INTRODUCTION

There are good prospects for modern Russian theater in terms of further fulfillment of its culture formation potential in modern society. This opportunity will be implemented if the challenges of the new information environment, which have virtualized the process of how various groups of the population get familiar with culture and art, are considered (ANUFRIeva, 2013; ZAGREBIN, TUKHVATULINA, 2017; SOKOLOV, 2012). One of the negative consequences of this phenomenon is the loss of direct contact between the audience and the achievements of performing arts, which has increased in the context of the pandemic. In this connection, there is a need to rethink the work of theaters as cultural institutions and their role in the contemporary cultural space (ANDREEV, 2001).

Analysis of the global and Russian theatrical process shows doubtless growth in the significance of mastering the theatrical behavior models in society, which are necessary for the preservation and development of the culture of social interactions and relations. Therefore, foreign and Russian research into the phenomenon of social interaction ensuring the processes of enculturation, socialization, and personal development by means of theatrical culture are of great interest (IONIN, 2004; KAMENETS, 2015; LUKOV, 2010; MARKOV, BIRZHENYUK, 1997). Accordingly, the role of theater is becoming more significant since it serves as a model of social behavior for different categories of spectators and listeners and an alternative to social self-isolation and the imposed virtuality of modern society through information technologies.

This new mission of Russian theater can be fulfilled upon condition that the conceptual and value foundations of the theatrical process are changed in terms of all its components: organization of theater business, dramatic art, theater direction, acting art, relations between theater and its audience, and also due to the further development of Russian theater as a social institution that encourages the formation of new social behavior models in society, which are necessary for the preservation and development of the culture of social interactions and relations. Therefore, foreign and Russian research into the phenomenon of social interaction ensuring the processes of enculturation, socialization, and personal development by means of theatrical culture are of great interest (IONIN, 2004; KAMENETS, 2015; LUKOV, 2010; MARKOV, BIRZHENYUK, 1997). Accordingly, the role of theater is becoming more significant since it serves as a model of social behavior for different categories of spectators and listeners and an alternative to social self-isolation and the imposed virtuality of modern society through information technologies.

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Essentially, all the highest achievements in the work of theaters have always been connected with showing on the theatrical stage the triumph of the human spirit, positive examples of serving society and surrounding people, and uncompromising attitude to human vices and asocial manifestations of human nature. In the face of insufficient effectiveness of modern education and upbringing, theater can to a certain extent help to find a solution to this problem, underestimating which in modern Russian society can lead to severe social consequences. The main content of this article is represented by an examination of theater from the perspective of showing artistic models of desired (and undesired) social behavior and relations between people.
METHODS
The method predominantly used in the research into modern theatre is the art criticism approach, and theater studies are usually viewed as a type of journalism in the light of a shortage of creative works on theatrical art. For this reason, from the perspective of the social significance of theater, implementation of its essential social functions, its influence on modern society, and its interrelations with various social institutions are considered only occasionally. Correspondingly, the reverse influence of society on modern theater is also under-explored, as well as the role of theater in the contemporary cultural space. Instead, studies of the theatrical process within the theatrical process itself prevail, which does not allow researchers to identify the culture formation potential of modern theater to the necessary extent. At the same time, studies of the history of world theater show that the role of theater in society, starting from the ancient period, has been remarkably great (DZHIVELEGOV, BOYADZHIEV, 2013; PIVOVAROVA, 2011).

In this connection, viewing theater in a broader system of socio-cultural interrelations appears extremely relevant and up to date if it is taken into account that modern virtualized society is becoming a kind of theatrical environment hiding the “behind-the-scenes” material and biological needs, which are satisfied without any limitations. The main requirement for social behavior in modern society is “to behave properly”, i.e. to put on a proper guise and follow the corresponding socio-legal norms and abide by the rules of etiquette. “To seem rather than to be” is becoming a customary orientation for individuals, especially in an urban environment.

