21st century, European metropolises have been faced with the challenge of redefining their urban identities, especially in the context of sustainable development. Cities had to adapt to the consequences of globalization, economic crises, and growing ecological and social inequalities. These challenges did not bypass the cultural systems of post-socialist countries of the former Yugoslavia, where transformation extended beyond political structures and affected the very foundations of cultural institutions, including the national theatres in Zagreb and Belgrade.

The countries that emerged from the breakup of Yugoslavia have faced profound political, social, and cultural upheavals. Processes such as migration – whether forced or voluntary – rising ethnic tensions, the collapse of industrial infrastructure, and the influences of globalization and European integration have deeply altered not only everyday life but also the visual and symbolic landscape of urban environments. Within this context, the concept of “neighbourhood” becomes the opposite of the consumer society concept, as it implies local rootedness, stable communities, and a certain degree of immobility. In contrast, the consumerist logic promoted by neoliberal regimes – such as those shaping transitional states like Serbia – emphasizes individualism, mobility, and fragmented identities.

The specific situation of young people in medium-sized Serbian towns further complicates the potential for cultural institutions to function effectively. A generation overwhelmed by information, a lack of cultural offerings, high unemployment, and pronounced apathy create conditions in which traditional forms of cultural expression, such as theatre, are perceived as outdated and irrelevant.¹

This broader political and social context is essential for understanding the position of national theatres as institutions that reflect and perpetuate dominant cultural policies during the transition period. This tension is mirrored in theatre institutions, which are caught between the need for local relevance and the pressure to participate in transnational cultural flows. This raises the question of the transformative potential of national theatres to adapt to new generations without losing their mission and institutional integrity.

On the other hand, the Croatian cultural sector still heavily depends on the structure of the so-called official culture, shaped by state institutions and a centralized system of cultural infrastructure. Despite formal political and economic changes, the institutional framework of cultural policy has remained largely unchanged. The dominant model of public funding is aimed at maintaining the status quo, meaning that financial resources are primarily used for fixed costs of staff and infrastructure,

¹ DRAGIĆEVIĆ ŠEŠIĆ, M. – BRKIĆ, A. – MATEJIĆ, J. Mobilizing Urban Neighbourhoods: Artivism, Identity, and Cultural Sustainability. In DRAGIĆEVIĆ ŠEŠIĆ, M. – HRISTOVA, S. – DUXBURY, N. (eds.). *Culture and Sustainability in European Cities: Imagining Europolis*. London: Routledge, 2015, pp. 193–205. [online]. Available at: https://www.routledge.com/Culture-and-Sustainability-in-European-Cities-Imagining-Europolis/Hristova-DragiccevicSesic-Duxbury/p/book/9780367668884?srsltid=AfmBOoqf2DuAmIRzkW6uw-3dGHOFmc_QaTYkBbV7nTGWt26nwj-ve4m1.

while space for innovation and program development is minimal.² Such structural inertia highlights disconnect between cultural policies and the needs of contemporary theatre management, which requires flexibility, programmatic orientation, and openness to new models of governance.

Management in Culture and the Arts, although developed as an academic discipline in the international context, has not yet been fully recognized or acknowledged in Southeast Europe as a key professional skill that can improve cultural and artistic practice. Its future affirmation implies the integration of theoretical and practical approaches of contemporary management with the cultural sector. As an interdisciplinary field, cultural management starts from the understanding of culture as a system that can be consciously shaped, organized, directed, and structured, creating conditions for the development of artistic creation, its distribution, and reception in the broader public.³

INSTITUTIONAL DEFINITION OF NATIONAL THEATRES IN ZAGREB AND BELGRADE

In this paper, the term national theatres refers exclusively to two key public theatre institutions in the successor countries of the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) – the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb and the Serbian National Theatre in Belgrade. Both theatre institutions operate within the state cultural management system and are owned by and under the direct jurisdiction of their respective national ministries – the Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Serbia.

According to the Theatre Act of the Republic of Croatia,⁴ the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb, as a public institution of particular national significance, is financed 51% from the state budget and 49% from the City of Zagreb and is strategically and managerially overseen by the Ministry of Culture and Media of the Republic of Croatia. In parallel, according to the legislation of the Republic of Serbia,⁵ the National Theatre in Belgrade has nearly identical institutional status: the founder and main financier is the state, and the director (intendant) of the institution is formally appointed by the Ministry of Culture, just like the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb. In both cases, the intendant is appointed by a direct decision of the relevant ministry, confirming the high level of political and administrative control over these institutions.

It is important to emphasize that the term national in this context does not primarily imply cultural or artistic prestige or national artistic definition in the

² VIŠNIĆ, E. *Kulturne politike odozdo: nezavisna kultura i nove suradničke prakse u Hrvatskoj*. Amsterdam, Bukurešt, Zagreb : Policies for Culture, 2008. Available at: https://www.clubture.org/system/publication/pdf/7/za_web-Kulturne_politike_odozdo.pdf.

³ DRAGIĆEVIĆ-ŠEŠIĆ, M. – STOJKOVIĆ, B. *Kultura: menadžment, animacija, marketing*. Zagreb : Kulturno informativni centar, 2013, pp. 17–19.

⁴ Zakon o kazalištima. In *Narodne novine*, 2023, Vol. 185, Issue 23, pp. 1–10, 28 February 2023. [online]. [cit. 2 May 2025]. Available at: <https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/eli/sluzbeni/2023/23/386/pdf>.

⁵ Ministarstvo kulture Republike Srbije. Zakoni i uredbе. [online]. [cit. 24 May 2025]. Available at: <https://kultura.gov.rs/tekst/sr/43/zakoni-i-uredbe.php>.

programming production of exclusively national authors, but rather refers to the institutional status within the public cultural sector. Similar solutions can be found in other European contexts – for example, Staatsoper Wien as part of the Austrian federal theatre system (Österreichische Bundestheater) operates within a centralized legal and managerial structure.⁶ Likewise, institutions that make up the Stiftung Oper in Berlin (Deutsche Oper Berlin, Komische Oper Berlin, Staatsoper Unter den Linden, and ballet ensembles) are organized as a foundation model within the German public cultural management system.⁷

However, unlike most European models, the national theatres in Zagreb and Belgrade are unique in that they combine all three artistic directions within one institution: Drama, Opera, and Ballet. This organizational configuration is firmly developed, established, and inherited from the period of the former SFRY, and it is still maintained today without significant reforms, thus confirming the central thesis of the paper expressed in the title: *Trapped in Tradition: National Theatres of Zagreb and Belgrade in the Context of Post-Socialist Cultural Policies and Organizational Models*.

