

The Origins of Contemporary Albanian Directing: A Reflection of Human Diversity

Inis Gjoni*

Faculty of Performing Arts, University of Arts, Tirana, Albania

* Corresponding Author: gjoni.inis@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper examines the contribution of director Pandi Stillu to Albanian theatre, focusing on the way he has portrayed unique human identities. It also analyses the director's artistic approach, the themes he addresses, and his impact on the audience's perception of the complexity of individuals. Through a critical analysis of some of his works and interviews with his collaborators, the paper highlights that Stillu's way of creating different characters, often with their fragility and uniqueness, establishes him as a key figure in contemporary Albanian dramaturgy. The results show that the characters and identities created in his works are diverse, complex, and often challenge social stereotypes. Pandi Stillu is an Albanian director known for his portrayal of complex human identities in drama, tragedy or comedy. Through his works, he has managed to explore fragility, individuality and human relationships in ways that challenge stereotypes and social norms. Additionally, Stillu's contribution also lies in his ability to present complex and unique characters, giving the audience a deep perspective on human diversity. Very few studies on Albanian dramaturgy have analysed and focused on the way directors portray individual identities. This paper aims to examine Pandi Stillu's approach and show how he creates unique identities, contributing to the understanding of human nature through the performing arts.

Keywords: *Theatre; Film Art; Stereotype; Human Identity.*

1. Introduction

The features that would characterize Pandi Still's direction are truthfulness, realism, and the constant demand for as much life as possible in the actors' play, where the interpretation resembled in a higher artistic form, the truth of the feelings and thoughts of the characters they played. In his work, one of the accompanying qualities of direction stands out: the ability to create the harmonious unification of the theatrical components of the performance in an ensemble of values, ideo-aesthetic approaches, directions and unified style, all as an artistic synthesis. This has justified, in turn, the collective character of theatrical art (Pano, 1985). It can be said that in Still's directorial concepts for the performances he staged, the theatrical components are considered harmonized with each other, in various interactions and communications, with clear theatrical functions (Papagjoni, 2003). The creativity of each individual artist who has participated in the

construction of Pandi Still's performances actors, set designers, costume designers, choreographers, composers appear harmonized with the whole, as an organic part of it. Thus, the director has created a true community of concepts, ideas, aesthetic tastes of all artists in the theatre collective, guided by an advanced consciousness, by a unique method, accepted and preferred by all. These are what have subsequently made it possible to achieve harmony and synthesis of the performance by him, meaning the community of personal contributions to the all-creative contribution of all artists. He was able to unite the passions, feelings, and goals of every artist into a creative, compact, and indestructible will. He has also been able to tactfully and wisely direct every creative, fruitful, productive and effective initiative, always to the benefit of the main goal of the show. They have been supported by the director and have gone towards the unique character of the spectacle, the tone and the inalienable direction of its concept.

Furthermore, Still's art can be summarized in the ability to beautifully arrange the feelings and thoughts of all the artists, within an ideo-artistic whole that is given to us in the directorial concepts of the stage works in question, thus creating a community of interests, goals and artistic tastes of the entire large theatrical collective, as well as unified meanings for the parts and the social and spiritual reality itself materialized there, transformed into an aesthetic theatrical reality. This has led to a fair conception of stage tasks, within a unique system and a unified and universally accepted stylistic approach. All of this has made the creation of the ensemble possible. For this very reason, Pandi Stillu's directorial art can only be seen and appreciated when merged with the content and uniqueness of each theatrical component in this or that performance, especially with the individuality of the author, the set designer, and the actor, aiming for synthesis, togetherness, and harmony. Undoubtedly, this "fusion" does not imply the loss of the director's individuality, nor the creation of contradictions between theatrical components, on the contrary, there were clearly defined goals, regarding the known laws of directorial art (Papagjoni, 2003).

Another valuable quality of Pandi Stillu's direction has been the ability for deep meanings and multifaceted perceptions of every type of art in the synthesis that theater requires. Theatre requires exquisite artistic taste, and further requires a keen sense of contemporaneity to grasp the dialectic of historical consciousness, the parallels of social development, the humility of today's man when the play is given.

