

**SHADOWS OF THREE DIFFERENT PERIODS IN THE ALBANIAN THEATRE**

*“Shadows of the Night” by Vedat Kokona – The only drama of the great Albanian translator*



**Theater**

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**Abstract**

2004 can be considered as a very successful year for the Albanian theatres due to the reappearance of Albanian drama. Even though it was obviously noticed by the critics that the Albanian drama was gradually becoming extinct, in 2004 the flow seemed to change. Bylis Theatre put triptych parts on stage of Kristo Floqi’s composition, one of the most high-toned eminent of Albanian’s Renaissance literature with Met Xhelili as a director. “Aleksander Moisiu Theatre” of Durrës puts on stage the drama called “Balkan Hotel”, which was about the occurrences of Kosovo’s war, with Bashkim Hoxha as a playwright, under the direction of Driada Dervishi, whereas the National Theatre puts on stage another work entitled “*Shadows of the Night*” written by Vedat Kokona and directed by Hervin Çuli, which was taken from the fund of dramaturgy during the period of socialist realism. The Albanian’s dramaturgy crisis which had started to be felt in the last decade of the communist era, peaked its crisis in the ‘90s. From 50 years composition under the dictatorship rule, even though authors such as Ismail Kadare and Dritero Agolli from other branches of literature survived, Albanian drama was still left vacant almost like in its beginnings. The overwhelming part of dramaturgy production that was written during the years of dictatorship decreased immediately after its collapse. Josif Papagjoni, an art critic raised a question: Should the “frozen” manuscripts be paraphrased historically? Can some of the best dramas of socialist realism period be re-written? (Papagjoni, 2005, 21) In year 2004, one of the best works of socialist realism period returns on stage: “*Shadows of the Night*” by the great publicist, writer, translator and the lexicologist Vedat Kokona (1913-1998). Written in 1946, this drama comes in three versions, through different interpretations of the same manuscript, from three well-known directors: Pirro Mani, with the “Andon Zako Çajupi” theatre’s troupe, Zef Bushati with the Folk Theatre troupe, just a year after the death of the dictator Enver Hoxha in year 1986, and returned at the National Theatre after 14 years of the dictatorship’s collapse, under the direction of Hervin Culi. Despite of the other parts being continuously put on, particularly those with propagandistic contents, “*Shadows of the Night*” was not put on stage for many years in Tirana.

**Introduction**

“*Shadows of the Night*” is a five act drama, about a family from Tirana during the Second World War in 1944, in the last days of the capital liberation in Albania. A family of rich traders anxiously experiences the last days of war, while it stays shut inside a basement. Tefik, the householder and one of the boys of the family, felt threatened and scared from a possible victory of the communist forces, as they would go through the soviet reform dispenses (confiscation of their fortune, and they would be found guilty for the cooperation with the previous system), the other son called Halit which was a professor, thinks that communism can be seen as a salvation, as it would bring social equity and it would fight the injustice. Fear and anxiety pervade the whole story. The fear of the new coming ideology, where they had already destroyed “the traders” in Russia, their anxiety thinking who the real enemy is : the invaders that were cast out, or the liberators that would take away everything they had honorably set up. The main conflict of the drama is based on different systems- by dividing the family in two pieces. The war crisis is added to the ideological conflict. At the end of the drama, some partisan liberators arrest the nationalist brother.

A satire drama comprised with realistic atmosphere and circumstances, in where typical and characteristic figures are noticed. Each of the directors, each one with a characteristic style,

has brought a different stylistic interpretation from the other. Their ideo-emotional attitude also differs, as each of them highlights different aspects of the work. Pirro Mani and Zef Bushati, both by referring to the period they set it up, concentrated into putting the emphasis on the value of the war against fascism, the class struggle, as well as the arrival of a new world. Meanwhile, the latest version from Hervin Culi, comes with a new perspective and takes another shade, first, because it is set up in another period.

### **Mani, Bushati, Çuli**

Even though some of the directors believe in the “first impression” and the importance of the influence on the directorial conception while reading a manuscript, it is a fact that Pirro Mani started his work on “Shadows of the Night” without having a conception. As he recalls : We had to come with the Korca’s troupe in the Theatre’s Festival in Tirana with “White Barriers” a drama by Naum Prifti, criticized from the senior leadership of the Party, which was not approved and banned. They told us: “Korca’s theatre will definitely take part in the festival, so you’d better find the new drama and do the show!” We only had a month left. So, I decided to take “Shadows of the Night” drama by Vedat Kokona and I started working on it without having any image. However, during the rehearsal and the direct work with the cast of actors, my image started to create and fulfil. I say that there are no strict things: I mean, since in the beginning you should have a complete picture of the upcoming show. No. My picturing comes slowly, enriches, breathes along as we rehearse on stage. I don’t agree that the director should choose all the things in the beginning, then to apply what he has imagined. For example, this actor goes here, pics the phone, sits there, raises his voice and so on... I do not agree with this thing at all. Art isn’t math. The directorial platform isn’t a technical-scientific project either. (Papagjoni, 2002,120) Despite that, within a short time (not even a month of rehearsal) he manages to bring a well-thought show in every detail. The title itself “Shadows of the Night” has had an impact on all three directing versions. These shadows operate in a semi-dark place, in a basement. The pale light comes from the outside, where the war is occurring, but is accompanied through the motion of these shadows. The presentation he makes on his directorial concept, Pirro Mani aimed at revealing hope, light and optimism in a dark environment, among desperate people, awaiting and anxious about how everything would go with the arrival of the communist power. In spite of frequentness, panic, and mare having invaded the situation, the youngest of the traders’ family, Tefik, becomes the main chord, by creating comic situations within an expected ending. (Papagjoni, 2011, 427).

