

REPRESENTING THE “OTHER” ON STAGE: A DRAMATURGICAL APPROACH TO FRANZ KAFKA’S “THE WARDEN OF THE TOMB” AND “THE HUNTER GRACCHUS”

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Introduction

It would not be an overstatement to see the twentieth century as one of the most dynamic periods in the history of humankind thanks to the revolutions, the two world wars, the technological advances, and the other radical changes affecting almost every aspect of human life that the century saw. As far as the aesthetic movements of the twentieth century are concerned, one can take this statement even one step further, and regard this epoch as the most vigorous period of the history of art due to the mutinous features of the innovative genres that emerged in this century which posed serious challenges to the established theories and perceptions of the preceding ages. Indeed, a brief glance at the aesthetic movements of the twentieth century either from the vantage point of literary works or from the perspective of visual arts supports such an argument: The literary pieces introduced by a group of authors (such as James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Marcel Proust) who today are recognized as the key figures of modernism, and the theatrical changes comprising new methods of staging (e.g. the theories of Adolphe Appia, Vsevolod Meyerhold, Edward Gordon Craig, Antonin Artaud) have all contributed in one way or another to the constitution and formation of the contemporary understanding of the very word art. What made all these artistic movements quite influential was their specific characteristics which were pleading for various interpretations of different critical approaches, therefore triggering the research that would shed light on them.

Franz Kafka is by no means an exception. Just like the other essential names of modernism, the author was born towards the end of the nineteenth century, experienced his literary breakthrough in the 1910s, indulged vehemently in the literary movements of his time, passed away untimely, and gave a fresh impetus to the works of the other prominent figures of the twentieth century. Such a parallelism, however, would be misleading for one who is eager to get to know the deep sense underlying the works of the author. In opposition to the works and lives of the other weighty figures of modernism, Franz Kafka was reluctant to have his writings published, worked as an insurance officer, struggled fervently against the image of his father which haunted him in his entire life, suffered from serious health problems, and led the life of a voyager wandering constantly between the two opposite poles of life: life and death. Without a doubt, the history of literature has not seen an author like Kafka who revealed his life in such a creative manner in his writings. Maybe that was the reason lying behind the reluctance of Kafka’s sharing his works with the public or maybe it was Kafka’s intention to imprison his works in the solitude which the author strived to preserve throughout his life. Whatever the case, the posthumous publications of Franz Kafka’s works paved the way for the perception of his literary genius, and even more than eighty years have passed since the author’s death, the name “Kafka” is still being discussed both among scholars and literary critics representing different schools of thought. It is surely this aesthetic genius of Franz Kafka which entices one to conduct research on his works and trace the deep sense embodied in them.

As an outcome of the various interpretations of Kafka, the author’s works have transcended the boundaries of literature and have become a sort of inspiration for playwrights, theatre producers, and movie-makers. Correspondingly, Kafka’s writings started to be analysed from the point of view of

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theatre studies, visual arts, and film studies. Yet, most of the research done within the realm of these disciplines have focused either on the dramatic notions of Kafka's novels, short stories, and aphorisms or on the adaptations done from the author's writings.¹ Indeed, the twentieth century is rife with examples of adaptations of Kafka's creations which set the groundwork for such analyses: in terms of theatre productions, André Gide and Jean-Louis Barrault's adaptation of Kafka's *The Trial* (1947), Mark Rozovsky's *Father and Son* (1992), Alan Bennet's *Kafka's Dick* (1986), and *The Insurance Man* (1986) and regarding the silver screen, Orson Welles's *The Trial* (1962), Danièle Huillet and Jean-Marie Straub's *The Man Who Disappeared* (1983), and Steven Soderbergh's *Kafka* (1991) can be shown as representative examples of this fact.²

Under close observation, one can see how all these adaptations have taken either merely the biographical factors concerning Kafka's life or the dramatic motifs of his novels as a point of departure for their productions. When a theatre performance and a cinema production are compared, it can be deduced that, while in the latter the production flourishes mostly through the creative mind of the director, in the former, the director feels him or herself to a certain extent bound to the dramatist; after all, a theatre play is the creation of a playwright in the first place. Hence, in the case of the studies concerned with Kafka's theatre adaptations, a fundamental problem arises; that is to say, instead of assessing Kafka's aesthetic values as a dramatist, the author has mostly been evaluated by theatre scholars either as a prose work writer or a literary figure stimulating a work of art intending to interpret an already existing creation from a different perspective.

