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Incoming Mobility Sessions

- **From Beckett to Hare:
Mapping Modern British Theatre**

Dr. Radoje V. Šoškić
Associate Professor, Faculty of Philosophy
University of Priština

Hosted by the OUC Programme of Study: MA in Theatre Studies

Instructor and short bio

Dr. Radoje V. Šoškić is Associate Professor of Modern English and American Literature at the University of Priština in Kosovska Mitrovica. He received his B.A., M.A. and PhD from the University of Priština in Kosovska Mitrovica. Since 2008, he has been teaching at the Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Philosophy, where he serves as Associate Professor. His major areas of research include: contemporary British and American Literature, postcolonial studies, anthropology, Western philosophy, and mythology. Dr Šoškić is the author of three scholarly editions dealing with post-modernism in American drama, the figure of Harlequin in Shakespeare's plays, and the late plays of Arthur Miller and Steve Tesich (Postmodernism in Arthur Miller's Late Plays, Harlequin, the World out of Joint and Shakespeare, The Closing of the American Mind in 'On the Open Road' by Steve Tesich and 'Resurrection Blues' by Arthur Miller) and articles in peer-reviewed journals.

University bio: <https://en.fifa.pr.ac.rs/zaposleni/radoje-soskic/>

Contents of the Teaching Programme

- **Lecture 1: Introduction to Modern British Drama.**
[ONLINE]
Monday, March 11, 2024 | 20:00 – 21:30 (GMT+2)

Live streaming link:

<https://tinyurl.com/53e937st>

- **Session 1: Overview of Modern British Drama**
 - Brief historical context and major movements (e.g., post-war, the theatre of the Absurd, postmodernism).
 - Introduction to key playwrights: Beckett, Pinter, Stoppard, Churchill, Hare.
- **Session 2: Samuel Beckett's theatre of the absurd**
 - Explore Beckett's major works.
 - Explore the existential nuances in Beckett's works and the impact of Dante's influence.

- **Lecture 2: Harold Pinter's "comedies of menace".**
[ONLINE]
Tuesday, March 12, 2024 | 20:00 – 21:30 (GMT+2)

Live streaming link:

<https://tinyurl.com/53e937st>

- **Session 1: Understanding Pinter's linguistic intricacies**
 - Analyze Pinter's distinctive linguistic style and delve into the concept of "comedy of menace".
- **Session 2: In-depth study of Pinter's selected plays**
 - Apply theoretical concepts to selected plays for a comprehensive study.

- **Lecture 3: David Hare and political engagement in theatre.**
[HYBRID PUBLIC LECTURE]
Wednesday, March 13, 2024 | 19:00 – 20:30 (GMT+2)

Location: OUC Main Building, 33 Yiannou Kranidioti Avenue, 2220 Latsia, Nicosia

Live streaming link: <https://tinyurl.com/53e937st>

David Hare stands as a prominent figure in contemporary theatre, renowned for his insightful and provocative exploration of political themes and societal issues. Central to Hare's oeuvre are a series of recurring themes and motifs that reflect his preoccupations with power dynamics, institutional corruption, and the erosion of democratic values. The objective of this lecture is to elucidate the developmental trajectory of David Hare's political dramaturgy within the socio-political milieu spanning three decades: the 1970s, the 1980s, and the 1990s. This elucidation is accomplished by scrutinizing one seminal play by the dramatist from each epoch, namely *Fanshen* (1975), *The Secret Rapture* (1988), and *The Absence of War* (1993), respectively. In alignment with this objective, each play is subjected to analysis within its contemporaneous political landscape as well as its theatrical milieu. Such contextual examination of the plays serves to elucidate the varied stances adopted by Hare and the diverse narrative pathways he navigates in his engagement with the British socio-political milieu of each decade.

Furthermore, in addition to the contextual framework, the in-depth analysis of these plays underscores the evolution in Hare's political dramaturgy, transitioning from overt representation of socialist revolutionary themes, as exemplified in *Fanshen*, towards nuanced discussions of socialist politics confined within the private spheres of characters, as depicted in *The Secret Rapture*, and ultimately culminating in the assertion of the necessity of institutional frameworks, albeit under the sway of right-leaning principles, as argued in *The Absence of War*. These three plays also serve to exemplify the broad spectrum of techniques and narrative forms employed by Hare in his political theatre, ranging from epic theatre techniques to cinematographic devices, and from classical dramatic forms to avant-garde innovations of his era. Moreover, the scope of these plays affords an opportunity to observe Hare's transition from the domain of fringe theatre companies to the mainstream theatrical arena.

In summation, the lecture concludes that Hare's political dramaturgy undergoes evolution, evident in the thematic preoccupations addressed, the narrative techniques deployed, and the theatrical platforms his works inhabit, across three decades, shaped by the contemporary political currents of his time. David Hare's political theatre offers a compelling lens through which to examine the complexities of the contemporary world. By blending astute social observation with theatrical innovation, Hare challenges us to confront the moral ambiguities of political life and interrogate our own complicity in systems of power and injustice. As we navigate an increasingly polarized and uncertain political landscape, Hare's work serves as a poignant reminder of the enduring power of theatre to provoke thought, inspire empathy, and effect social change.

- **Lecture 4: Political theater of Caryl Churchill.**
[ONLINE]
Thursday, March 14, 2024 | 18:30 – 20:00 (GMT+2)

Live streaming link:

<https://tinyurl.com/53e937st>

- **Session 1: Churchill’s contribution to political theater**
 - Overview of Churchill’s political themes and innovative theatrical techniques.
- **Session 2: Close reading of selected experts from Churchill’s plays**
 - Analyze experts from her plays, focusing on political and social commentary.

- **Lecture 5: Stoppard as a postmodernist playwright.**
[ONLINE]
Friday, March 15, 2024 | 20:00 – 21:30 (GMT+2)

Live streaming link:

<https://tinyurl.com/53e937st>

- **Session 1: Introduction to Stoppard’s Postmodern Elements**
 - Exploration of meta-theatrically, intertextuality, and non-linear narratives.
- **Session 2: Analysis of Stoppard’s Notable Works**
 - Discuss selected plays that showcase Stoppard’s postmodernist approach.

Topics

- Modern British Drama
- Samuel Beckett’s theatre of the absurd
- Harold Pinter’s “comedies of menace”
- Stoppard as a postmodernist playwright
- Political Theatre of Caryl Churchill
- David Hare and Political engagement in theatre

Teaching/learning method(s)

Several teaching techniques and methods will be used to effectively facilitate the learning process of this series of lectures. These methods will include hybrid and/or online live interactive sessions, group discussions, short quizzes.

Language of instruction

English.

Other

Attendance and completion certificates will be available to all participants.

Registration link: <https://forms.office.com/e/hUXtPkKSu6>