Existence in a predominantly urbanized space where everybody formally plays their role has caused a crisis of one’s own identity in many members of modern society while studying the possibilities of performing arts, which encourages the acquisition of one’s own self, is becoming more relevant. For this direction of research into theater to develop and become regular, it is necessary to explore this issue in terms of interaction between theater and audience and restoration of theater sociology, which is now largely neglected. Profound research into the social and pedagogical aspects of modern theatrical directing is also of great importance. Research into the Russian school of acting, its unique features, preservation and development of traditions of performing arts remains relevant as well. Research into the role of theater in the modern cultural and educational space and its culture formation potential retains its relevance. Exploration of the possibilities of theatrical art in scientific comprehension of reality has good prospects, which is proved by corresponding activities carried out by researchers and outstanding theater professionals (BRECHT, 1965). Another important research aspect is represented by studying the role of theater in the formation of the political culture of the population, which has a significant impact on the further development prospects for Russian society. Let us consider some results of the conducted research on modern Russian theater looking at these aspects.

RESULTS

The culture formation potential of modern Russian drama
Fulfillment of this potential is connected with addressing a few current issues, the first of which is the combination of relevant topics and high artistic level in modern Russian drama. Nowadays the lack of such a combination is obvious. If the topic of a dramaturgical work is up to date, it is rarely presented at a sufficiently high artistic level. At the same time, there are a lot of plays that meet the requirements of high artistic taste but more often than not they serve entertainment purposes rather than socially important tasks. Another common trend is placing the focus on the shadow sides of reality and leaving no hopes for improving it; such approach forms feelings of frustration, pessimism, and disbelief in one’s own abilities to change the status quo in the audience. These dramaturgical works are often characterized by naturalism, savoring negativity, and, at the best, publicist journalism lacking real artistic merits.

These negative trends in drama are often justified by their creators as their attempt to reflect reality truthfully and critically and show the true negative sides of real life. Such justifications rather demonstrate many authors’ contempt for their own country, disbelief in its creative abilities, and internal rejection of the best realistic traditions of Russian theater, which are reflected in N.V. Gogol’s famous quote, “Theater is a lectern, from which one can tell a lot of
The problems of fulfilling the culture formation potential of modern Russian theater

Laplage em Revista (International), vol.7, n. Extra D, 2021, p.252-259
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The suggested alternative to “relentless” criticism of the past and present of our country is a flow of dramaturgical works created according to the standards of bourgeois melodrama, its superficial sentimentality, and based on copying the plots of Latin American series with endless “Don Pedros” and “Slave Isauras” in Russian interpretation. These dramaturgical works may not follow the high artistic criteria but provide mass demand for theatrical performances and bring good profits to theaters.

After all, such plays also have the right to exist, but it should be pointed out that there is a shortage of Russian plays where the melodramatic content and the depicted love stories are represented at a relatively high artistic level and follow the Russian cultural traditions of relationships between man and woman. It should also be mentioned that there is an insufficient amount of modern plays intended for certain social and age groups – in the first place, for children and adolescents, preschoolers and young people. While the audience of preschoolers may be to a certain degree satisfied with the repertoire of staged folk tales, the other social and age groups lack their own stable repertoire.

Satisfaction of theaters’ repertoire hunger is also prevented by the shortage of spiritual values and norms as an orientation for dramaturgical work. Analysis of modern drama shows that a positive modern character has virtually disappeared from the stage and has been replaced by negative and vaudeville characters. On the one hand, the absence of censorship has provided playwrights, especially young and starting ones, with new opportunities. On the other hand, the lack of a comprehensible social and government contract for creating dramaturgical works has led to the situation when the major part of Russian drama has lost touch with the contemporary social and cultural process and the demands of the audience.

**The culture formation potential of modern Russian directing**

In the work of modern theatrical directors, there is a significant potential, which is not being used properly. In the first place, it is connected with the lack of comprehensive professional training for such specialists – many of them do not possess a sufficient humanitarian educational base. Many traditions of the Russian schools of directing have been lost; the role of a theater director as an art director is becoming rare, especially in provincial theaters, which results in theaters turning into places of staging the performances of out-of-town directors on tour. Subsequently, theatrical companies are losing their creative individuality as well as their connection with the local culture, cultural and social demands of the local population. The lack of a proper artistic level of theater performances and interpretation of the classical theatrical repertoire by several production directors represent a special problem. Due to the directors’ sophisticated solutions, characters of classical drama often turn into modern-day gangsters, prostitutes, or pathological personalities, who have nothing to do with the characters of classical plays. The very theatrical action can be shifted to the new “given circumstances”, such as a morgue, prison, garbage dump, etc., which was not implied by the author of the play.