Even though Franz Kafka is chiefly regarded as one of the most powerful novelists and short story writers of the twentieth century, the author's one-act drama "The Warden of the Tomb" (*Der Gruftwächter*), written circa 1916-1917, clearly testifies to Kafka's intention of trying his hand at writing a theatre text,³ thus setting the basis for an evaluation of the author as a playwright. Looking from this standpoint, one can observe how theatre studies –to a certain degree– have neglected analysing Kafka as a dramatist by failing to take the author's only theatrical writing as a focal point.⁴ Moreover, an additional fragment of one of the short stories of the author, namely "The Hunter Gracchus" (*Der Jäger Gracchus*), composed in 1917, calls for a (re)reading of this text along with "The Warden of the Tomb" due to the shared features of the two works. In addition to that, "The Warden of the Tomb"'s open-ended feature allows a researcher to read it in connection with "The Hunter Gracchus" with the purpose of moving these two texts from page to stage.

¹ See for instance, Una Chandri, **Staging Place: The Geography of Modern Drama**, Michigan: Michigan University Press, 1997, pp. 196-197; Zehra İpsiroğlu, **Eleştirinin Eleştirisi**, Istanbul: Mitoş Boyut, 1998, pp. 90-96; Osman Durrani, "Editions, Translations, Adaptations", in Julian Preece (ed.) **The Cambridge Companion to Kafka**, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 219-222; John Zilcosky, **Kafka's Travels**, 2003, Basingstroke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 97-98 and pp. 111-114.

² For a study regarding the Kafka adaptations in the movie industry, see Martin Brady and Helen Hughes, "Kafka Adapted to Film", in Julian Preece (ed.) **The Cambridge Companion to Kafka**, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 226-241

³ In fact, a close reading of Kafka's *Diaries* fortifies this argument to a certain extent. As early as 1911, Kafka, while depicting his dreams taking place in a theatre, writes sketches of a drama piece. Having a dream taking place on a theatre stage indicates the author's interest in theatre. Other dramatic fragments written down by Kafka in his diary in 1913 and in 1917 respectively, strengthens this argument even more, see Franz Kafka, Max Brod (ed.) **The Diaries of Franz Kafka**, trans. Joseph Kresh and Martin H. Greenberg, 1999, London: Vintage, pp. 111-113, 119-124; esp. pp. 123-124, 229-230, 377-379.

⁴ The same situation holds true for the productions of "The Warden of the Tomb" as well. The sparse amount of productions of the play can be taken as a token of the negligence of the academic world regarding Kafka's one-act drama resulted in the lack of staging the play. "The Warden of the Tomb" was staged rather recently as a "modernized" comedy adaptation by a theatre group from Taiwan, namely New Bodo Troupe in August 2003 (<http://www.taipeitimes.com/News/feat/archives/2003/08/22/2003064816>, 03.05.2009), and was put on by an Italian director Armando Adolghiso at the early phases of his career as an "avant-garde text" (http://www.adolghiso.it/autoscatto_eng.asp, 03.05.2009), and was performed by Théâtre de la Bastille in 1983, see John Strand, "Théâtre de la Bastille" in **The Drama Review** 28 (1), p. 95.

With these assumptions in hand, this study will attempt to evaluate Kafka as a playwright, and offer a dramaturgical approach to the two texts of this author in question, with the intention of providing a new insight to the readers of Kafka from the perspective of theatre studies. In order to move “The Warden of the Tomb” and “The Hunter Gracchus” from page to stage, the paper will present the necessary theoretical framework/s regarding a staging process as well as a dramaturgical approach prior to the application part of the study. Additionally, as far as the case of “The Warden of the Tomb” is concerned, another intention of the paper will be to shed light on a Kafka text that has been left almost untouched by scholars up to now.

A Dramaturgical Approach to Franz Kafka’s “The Warden of the Tomb”

The ultimate function of dramaturgy during the staging process, according to Edward M. Cohen, “*is to supply writers and directors with a pair of audience eyes so that the audience viewpoint will not come as a surprise on opening night.*”⁵ In this respect, one can regard a dramaturge as one of the most crucial figures of a staging process, who translates the script from the literary language into the stage language, and eventually becomes the critical eye of a theatre company, which evaluates the final creation from the viewpoint of the spectator. In order to find the appropriate transformation strategy, a dramaturge analyses the text/s in question both from the perspective of a literary work and from the vantage point of a potential visual artwork. An exhaustive textual analysis is the core of a dramaturgical approach owing to the fact that only after a thorough analysis can one comprehend the essential meaning of a text to be staged. The most crucial part of a textual analysis is the interpretation of the stage directions due to the fact that it is these parts of a script in which a playwright reveals fundamental features of the play’s characters most obviously. Furthermore, since stage directions “*define the concrete conditions of the discourse of the play*”^{6*} together with the hints they include in order to find the suitable acting style, a misinterpretation of them might distort the crux of the text, and as a consequence the performance to a certain extent.