Although the dissolution of the former SFRY opened the space for redefining cultural policies, these two national theatres still operate within institutional frameworks that belong to the previous paradigm. Therefore, we can speak of a transitional phase in the post-SFRY processes of cultural transition, in which old organizational structures continue to be maintained, while new models have not yet been fully affirmed.

When observing the concept of national identity through the lens of cultural expression, especially theatrical art, it can be seen that national theatres often served as symbolic and real spaces for articulating identity narratives. For example, the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb in the second half of the 19th century used its repertoire policy as a means of cultural affirmation, while during the 1990s, the performing arts once again took on the role of carriers of identity values. A similar logic was evident in institutional continuity, despite changes in political systems.⁸

The legislative framework in the Republic of Croatia, defined by the Theatre Act (2023), to some extent structures and regulates the functioning of theatre institutions, which gives the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb a more precisely defined management architecture compared to the management structure in the Republic of Serbia, where theatrical activity is regulated by the broader Cultural Law, without a separate regulation dealing with the specifics of the theatre sector. Thus, Croatia, at least in legislative terms, demonstrates a higher degree of institutional articulation of theatre policy, while a similar process in Serbia is still to come.

⁶ Österreichische Bundestheater. Über uns. [online]. [cit. 24 May 2025]. Available at: <https://www.bundestheater.at/oesterreichische-bundestheater/>.

⁷ Stiftung Oper in Berlin. Über uns. [online]. [cit. 28 May 2025]. Available at: <https://www.oper-in-berlin.de/de/stiftung/ueber-uns/>.

⁸ HRASTE-SOČO, I. Uloga nacionalnih kazališta u kontekstu razvoja identiteta nacije. In *Krležini dani u Osijeku 2020. Devedesete u hrvatskoj dramskoj književnosti i kazalištu, prvi dio*. Zagreb – Osijek : HAZU, 2021, pp. 18–29.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL THEATRES IN ZAGREB AND BELGRADE

A particular challenge in managing national theatres stems from the historical context of how these institutions were established. Specifically, both the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb and the National Theatre in Belgrade were originally founded as drama theatres, with opera and ballet activities added later on.

The history of the Croatian National Theatre begins in 1860 with the symbolic act of removing German actors and their language from the stage in favour of Croatian-language performances. From its very inception, this theatre bore a strong cultural, educational, and political responsibility, although it was often assigned tasks that did not align with its actual capabilities or original artistic purpose. In other words, the theatre played a key role in preserving and promoting national culture, education, and political consciousness.⁹

The Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb is the central institution of Croatian theatrical life and one of the most important cultural institutions in the region. Its establishment is closely linked to the cultural and political processes of the 19th century that shaped Croatian national identity. Although theatrical life in Zagreb predates this, the pivotal moment occurred on November 24, 1860, when protests interrupted a performance by a German theatre troupe at the Stanković Theatre on Marko's Square. Already the next evening, performances were held exclusively in the Croatian language, marking the beginning of the institutionalized history of Croatian theatre.

In the Croatian context, Stjepan Miletić played an especially important role in this process, taking on the position of intendant of the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb in 1894. His mandate marked the beginning of the institutional professionalization of theatre: the system of acting education was reformed, directorial innovations were introduced, and the organizational structure was adapted to contemporary European models. The introduction of the intendant function as the responsible managerial instance resulted in greater functional efficiency and hierarchical clarity within the theatre administration. In the second half of the 20th century, during the tenure of Marijan Matković (1949–1953), the first public discourses about the sustainability of the unique management model of the three-part system (Drama – Opera – Ballet) were initiated. Matković was among the first to articulate the complexity of managing different artistic units within a single institutional entity, highlighting the functional and organizational challenges arising from this model. His managerial and conceptual intervention represents an early formulation of issues that would decades later become the central subject of discussions about the reorganization of national theatres in the context of post-socialist cultural policies.

In this context, Joakim Vujić is recognized as an archetypal figure of a director-producer with strong leadership skills – flexible, not bound by predetermined forms

9 ĐURINOVIĆ, M. Kad počinje hrvatski balet? In *BALETI.hr*, 2022. [online]. [cit. 2 May 2025]. Available at: <https://www.baleti.hr/index.php?p=article&id=2121>.



Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb (Hrvatsko narodno kazalište u Zagrebu). Photo © Biljana Šimić, 16 September 2025.

and patterns, possessing high coordination and organizational abilities, and acting as a theatre pedagogue capable of transmitting his knowledge to all participants in the theatrical process. Analysing Vujić's talent for inspiring and motivating his collaborators, Maja Ristić explains the key moment in the transformation from high-level amateurism to a professional theatrical system. She sees this transition as the result of assembling talented and experienced enthusiasts within the so-called Flying Amateur Theatre formed around Joakim Vujić. Through the intense activity of this group, the foundations were laid for the establishment of the Homeland Theatre Society in Zagreb (1840–1842), which is considered the first professional South Slavic theatre.¹⁰

The National Theatre in Belgrade represents a fusion of local cultural values and Western theatrical practices, particularly in dramaturgy, management, and repertoire policy. Pioneers of this theatre, such as Branislav Nušić and Jovan Đorđević, played key roles in shaping the theatre as a space for social emancipation, artistic innovation, and affirmation of national identity, in line with contemporary European theatrical trends. Milan Bogdanović significantly contributed to the development of

¹⁰ RISTIĆ, M. Pozorišni producent: Od antičkog arhonta do lidera novog milenijuma (o nastavi na predmetu pozorišna produkcija). In *Zbornik radova Fakulteta dramskih umetnosti*, 2011, Vol. 19, pp. 97–114. [online]. [cit. 2 May 2025]. Available at: [https://fdu.bg.ac.rs/uploads/files/Institut/ezbornik/Zbornik 19/Dr Maja Ristic_POZORIŠNI PRODUCENT – OD ANTIČKOG ARHONTA DO LIDERA NOVOG MILENIJUMA \(O NASTAVI NA PREDMETU POZORIŠNA PRODUKCIJA\).pdf](https://fdu.bg.ac.rs/uploads/files/Institut/ezbornik/Zbornik%2019/Dr%20Maja%20Ristic_POZORIŠNI%20PRODUCENT%20–%20OD%20ANTIČKOG%20ARHONTA%20DO%20LIDERA%20NOVOG%20MILENIJUMA%20(O%20NASTAVI%20NA%20PREDMETU%20POZORIŠNA%20PRODUKCIJA).pdf)

the National Theatre through his work on modernizing management and artistic standards.