In addition to the dramatic and tragic, Pandi Stillu has stood out for his organic tendency towards humour. In Pandi Stillu's direction, as in general in the qualities that a talented director must have, two features are encountered, without which his art cannot be understood: fantasy and imagination. In mutual relationships and interactions, these qualities have created figurative thinking in the pre-imaginings of director Stillu, which meant the appearance of every image, every conversational relationship, every physical detail and every psychological experience in a well-defined artistic form, which corresponded to a certain scenic structure according to the concrete performance. In accordance with this type of thinking, he has combined two substantial elements of his

directorial thought, the “game of meditation” (i.e. fantasy) and the “game of feelings” (i.e. imagination). To these two he has equated a third, no less important, the “game of argument” (i.e. logic). These have been like the three “unknowns” of an equation, the solution of which is conditioned by the immediate solution of all three together, and not at all of one, even of both without the third (Luarasi, 2006).

Another valuable quality of Pandi Stillu's direction has been the ability for deep meanings and multifaceted perceptions of every type of art in the synthesis that theatre requires. Having said that, it is required by the refined artistic taste, and further, by the keen sense of contemporaneity, to grasp the dialectic of historical consciousness, the parallels of social development, and the humility of today's man when the performance is given. Let us recall here some of the works of world dramaturgy staged by him such as *"The Leipzig Trial"*, 1955, an impressive play where the romantic-heroic spirit and the unmasking of the political crime of the Nazis stood out; the classic comedy of the prominent Romanian writer Ion Luca Caragiale *"A Lost Letter"*, a play from 1960, where the directorial thought and solution proceeded in the grooves of a whipping satire and an irony about the customs and vices of a depraved society, where there was no lack of overt political overtones. Or the well-known comedy of Molière *"The Noble Bourgeoisie"*, 1963, where he used light and entertaining elements of humour. Stillu offered a team of talented actors with Mihal Pop in the lead role.

2. Analysis of Human Characters and Identities in his Works

The analysis of the works under review shows that Pandi Stillu created deep and diverse characters, exploring the fragility and challenges of individual identity. His characters often reflect contradictions, moral dilemmas, and complex psychological dimensions, challenging traditional stereotypes. Key examples include characters who face interpersonal and social conflicts, showing a rich and complex emotional world. Stillu's visual and narrative approach makes the audience emotionally connect with the characters, giving each individual a unique and unrepeatable identity. We see this with the staging of several pieces from Soviet dramaturgy, such as: the drama *"For Those Who Are at Sea"*, 1948, by Boris Lavrenjev, and the drama *"The Time of Fathers' Youth"*, 1950, by Boris Gorbатов. Later, we find it reflected in the staging of the classic Albanian drama *"Our Land"* by Kolë Jakovë.

Pandi Stillu thus became one of the promoters of Albanian drama and, thanks to his previous collaboration with the authors of the texts, he offered generative ideas by improving their dramaturgical structures and making them more scenic, as happened with the plays *"Vajza nga fshati"*, 1954, by Fatmir Gjata; *"The Seven Shaljans"*, 1958, by Ndrekë Lucës; *"Syleshi"*, 1958, by Spiro Çomorë; *"Trimi i mirë me shokë pumë"*, 1961, by Sulejman Pitarkë, dedicated to the figure of Skanderbeg, etc.

The work *"Our Land"* became a reference in the history of Albanian theater. Through this work, the director managed to convey the dramatic, tragic, and heroic layers of the work, primarily through Loke's fate and suffering from Tuç Maku's slander. Thanks to

Marie Logoreci's wonderful acting, the undeserved suffering of a humiliated but indomitable woman and mother came to the stage with a clear language and psychological, even tragic, tones. Through her will and bravery, she newly deserved the love and respect of her children by restoring her denied dignity as a mother, as a woman, as a mountaineer. The director accurately outlined the directions of social and political conflict, necessarily within the "red lines" that socialist realism had defined for the content of the drama. This was seen in the exaltation of moral values and honesty of the children of Loke, Murrashi, and File, and in the strong spiritual contradictions of Leka as well. Alongside Lokë, this drama brought the figure of Tuç Maku by actor Loro Kovaçi, one of his emblematic roles, to a highly professional format. He was a cunning, cunning Tuç, who cunningly played on the traumas of others, sometimes threatening and sometimes flattering, which was clearly evident in his relationship with Leka, Murashi, and Loke. It seems that the actor and the theater itself could not avoid the narrow, schematic optics of "class warfare" that this character carried on his back.