Such stage experiments with aspirations of postmodernism are not often justified by the artistic conception and are rather aimed at provocation and commercial success than represent true artistic breakthroughs. The Russian theatrical stage is overrun by the aesthetics of the ugly presented as harsh reality and truthful portrayal of life, which have nothing to do with true feelings and realism. There is a reason for such a situation. Mainly, it can be explained by an insufficient cultural level of many directors, especially young ones, which gives them a feeling of total creative freedom not connected with any professional directing or cultural traditions. Such freedom can easily develop into a director’s arbitrariness, especially with respect to the classical theatrical repertoire.

In this connection, providing government support to theaters in the sphere of the fulfillment of their culture formation potential in the course of directing and production is relevant (DYMNIKOVA, IKSANOV, 2008). The state cultural authorities should in the first place support such performances that represent the special social significance and encourage the solution of the social problems existing in society. Meanwhile, directors who have adopted an openly asocial and antistate position should be rejected such support. One of the most acute problems related to the work carried out by theatrical directors lies in the lack of the necessary culture of relationships between these specialists and theatrical companies. The existing stereotype about the unlimited rights of production directors in terms of their interaction with...
actors is often justified by the necessity to achieve the intended artistic result, for the sake of which one can trade off moral constraints with regard to performers of theatrical roles. In addition, there are often conflicts between theater directors and production directors over the necessity to make profits at the expense of the level of theatrical performances.

All these problems cannot be viewed as internal theatrical situations that should not be interfered with by society or the state. There are a few outstanding Russian directors who became victims of conflicts in their theaters (for example, A. Efros, S. Zhenovach, or Yu. Lyubimov), which was bound to leave a mark on their psychological and creative well-being and the theatrical companies led by them. Therefore, the state should provide social protection to theatrical directors and, if necessary, perform intermediary functions in the course of solution of internal theatrical conflicts (DYMNIKOVA, IKSANOV, 2008).

**Fulfillment of the culture formation potential of acting art**

Preservation of the Russian school of acting is an issue of national importance. Directing pedagogy needs additional development. It is characteristic that there is a great shortage of study literature on the art of acting, which is often substituted for directors’ memoirs, recordings of directors’ rehearsals, etc., which surely have a great educative value but cannot fully replace proper textbooks and study materials on the art of directing. Individual study materials on disciplines that are included in the actors’ training cycle (speech training, basics of pantomime and plastics, etc.) cannot fully make up for this shortage. The Stanislavsky system described in corresponding sources remains the only complete study guide on the art of acting. These factors explain the underdevelopment of professional ethics of the interaction between directors and actors as well as the lack of stable and well-defined requirements for the level of acting in many theaters. They are replaced by directors’ and actors’ subjectivity and arbitrariness regarding the system of requirements for performers.

As a result, there are two interrelated trends – on the one hand, the emergence of a significant number of actors without high-quality acting education and, on the other hand, a lot of truly talented performers who are not successful in theatrical art due to the vagueness and arbitrariness of professional requirements for the art of acting.

The position of the state on actors’ training should imply the participation of representatives of various humanitarian disciplines in such training, who would interact with each other under the guidance of teaching directors and offer students a consistent and comprehensive education system able to fulfill the culture formation potential of the students’ future profession to the full extent. A great way of minimizing the losses among the pool of trained actors in the labor market is the creation of jobs for actors who have not found vacancies in professional theatrical companies for different reasons but whose skills can be in demand in other spheres of culture where acting art is required. They can become artistic directors of various cultural institutions, teachers of educational institutions, heads of amateur theater groups, etc. Therefore, there is a need for a national policy aimed at providing employment for acting professionals in various cultural spheres and educational activities.

**DISCUSSION**

The problems in the sphere of theatrical activities examined above can be solved provided that there is not only corresponding government support but also the organization of the influence of the main socio-cultural institutions on the theatrical process. In the first place, it is the institution of education that should be involved. As of today, there are two conceptual views on theatrical art. According to the first one, theater is an institution that should be predominantly oriented at the solution of purely artistic and creative problems; therefore, its production is mainly oriented at true theater aficionados and selected audience able to perceived the offered material adequately. The other view assumes that the essential mission of theater is to distribute knowledge and information, which educate mass theater audiences while preserving and cultivating true theater experts. Surely, each of the views has the right to exist. However, contemporary theater practices show that it is the second view that opens prospects for further fulfillment of the culture formation potential of theater as a state institution, which does not eliminate the first view oriented at the elite audience. In this
connection, theaters need to strengthen their efforts in the educational space forming various theatrical demands in all kinds of population groups.