The show was known for a resourceful rhythm, an energy that passes from the stage to the theater’s hall, making the public melt with what was happening in the setting of the family.

The Deathbed stays in that dark basement in the form of fear and horror, where Tefik Ruzaj and his family members are isolated. Pirro Mani, puts an armchair at the left of the stage, where the grandmother of the house sits on. He brings that armchair, as (Deathbed) of the society in the west. Everyone goes around that death-armchair, just like shadows.

Like this scene, the show is built up by many others like this one, some directorial details such as the drop out of old lady's medicine from the tray, and everyone crouches like mice in the corners of the basement-house. The actors' play is a successful element of this first version of "Shadows of the Night". Through scenes full of rhythm, left or right, up or down, like the character of Thanas does, as we mentioned, so do the other characters, by moving and over moving around the basement, matching their spiritual rhythm.

The harmonization between different oppositional manners of spiritual and physical reactions of the characters remains one of the main tasks for the director, also for me in the case of the "Shadows of the Night" show.

The second version of the show with Bushati as a director is also similar when it comes to the conceptualization of the work, if in the first version we notice the remarkable direction of Pirro Mani, in Bushati's version, there is the eye-catching cast of actors. Gjon Karma states: Here (Bushati's version) all the actors are distinguished, while in Korça's show, only Thanas of Pandi Raidhit is noticed. (National Theatre Archive). It should be highlighted that the cast of Bushati comprises some of the best names of Albanian actors such as: Kadri Roshi, Vangjush Furrxhi, Ahmet Pasha, Drita Pelinku, Yllka Mujo, Violeta Manushi, whereas Pirro Mani works with new actors and not at the masterly level of the names mentioned above. (Qendro, 2010, 127.) However, Pirro Mani's show is known for many directorial values, bringing a downturn- whether it is for the understanding of the actor's mastery, or the directorial vision.

The rhythm of the three versions of the show is dictated by the outdoor atmosphere which becomes more and more intensified. In Pirro Mani's version – highlighted by the critic Miho Gjini- there is a domination of a clear directorial thought... He frequently gives the show a bothering silence, which often gives the impression of people's agony before death; yet this accompaniment to the cemeteries that the director does to his heroes, does not make us cry nor be shocked, in the contrary it makes us smile. (Miho, 1964, 2.)

Zef Bushati treats the play as a genuine drama, where some characters bring comic shades like: Thanas, Tushja or Grandma, which is also noticed at Pirro Mani's version, anyway, the main topic on the class struggle is enough to not pass the dramatic tone. At Hervin Çuli we can spot a re-interpretation of the play, in which the grotesque is felt, also the comic: *inside the drama, the comic moves*. (Papagjoni, 2005, 21) The whole idea-emotional structure changes in this version, which also impacts on a new approach of the directorial conceptualization. The structure of character changes along with the idea-emotional structure of the play.

Pirro Mani would make a lot of modifications in the manuscript (Qendro, 2010, 147), by making it more concrete especially the long monologues. During this process, he consulted with Kokona, the playwright, by doing so, he gave more action to the drama and made the dialogue

more expressive, at the end he managed to summarize the part, so he brought a drama with a dialogue and compressed action.

Bushati tries to have a punctual attitude towards the changes made in the manuscript by Pirro Mani, while Çuli goes beyond, into interfering the manuscript and resulting into almost a new work.

“Shadows of the Night” in the recent play (2004) comes through an aesthetic actualization of the manuscript by giving a scenic meaning.

Actualization and the review of the manuscript are the essential changes made between the play of ‘90s and the one of 2004. For the first time, in this treatment we come across a director-author who gives a meaning and actualizes the socialist realism work. The director is concentrated on the work’s motifs, on the subject, on the characters, but, makes a lot of changes.