In opposition to the proponents of the view that reduces the role of a dramaturge in the staging process,⁷ it is also possible for a dramaturge and a director to establish a dialectical relationship. Since a given staging process evolves gradually as a result of a dialectical relationship among the actors, stage designer, director, and the other figures involved in the making of a production, a confined approach intending to constrain the role of dramaturgy in the course of staging would be equal to putting an end to the dynamic function inherent in dramaturgy. When the work is almost finished, states Eugenio Barba, “*he [a dramaturge] stops and says that now it can really begin. Those around him [sic] express stupor and incomprehension. Meanwhile he disarranges and destroys everything he has done up to that moment. He draws other scenes and figures, which he interweaves or superimposes on the preceding ones, cancelling them out.*”⁸

This overall outlook concerning the function of a dramaturgy during the course of a staging process provides the framework necessary for an analysis of Franz Kafka’s one-act drama “The Warden of the Tomb”. As stated previously, Kafka’s one-act drama “The Warden of the Tomb” is the most evident example of the author’s interest in writing a theatre text. Kafka’s description of the

⁵ Edward M. Cohen, **Working on a New Play**, New York: Limelight Editions, p. 34

⁶ Esen Çamurdan, **Çağdaş Tiyatro ve Dramaturgi**, İstanbul: Mitos Boyut, 1996, p. 92

□ Unless indicated all translations are my own.

⁷ Cf. Edward M. Cohen, **Working on a New Play**, New York: Limelight Editions, p. 32, p. 34

⁸ Eugenio Barba, “The Deep Order Called Turbulence: The Three Faces of Dramaturgy”, in Henry Bial (ed.) **The Performance Studies Reader**, London and New York: Routledge, 2004, p. 257. For a brief account on the importance of the dialectical relationship between a dramaturge and the other members of a given theatre company, see Esen Çamurdan, **Çağdaş Tiyatro ve Dramaturgi**, İstanbul: Mitos Boyut, 1996, pp. 98-102, and for the dynamic function of dramaturgy in terms of providing staging interpretations, see Zehra İpşiroğlu, **Tiyatroda Düşünsellik**, İstanbul: Mitos Boyut, 1995, pp. 18-23

“undead”, the ambiguous structure of the play, the stage directions suggesting a rather different way of acting and the author’s construction of the plotline are the most obvious factors which invite an assessment of this writer as a dramatist. However, as the analysis of the play will plausibly point out in the following pages, Kafka’s construction of the plotline to a certain extent comprises the components of a prose work which aids him during the course of complicating the events of the text.

The peculiar opening of “The Warden of the Tomb” leaves the impression on the reader that the play starts during the course of some action; in other words, something “should have taken place” right before the start, thus serving as an element of a literary piece which lures the attention of the reader:

PRINCE (turning from window): *Well?*

CHAMBERLAIN: *I cannot recommend it, your Highness.*

PRINCE: *Why?*

CHAMBERLAIN: *I can’t quite formulate my objections at the moment. I’m expressing only a fraction of what’s on my mind when I quote the universal saying: Let the dead rest in peace.*⁹

Right from the start then, the image of the “undead” occupies an overwhelming presence throughout the play. Similarly, as the play proceeds, Kafka shifts the focus of attention from the question “what happened before” to “who is the human and who is the other”, therefore signifying the crucial function of the image of the non-living in the text. By blurring the distinctions between the play characters, Kafka leaves the reader with questions in mind at the end of the play. The reader, who saw the Warden as the main character of the play and even felt compassion for him to some degree during the course of the piece, cannot be sure if the Warden is human or not when s/he witnesses these words towards the end of the play:

STEWARD (stamping his foot): *Is it impossible to get rid of him? Pick him up in your arms if there’s no other way. Can’t you understand what’s expected of you!*

CHAMBERLAIN: *The Prince!*

SERVANT (opening door at left)

STEWARD: *Ah! (Glances at Warden.) I should have known that ghosts cannot be transported.*¹⁰