In 1956, he staged another work from Albanian dramaturgy, Sulejman Pitarka's drama "The Fisherman's Family", which remained in the repertoire of the People's Theater for over 20 years, becoming in itself a valuable and historical part of the classical fund of Albanian theater. The clear directorial idea created the picture of the ordinary life, but steeped in pure patriotic feelings, of a simple family during the National Liberation War, which experienced the horrors of war and the fierce class and political conflicts of the time, which reached within its bosom. Even though the drama had a prominent political overtone, it nevertheless brought to life strong emotions, starting with that of the fisherman Jonuz Bruga performed by Kadri Roshi (and 20 years later, in 1974, by Naim Frashëri), followed by Naim Frashëri as Selimi, Drita Pelinku as the mother, Esma Agolli as Sheja, Lazër Filipi as Uncle Shazua, etc. As always, in this drama, Stillu's directorial conception was characterized by tragic tones, silences filled with emotion and tension, the confusion in the worries and aggravated states of the characters, but he did not neglect the heroic pathos, the romantic breath, which was observed with Petrit, Dini, Maliqi, etc. Such emphases in Pandi Still's directorial concept speak of a correct understanding of both the individuality and style of the author, Sulejman Pitarka, but also of a correct understanding of the style of the work, its nature and genre. Regarding the typology of the director, it can be said that she insisted on the realization of the characters, the relationships between them, the emphasis on the contradictions in the conflict, and the care for the word and the play. In this show, all components are unified: text, acting, set design, costume design, music, directorial idea. An ensemble is created, as one of the priorities of directorial work. In the scenography, one notices the care, sometimes even naturalistic, for the decor, the wooden hut covered with straw, the poor furnishings of the house, the interior of the hut itself, as well as the costumes, etc. It is worth noting that the preferred model for treating stage space in the 1950s, including the play "The Fisherman's Family", was not the active presence of conventional or symbolic solutions, where in specific elements the architecture of the stage and the image would acquire the

connotations of a poetic metaphor. We cannot ask Pandi Stillu for such an outlook at that time.

In addition to the dramatic and tragic, Pandi Stillu has stood out for his organic tendency towards humor. An elegant, redeemed, meaningful humor. This tendency was most evident in the tragicomedy "The Morality of Mrs. Dulka", 1962, by the Polish writer Gabriela Zapolska. This performance was a resounding success at the People's Theater, being recorded as one of the most beautiful in the historical annals of its repertoire. On the directorial platform, Stillu rediscovered the style of the Polish writer and her work, which she had written in "one breath", within three days. He brought to light precisely the social underbelly and the unmasking power of comedy, the blade of satire directed at corrupt political castes, false morality, lies, deceptions, and sermons that confuse people. In his directorial concept, Stillu would write:

"The framework of social life that Zapolska gives us is very simplified... It is precisely this simplified, schematic framework of social reality that performs only an unmasking function... The naturalistic concept of man and society allowed Zapolska to present in a striking form the framework and phenomena of life rather than its mechanism..."

Zapolska focuses the action around one event, giving the play compactness, but also complexity, which brings out the lyrical and epic elements. Zapolska is faithful to the principle accepted by her that "...in a book you can elaborate the analysis of the development of feelings, never on the stage. So, you have to put the spectators at the center of the drama and present the actors, in the development of their feelings, with a skeptical eye, so that they accept the facts and follow the action without criticism" (Stillu, QSA).

The director thus created hilarious scenes, played with the numerous contradictions that characterized the characters, using comic surprises, paradoxes. As always, he took special care to outline some original types from the actors. In terms of the artistic qualities that distinguished his personality as a director, in this play he made the dialogues quite tangible, using elements of verbal intonation and the color of the dialogue here or there in the surrounding environment and the flow of the story; he took great care of elements such as rhythm, melody, word, harmony, semantic load, but also the "spiritual" one of the dialogue, the word, aiming at what was hidden behind them. He gave these the textual layers of the piece an almost visual relief through figurative gesture, mimicry, plastic, imagery that stemmed from their perception, to the reactions that were caused by touching, smelling, hearing. As is known, he distinguished between the playwright, who during the writing of the work is interested in what the characters say among themselves or to themselves, on the one hand, and the director who insists more strongly on the way these same people say this word, on the other hand. In other words, on their conversation. The word to the actors, thanks to the directorial request, came natural, direct, alive, as a way of speaking, as an intonation, as a rhythm, as a tempo, as a timbre of voice, as a color, as a pulse and as a natural carrier of the temperament of the actors in the respective roles.