Here it is necessary to point out school theater that appeared in Western Europe in the 12th century as a technology and methodology of teaching such subjects as oratory, history, and theology. Later school theater developed also as an independent cultural phenomenon, and school dramaturgy emerged. Nowadays, the method of theatricalization as well as studying several humanities in the educational space are getting widespread use. At school theatrical art is also important since it encourages the personal and cultural development of students and their socialization. Implementation of the idea suggested by many experts in the sphere of education about the inclusion of theatrical art into the range of academic disciplines is long overdue since it could considerably improve the theatrical culture of the younger generation and give a fresh impetus to the development of the culture formation potential of Russian theater. An important move in this direction would be the enhancement of ubiquitous interaction between professional theaters and schools as well as more active engagement of theatrical professionals in the sphere of supplementary education. At present, virtually every creative team in the institutions of supplementary education needs mastering directing and acting technologies connected not only with stage performance but also with learning and rehearsal work, which develops the personalities of team participants in various directions (MARKOV, BIRZHENYUK, 1997).

The culture formation of theater and the institution of science

Science developed as an independent socio-cultural institution in the second half of the 20th century. An indicator of this process was the creation of an unwritten ethical code, the main content of which was the requirement of research independence, objectivity, and credibility (SCHWEITZER, 1973). Another indicator was the real influence of science on the social, economic, political, and cultural life of society. Thus, science became a real productive power of society (SHCHEDROVITSKII, 1995).

In theater history, there was a case when theater itself took part in the formation of a scientific worldview represented by Bertolt Brecht’s dramaturgy and directing. Characteristically, he called the theater he created “theater of science”. For this outstanding playwright and director, science is developing normally if it is truly independent of the political and economic environment and if it has a real opportunity to influence the existence of state and society. In this respect, the play “Life of Galileo” by B. Brecht is quite telling. In his commentary to this play, the playwright described his work as a response to the creation of the “Bib Bomb”, i.e. nuclear weapon, in the 20th century. According to B. Brecht, at the time of Galileo, who created the science of the new age, scientists still had an opportunity to conduct independent research for the sake of society. However, Galileo’s betrayal of independent science led to the subordination of science to politicians, who began to determine the significance and direction of scientific research even if contradicted the interests of mankind. One can accept or reject this version of Galileo’s conduct but one thing is certain: B. Brecht’s focus on the theater aesthetics he created and dramaturgy in the context of scientific cognition of the world turned out to be quite justified and sound since it became clear that in terms of reflecting reality and unveiling social laws, theatrical art is potentially comparable with traditional scientific research, significantly enriching the latter. In a few words, the scientific potential of theater in B. Brecht’s interpretation involves the following (BRECHT, 1965):

- Theater should teach the theatrical audience to think by providing the objective patterns of existence and development of society. In compliance with this statement, the “planetarium” theater should replace the “carousel” theater. While the former places the spectator into the position of a researcher at the center of the universe, who is studying the world, the former, which Brecht believed to be outdated, on the contrary, has to “take” the spectator to the place chosen by the playwright, director, and actors, presenting theater audience with an accomplished fact of demonstrating the truth unveiled by somebody else;
- Theater models society by showing stories of characters who follow or break certain moral and social values and the consequences of their violation for the person and society. In these roles, the playwright, director, actors, and spectators become
participants of a research process and carry out independent and objective cognition of the most general patterns and trends of timeless nature. It is no coincidence that B. Brecht used mainly historical plots for his plays, and not only from censorship considerations; at first glance, they seemed to be detached from the problems of modern society but revealed the objective social laws of society and human existence relevant at all times;

- It is necessary to cut the theatrical performance into pieces so that the audience can not only follow the plot and empathize with what is happening on stage but rather view the examined idea and issue from different angles, which is typical of scientific investigation. It does not mean that theater ceases to be an art where the role of emotions, feelings, and empathy is important. In this case, people become more aware of their emotions and seek truth, which characterizes the social position of a researcher.

**Theater and the institution of politics**

The orientation of theater towards the political life of society is a long-standing tradition of Russian theater, and preservation of this tradition is one of the main resources of its culture formation potential. Many theatrical professionals have been taking up the position of an active citizen who is ready to deliver sharp criticism of the vices of modern society through their creative work, suggest new solutions to social problems, and implement the ideas of patriotism and civil service (BERGER, LUCKMANN, 1995; BERGSON, 2006; VORZHETSOV, 2010).