Even though the overall structure of the play is obscure enough to comprehend a pivotal feature of Kafka’s texts, which “*generates a second, an excessive text flying off from the first,*”¹¹ surfaces in “The Warden of the Tomb” as well and assists the reader to grasp the plotline of the work. A close reading of the entire text reveals that the text itself can be divided into two main parts: the first phase of the play informs the reader of the Prince’s plan which aims at stationing a warden on the frontier between the human and the non-human,¹² whereas the second phase of the work gives the plausible reasons for the Prince’s intention. During the course of the play, the reader comprehends that the Steward has come to the palace from a foreign court with the Princess six months ago, struggling to establish an order as opposed to the already existing one,¹³ and accuses the Chamberlain of flirting

⁹ Franz Kafka, “The Warden of the Tomb” trans. Tania and James Stern, in Nahum N. Glatzer (ed.) *The Complete Short Stories of Franz Kafka*, London: Vintage, 1999, p. 206

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 218

¹¹ Stanley Corngold, “The Life of the Author in the Margin of His Breaks: On Kafka’s Perspective”, in Moshe Lazar and Ronald Gottesman (eds.) *The Dove and the Mole: Kafka’s Journey into Darkness and Creativity*, Malibu: Undena Publications, 1987, p. 185

¹² Franz Kafka, “The Warden of the Tomb” trans. Tania and James Stern, in Nahum N. Glatzer (ed.) *The Complete Short Stories of Franz Kafka*, London: Vintage, 1999, p. 207

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 216

with the opposition.¹⁴ In this regard, one can fathom the Prince's friendly behaviour towards the Warden: Prince Leo, without having seen the Warden before, considers him as a messenger who transmits the words of the "Other" to the human and trusts his words instinctively. In this light, one may even take a step further and claim that Prince Leo regards the Warden as a courier bearing the messages of his ancestors, whom he may also consult in his struggle for preserving the established order of the principality. The Chamberlain, who seems to be one of Prince Leo's right-hand men, declares clearly how he "*still represent[s] the open policy that prevailed under Duke Friedrich. At that time the only policy at Court was to serve the Prince.*"¹⁵ In this sense, one can infer how Prince Leo is in favour of the established order of his ancestors. The Steward's seeing the Warden as "an upright, active worker for evil"¹⁶ reinforces the idea of the Steward's hostility towards the order of Prince Leo. Furthermore, when the second phase of the play is examined in the light of George Steiner's comment which reads as "*behind the nightmare exactitudes of Kafka's setting lies the topography of Prague and of the Austro-Hungarian empire [sic] in its decline,*"¹⁷ the ambiguity of the time and the setting in which the play takes place fades away.¹⁸ In this regard, "The Warden of the Tomb" can take place in a year towards the end of the First World War, that is to say, in 1917, which would signify the dissolution years of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Moreover, the most probable setting for the play can be Prague, the capital-to-be of Czechoslovakia, the country that would eventually gain its independence in 1918. When observed from this viewpoint, it can be surmised how one of the most key components of classical tragedy, that is to say, a palace intrigue, has become one of the most significant factors of a dramatic piece in the hands of Kafka.¹⁹

As mentioned in the beginning of this paper, the history of literature has not seen another writer like Kafka who expanded on the sufferings, affairs, disappointments of his life throughout his writings. When the author's depictions of the "undead", therefore the "ghosts" are taken into consideration in the light of the repercussions of the very word "death" in the other writings of the author, particularly after 1917 (the year when the writer suffered a haemorrhage for the first time), the image of the undead depicted in "The Warden of the Tomb" takes the shape of a terrifying phenomena suffocating the thoughts of Kafka. A look at the description of the undead throughout the play indicates that the image of death –just like the tuberculosis that would eventually put an end to Kafka's life in 1924– dominates the plotline, and finally "*it becomes clear that the boundary between the principality and the region of the dead is shifting, as the dead-space encroaches.*"²⁰ From the standpoint of this autobiographical resonance of the death image in "The Warden of the Tomb", it can be inferred that Kafka used this metaphor as a symbolic narrative tool which complicates the events of the plotline.

An additional –and maybe more significant in terms of Kafka's usage of a symbolic narrative tool– component of "The Warden of the Tomb" is the author's employment of the image of "The Tower of Babel". As stated by George Steiner, "*Kafka saw in the Tower and its ruin a dramatic shorthand through which to convey certain exact, though not wholly articulate, intimations about*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 215

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 218

¹⁷ George Steiner, **Language & Silence**, Yale: Yale University Press, 1998, pp. 120

¹⁸ Even though Steiner's comment is surely not concerned with "The Warden of the Tomb", the scholar's terse remark serves as a starting point for one during the course of puzzling over the time and the setting of the play.