Similarly, in this performance Pandi Stillu also distinguished himself for his musical sensations, thus offering, so to speak, a poetic discourse of speech and dialogue.

According to the prominent director Mihal Luarasi, in his book "The Memory That Doesn't Sleep", in Pandi Stillu's direction, as in general in the qualities that a talented director needs to have, two features are encountered, without which his art cannot be understood: fantasy and imagination. In mutual relationships and interactions, these qualities have created figurative thinking in director Stillu's imaginations, which meant the appearance of every image, every conversational relationship, every physical detail, and every psychological experience in a well-defined artistic form, which responded to a certain stage structure according to the concrete performance. In response to this type of thinking, he has brought together two substantial elements of his directorial thought, the "play of meditation" (i.e. fantasy) and the "play of feelings" (i.e. imagination). He has equated these two with a third, not less important, the "game of argument" (i.e. logic). These have been like the three "unknowns" of an equation, the solution of which is conditioned by the immediate solution of all three together, and not at all of one, or even of both without the third (Luarasi, 2006).

In the Drama "Dragon of Dragobisë" in 1960, we see how patriotic pathos, romantic and epic spirit take shape on stage, since the character is a famous hero and patriot, Bajram Curri. From the directorial concept of this play, another quality of Pandi Stillu stands out, the ability to unravel and touch the ethnopsychological layer of the hero and supporting characters, which includes: 1) knowledge of the social psychology of the time from which the figure of the hero Bajram Curri comes, 2) knowledge of his psychology as a leader in the duplicity of character-interpretation and 3) knowledge of the psychology of the actor as a citizen and as an artist, in the specific case of Loro Kovaçi who embodied the role of Bajram Curri. This is related to the ability to unravel, identify and develop the often-hidden abilities of actors by putting them in complementary functions with the roles they embody.

Spiro Çomorë's comedy "Korça Carnival" in 1964 had a sensational success on the stage of the People's Theater. This was a second peak in Pandi Stillu's directorial career. "Director Pandi Stillu, as it seems from the beautiful performance he gave us, - wrote Petro Marko about this performance, - staged this comedy for us not only out of desire, but also out of inner need. That Pandi Stillu began his path as a stage artist at the time when the events of the comedy take place. He introduces us to the world and environment created by the author... and speaks in the language of today" (Marko, 1964).

Additionally, he speaks the language of today, where contemporaneity, a fundamental principle of new directorial readings, as Stillu did with this comedy, has been an inherent attribute of his directorial conceptions. He found in "Korça Carnival" those values that were active and alive in 1964, which meant that the directorial concept had taken into account their moral status, corrupt natures, vices and character deformities. They came in a recyclable form, as social conditions, as spiritual relationships, as psycho-characteristic

deficiencies, which transcended the limited time of the work and transformed into universal approaches.

"The understanding of the nature of comedy, the fair treatment of characters, the discovery of the essence of the comic," noted researcher Josif Papagjoni, "were gracefully realized in the performance, both by the realistic way of its stage embodiment, by the creation of characters (consequently, by the fair division of roles by director P. Stillu), as well as by the wealth of artistic findings, by the application of a language that sought the truth of the relationships between the characters. The directorial setting was of a "classical" style, the mise-en-scene moved calmly, without many "figures", a setting of the "domestic" type (Papagjoni, 2004).

Nevertheless, he discussed the opinion of the prominent critic of that time, Razi Brahimi, who said: "With "Korça Carnival" Pandi Stillu has known how to reveal to the spectator the rottenness of the mentality and morality of a wealthy merchant family, emphasizing, first of all, their external gloss and the illusion that with wealth everything can be done" (Brahimi, 1964, a).