Manuscript clearance from the ideological overlays and the omission of political frameworks are evident in this play. Hervin Çuli does not give up with only a simple editing but: *he* fills the old manuscript with words, dialogues, and real stories, which match the logic of the characters, their spiritual condition, the conflict of the work, and the nature itself ... making the idea emotional attitude even sharper. (Papagjoni, 2005, 21)

He goes beyond that by making a conceptual overthrow of all the treatment of the work, in the end becoming a co-author. The change of the manuscript consequently follows the change of the idea’s treatment of the work. In the first two plays, the whole part which is pervaded by Tefik’s anxiety, Selman, the mother or the others being worried, takes negative connotations. Their treatment this way, is taken for granted by showing them as enemies so they could be treated like that. Even in the directorial platform of Zef Bushati, he evaluates the author's dramaturgy finding for such treatment: Vedat Kokona with such originality in his viewpoint, goes through the enemy’s camp, exposing hence their way of perceiving the world, the enemy’s character and at the same time taking off their masks. (National Theatre Archive)

In Çuli’ version, the situation of this family gets another meaning, it pervades, as a tragic situation of people who are abducted from freedom, property and are threatened by the physical arrest and liquidation of the communist power that is expected to win. (Papagjoni, 2011, 427) The drama comes at another time with a new conception, which overturns the initial treatment. Çuli aims and goes to a drama author with the effort to bring parallelism within the family that carries the work, generating various political extremes during the war where in his opinion, the image of this family is the image of the Albanian family many years before till nowadays. (Olli, 2004, 22)

A drama that insists deeply on the plight of politicization, the extreme ideology of the individual, but also of society in general, of the fierce war of classes. (Olli, 2004, 22) We have in

our hands a pure chronic drama, the essence of which is peace, love for life, the human dream to be happy. (Slatina, 2004,19).

Political debate among members of the household, which happens most commonly in Albanian families, is underlined as an actual topic in this treatment after the fall of the dictatorship. Conflict between the two brothers, Selim, a nationalist officer and Halit, a professor who dreams of a unclassified society, if in the first versions is seen as an antagonism between bad brother Selim and good brother Halit, the post-communist version is directed towards an extremity of their convictions.

Selim even though he worked honestly frightened the partisans. Halit appears extremely pathetic, while Selim is realistic. These different outlooks have created a brutal conflictual climate in the family, especially to emphasize that the sense of understanding for thinking differently has no place. In the variant of Pirro Mani and Zef Bushati, the little brother, Halit, remains in the minority seems unusual, and everything is set by his father and brother in the Culit variant, Halit debates with more pathetic energy.

In the first variants is identified the connection of this family with the Germans, especially the older brother, while Çuli emphasizes the line of disagreement and non-cooperation of the family of the merchant Tefik with the Germans, but not with the partisans. The merchant's family experiences a real hell in that basement-tomb, waiting with fear, anxiety, and horror at the arrival of Germans or Partisans. (Prenci, 2008, 269)

Referring to the scenic breakdown, both Mani and Bushati relied on the realistic theater more than that of socialist realism, while in Çuli we see elements of realism intertwined with the physical theater, featuring dynamic scenes, at a high rate. (Prenci, 2008, 273)

### **Scenography**

The sentiment, as the author himself dictates, is the basement of a house where the shadows are rewound and clash with each other through the concrete walls of this basement. Scenography of the show of Pirro Mani, changes in the scenario's decomposition of later performances. The sculptor Koço Ristani, according to the director's idea, realizes a basement with a large half-wall in the form of an arch, evidenced at the left of the scene. Inquiry of the event beneath this somewhat distorted wall, gives the idea of a strut, as well as of the crash.

Under a minimalistic scenario, with no unnecessary loads, played on two planes, there are only functional objects, but on the other hand, conveys the idea of a collapsing world. As another well-known director recalls for this scenography : Pirro Mani participated in the Vedat Kokona's "Night Shadows" drama. Minister of Culture, the new Political Bureau, Manush Myftiu, after seeing the first part of the show, he said to me at rest: "Why are you doing these decors?" "How

are we to do it?" I said. "Well, that wall there, crooked, as anxious, is not natural, it would have crashed, you could not stand as it is done!" I said, " Comrade Manush, there is no static screenplay, it's not enough for it to tell where the action is taking place. Scenography is art and it must give the idea of the work by its means. Even the scenography has made the walls crooked to give the idea that this world is collapsing. "(Papagjoni, 2004, 253).

Scenes constructed according to the triangular principle of the pyramid, was another well-thought, paradigmatic nature of the film, which expressed the idea of crushing old social-political hierarchies and building new hierarchies.(Papagjoni, 2004, 137.

The first act is especially filled with an atmosphere of truth and there are some interesting directorial details like the game with the squash and the fall of the tray.



*“Shadows of the Night” – directed by Pirro Mani - “Andon Zako Cajupi” theatre, Korçë, 1964.*

In the following variants, the screenplay is realistic and has some similarities. Zef Bushati specifies that in the directorial platform that: Scenography will represent a bit of the luxurious environment and the size of the cellar will be great. Colorful colors will be kept in cool colors, mostly gray and ocher. (National Theatre Archive) The somewhat heavier gray color somewhere mixed with dark brown is visible in all three scenographies.