¹⁹ Kafka's usage of a palace intrigue in this play becomes quite significant when one thinks of the general tendency of the playwrights of his time. Indeed, dating from the eighteenth century onwards the function of palace affairs was gradually swept away from the theatre stage due to Denis Diderot's introduction of the concept of Bourgeois Drama. Cf. Burç İdem Dinçel, "Burjuva Dramı, Denis Diderot ve Tiyatroda Gerçekçilik", in **Tiyatro Eleştirme ve Dramaturji Bölümü Dergisi** 8, İstanbul: İstanbul University Press, pp. 50-56. In this respect, Kafka's usage of a palace intrigue in "The Warden of the Tomb" can be regarded as a representative example of the author's (re)interpretation of a traditional theatrical component in the twentieth century.

²⁰ Daniel Albright, **Beckett and Aesthetics**, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 30

man's linguistic condition.”²¹ According to Steward, Prince Leo “needs all his energy for the second half [of himself] which scrapes together the foundation needed to build something like the Tower of Babel”²² with the purpose of achieving the ultimate silence that would offer him the unique opportunity to comprehend the message of his ancestors, which is eventually a must for him to strengthen the basis of his already established order. By using the myth of Babel –the myth in which mankind is sentenced to eternal silence– in a theatre text then, Kafka digs the foundations of the sphere of theatre in which language, speech, dialect and words prevail. From the vantage point of the genres evolved within the realm twentieth century drama, in this respect, one can regard Kafka as one of the forerunners of the theatre of the absurd in which the meaning inherent in words along with the perception of the world disappears.²³

A Dramaturgical Approach to Franz Kafka's “The Hunter Gracchus”

When Kafka's usage of the image of the “dead” both in “The Warden of the Tomb” and in the two versions of “The Hunter Gracchus” are compared, one can see how the author's depiction of the undead goes in close association in the latter piece more than it does in the former one with the writer's anxieties concerning “death” in his life. As stated previously, both of the pieces were written more or less in the same period of Kafka's life, namely around 1916-1917 when the author had his first tubercular outburst. By the same token, “The Hunter Gracchus”, in the words of Anthony Northey, is one of the few examples of “Kafka's fiction when he actually names and describes a real locale.”²⁴ However, in addition to Kafka's worries of dying, the main idea of “The Hunter Gracchus” emerges chiefly from a real event of which the author was aware, that is to say, a suicide of one of the retired major generals of the Austrian army whom the writer knew close enough to mention his name –Ludwig von Koch– in a letter to his friend Max Brod in 1913.²⁵ Anthony Northey summarizes succinctly that “the story's motif is derived from the myths surrounding suicide: the soul that cannot find eternal rest.”²⁶ Furthermore, when Northey's observation is taken into consideration in conjunction with Kafka's entry in his diary on the sixth of April in 1917,²⁷ the author's usage of real events during the course of writing “The Hunter Gracchus” bestows upon this short story a trait of a realistic piece of writing.

Nonetheless, Kafka's forging these realistic events with his own comprehension of death in a peculiar way constitutes the main point of “The Hunter Gracchus”. When taken into account that the writer's surname *Kafka* and the name of the legendary hunter, which is at the same time the name of a

²¹ George Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977, p. 66

²² Franz Kafka, “The Warden of the Tomb” trans. Tania and James Stern, in Nahum N. Glatzer (ed.) *The Complete Short Stories of Franz Kafka*, London: Vintage, 1999, p. 206

²³ For an account of Kafka's influence on the theatre of the absurd, see Zehra İpşiroğlu, *Tiyatroda Düşünsellik*, Istanbul: Mitos Boyut, 1996, pp. 15-40. İpşiroğlu's study provides a fruitful analysis of the theatre of the absurd in general, yet the scholar does not refer to Kafka's one-act drama in her study, and further mentions that Kafka has not written a theatre text, see p. 76.

²⁴ Anthony Northey, “Myths and Realities in Kafka Biography”, in Julian Preece (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Kafka*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 196

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ 6 April. Today, in the tiny harbour where save for fishing boats only two ocean-going passenger steamers used to call, a strange boat lay at anchor. A clumsy old craft, rather low and very broad, filthy, as if bilge water had been poured over it, it still seemed to be dripping down the yellowish sides; the masts disproportionately tall, the upper third of the mainmast split; wrinkled, coarse, yellowish-brown sails stretched every which way between the yards, patched, too weak to stand against the slightest gust of wind.

I gazed in astonishment at it for a time, waited for someone to show himself on deck; no one appeared. A workman sat down beside me on the harbour wall. “Whose ship is that?” I asked; “this is the first time I've seen it.”