Branislav Nušić, Milan Grol, and Milutin Čekić represent complex intellectuals of European stature whose contributions to theatre art and cultural theory extend beyond the historical contexts of their time. Although they belonged to the first half of the 20th century, their ideas and activities remain relevant in today's societal circumstances. At a time when theatre represented not only a cultural but also a political axis of the nation, their role was fundamental in shaping intellectual and aesthetic discourse. However, the transformations that occurred during the 20th and early 21st centuries – including the erosion of political idealism and the commercialization of theatre production – moved theatre from its position as a bearer of national identity to the margins of public interest, left in the hands of enthusiasts and individuals.¹¹

This period is crucial for shaping the cultural future of Southeast Europe, with particular attention given to the continuity of intellectual and cultural heritage, which is reflected in the actions of significant cultural strategists and directors of the National Theatre in Belgrade, such as Branislav Nušić, Milan Grol, and Velimir Čekić. Although they belong to different historical circumstances, their mission – the construction and defence of the role of theatre as a public cultural asset – remains relevant in contemporary debates about the role of cultural institutions in the era of transition and the post-SFRY transformation.

Cultural assets represent the foundation of national identity and collective memory, whose perception varies between preservation and oblivion, depending on social and political circumstances.¹²

In this context, their actions can be interpreted as a counterpoint to the contemporary institutional weakening of theatre, which, in the new economic and political conditions, struggles to maintain its societal function. Similar impulses can be read in the Croatian cultural context, especially through the actions of Stjepan Miletić, who assumed the position of intendant of the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb in 1894. His tenure marked the beginning of institutional professionalization with a more functionally efficient management structure, based on contemporary European models.

In the second half of the 20th century, Marijan Matković became one of the first intendants to openly articulate the sustainability problem of the three-part

11 ČOLIĆ BILJANOVSKI, D. Sanjari balkanskog pozorišnog prostora 20. veka: Branislav Nušić, Milan Grol, Milutin Čekić. In *Zbornik radova Fakulteta dramskih umetnosti*, 2003, Vol. 6–7, pp. 89–103. [online]. [cit. 2 May 2025]. Available at: https://fdu.bg.ac.rs/uploads/files/Institut/ezbornik/Zbornik%206-7/Dragana%20C4%8Coli%20C4%87%20Biljanovski_SANJARI%20BALKANSKOG%20POZORI%20C5%A0NOG%20PROSTORA%2020.VEKA%20-%20BRANISLAV%20NU%20C5%A0I%20C4%86,%20MILAN%20GROL,%20MILUTIN%20C4%8CEKI%20C4%86.pdf.

12 NIKOLIĆ, M. Trezor-i kolektivnog i individualnog medijskog sećanja. In *Zbornik radova Fakulteta dramskih umetnosti*, 2017, Vol. 32, pp. 103–115. [online]. [cit. 2 May 2025]. Available at: https://fdu.bg.ac.rs/uploads/files/Institut/ezbornik/Zbornik%2032/Mirjana%20Nikoli%20C4%87_TREZOR-I%20KOLEKTIVNOG%20I%20INDIVIDUALANOG%20MEDIJSKOG%20SE%20C4%86ANJA.pdf.

institutional model (Drama – Opera – Ballet), anticipating issues that remain unresolved within the national theatre system to this day. Alongside him, Kosta Spaić, as intendant, insisted on the necessity of profound structural reform and the dismantling of entrenched self-management practices, although his attempts to introduce radical changes encountered strong resistance, particularly within the opera ensemble. This comparison suggests that cultural transition, especially in the national theatre institutions of Zagreb and Belgrade, oscillates continuously between modernization efforts and systemic inertia. For this reason, the role of individual cultural actors – both in historical and contemporary contexts – remains crucial to understanding the deeper structural issues of cultural policy in the post-SFRY region.

The author concludes that the contemporary challenges of national theatres after the dissolution of the SFRY arise from these historical experiences, with theatres today caught between the concept of public cultural responsibility and the reality of market pressures. Historical continuities cannot be ignored – they act as frameworks within which contemporary theatres define their identities, management models, and societal functions. Reflection on past management practices and their limitations is of crucial importance for designing sustainable cultural policies in the conditions of post-transition uncertainty.

NATIONAL THEATRES AFTER THE DISSOLUTION OF THE SFRY: BETWEEN PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY AND MARKET PRESSURES

Although after the split with the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform), Yugoslavia gradually abandoned the Soviet model and opened up to the West, internally, political patterns of authoritarian rule and rigid state control characteristic of the Stalinist system continued to prevail. However, political instability within the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, marked by purges and crises of trust, led to the redefinition of the existing governance model. As early as the late 1940s and early 1950s, a shift began toward abolishing the planned economy and introducing market-based business mechanisms. This shift was formalized by the Constitutional Law of 1953, which affirmed a new management system based on the idea of workers' self-management. Although neither capitalist pluralism nor Stalinist statism were directly applicable to the Yugoslav context, the new order significantly changed the relationships within the cultural sector. With changes in fiscal policy and reductions in state funding, cultural institutions, including national theatres, were forced to seek alternative sources of income. As of January 1, 1953, theatres were legally redefined as economic entities, with financial success increasingly based on their management's ability to generate their own revenues rather than on state budget subsidies or funds from local councils.¹³

¹³ BANOVIĆ, S. Samoupravljanje u hrvatskom kazalištu kroz polemiku Marijan Matković – Vjekoslav Afrić: ima li razlike između pekara i glumaca? In *Dani Hvarškoga kazališta*, 2021, Vol. 47, No. 1, p. 333–350. [online]. [cit. 4 May 2025]. Available at: <https://hrcak.srce.hr/265470>.

The transformation of the Yugoslav political-economic system in the early 1950s, especially after the Constitutional Law of 1953, marked a key moment in redefining the relationship between the state and cultural institutions. Theatres, including the national houses in Zagreb and Belgrade, suddenly found themselves in a new institutional framework that forced them to abandon their previous model of complete dependence on state funding and adapt to market-based business principles. This institutional transformation, though rhetorically grounded in the idea of self-management, in practice introduced a series of contradictions that would shape theatre organization models in the long term – caught between normative autonomy and actual financial insecurity. In this process, patterns of governance and political influence began to emerge that would remain deeply rooted in the cultural policies of post-socialist states even after the breakup of Yugoslavia.