The window element, as a mediator with what happens outside the walls, and focusing on some scenes, is noted in all three variants. At the first variant we see more than a concrete window, the idea of a relatively large, trapeze window, located in the centre, all covered with fine shades to give the grille idea and where the light was coming from fragmented. It never opens. Agim Zajmi, in Zef Bushat's version, selects a smaller, three-folded window in neoclassical style, also positioned in the center of the scene, while Kiço Çala in the third variant places a window of

very small dimensions and where the grate looks. A window like a prison cell, that gives the idea of a prisoner family before being imprisoned, as if their trial had begun in the meantime. From this little window, from time to time came a red light that killed the eyes of the characters.

The functional objects of the daily are noticed in these two scenographers, although they differ somewhat from style, but within the idea of a deluxe environment, unlike Pirro Mani's where there are very few elements. In Zajmi's scenography we see the reminiscences of the Italian neo-classical period, among other objects we see a piano. The piano is used with elegance from the house bride, Nafija. This object also helps to identify the well-being of this family of merchants. Within this basement there are two places of action, on the right there is a grandmother's comfortable armchair, and on the left we have a complete sofa in the neoclassical style. In the upper plan dividing through some decorative rails, a corridor is created for entry exits. We have desks, tables, and books, as well as other objects set up in order to show the commercial layer and well-being of this family.



*“Shadows of the Night”- directed by Hervin Çuli – National Theatre – 2004*

Çala's scenography is a little more spared, but within the idea of a well-stocked family. The basement is narrower and the walls are worked with an abrasive coating in pale brown, that gives the idea of a bunker. All the elements of the décor are functional and equally descriptive. There is no decorative element as we see in Zajmi's. Even the candles set in some positions, help in creating lightbulbs, also go parallel to the psychological terror that Culi will underline: the face expressions of the characters come prolonged, nearly disenchanted, so that synchronize with anxiety and the situation of war. However, what makes the big difference between the third scenography, with the first two is a director's special remark: the ceiling that stands above the basement, in triangular shape, becomes a concrete character at key moments of the show, returning to on an improvised screen where real-life movie images are transmitted. This is one of the first time in this show we have a use of this contemporary technology element. It is a well

thought out and well-researched scene from Kiço Çala scenography: above the scene are the macabre views of the political, "collaborators' and" traitors "of" opponents, (Olli, 2004) thus giving a contemporary articulation to the work. On the other hand, this three-pillar triangle gives us the conflict triangle in this family: Son, father, son.

### Final Scene

The last scene, with the arrival of the partisans, is a scene where the stage action intensifies. The whole atmosphere of war enters and becomes concrete in this final scene. And here we see three different optics from perspective. At the time of Pirro Mani's arrival, the partisans are seen as the liberators who will put justice in place and give the traitors what they deserve. At Bushati's, we have a bit more strict treatment of the partisans, and it is noteworthy that the criticisms made during the presentation of the evidence before the artistic council of the theatre, where director Pirro Mani himself points out: The final should be sought resolved because there is schematization and as dramaturgy. Still the final is not hit, it should be thought about the Partizan who are too fierce. (National Theatre, Archive)

But their treatment seems pale in comparison to the post-communist fallout treatment. The dose of aggression, and the brutality of the Partisans has been greatly increased. The finale has been changed from the original text by overcoming the previous schema. In the first two variants, the Partisans arrive and arrest only Selim, the brother who is considered a traitor and collaborator, which in the third variant (2004) changes completely: both father, Tefik and Selim are shot by partisans in their family's eye: *Their* (Partisans) treatment with cracked voices, as criminals, fascists who arrest and beat Selim and Tefiku, father and son, in the eyes of others. Çuli actually decides, in a naturalistic realism point of view, that the characters do not fall on the ground after being shot. When they shoot his son, Tefik goes to defend him and he gets shot as well, but they do not fall, they just stay frozen, and through the light they look like monuments. A moment that coincides with the day of triumph, but also the day on which the communist revolution begins. The director emphasizes that he wanted to bring back a historical moment, November 17, where the joy of victory over fascism, was accompanied by numerous fights and terror in Tirana.

At the end of the show both Bushati and Çuli use symbolism, but each in context of the relevant time: Haliti (Agim Qirjaqi) opens for the first time the big window. From there appears a clear blue sky, not the dark one, which symbolizes the coming of a new world. This whole scene is accompanied by a chorus of partisan songs. The contrast with Culi's closing is enormous: while killing his father and brother in front of his eyes, his brother, Halit (Arben Derhemi), drops out the book of utopias of communism, a finding that symbolizes the collapse of an ideal by thus provoking the partisan struggle itself and the communist ideal. Father and son are both being killed by Albanians, because of different ideologies. This resonates with the actuality, as it proves that Albanians are politicized individuals. (Papagjoni, 2005, 21.)