“It puts in every two or three years,” the man said, “and belongs to the Hunter Gracchus” Franz Kafka, Max Brod (ed.) *The Diaries of Franz Kafka*, trans. Joseph Kresh and Martin H. Greenberg, 1999, London: Vintage, p. 373

famous Roman family, both allude to a jackdaw,²⁸ it becomes evident that the Hunter Gracchus is actually the author, who felt himself closer to death than ever before in his life. Kafka, contrary to the general fear of a human being towards death, regards dying as a journey embarked on with the purpose of finding the eternal rest. What Kafka fears, on the other hand, is the failure to find a place to rest and to wander aimlessly in the world just like Gracchus does. “I had been glad to live and I was glad to die,”²⁹ says Gracchus, indicating how he is ready to enter the other world by all means. Yet, he cannot die; he cannot even enter the margins of the other realm. Instead, Gracchus finds himself trapped on the great stair which leads up to the underworld. As John Zilcosky states in his exhaustive study:

*“Kafka imagines that—by preventing the endless, posthumous circulation of his texts— he might finally gain a resting place. Writing’s annihilation might allow him to cease being what he had chosen to become a writer, prowling the exotic space between life and death. If no one reads his writing, Kafka imagines he might escape Gracchus’ limbo—and the ghosts that inhabit it—and reach death’s Promised Land”*³⁰

In this regard, the purpose of Kafka’s last testament in which he puts momentous emphasis on the destruction of his entire works, and implores Max Brod to burn all of his writings can be taken as a desire of the author delineated in the character of Gracchus.

In the light of this close reading of “The Warden of the Tomb” together with Kafka’s usage of the image of “death” in “The Hunter Gracchus”, an additional fragment of the short story, which was written in a dialogue form as opposed to the finished version of it, acquires the legitimate ground for a dramaturgical analysis. In a manner evoking “The Warden of the Tomb”, this piece is full of dramatic elements focusing mainly on the image of the undead. In “The Hunter Gracchus”, the reader is informed of the voyage of a legendary hunter, his “otherness” in a world that is located somewhere between life and death, and the hunter’s conversation –presumably– with the Burgomaster of Riva.³¹ Gracchus, in the strict sense of the word, represents the “Other” in this piece. The Hunter is neither alive nor dead, moreover, is surprised at the living people’s unawareness of his past and legends, and in this sense, resembles a character living in an ivory tower unaware of the vicissitudes of the world. Contrary to the stable figure of an ivory tower, on the other hand, Gracchus is a moveable character who wanders endlessly in a vague world and considers his own self as a legendary one. What is more, Gracchus surprises and gets even irritated when he witnesses the living people’s lack of knowledge regarding his past:

*These are your observations my dear friend, other people have made others. There are only two possibilities here. Either you conceal what you know about me, and do so with a definite motive. In which case let me tell you frankly: you are on the wrong track. Or you actually think that you can’t remember me, because you confuse my story with someone else’s. In that case I can only tell you: I am—no, I can’t, everyone knows it and [sic] of all people I should be the one to tell you! It’s so long ago. Ask the historians! Go to them, and then come back. It’s so long ago. How can I be expected to keep it in this overcrowded brain?*³²

Gracchus, however, persists that every single human being in the world is aware of his legend:

[...] All the books are full of it, teachers draw it on the blackboard in every school, the mother dreams of it while sucking her child, lovers murmur it while embracing, merchants tell it to the

²⁸ Cf. Ritchie Robertson, **Kafka: A Very Short Introduction**, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 40

²⁹ Franz Kafka, “The Hunter Gracchus” trans. Willa and Edwin Muir, in Nahum N. Glatzer (ed.) **The Complete Short Stories of Franz Kafka**, London: Vintage, 1999, p. 229

³⁰ John Zilcosky, **Kafka’s Travels**, 2003, Basingstroke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 191-192

³¹ It would be reasonable to use the very adjective “presumably” in this statement given the ambiguity in the character that Gracchus converses.

³² Franz Kafka, “The Hunter Gracchus: A Fragment” trans. Tania and James Stern.” trans. Willa and Edwin Muir, in Nahum N. Glatzer (ed.) **The Complete Short Stories of Franz Kafka**, London: Vintage, 1999, pp. 233-234

customers, the customers to the merchants, soldiers sing it on the march, preachers declaim it in church, historians in their studies realize with open mouths what happened long ago and never cease describing it, it is printed in the newspapers and people pass it from hand to hand, the telegraph was invented so that it might encircle the world the faster, it is excavated from ruined cities, and the elevator rushes it up to the top of the skyscraper.³³