Despite strong ideological control and the centralization of the cultural system in the immediate post-World War II period, culture in socialist Yugoslavia positioned itself as a broadly defined social space, whose key directives were regularly articulated through the congresses of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia. Building on previous cultural traditions, the dominant cultural policy set ambitious goals for theatres and their professionals – from raising the quality of the repertoire and making art accessible to the broadest social layers to ensuring the financial stability of institutions meant to symbolize the country's cultural development. In this context, the key function of theatrical art was not merely aesthetic but also integrative: strengthening interethnic cooperation within the federation was recognized as a fundamental ideological and political objective. The cooperation between the national theatres of Zagreb and Belgrade, initiated immediately after the end of the war in 1945 and intensified with the founding of the Yugoslav Drama Theatre in 1947, represented an unprecedented level of cultural exchange and symbolic connection between the two most important cultural centres in the country. During the 1950s, following changes in the domestic and foreign policy of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia (FPRY) and Tito's distancing from the Soviet model, there was a gradual liberalization of the cultural sphere. Cultural policy increasingly focused on professionalization, the reduction of censorship, and the redefinition of the relationship between the state and artistic institutions. Within this new framework, the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb and the National Theatre in Belgrade occupied central positions – not only as national symbols of cultural production but also as focal points of regional competition, whose outcomes contributed to the general rise in the quality of theatrical art in Yugoslavia.¹⁴

Despite the fact that almost all the countries formed after the dissolution of the former SFRY are signatories of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and formally included in international

¹⁴ BANOVIĆ, S. Zagrebačko-beogradske kazališne razmjene od 1945 do 1960. In *Hrvatsko-srpski/srpsko-hrvatski interkulturalizam danas. Zbornik radova s Desničinih susreta 2016*. Zagreb : Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 2017, pp. 71–85.

intercultural dialogue programs, the cultural policies of the region still strongly reflect the national (ethnically-based) cultural model. There is a lack of an articulated cultural-political alternative from the left-wing political spectrum, while the demands of the right are clearly defined – culture is perceived as the foundation of national identity, while the creative industry is instrumentalized as a means for local economic development and positioning on the symbolic map of Europe. This development confirms the process of convergence between cultural policies and cultural management, with both spheres increasingly serving national goals, branding, and differentiation in the cultural market.¹⁵

The author concludes that the period immediately after World War II is crucial for understanding the institutional positioning of the national theatres in Zagreb and Belgrade within the cultural system of socialist Yugoslavia. Despite ideological mandates, it was precisely through mechanisms of cooperation and rivalry that these two central theatres developed high artistic standards and institutional practices that would, in a modified form, survive even in later post-socialist contexts – preserving the national theatre as a space of cultural symbolism, but also of political instrumentalization.

An analysis of the theatre systems in the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Serbia, in comparison with European models, reveals that both national theatre systems are shaped by a strong historical legacy that continues to influence their organizational and managerial structures today. The model of shared management of drama, opera, and ballet activities proves to be challenging under modern conditions, particularly in the context of programmatic flexibility and strategic planning.

MODERNIZATION AND POST-SOCIALIST CHALLENGES: BETWEEN ARTISTIC AUTONOMY AND POLITICAL CONTROL

Examining the concepts of theatre and management reveals two parallel but interconnected developmental trajectories. On one hand, theatre has historically withdrawn from the centre of social and political life, becoming increasingly marginalized. While in the ancient Greek polis, theatre was an integral and ceremonial part of public life, over time it lost that status, resulting in its relocation to the margins of societal priorities and cultural policy.¹⁶ The author highlights how this historical dynamic of shifting theatre from the margins to the centre – and vice versa – is once again reflected in the context of the national theatres in Zagreb and Belgrade, where their traditional symbolic role does not always align with current cultural practices and the need for institutional modernization.

A creative city is defined as an urban space with a developed cultural scene,

¹⁵ DRAGIĆEVIĆ ŠEŠIĆ, M. Ethical Dilemmas in Cultural Policies: Conceptualising New Managerial Practices in New Democracies. In *Zbornik radova Fakulteta dramskih umetnosti*, 2012, Vol. 21, pp. 69–94. [online]. [cit. 24 July 2025]. Available at: Milena Dragićević Šešić_ETHICAL DILEMMAS IN CULTURAL POLICIES – CONCEPTUALISING NEW MANAGERIAL PRACTICES IN NEW DEMOCRACIES.pdf.

¹⁶ SCHMIDT, T. *Modernes Management im Theater*. Wiesbaden : Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden, 2020.

promoting innovative expression, and strong creative industries that contribute to sustainable cultural and economic development.¹⁷

Theatre cannot be fully understood without analysing its relationship to the economic environment, yet this aspect often remains overlooked in theatre studies. Instead of systematic analysis, the topic is frequently relegated to non-specialist discourses – from cultural journalism to theatre commentary – which leads to numerous superficial or unfounded conclusions. Such an approach perpetuates a stereotypical dichotomy between art and economics, rather than viewing them as necessarily interconnected spheres of cultural production.¹⁸ In the context of post-socialist transitions, the national theatres in Zagreb and Belgrade face the necessity of redefining their relationship with market mechanisms. The author argues that without a scientifically grounded consideration of the theatre-economy relationship, any institutional reform remains superficial and unsustainable.

In post-socialist states of Southeast Europe, the institutional strategy of national theatres can be understood as a coordinated series of actions aimed at preserving and enhancing cultural and managerial effectiveness. In the context of hybrid theatre models – which combine drama, opera, and ballet – a successful strategy requires not only responses to political and social changes but also the ability to build sustainable competitiveness within the cultural field. However, an analysis of the management models of the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb and the National Theatre in Belgrade reveals a strong continuity with traditional management patterns, indicating the presence of strategic inertia – institutions remain “trapped in tradition.”¹⁹ The author concludes that establishing a modern institutional strategy in post-socialist national theatres must be based on a clear recognition of challenges, the formulation of targeted policies, and consistent implementation. Without such a framework, theatres remain caught in a cycle of reactivity and inherited structures.

In the period following the dissolution of the former SFRY, cultural production in the territory of the former state faced a series of ideological, identity, and organizational challenges. Theatres, especially those with a national affiliation, remained subject to multiple social and political pressures, including demands for the reaffirmation of national identity, adaptation to new market conditions, and the redefinition of their public function. Theatre art in the countries of the Western Balkans, in this context, became a space where both institutional resistance and cultural transition were simultaneously evident. Despite the declarative commitment of many countries to international cultural conventions and principles of cultural diversity, the national dimension of cultural policies remained dominant, especially in the context of public cultural institutions. Theatres, as key institutions of

17 GLAVAŠ, J. Kreativni gradovi budućnosti – temelj gospodarskog razvoja. In *Evropska revija*, 2019, Vol. 2, Issue 10, p. 105.

18 LUKIĆ, D. Kazalište i gospodarsko okruženje. In *Kazalište*, 2010, Vol. 18, Issue 41/42, pp. 116–127. [online]. [cit. 24 May 2025]. Available at: <https://hrcak.srce.hr/187112>.