In dealing with the "Shadows" of 2004, we have a confrontation with history , which provokes us to re-examine the past, questioning the morality of the new world that ruled our country for fifty years. (Papagjoni, 2005, 21.)

The provocation of the communist war and its value seems to be the main goal the director will find out through the decomposition of events and characters that are all against the war, somehow through the grotesque, somehow directly.

The final scene where the Partisans appear criminals or bandits raises questions, leading to new critical discussions, especially on dealing with a new ideology.

On one hand, the critic Papagjoni has some reservations about this finale in ideological conception: The show closes under a terror and political rudeness. But this treatment conveys us into a new image, followed by an open ideological and political tendency that brings about a new kind of scheme. Starting with the Germans, the Ballists who are criminals, sneers, wicked, almost grotesque and comedians as they used to do in the old days in the dramas of socrealism, but now we have partisans, communists, intellectuals, etc. So we have a port exchange, and the scheme is the same. (Papagjoni, 2005, 21.)

On the other hand, the critic, Mexhit Prençi supports the idea that Çuli expresses an indisputable truth of that time. According to the Communist-Enverist ideology, nationalists and traders were considered enemies. As such, they were terrorized, even eliminated without trials, as the director introduced, Tefik's murder at the end of the drama, a bandy, macabre assassination. (Prençi, 2008, 270.) Here the theatrical performance takes even greater value by surpassing the boundaries of the theater, and bringing a historical truth. This truly artistically crafted fact for all the animated discussions undoubtedly speaks of an innovation in contemporary directorship and has even more value when it comes to an alternative re-conceptualization of the drama of socialist realism. A directorial perception, focused on: purging the work from the ideological understanding and giving it its pure essence - just like Kokona himself with a very fine elegance has presented in this drama. (Peçi, 2004, 21)

## **Costumes**

The location of the events in 1944 has created an obvious dependence on the design of costumes in three variants. Trying to create garments that belong to this historical period, if in the scenography the differences that are mentioned above are noticed, in the costumes the distinction is less noticeable. The grandmother's character has been kept almost in the same style, although the theatrical physiognomies of the three actors selected by each of the directors speak clearly for the very different styles with which they treat the work. Likewise, Tushes' suit as well as her dialect of central Albania do not differ from one show to another. The folk costume of this province also gives us a historical detail where the servants were from the peasantry of the people

who still used clothing in their daily newspaper, folk clothing. Thanas's costume is similar in terms of the costume model, but not the piece used, although the quads are shown as a little cliché style of what this character represents. While in the first variant, Pandi Raidhi is dressed in quadruple suit, the second variant, Agim Zajmi at Thanasi of Vangjush Furrxhiu, plays only with white and black. His costume is immediately linked to the historical time and conditions, telling us clearly when the event is happening. His sporty pants, long socks, jackets - all of which give the impression of a "go out" man across Europe. (Papagjoni, 1999, 129)

While Kristo Cala at Thanasi of Robert Ndrenica, uses a wider, but also light-colored glaze, giving color to creating this figure by adding notes of humor.

A special detail in Cala's costumes is Halit's costume, where if in the first installment the costume is kept quite classic, according to Mani's request, the second post is held in low-gloss colors with little emphasis here comes with a brown suit showing a red flaming shirt, which coincides with his communist ideal on the one hand, and on the other hand, gives a funny note to this figure, thus helping in all the treatment that has been made to this figure in the third variant.

There are some changes in the colours of Zyhraja's costume. In the first variant she appears with a rather simple costume, not with that chic one that is noticed in the second version of Zyrhaja. A stylish enough costume to look at Zajmi's selection, as well as the stuffy or hatch that Pelinku uses, give him a status of well-established personality.

In the third version, Cala uses in almost all the family's characters, the shades of brown, from the lightest to the darkest. So even Zyhraja here, though more refined of elegance, holds a suit in a sweet brown. Nafi also looks very elegant in the first variant, as well as in the second one, where the charm of the new home bride is evidenced through the garments that fit her like a glove. There is no elegance in the third version, and the figure itself is treated as an attachment, without any special significance. She wears a dark blue turtleneck dress to help somehow create the finesse that seems to be lacking in this version.