"To this correct statement of the critic, the other side of the coin must be added," Papagjoni underlined, "namely, the fact of a one-sided and tendentious political charge of the conflict, where the "rottenness of the mentality", the supposedly "degenerate" layer of wealthy merchants, the "violent and corrupt administration of the state", all are viewed through the ideological fringes of socialist realism, being prejudiced, therefore, as the "bad part" or as "damaged tissue" of society. Such a concept was, of course, also the one that accompanied the main ideas of the work. And there was no way it could be otherwise. Even so, the realistic breath felt in the work, especially in the identification of the characters and the relationships between them, was, in a sense, also the "delight" and beauty of the play" (Brahimi, 1964, b).

From the point of view of understanding and respecting the dramaturgical structure of the work, the director has made a correct definition of the main events, their differentiation, which is followed by the development of the dramatic action, in accordance with the concrete situations. The assessment of the events of the comedy has led the directorial idea to two solutions: a) the fluidity of the dramaturgical plot, b) the rhythmic diagram of the spectacle. The naming of the events is an incentive for the actors, their figurative essence is extracted, their "core" as they are otherwise called. For example, the events of the second act of the comedy "Korça Carnival" in P. Still's directorial platform are formulated as follows, see Table 1. "As for the economic issue, I believe it will be sorted out..." Stillu, TK). As can be seen, the naming of events is figurative, stimulating the actor's imagination, making his artistic being active in interpreting the concrete situation of the character he plays. There, the exact line that expresses the "key" to unlocking and understanding the real meaning, that which is either hidden or openly stated, has been chosen.

Table 1. Illustration of fable dramaturgical which is accompanied with rhythm and actors' interpretation

<i>Fable dramaturgical</i>	<i>Rhythm and actor's interpretation</i>
Bringing the Piano	"Well, what do you mean?!... Let's do it like in Russia!...The rich are slaughtered so that the ragamuffins can take their place"
Nikollaq's Great Worry	Your wealth, madam, cannot be squandered with just four hands
The Case of Two Engagements	"Who got married and wasn't happy? You, for your part, don't you give up?"
Loni Brings Good News	"This job is over! I started it and I finished it!"
The Case of Vaska	"His absence will hurt you a lot"
The Arrival of the Prefect after the Demonstration	"Oh men, let's make a fuss like in Russia! On the one hand, Moscow, on the other, Arnautlëk!..."
The Rescue of Vaska	
The Arrival of the Fascist Consul's Wife	"What about our accountant, Mr. Vehip, what will happen? We're left with a vacant store!"

3. Analysis Of Working with Actors, Roles and Directorial Features of Pandi Stillu

The most appropriate choice of actors in the respective roles and the creation of a "gallery" - this has always been a director's obligation, achieved through many trials and experiments. The main characters "found" their equivalents in the actors who best suited the role. Viktor Gjoka's Nikollaq Jorganxhiu and Violeta Manushi's Olimbia were a harmonious, wonderful couple, where everything seemed so real, yet also so funny, comical, interactive, almost perfect. And alongside them, unique acting incarnations such as Marika Kallamata's Aspasia, Antoneta Papapavli's Afroviti, and Gjon Karma's Vehipi approached. This insistence on the actors' most original portrayals of roles, aiming for rarity, was consistent with his concept of the ensemble, which had to dominate throughout the entire creative process of bringing the play to life. While we see the meticulous work with the actors as a quality of Still's direction, it can be confirmed that their selection in the respective roles took into account: a) the degree of matching and proximity of each actor's temperaments with the data of the characters (e.g. V. Gjoka - Nikollaq Jorganxhiu), b) the partial matching, but with the essential qualities of the character (e.g. A. Papapavli in the role of Afrovit), c) the long acting experience for such roles (e.g. Gjon Karma in the role of Vehip), d) the high technique, which can "do" the role even when it, at first glance, seems "outside" the known abilities of this or that actor (e.g. V. Manushi in the role of Olimpja, who was transformed into a character, without previously trying

such roles). "The above parameters," noted researcher J. Papagjoni, "extended with care and prudence in the performance "Korça Carnival" of the People's Theatre, proved that between the values of the part and the actual abilities of the troupe there must necessarily be such a match, which ensures success. In particular, the match and proximity between the character's data and those of the actor must exist (as a prerequisite) for the main figure." (Papagjoni, 2004)