19 ROTHÄRMEL, F. T. *Strategic Management*. New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2023.

cultural representation, thus balance between the role of guardian of national identity and the pressure to operate according to the principles of the cultural industry – with imperatives of financial sustainability, market competitiveness, and urban attractiveness.²⁰

When observing the interaction between cultural institutions and their audiences through digital platforms, it becomes evident that many theatres neglect the importance of two-way communication. Although responses to audience comments could strengthen a sense of belonging and encourage more active participation, theatres often remain passive, thereby missing the opportunity to build a contemporary, participatory relationship with users.²¹

The development of digital technologies significantly impacts the cultural and creative industries, particularly through digital tools for the valorisation of cultural heritage. The implementation of ICT systems enables greater accessibility of heritage to citizens and encourages their active participation in cultural processes.²²

The author notes that the passivity of the national theatres in Zagreb and Belgrade on digital platforms points to a broader issue of lacking institutional modernization and misalignment with new models of cultural participation. Active digital presence is becoming an increasingly important aspect of cultural strategy, especially in an era when traditional hierarchies in culture are being reshaped by technology and audience expectations.

Eastern European countries – including Greece, Hungary, Albania, Slovenia, Poland, Russia, Georgia, and Kazakhstan – are characterized by high levels of collectivist values, strong gender equality, and a pronounced tendency toward interpersonal support. However, their management systems exhibit less orientation toward long-term strategic planning, performance achievements, and strict legal regulation. In such a cultural framework, the ideal leader is perceived as an independent and autonomous figure who, although somewhat charismatic and people-oriented, does not show a strong inclination toward participative decision-making. Leadership is thus based on individual authority, with a strong emphasis on protecting one's position within the hierarchy, rather than openness to a transparent, collective decision-making process.²³

In the context of post-socialist cultural transformations, the issue of repertory strategies in national theatres represents a key element of institutional and artistic self-determination. Although managerial responses to this question are rarely

20 DRAGIĆEVIĆ ŠEŠIĆ, M. – JOVIĆEVIĆ, A. Voices from Semi-Peripheries: Pressure, Self-Censorship, and Micropolitics of Resistance in the Western Balkans. In ETIENNE, A. – MEGSON, Ch. (eds.). *Theatre Censorship in Contemporary Europe. Silence and Protest*. University of Exeter Press, 2024. DOI: 10.47788/MBJH9642.

21 NYMAN, I. – M. Between Exclusivity and Accessibility: An Analysis of Instagram Branding at Two Nordic Opera Companies. In *The Opera Quarterly*, 2023, Vol. 39, Issue 1–2, pp. 91–112. [online]. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/oq/kbae015>.

22 MAVRIN, I. – ŠEBO, D. – GLAVAŠ, J. Immersive Cultural Tourism in the Context of COVID-19 Pandemic: Global Perspectives and Local Impacts. In *Ekonomski pregled: mjesečnik Hrvatskog društva ekonomista Zagreb*, 2022, Vol. 5, Issue 73, pp. 740. DOI: 10.32910/ep.73.5.4.

23 NORTHOUSE, P. G. *Leadership: Theory and Practice*. Seventh edition. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2015.



National Theatre in Belgrade (Narodno pozorište u Beogradu), Serbia. Photo © Krešo Sekulić, 17 September 2025.

provided systematically and transparently, there are examples of practice that point to possible models of strategic thinking.

One of the rare examples of a comprehensive, clearly structured repertory response was recorded at the Semperoper – Semper Opera House – in Dresden, where the intendant – without prior preparation – precisely explained that the repertory policy must be based on the actual artistic capacities of the ensemble. The fundamental managerial premise in this model becomes the recognition of the talents and artistic potential of the employed artists, ensuring the aesthetic development of the theatre as a collective subject. In the national theatres of the countries of the former SFRY, repertory policy is often structured according to institutional identity – differentiating between national, folk, and city theatres – and is programmatically based on a balance between four repertory axes: world classics, domestic classics, contemporary world drama, and contemporary domestic production. However, this framework often remains declarative, while the actual program policy is shaped under the influence of cultural policies that favour nationally representative content and market attractiveness, rather than artistic innovation and social questioning.²⁴

²⁴ DRAGIĆEVIĆ ŠEŠIĆ, M. Pozorišne politike i repertoarske strategije: Kultura i estetika brige, gostoljubivosti, solidarnosti i empatije. In LJUMOVIĆ, J. (ed.). *Moć kulture: politika i pozorište – sjećanje na stvarnost*. Podgorica : Fondacija Konrad Adenauer; Fakultet dramskih umjetnosti Univerziteta Crne Gore, 2020, pp. 66–79.

What further complicates the situation is the absence of clearly defined cultural policies that would offer consistent priorities regarding the relationship with public theatres. Instead of strategic orientation, theatres are often left to improvisation and dependence on the personal capacity of the leader, which not only destabilizes the institution but also long-term prevents the building of a resilient cultural system. The need to redefine the role of the intendant/director – no longer as a figure of symbolic representation, but as a real cultural manager with strategic authority and a professional environment – is crucial for the further development of institutional autonomy and strengthening responsibility towards the public. In line with this, the author concludes that public theatres, within their cultural and societal function, should act as spaces for critical reflection and resistance to normative values. They should reexamine collective memory, uncover mechanisms of deliberate forgetting, but also encourage collective imagination and contemplation of alternative societal possibilities. In this sense, theatre is not exhausted in its aesthetic function, but becomes an active participant in shaping the public sphere, balancing between responsibility towards citizens and adapting to market demands.

In the context of cultural policy and institutional management in post-socialist states, particularly in Croatia and Serbia, the profile of desirable leadership in national theatres has been shaped by deeply rooted cultural patterns characteristic of the Eastern European space. Analysis of such profiles shows that desirable leadership models in cultural institutions like the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb and the National Theatre in Belgrade often rely on a paradoxical combination of collectivist values and a strong personalization of authority. This confirms the continuity of hierarchical structures in which the autonomy of artistic expression in the Drama, Opera, and Ballet departments is nominally recognized, but in practice often remains limited by political and ideological frameworks. Due to this discrepant relationship between formal artistic autonomy and actual institutional control, it is necessary to examine leadership and management concepts in theatre systems that inherited the institutional matrices of the socialist era. The transformation of such systems, influenced by market mechanisms and the new paradigm of cultural management, cannot be understood without insight into how leaders – intendants and directors – were historically constructed as figures of authority, intermediaries between politics, art, and the market.