## Music

Pirro Mani saw it as a chance to create an atmosphere, especially to "attract", to make a certain situation, a word, a gesture prominent. In his sound formulations, besides the music, the various voices became active, creating parallels with the "background" of the play in the hearing. The theatre is a visual-audio-visual art (audio-visual), which considers hearing a priority. The word pronounced by the actor, as the primary and original element of the theatre, has an auditory character.<sup>36</sup> In addition to the sound effects associated with the three sets, such as gunfire, bombing, German soldiers' march, music is also an element that tunes in with the respective show on the basis of each concept. All the sound effects accompany the outside atmosphere, which though not physically seen, through them becomes quite present. Although we do not see, we feel

completely the struggle that comes out, that we notice on the faces, in the words, in what unbalances the protagonists of the spectacle--says critic Razi Brahimi for the screening of Pirro Mani. The gloomy atmosphere the film director has chosen and the means of expression he has used are completely embedded in the situation of the inmate family inside their home.<sup>37</sup>

Meanwhile music becomes one with what happens inside the cellar. In the first variant, the drama from the beginning, in the serenity that the members of Tefik Ruzaj's family have captured at the threshold of liberation of Tirana, sadly convey the sounds of a piano. Nafi, Selos' wife, the fascist captain and the great son of Tefik, "plays the first notes of Rahmaninov's prelude, which sounds like a death bell for this family. And this is the prelude to victory for those outside the home's grille," Muzafer Xhaxhiu describes in a critical article.

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The Partisan Choir is finally used in both Pirro Mani and Zef Bushati's work.

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The entire music column was previously composed by Kujtim Laro (1947-2004), for the movie "Red Flowers, Black Flowers", but the Culi thought it would fit also well in theatre, especially for this play. The music composed by this composer is his last work, and it seemed to the director that it was written specifically for "Shadows of the Night" as a Mozartian requiem, before the death of Kujtim Laro, himself.

### **Characters**

In addition to the artistic achievement values, this work contains special values and the diversity between characters by giving endless opportunities to the actors' incarnation, depending on the respective film concept. Kokona is more focused on the psychological decomposition of the characters at key moments of their destiny. These night shades appear to him as shaped characters, leaving different interpreting opportunities. Just as there are great contrasts between the above-mentioned variants, these contrasts are also noticed in the way the roles are divided and the characters unfold. Pirro Mani, besides the directorial solutions that emerged throughout the intensive process of work, is well-known for important work in the direction of the actors, their demands for authenticity, hearing, but also determination of the purpose and mainstreaming of each of the roles, thus not tolerating no test, "to game in general" or "to play with the voice". Harmonizing the various ways of counteracting the spiritual and physical reactions of the characters appeared here as one of the main duties of the director. (Papagjoni, 2004, 142)

Zef Bushati has a cast with big stars and all confirmed on the Albanian theater scene, while Hervin Culi brings together three generations of actors.

The first play of "Tefiku" came from the actor Spiro Karanxha (1926-2000), a semi-professional actor, and despite Pirro Man's work, could not achieve a prominent role as it happens with his successors in this role: two actors with great value on the Albanian scene - Kadri Roshi (1924 - 2007), selected by Bushati and another actor of the same size, but equally great in his acting play, actor Fatos Sela (1948 - 2013) at the show of Çuli.

Fatos Sela emphasizes the tension of the war, the fear of the future, not so much the great greed - the relationship with the money that is noticed in the treatment of Kadri Rosh. For the breakdown of characters in general, Culi has tried to direct actors away from the black and white scheme that imposed socialist realism. For Tefik's character he underlines: My character is an

honest merchant who floats in his own political, nationalistic beliefs in a certain reality. (Mile, 2004, 21)

On the other hand, Tefik of Kadri Roshi feels the influence of time-handling, where he is the representative of a greedy class who thinks only of the material goods, wholly denounced or self-worthiness. However, by dividing the induced treatment of that period propaganda, from the acting play as an artistic event, we must say that we have a masterful achievement of this figure, which culminates especially on the double stage with Zyhra, his wife (Drita Pelinku), where after he seeks to see and touch his property, he calms down only when he sees the box and makes sure the money is there. The relationship he creates with these objects, the way he lashes and how he speaks, is a scene with beautiful artistic tension. The intertwining of Stanislavski's system and that of Brecht's is noticed in his interpretations, which, as his partner Drita Pelinku notes - he swallows within his own being, inserting it into his originality, both in form and in content. (Slatina, 2013, 272).

An actress with a lot of charm, rare scenic elegance, Dhimitra Mele, was the actress who played the first role of Zyhra, Tefik's wife. Pirro Mani, who was very good at finding the right people for the roles, he made an amazing choice, with this actress, because she had an immediate connection with the audience.

The responsibility that Drita Pelinku (1926- 2013) showed in the role of Zyhra, as well as a kind of balancing, enjoys more naturalness and where the professionalism of an actress with great acting skills is noted. In this role Rajmonda Bulku, in the variant of Çuli would bring another Zyhra, though as elegant as its predecessors. But Culi's Zyhra brings another charm, both in her hair and hair pattern, making a deliberate look to the director, with the Italian cinema actresses of the 1930s. Conveying a kind of worship to all ladies who had the same artwork but who were rumored and seen as enemies during the years of communism.