Working with the actor has been a main characteristic of Pandi Stillu. He devoted a lot of time, effort and will to the creative relationship with the actor in the respective role. He has considered his relationship with her, as always, as an organic coexistence between the directorial demand and the actor's realization of the character, alongside each other. In other words, as a system, as a whole. And in this system, he has always valued as a dominant element the similarity, and at the same time the difference, between the perceptive act of the director and the perceptive act of the actor, finding and establishing convergences between them. In working with the numerous actors in his plays, the director has previously carried out a large volume of work oriented towards discovering the defining characteristics of their roles: how they walk, how they sit, how they drink, how they eat, how they argue, how they comfort each other, how they love, how they are touched, how they grieve, how they cry, how they laugh, how they argue, how they fight, how they die, etc. And between them, the two parties involved, the director and the actors, have found the same denominator, the same rhythm, the same color, as well as the form of physical action, psychological action, the intensity of feeling, making natural "grafts" between the actor's artistic expressive properties with the expressive properties of the character. This entire process is carried out in accordance with the psychorhythmic nature and moral-social interior of each individual.

In the form of an inseparable unit and dialectical relationship, director Stillu's sense of time and space existed. They have always been conceived as an unstoppable, natural, material and spiritual flow, responding to concrete forms of life here or there, in this scene, action, performance or another. This is included in the uniqueness of his imagination, fantasy, and directorial logic. In support of this idea, we recall the performance of Shakespeare's tragedy "King Lear", staged in 1965.

"With the realization of this magnificent and difficult work - said Mihal Luarasi - Albanian theater had already taken off its infancy, therefore it could boldly approach classics such as Shakespeare" (Luarasi, 1966).

Through Lear's fate, the play sang of the spiritual nobility of man, of true father-daughter love. Freedom was played with tragic pathos by Pjetër Gjoka. In his book "Shakespeare in the Albanian World", the renowned aesthete and academic Alfred Uçi noted:

"Some directors have emphasized Liberty-Father, intoxicated with flattery and caresses, which blind him and make him incapable of distinguishing where hypocrisy ends and where sincere love begins. Others have seen Liberty-Old Man, who degrades

into a grotesque, deviant, unaware of the consequences of his actions. There have been directors who have delved deeper and have shown on stage Liberty-King as arbitrary and authoritarian, corrupted by excessive power and servility. We see in these interpretations one-sidedness, which is tantamount to accepting half-truths and we think that the path to the truth of this drama would be found when all three aspects above were merged into a single complex figure of Liberty-King, Father and Old Man” (Uçi, 1997).

Based on this definition, Pjetër Gjoka's acting in the role of Lear leaned more towards the model of the suffering, dethroned, disappointed, mournful king, and less towards Lear's second side as a tyrant, abuser of power, arrogant, capricious, consequently guilty and punished for the excess of power and trust.

In the staging of this tragedy, a deeper understanding of the narrative and semantic corpus could not be achieved without recognizing the underlying elements of psychoanalysis (Freud, Jung, etc.). Furthermore, without the decryption of the severe spiritual traumas that lead King Lear, as a tragic being, to the loss of reason and madness, with his doubt, extreme despair, with the emptying of his burdened psyche by using the "confidant", the confidant. The director's portrayal of this severe psychological trauma has proceeded through careful nuances of the emotional burdens and emotional outbursts of actor Pjetër Gjoka, starting with his once excessive self-confidence, his boasting about the authoritarian and abusive king, to further reach hallucinatory states, visions and breakdowns, hypnotic situations and ending with hysteria, total depression, etc. The director encouraged the psychological depths of the actors' play to decode the contradictions of the human being itself in all its social and psychobiological dimensions. From this analytical plane, it can be said that Pandi Stillu was a director who knew how to play, even, with existentialist theatrical poetics thanks to a multidimensional treatment of the tragedy, functionalizing it from a visual point of view in the form of an interactive circle where the center was Pjetër Gjoka as King Lear and the perimeter the entire staff of interacting actors.