Such civil-oriented theater has been created by outstanding Russian writers and playwrights: D. Fonvizin, A. Griboyedov, N. Gogol, A. Ostrovsky, L. Tolstoy, and many Soviet playwrights. The specific feature of the social and critical bombast of Russian theater traditionally involved “unmasking” many representatives of society who had already disguised themselves as law-abiding citizens hiding their vices and crimes. In this respect, the best achievements of Russian theater represented the achievements of “anti-theater” with regard to the deceitful, criminalized, and theatricalized social environment. Thus, theater and reality swap places here, and such a move appears to be one of the main prospects for the development of the culture formation potential of modern theater.

**CONCLUSION**

Modern Russian theater is, in the first place, a cultural institution meant to contribute to the solution of the social, spiritual, and moral problems faced by society. To this end, many Russian theatrical professionals need to overcome the temptation of achieving commercial success at the expense of solving these problems by theater (ASTAFEVA, 2016; VISLOVA, 2009). The necessity to choose between box-office success and the social mission of theater is contrived if the financial aspects of theatrical activities are brought under the control of the fulfillment of their culture formation potential. Under-exploration of the conditions for such fulfillment leads to a common belief that the task of “survival” of theaters under market relations does not leave them any other alternatives except their further commercialization beyond the boundaries of any significant socio-cultural context.

Many modern theaters pay for this misconception by crises in drama, the art of acting and directing, and in production work, while exploration of the opportunities for the fulfillment of the culture formation potential of Russian theater is one of the ways to overcome such crises.

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The problems of fulfilling the culture formation potential of modern russian theater

Os problemas de cumprir o potencial de formação cultural do teatro russo moderno

Los problemas de cumplir con el potencial de formación de la cultura del teatro ruso moderno

Resumo
O artigo foca nos componentes essenciais do processo teatral contemporâneo. Os problemas do drama e suas tendências recessais são identificados. Atenção especial é dada à questão de valores e ideais no trabalho dramatúrgico e significância para a atividade posterior conduzida pelos teatros. Um dos aspectos fundamentais na melhoria do trabalho teatral identificado no artigo é a tarefa de otimizar a interação entre essas instituições com o público. Os autores também examinam os problemas da direção moderna do teatro em termos de cumprir o potencial cultural e criativo dos teatros russos modernos. Os autores associam as perspectivas de melhoria do sistema de estabelecimento de teatros como instituições culturais com aproveitar as oportunidades para criar uma interação mais efetiva entre profissionais do teatro e especialistas que atuam no âmbito da educação.

Abstract
The article focuses on the essential components of the contemporary theatrical process. The problems of drama and its recessionary trends are identified. Special attention is paid to the issue of values and ideals in dramaturgical work and significance for the further activity conducted by theaters. One of the pivotal aspects in the improvement of theaters’ work identified in the article is the task of optimization of the interaction between these institutions with the audience. The authors also examine the problems of modern theater directing that matter in terms of fulfilling the cultural and creative potential of modern Russian theaters. The authors associate the prospects of further improvement of the system of establishing theaters as cultural institutions with taking advantage of the opportunities for creating a more effective interaction between theater professionals and specialists working in the sphere of education.

Resumen
El artículo se centra en los componentes esenciales del proceso teatral contemporáneo. Se identifican los problemas del drama y sus tendencias recesionales. Se presta especial atención a la cuestión de los valores e ideales en el trabajo dramatérico y a la importancia de la actividad posterior que llevan a cabo los teatros. Uno de los aspectos fundamentales en la mejora del trabajo de los teatros identificados en el artículo es la tarea de optimización de la interacción entre estas instituciones con el público. Los autores también examinan los problemas del teatro moderno que dirige esa materia en términos de satisfacer el potencial cultural y creativo de los teatros rusos modernos. Los autores asocian las perspectivas de una mayor mejora del sistema de establecimiento de los teatros como instituciones culturales con el aprovechamiento de las oportunidades para crear una interacción más eficaz entre los profesionales del teatro y los especialistas que trabajan en la esfera de la educación.

Palavras-chave: Teatro. Potencial de formação cultural. Dirigir. Arte de atuar. Público.

Keywords: Theater. Culture formation potential. Directing. Acting art. Audience.

Palabras-clave: Teatro. Potencial de formación de la cultura. Dirigir. Arte de actuar. Audiencia.