Selim's character interpretations resemble in some respects, where the costume is one of them, but also differs in the physical psychic disintegration. In the first variant it is interpreted by the Korcar actor Vani Trako (1923-2009). In Bushati version, to mark the negative sides of Selim, Ahmet Pasha creates an aggressive figure, irresistible and should be said and achieves it with great skill, meanwhile Dritan Boric, there is a more honest treatment, underlining the anxiety of the future, the concern for what he expects. Boric has naturally brought the figure of a nationalist, who believes in his beliefs, but on the other hand is all anxious about how his relations with his attitude to the Communists will be expected.

An important character is that of Halit played first by Dhimitwr Orgocka, then by Agim Qirjaqi (1950-2010), in the Bushat variant, where, like in all other roles, this polyhydic actor, as he calls it director Dhimiter Anagnosti, and in this character stands out for his special Brechtian game. His sensitivity and wisdom are seen throughout the show and at no time have any

declarations or patos, which is intentionally highlighted by Arben Derhemi in the third variant. A detail that caught Culi in the character of Halit was that whenever he came on stage, he had a book and a pencil in his hand, pointing out from time to time on the ideological books. This repeated detail brought ridiculous notes by playing the naive conception of this character on the new era.

The treatment that Mani does to Halit is paralleled to Hamlet monologues. He also underlines that all the insisted Halit's monologues have to be played aside, distanced from other family members. Agim Qirjaqi's play is restrained and rational, a modern game for the time, where such a schematic character, he can bring with a naturalness and serenity a game without extravagance, without artifice. In Haliti i Qirjaqi is seen the ability to clearly convey the subtext and the scenes where it has a passive role as well as the scenes when it reacts and reveals its ideas, it feels the preservation of the sense of mass as well as stage fines. In Arben Derhemi there is a different treatment of Halit, which reveals the futility of his ideals. It comes as an out of date and worldly character. Detail of the collapse of the communist utopian book at the end of the show is its turning point. Both the dress and the stand, created a deliberate association by the director with the figure of Qemal Stafa.

Bushati on his directorial platform specifies that: Sarcasm, that the author uses a lot, often forces us to laugh at characters even though they are in dramatic circumstances. (National Theatre Archive)

Thanasi is exactly one of these. In all three versions, this is the character that remains long in memory. His concept originally as the merit of the creator Kokona comes in three different adaptations, never losing its originality. Thanasi, an undecided type who cannot position himself, adds confusion to other members by conveying comic in the public.

Work in detail with the actor to create a character is a masterpiece by director Pirro Mani. Although with a modest body of actors he managed to spark and draw the figures that distinguish, with a lot of findings, where the work with Pandi Raid (1931-1999) was highlighted for this role to the finest detail: How would Thanasi walk in stage? How to keep the snout on her head, hanging on her forehead, holding her hands behind her back as she would talk to her partners. (Qendro, 2010, 148) Through a well-defined organization and actuarial adaptability, conceived within the spiritual rhythm that this character brings, it should be said that Thanasi was masterfully performed by actor Pandi Raidhi. For the creation of this figure, Raidhi was also awarded with the Laureant Prize of the National Theater Professional Festival in 1964. The Detail, as an expressive tool, began in the character of the literary character. Incidentally, this character was short-handed, the other was a nose-throat, he had guts, shoulders, broad bumps. Then Pandi Raidhi had to gather his hands, put a piece of cotton on his back, make up a gut and change that way, voice, walking, behavior by becoming Thanas at "Shadows of the Night."

It is this Thanasi who comes to Bushat's spectacle in another great performance by actor Vangjush Furrxhi, where his overly organic game looks at adapting to the role. With the first entry that Thanasi of Furrxhiu performs on stage, immediately visualize the character. Not only is his visual appearance, but also plastic and scenes that have been adopted with a lot of naturalness, come to the function of his role. He climbs up the stairs as he agrees with any prophesied words of Tefik, Selim, etc. (sometimes without even hearing them, so is his mind: a real clutter.) His personality appears to be perverted. All of these bring us a Thanas undecided and, in turn, very ridiculous. His comic is created to transform the "extraordinary", "horror" and panic of distress into a "historical misery". The immediate reduction of the big one in the small "drama" and "tragedy" in funny comics, - is the special merit of Thanas's play interpreted by Vangjush Furrxhi. At this level is also the other member of Thanas, who was played in the Korca theater by prominent actor Pandi Raidhi. (Papagjoni, 1999, 129).

If in the early '86s, we see a cowardly, cowardly merchant, unstable Thanas. After 17 years, we see Thanas in a new conception, otherwise but equally unquestionable in his work by Robert Ndrenika: a peace-bound merchant does not want to have a problem with either side or the other and thanks to this the reasoning he gives is right for both parties. He comes as a young personage, with an explosion of inner freedom, clothed with the modern version of a fatalistic character. In Thanasi of Ndrenika, there is only a little fear, and having a bit of fear is not ashamed", (Grosi, 2004, 20) - explains Çuli the breakdown of Thanasi's character.