Nevertheless, when it comes to put such a mighty legend into words, Gracchus hesitates. He cannot talk; Gracchus *knows* that he cannot talk. The legendary hunter is either weary of his endless journey or he is suffering from the burden of a possible guilt which sentenced him to move aimlessly in the earth. Yet, by the skin of his teeth, Gracchus informs his interlocutor of the fact that he is from the Black Forest; he was led by the temptation of hunting a chamois, consequently fell down from a steep cliff and died on the rocks when he was in his mid-twenties.³⁴ Additionally, at the beginning of his conversation, Gracchus mentions how he has learned many languages throughout the ages, and claims that he could act as an interpreter between the past and the present time but still, he fails to comprehend the speech of the owner of the bark in which he has been cruising for fifteen hundred years.³⁵ Gracchus can barely recall his days of Black Forest, though, as a consequence of his interlocutor's persistence remembers how he died. Gracchus, in a manner evoking a mortal man who was struck moronic and lost all remembrance of his native and universal parlance by the curse of Babel, fails to speak of the previous life he had in the Black Forest.³⁶

When the additional fragment of "The Hunter Gracchus" is (re)read in connection with the finished version of the short story, the possibility of Gracchus' guilt becomes feasible enough, and moreover, the peculiarities in Gracchus' situation start to fade away. Gracchus, who was given the name of "The Great Hunter of the Black Forest", and asked for nothing better than to live among his mountains, has remained on earth after his death, and ever since that day, his ship has sailed earthly waters and through all the lands of the earth as a result of the boatman's mistake which made the Hunter's dead ship take a wrong turn of the wheel.³⁷ Gracchus accuses the boatman: a moment's absence of mind on the pilot's part has taken Gracchus to the places he has never been before, and furthermore, might even make the Hunter be confronted with the hostility of the inhabitants of these remote places. Gracchus speaks of a peculiar picture "*of a bushman who is aiming his spear at me [him] and taking cover as best he can behind a beautifully painted shield*"³⁸ which indicates the Hunter's existence, though not clear when, either in Southern Africa or in Australia. Gracchus considers this picture as the silliest picture that one often might come across on a ship.³⁹ Seeing from this point of view, one might regard Gracchus, in a way, as a character that served either willingly or unwillingly the cause of colonialism during the course of his fifteen hundred years of journey, and now –at a time towards the end of the First World War– feeling contrite about his former actions, and trying to find a way to compensate for them in order to find the rest he yearns for.⁴⁰

What is more, from the finished version of "The Hunter Gracchus" one can infer that the Hunter is already aware of the living world's unawareness of his past. "*Nobody knows of me, and if anyone knew he would not know where I could be found, and if he knew where I could be found, he would not*

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 233

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 234

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 231

³⁶ Cf. George Steiner, **After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation**, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977, p. 66 with Daniel Albright, *Beckett and Aesthetics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003, p. 30

³⁷ Franz Kafka, "The Hunter Gracchus" trans. Willa and Edwin Muir, in Nahum N. Glatzer (ed.) **The Complete Short Stories of Franz Kafka**, London: Vintage, 1999, pp. 228-230

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 229

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ John Zilcosky, on the other hand, interprets the Bushman image as a form of a reflection of a native land which Gracchus, and as a matter of fact, Kafka craves for, see John Zilcosky, **Kafka's Travels**, 2003, Basingstroke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 179-183

*know how to deal with me, he would not know how to help me,”*⁴¹ says Gracchus, and beseeches the Burgomaster of Riva to understand his situation. Yet, Gracchus does not ask any help from the people of Riva, he solely wants to be understood by them. At the end of the short story, Gracchus implies that he would be taking his leave from Riva, though; the time of his departure from the town is entirely vague:

“Extraordinary,” said the Burgomaster, “extraordinary. And now do you think of staying here in Riva with us?”

*“I think not,” said the Hunter with a smile, and, to excuse himself, he laid his hand on the Burgomaster’s knee. “I am here, more than that I do not know, further than that I cannot go. My ship has no rudder, and it is driven by the wind that blows in the undermost regions of death.”*⁴²