Managing national performing arts institutions requires a high level of strategic adaptability. Changes in funding models and political instability highlight the importance of effectively linking artistic standards with financial sustainability.²⁵

The author concludes that key indicators of how national theatres in the post-SFRY space move between public responsibility and market pressures are crucial. Their

25 ZELIĆ, J. – GLAVAŠ, J. – VOJINOVIĆ, Ž. Adaptability and Strategic Management in National Opera and Ballet Theaters: Navigating Challenges in the Field of Music Art. In *Interdisciplinary Management Research XX*, pp. 281–302. Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, Faculty of Economics. Available at: <https://nx15738.your-storageshare.de/s/koTLXbrsS8ycqtP>.

institutional position reveals deeply rooted decision-making models that, although nominally revised, still significantly reproduce the patterns of earlier management systems.

As part of a qualitative study focused on analysing organizational models and managerial challenges in post-socialist cultural institutions, a semi-structured interview was conducted with Dr. Vanja Grbović, a researcher at the Institute of Musicology of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SASA) in Belgrade. Dr. Grbović is a recognized expert in cultural policy, with a particular focus on the self-management socialist model in culture, the relationship between culture and education, and the institutional development of cultural organizations. The interview took place on June 26, 2024, in the premises of the National Theatre in Belgrade – an environment that itself illustrates the thematic challenges of institutional continuity and transformation. The thematic focus of the conversation was on strategic decision-making within the Opera and Ballet sectors, with an emphasis on modernization possibilities, institutional autonomy, and adaptation to contemporary cultural policies and management standards. Through her extensive professional experience and comparative insights, the interviewee outlined key tensions between the inherited structures of the socialist cultural model and contemporary demands for efficiency, transparency, and audience development.

LIMITATIONS OF TRADITIONAL MANAGEMENT IN THE TRIPARTITE MODEL: DRAMA – OPERA – BALLET

In an interview with a regional theatre expert, multiple layers of problems were identified in managing national theatres within a post-socialist context. Focus was placed particularly on the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb and the National Theatre in Belgrade – institutions that persist in a unified organizational model combining Drama, Opera, and Ballet, despite changes in the European context that favour specialized, decentralized artistic entities.

1. Legacy of Hierarchy and Cultural Etatism

The interviewee points out that the most stable periods of artistic and organizational development in these institutions occurred when they had clear state support, recognizable authoritarian leaders (e.g., Oskar Danon), and a hierarchical structure (1950s to 1980s). In the context of the then-dominant self-managed socialism, institutions functioned through structures requiring strict organization and collective responsibility, but in practice, reliance on individual leadership and clearly defined roles enabled operational excellence.

Author's meta-comment: This form of management can be characterized as a hybrid model in which authoritarian leadership was embedded in the socialist framework of cultural policy. However, with the decline of state sponsorship and the collapse of cultural etatism, this model has not been successfully replaced with modern management forms.

2. Unsustainability of the Tripartite Model in the Contemporary Context

The interviewee explicitly notes that today's challenges to the tripartite model (Drama – Opera – Ballet) are multifaceted – ranging from spatial limitations and financial fragmentation to a declining cultural demand for opera and ballet. Contemporary management systems require specialized structures, differentiated human resource strategies, and targeted audience engagement – all of which are hampered by the unified model.

Author's meta-comment: Maintaining an integrated model within a single management structure reflects institutional resistance to change and demonstrates a significant degree of “strategic inertia,”²⁶ thereby reducing the institutions' flexibility to respond to market, demographic, and cultural transformations.

3. Limited Implementation of European Standards

When asked about the potential for standardizing opera and ballet management in line with European practices, the interviewee responds sceptically. The reasons include historical and cultural conditioning, inadequate financial resources, a lack of strategic networking, and deeply rooted geopolitical and institutional patterns.

Author's meta-comment: Theatre institutions, as bearers of national identity, remain deeply entrenched in their own cultural paradigms, resulting in a lack of translational adaptation of management models – especially those emphasizing self-sustainability, decentralization, and staff competency development.

4. Limitations in Human Resource Development and Professional Mobility

The interviewee warns of imbalances within institutions, evident in the overproduction of artistic staff without systematic integration into repertory and project frameworks. He also points out historical patterns of clientelism, generational conflict, and political influence that continue to shape internal dynamics.

Author's meta-comment: Systematic human resource management in cultural institutions requires establishing clear career development criteria, performance evaluation, and artist mobility. Under current conditions, competence development is not integrated into institutional strategy, further reinforcing hierarchical barriers and staff demotivation.

5. Possibility of Achieving Artistic Excellence within the Existing Model

The interviewee does not deny the possibility of achieving artistic excellence within the tripartite model but emphasizes that this requires exceptionally strong individuals (e.g., soloists and conductors) and systems that support working conditions (e.g., rehearsal space availability, media support, institutional discipline). However, the current context does not provide the necessary infrastructure or motivation.

Author's meta-comment: While artistic excellence is theoretically possible, in practice it is limited by institutional deficits – both organizational and infrastructural.

Without redefining management approaches and modernizing the organizational model, excellence remains sporadic and dependent on individual efforts rather than systematic development.

CONCLUDING ANALYSIS: INSTITUTIONAL RESISTANCE TO CHANGE AND THE TRAP OF TRADITION

The analysis of the interview reveals deeply rooted institutional conservatism in the national theatres of Zagreb and Belgrade. The management of these institutions is still marked by structures inherited from the socialist era but without its systemic support, thus creating space for institutional dysfunction. The integrated Drama – Opera – Ballet model is not only outdated from a management perspective but also organizationally unsustainable in the contemporary cultural-economic context. Despite occasional examples of artistic excellence, the absence of strategic planning, adaptation to European practices, and human resource development prevents full transformation of these institutions. In conclusion, the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb and the National Theatre in Belgrade remain “trapped in tradition,” and the process of theatre management modernization represents a challenge that requires systematic, transdisciplinary, and politically committed action.

CONCLUSION

The theatrical performing arts in Zagreb and Belgrade developed in a dynamic socio-historical context, marked by political changes, cultural currents, and institutional transformations. As two cultural bastions of the former SFRY, both cities played a crucial role in shaping the theatre system and the professionalization of theatre production. The Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb was founded in 1860 as the central national institution, while the National Theatre in Belgrade began its work in 1868. Both theatre institutions, in their early years, were primarily based on the repertoire of national dramatic authors and the standardization of language, within which professional theatre standards and production models developed parallel to European examples, to the extent allowed by political and institutional changes in the management of the cultural sector. The theatre production of the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb and the National Theatre in Belgrade has had a multifaceted social function since its inception. In addition to its aesthetic and artistic role, these institutions also functioned as spaces for cultural articulation, social critique, and the affirmation of national representation.