There is also a great change in the way of perception and the character through the role of Nafie - Selimi's wife. Valentina Caci, actor of the amateur movement of the Korca troupe, but with responsibility and stage authenticity, plays at the beginning the role of Nafie. While Bushati has chosen a great actress of the Albanian scene, Yllka Mujon, Çuli puts in this role an incredibly young and little-known actress in the theater that, perhaps, is the only drawback of the 2004 show, Anila Muca. In Bushati version, we see Yllka Mujo more attractive than ever, quite beautiful, playful, in her splendor. Paying attention to make up as a part of female treatment, the sensuality of a woman who has been in Europe was noticed. Songs, piano, shows for a fin and cultivation. The lack of travel that Nafija underlines occasionally has the same melancholy, which is noticed in her game as a perception of the loss of an ending world. In her way she expresses melancholy exactly about the beautiful life she is losing in front of her eyes. Meanwhile, in the new Nafie, there are very few of these. Two different actor choices as well as the concise conception between them are noticed in the last scene, where Muza's Nafi is totally funky and numb, while in the context of the actualization of the text, Anila Muca is enough for the humor – doesn't urinate because of fear, and this gets rid of the elegance and refinement of the previous treatment. The character of the bride who did not match was that of Selimi's bride, which did not even approach the public naturally, but sounded false and resembling the play of high school students. (Mile, 2004, 19).

A special character is the maid, Tushja - where in Pirro Mani's version comes from Dhorke Orgocka, a famous actress known for her playful character creation.

Another different profile, in Bushati's is played by Pavlina Mani, where her work looks to be as real as possible with the dialect of Central Albania, but also a serious attempt to create a character that differs from the characters that this actress has in her curriculum. Even though she occasionally finds a break from the dialect, it is a successful challenge, as well as the dynamics of the character both in comic and dramatic scenes. Suela Konjari is the actress who brings Tushe with a new perspective of the '90s, where dialect has also helped to add new characters, bringing a lot of humor and reducing the burdened situation. In this treatment of Tushe, the grotesque role of poor maid servant who spies and spies on the masters of the house he is working on is magnified. A poor-faced representative, who is equipped with the intuition of survival, smokes things are changing, and does not hesitate to steal the family where he has been working for a while.

As Qefsere Trako (1928-2012) in the first variant (rated for this role, as well as Pandi Raidhi, with the "Laureate of the National Festival" at the 3rd National Festival), like Violeta Manushi (1926-2007) The second variant, or Margarita Xhepa (1932) - the three of them in the role of grandmother, have brought a very special figure, where the originality of each of these actresses is highlighted. Grandma's armchair, and she's sitting on it, looks like a curtain opens until the end of three shows.

Qefsere Trako conveys a grandmother with her usual age-old grievances, quoting the dramatic situation prevailing from time to time. The treatment of this figure, its plan both external and internal, - fall into contradiction with the tension that war brings to other members of family. Even though a not very active character, even this one with an incredibly fascinating finding by the author almost most of the time, Violeta Manushi in the second version, feels always present on the stage, brings a character who makes you smile, where every bit gets comic shades, but never pass the sense of mass. It looks like it is out of reality and so with its calm emphasizes the idea of meaningless of war and its motives create little humorous situations. Sitting in the armchair, as well as the scarf, are seen in the three variants, she groans, and this groan is also an artistic find of the three actresses.

Margarita Xhepa brings another grandma, a kind grandma, to whom Culi attributes a symbolic connotation to that of an aging era.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, we made a comparative study between the three directors Pirro Mani, Zef Bushati and Hervin Culi staging Vedat Kokona's drama "Shadows of the Night".



Each of the directors suggests an interpretation of the work as a whole, within the context of the time they set, as well as their individuality.

None of the directors' point of view is final, but each of them shows the importance of these directors to convey the vision of an author as Kokona at different times. The last variant has a particular importance, not only for the novelistic novelties, but also for the courage to deal with a work that pertains to socialist realism, where by the 2000s it was thought to be an "inactive composition" in the relationship with today's spectator. It also opens the way to the opportunity to see and review this and many other works of this period in new perspectives, removing ideological frameworks and thus expanding the possibilities for a review of the national drama values. On the other hand, like the very first director of this drama, Pirro Mani, we note that "Shadows of the Night" is a play that never loses its universality: You can take this piece and give it today.

It is as actual as yesterday. And it will always be, because it universalizes a phenomenon. So, there are some people, "imprisoned" to live somewhere (to survive), outside the war, and between them the clash of attitudes, thoughts, and alternatives to it. That's how it will always be, I say. It is an eternal triangle of human existence. (Papagjoni, 2004, 147)

A good work always remains an open opportunity for a creative partnership between the writer and the director.

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