The character of Qazim Mulleti by Mihal Popi in the comedy “The Prefect” by Besim Levonja, we note that the director has always respected the nature of observation in life and creation on stage of this prominent comedy actor. If the actor Mihal Popi appreciated in his observational and embodied work the traits of only one man, the prefect of Tirana within a comical model of behaviour and speech in the Tirana slang, on the contrary the director, in contrast to him, has appreciated the union of traits, actions and relationships in an organic psychophysical unity of the figure of Qazim Mulleti now as a whole, further of all the roles-actors, Behije Çela as Hajria, Gjon Karma as Prefect Mono, Ndrek Shkjezi as the captain, etc.

In this way, he specifically taught human communication as such, offering, in addition to the vital element, theatrical expressiveness, figurative aspects, and the aesthetic bearing of acting actions. The interaction, connection, communication, and matches between roles/characters were precisely what became the focus of the director's relationship with his actors. Thus, the entire director-actor relationship has taken theatrical form as an

unstoppable flow of acts, relationships, and associations, of stage action and reaction, in this or that scene. It has all come about in cycles of a unique, uninterrupted, interconnected process, as a series of spiritual, physical, and social relationships and associations, that have responded to both the literary reality of the dramatic work, as well as to vital and historical truth. This has been done in monologues, in dialogues between two or three people, in groups of characters, as well as in large compositions with massive human actions. In addition to the play "The Prefect", we have seen similar possibilities in "Our Land", "King Lear", "The Dragon of Dragobi", etc. These have been among the most difficult for the director, but they have given historical and social breath to the works.

4. Distinctive Characteristics of His Style: The Use of Narrative, Light, Sound, and the Way of Portraying Characters

A great importance in Pandi Stillu's directorial work has also been his sense of rhythm, his physical and psychological state. On stage, everything must have its own rhythm, from the simplest dialogue, from words and movements, to the spectator. Without mastering the sense of rhythm, a beautiful play cannot be built. Finding the rhythm of each part, reliving the rhythmic whole of the event, the scene, the actors, the subject of the work, matching the content of life, its rhythm, etc. - this has been one of the director's main obligations for the theatrical construction of the dramatic part.

If we stop at the *mise-en-scene* in Pandi Stillu's plays, it has generally been calm, sometimes static, and the director aimed more strongly at creating comfortable conditions for a dialogue, so to speak, "homely", without excessive physical displacements, without excessive movements. However, when necessary, the movement of the actors on the stage gained momentum, such as in the plays "The Fisherman's Family", "The Morality of Mrs. Dulcka", "King Lear", "Our Land". He particularly preferred the sense of plasticity, insisting on plastic and physical imagery in the *mise-en-scene* construction of the performance, thanks to which a dynamic of stage images was created that changed one after the other according to a certain order. Every action of the actor was required to be as free as it was justified. That is, in accordance with the directorial tasks. The harmonization of the freedom of acting creation with the necessity of directorial emphasis is clearly seen especially in figures such as those created by actors Mihal Popi, Naim Frashëri, Kadri Roshi, Marie Logoreci, Pjetër Gjoka, Loro Kovaçi, Viktor Gjoka, Violeta Manushi, Gjon Karma, Drita Pelinku, Prokop Mima, Marika Kallamata, Gjon Karma, etc. The aforementioned actors have not used their freedom as if it were a personal whim, on the contrary, merged it with responsibility and correctness towards directorial duties. On the other hand, the tasks are not envisaged as frozen norms, as limitations, as truncations, but as "unexpected", as "unknown", as "personal discoveries" in relation to the figure. Only the mechanism of stage trust could transform the rational and necessary propositions of these tasks into true acting values. This mechanism was successfully implemented by the director P. Stillu.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, director Pandi Stillu, through his work and realized works, has shown that human identities and characters are diverse and unique. His artistic approach, based on psychological complexity and emotional fragility, gives the audience the opportunity to understand and feel human diversity. His study can serve as a basis for further research on the influence of dramaturgy but also theatre on the social perception of the individual and to encourage a deeper analysis of contemporary Albanian art. Ultimately, Stillu's artistic vision not only enriches Albanian theatre but also contributes to a broader understanding of humanity through the performing arts. His legacy demonstrates the power of theatre to reflect, question, and transform the way society perceives human identity.

Conflict of interests

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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