Due to these multifaceted functions, the Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb and the National Theatre in Belgrade were not formed solely as performance venues but also functioned as symbolic bearers of national identity, the modernization process, and relevant political discourses. In accordance with the changes in political regimes – from the Austro-Hungarian Empire, through the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes and the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, then the socialist period within the SFRY, and finally the contemporary post-Yugoslav national states – there were also

transformations in the models of financing, management, and organization of theatre institutions.

Particularly during the socialist period of Yugoslavia, the introduction of the self-management model of cultural institutions was marked, with theatres operating with strong institutional support from the state, but also within clearly articulated ideological frameworks that defined cultural production and its function in society. After the dissolution of the SFRY and the transition to a market economy, theatre institutions in both countries faced a range of challenges: reduced public funding, the need to rationalize production, the introduction of managerial structures, and the redefinition of their relationship with the audience. These challenges resulted in various adaptation strategies, among which the professionalization of production functions within theatres and the strengthening of the independent scene stand out. It was in this context that contemporary theatre production developed, increasingly integrating the principles of cultural management, project management, and international cooperation. The production office became a key place for strategic thinking, financial planning, and public relations, thus changing the traditional role of theatres as purely artistic institutions. An analysis of the theatre systems in the Republic of Croatia and the Republic of Serbia in relation to European models reveals how both national theatre systems were shaped by strong historical legacies, which continue to influence their organizational and managerial structures today. The model of shared management of Drama, Opera, and Ballet activities proves to be challenging in contemporary conditions, particularly in the context of programmatic flexibility and strategic planning. Compared to European models, it is observed that decentralized approaches, such as those in Germany, allow for greater adaptability and financial sustainability of theatre institutions. At the same time, the French model of strong state oversight ensures stability but may limit the autonomy of theatre administrations.

Therefore, Croatia and Serbia face the challenge of modernizing their theatre systems through the optimization of managerial structures, diversification of funding sources, and increased international cooperation to ensure long-term sustainability and competitiveness in the European theatre context, as well as the preservation of national dramatic texts and the market trends of Opera and Ballet in the context of the European contemporary theatre system. In light of the above, the author concludes that integrated management models should be further contextualized according to the specificities of musical ensembles in Opera and Ballet. At the level of contemporary cultural policies in Europe, attempts are being made to find a balance between the political power of elected authorities, expert administration, and artistic elites, who, in their fight for the democratization of society, have fought for a high degree of autonomy in the cultural field. In such a context, public sector cultural management is entrusted to their expertise, while any political decision that reduces funding for an institution is perceived as a form of censorship.

In the context of transitional societies in Southeast Europe, the national theatres of Zagreb and Belgrade remain spaces where tensions between public

responsibility and market pressures are particularly pronounced. Although formally defined within legal frameworks, the institutional autonomy of these theatres is often subject to political influence and symbolic instrumentalisation, with the role of the intendant or director becoming the key point of conflict between artistic freedom and political control. It is precisely at this point that key managerial traps emerge: the intendant/director is, on one hand, responsible for strategically guiding the institution, maintaining artistic quality, and ensuring organizational stability, while on the other hand, is often exposed to unrealistic expectations from political structures, changes in public financing, and resistance within the institution itself. This paradox – formal autonomy versus substantial limitation – prevents the true modernization of the theatre system, deepening institutional inertia and preserving traditional management patterns.

In this sense, there is a need for a new type of cultural policy that will not remain in the realm of the declarative, but will clearly articulate the relationship between artistic freedom, institutional efficiency, and social responsibility. National theatres, as symbolic and operationally powerful institutions, have the potential to become levers of cultural modernization, but only if their management is freed from political arbitrariness and if intendants/directors are allowed to operate within professional standards, stable funding, and a strategic vision. This is a prerequisite for transforming theatres into spaces of true critical relevance, rather than just representative tradition.

Translated by Dušan Bojović

LITERATURE

- BANOVIĆ, Snježana. Samoupravljanje u hrvatskom kazalištu kroz polemiku Marijan Matković – Vjekoslav Afrić: ima li razlike između pekara i glumaca? In *Dani Hvarškoga kazališta*, 2021, Vol. 47, No. 1, p. 333–350. [online]. Available at: <https://hrcak.srce.hr/265470>.
- BANOVIĆ, Snježana. Zagrebačko-beogradske kazališne razmjene od 1945 do 1960. In *Hrvatsko-srpski/srpsko-hrvatski interkulturalizam danas. Zbornik radova s Desničinih susreta 2016*. Zagreb : Filozofski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu, 2017, pp. 71–85.
- ČOLIĆ BILJANOVSKI, Dragana. *Sanjari balkanskog pozorišnog prostora 20. veka: Branislav Nušić, Milan Grol, Milutin Čekić*. In *Zbornik radova Fakulteta dramskih umetnosti*, 2003, Vol. 6–7, pp. 89–103. [online]. Available at: https://fdu.bg.ac.rs/uploads/files/Institut/ezbornik/Zbornik%206-7/Dragana%20C4%8Coli%20C4%87%20Biljanovski_SANJARI%20BALKANSKOG%20POZORI%20C5%AONOG%20PROSTORA%2020.VEKA%20-%20BRANISLAV%20NU%20C5%AOI%20C4%86,%20MILAN%20GROL,%20MILUTIN%20%20C4%8CEKI%20C4%86.pdf. ISSN 1450-5681.
- DRAGIĆEVIĆ ŠEŠIĆ, Milena – BRKIĆ, Aleksandar – MATEJIĆ, Julija. Mobilizing Urban Neighbourhoods: Artivism, Identity, and Cultural Sustainability. In DRAGIĆEVIĆ ŠEŠIĆ, Milena – HRISTOVA, Svetlana – DUXBURY, Nancy (eds.). *Culture and Sustainability in European Cities: Imagining Europolis*. Routledge, 2015, pp. 193–205. ISBN 978-1-138-77841-2.
- DRAGIĆEVIĆ ŠEŠIĆ, Milena. Ethical Dilemmas in Cultural Policies: Conceptualising New Managerial Practices in New Democracies. In *Zbornik radova Fakulteta dramskih umetnosti*, 2012, Vol. 21, pp. 69–94. [online]. Available at: Milena Dragićević Šešić_ETHICAL DILEMMAS

IN CULTURAL POLICIES - CONCEPTUALISING NEW MANAGERIAL PRACTICES IN NEW DEMOCRACIES.pdf. ISSN 1450-5681.

- DRAGIĆEVIĆ ŠEŠIĆ, Milena. Pozorišne politike i repertoarske strategije: Kultura i estetika brige, gostoljubivosti, solidarnosti i empatije. In LJUMOVIĆ, Janko (ed.). *Moć kulture: politika i pozorište – sjećanje na stvarnost*. Podgorica : Fondacija Konrad Adenauer; Fakultet dramskih umjetnosti Univerziteta Crne Gore, 2020, pp. 66–79. ISBN 978-9940-9970-2-1.
- DRAGIĆEVIĆ ŠEŠIĆ, Milena – JOVIĆEVIĆ, Aleksandra. Voices from Semi-Peripheries: Pressure, Self-Censorship, and Micropolitics of Resistance in the Western Balkans. In ETIENNE, Anne – MEGSON, Chris (eds.). *Theatre Censorship in Contemporary Europe: Silence and Protest*. University of Exeter Press, 2024. DOI: 10.47788/MBJH9642. EISBN 978-1-80413-053-7.
- DRAGIĆEVIĆ-ŠEŠIĆ, Milena – STOJKOVIĆ, Branimir. *Kultura: menadžment, animacija, marketing*. Zagreb : Kulturno informativni centar, 2013, 300 p. ISBN 978-953-7356-40-8.
- ĐURINOVIĆ, Maja. Kad počinje hrvatski balet? In *BALETI.hr*, 2022. [online]. Available at: <https://www.baleti.hr/index.php?p=article&id=2121>.
- GLAVAŠ, Jerko. Kreativni gradovi budućnosti – temelj gospodarskog razvoja. In *Evropska revija*, 2019, Vol. 2, Issue 10, pp. 105–113. ISSN 2334-7597.
- HRASTE-SOČO, Iva. Uloga nacionalnih kazališta u kontekstu razvoja identiteta nacije. In *Krležini dani u Osijeku 2020. Devedesete u hrvatskoj dramskoj književnosti i kazalištu, prvi dio*. Zagreb – Osijek : HAZU, 2021, pp. 18–29.
- LUKIĆ, Darko. Kazalište i gospodarsko okruženje. In *Kazalište*, 2010, Vol. 18, Issue 41/42, pp. 116–127. [online]. Available at: <https://hrcak.srce.hr/187112>. ISSN 2459-881X.
- MAVRIN, Igor – ŠEBO, Damir – GLAVAŠ, Jerko. Immersive Cultural Tourism in the Context of COVID-19 Pandemic: Global Perspectives and Local Impacts. In *Ekonomski pregled : mjesečnik Hrvatskog društva ekonomista Zagreb*, 2022, Vol. 5, Issue 73, pp. 739–767. DOI: 10.32910/ep.73.5.4.
- Ministarstvo kulture Republike Srbije. Zakoni i uredbe. [online]. Available at: <https://kultura.gov.rs/tekst/sr/43/zakoni-i-uredbe.php>.
- NIKOLIĆ, Mirjana. Trezor-i kolektivnog i individualnog medijskog sećanja. In *Zbornik radova Fakulteta dramskih umetnosti*, 2017, Vol. 32, pp. 103–115. ISSN 1450-5681. Available at: https://fdu.bg.ac.rs/uploads/files/Institut/ezbornik/Zbornik%2032/Mirjana%20Nikoli%C4%87_TREZOR-I%20KOLEKTIVNOG%20I%20INDIVIDUALANOG%20MEDIJSKOG%20SE%C4%86ANJA.pdf.
- NORTHOUSE, Peter G. *Leadership: Theory and Practice*. Seventh edition. Thousand Oaks : SAGE Publications, Inc., 2015. 520 p. ISBN-13: 978-1483317533.
- NYMAN, Inka-Maria. Between Exclusivity and Accessibility: An Analysis of Instagram Branding at Two Nordic Opera Companies. In *The Opera Quarterly*, 2023, Vol. 39, Issue 1–2, pp. 91–112. [online]. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1093/oq/kbae015>.
- Österreichische Bundestheater. Über uns. [online]. Available at: <https://www.bundestheater.at/oesterreichische-bundestheater>
- RISTIĆ, Maja. Pozorišni producent: Od antičkog arhonta do lidera novog milenijuma (o nastavi na predmetu pozorišna produkcija). In *Zbornik radova Fakulteta dramskih umetnosti*, 2011, Vol. 19, pp. 97–114. ISSN 1450-5681. [online]. Available at: [https://fdu.bg.ac.rs/uploads/files/Institut/ezbornik/Zbornik%2019/Dr%20Maja%20Risti%C4%87_POZORIŠNI_PRODUCENT_%20OD_ANTI%C4%87KOG_ARHONTA_DO_LIDERA_NOVOG_MILENIJUMA_\(O_NASTAVI_NA_PREDMETU_POZORIŠNA_PRODUKCIJA\).pdf](https://fdu.bg.ac.rs/uploads/files/Institut/ezbornik/Zbornik%2019/Dr%20Maja%20Risti%C4%87_POZORIŠNI_PRODUCENT_%20OD_ANTI%C4%87KOG_ARHONTA_DO_LIDERA_NOVOG_MILENIJUMA_(O_NASTAVI_NA_PREDMETU_POZORIŠNA_PRODUKCIJA).pdf)
- ROTHAERMEL, Frank T. *Strategic Management*. New York : McGraw-Hill Education, 2023. 608 p. ISBN 978-1-266-19186-2.

SCHMIDT, T. *Modernes Management im Theater*. Wiesbaden : Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden, 2020. 75 p. ISBN-13: 978-3658320249.

Stiftung Oper in Berlin. Über uns. [online]. Available at: <https://www.oper-in-berlin.de/de/stiftung/ueber-uns/>.

VIŠNIĆ, Emina. *Kulturne politike odozdo: nezavisna kultura i nove suradničke prakse u Hrvatskoj*. Amsterdam, Bukurešt, Zagreb : Policies for Culture, 2008. 64 p. Available at: https://www.clubture.org/system/publication/pdf/7/za_web-Kulturne_politike_odozdo.pdf.

Zakon o kazalištima. In *Narodne novine*, 2023, Vol. 185, Issue 23, pp. 1–10, 28 February 2023. [online]. Available at: <https://narodne-novine.nn.hr/eli/sluzbeni/2023/23/386/pdf>.

ZELIĆ, Josip – GLAVAŠ, Jerko – VOJINOVIĆ, Željko. Adaptability and Strategic Management in National Opera and Ballet Theaters: Navigating Challenges in the Field of Music Art. In *Interdisciplinary Management Research XX*, 2024, pp. 281–302. [online]. Available at: <https://nx15738.your-storageshare.de/s/koTLXbrsS8ycqtP>. ISSN 1847-0408.

Josip Zelić

Academy of Arts and Culture in Osijek

Department of Instrumental Studies and Composition with Music Theory

J. J. Strossmayer University of Osijek

Ulica Julija Knifera 1

31000 Osijek

Republic of Croatia

E-mail: josipzeliczg@gmail.com

ORCID: ID 0009-0003-9300-2784