Moving “The Warden of the Tomb” and “The Hunter Gracchus” from Page to Stage

When the expanded dialogue of the additional fragment of “The Hunter Gracchus” is interpreted as a token of an expansion of Gracchus’ endless journey, one can infer that it can serve as a bridgehead during the course of merging this text with “The Warden of the Tomb” in a staging process. Still, when the three texts under observation are read together with the purpose of moving them from page to stage, a fundamental problem with respect to the question of integrating these texts in question on a theatre stage appropriately arises. Even though the three texts in hand share features, such as the image of the undead, the Babel myth, and eccentricities of the personas in common with regard to the aspect of engendering a text to be staged, one can see how the texts will become inadequate in the absence of an interlude which would serve as a link between the acts of the play. A glance at the plotline of the scripts, on the other hand, encourages the idea of adding an interlude between the acts. Indeed, as the dramaturgical analyses of the texts under discussion have pointed out, Gracchus’ search for an eternal rest, his desire for dying can find a reasonable connection with the palace affairs of “The Warden of the Tomb”. As Alan Bennet stated precisely in his introduction to *Two Kafka Plays*, “his [Kafka’s] work is garrisoned by armies of critics with some 15,000 books about him at the last count,”⁴³ to trespass on the borders of the aesthetic realm of Franz Kafka is definitely one of the most perilous ways of approaching the author. Still, to take the liberty of adding an interlude with the purpose of moving the author’s texts from page to stage, in order to proffer a suitable approach from the vantage point of theatre studies seems to be the only solution to overcome the existing problem, which is most likely to arise in a staging process. The act of setting in an interlude in which the Hunter Gracchus is interpreted as a phantom talking to Prince Leo in a dream can fill the gap existing amidst the texts. In addition to filling the gap existing among the texts, such an interlude can offer the chance to interpret the vital symbolic narrative tools, that is to say, The Tower of Babel, and the exotic homeland of the Hunter Gracchus in the Black Forest on the stage.

INTERLUDE

On the right edge of the stage, a tremendous edifice reminiscent of one of the works of Peter Bruegel the Elder. Gigantic as the structure may seem, it is weakly constructed. At the bottom of it, a door leading to a small place evocative of a forest. Wild animal voices are heard periodically. In the background, The Tragic Overture by Brahms is playing, though in a very quiet and almost inaudible tone.

⁴¹ Franz Kafka, “The Hunter Gracchus” trans. Willa and Edwin Muir, in Nahum N. Glatzer (ed.) *The Complete Short Stories of Franz Kafka*, London: Vintage, 1999, p. 230

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Alan Bennet, *Two Kafka Plays*, London: Faber and Faber, p. ix

[Prince Leo enters from the left edge of the stage. He seems to be running away from something anxiously. Like a prey being pursued, he enters into the edifice on the right carelessly; hoping to find a shelter. The Tragic Overture ceases to be heard as he enters. In the blink of an eye, he climbs to the top of the building in a more careless manner than before. Pause. Spectral figures appear all of a sudden and The Tragic Overture starts to be heard again; though, the tone of it ascends gradually this time. For a moment he attempts to talk and then fathoms that he is unable to do so. Leo dances to the ghostly figures' tune which makes him fall from the top of the edifice to the ground. A long pause. Gracchus enters from the door facing the forest-like place, looking paler now. He glances at Leo sympathetically. Leo looks back at him. He does not look surprised at all, and moreover he seems to be somewhat relieved.]

GRACCHUS [*wearier than ever.*]: You've been fighting for much too long, though you are too young to do so. What you saw just now was the future and what –the uneasiness that will haunt you every once in a while– to come if you fail in heeding the call of your ancestors. You sense that the restless spirits are on the run, right? You feel that they are trying to find a way to trample down everything established for the sake of the good order, right? And you consider yourself as the mere rising resistance, the bringer of light amongst the shadows of darkness, right?

PRINCE [*attempts to answer the questions of Gracchus. He cannot. He seems to be compelled to remain silent by the power emerging from the edifice.*]

GRACCHUS [*seems immune to the omnipresence power of the edifice. Each time he speaks, however, he looks more spent than before.*]: Yes! You ARE the Bringer of Light! I can see it in your frightened eyes. Yet, you want to know the person who converses with you. You have the right to know more of me. Although I don't think it's necessary to waste our precious time on the introductory sessions. I am Gracchus, a.k.a. The Great Hunter of the Black Forest. I am here now, to show you a way somehow.

PRINCE [*seems to abandon his attempts at talking. He nods.*]

GRACCHUS [*continues.*]: I was led by temptation into the netherworld; to the absence of season and time. You see that door next to you which leads to the enchanted gardens of my homeland? I led a peaceful life there, I asked for nothing better to live among my mountains. At the age of twenty-five, unfortunately, I was killed on the rocks, when I was hunting a chamois; and ever since that day I am moving in time and space. Maybe not in my days in the Black Forest, but in my days when I was sailing the earthly waters I sinned. Either I was misled through darkness, or I was misled by desire but eventually I sinned. Do not dare to ask how; but I did. As you see, I am neither alive nor dead now. But I ensure you that I long to die. My journey has come to an end. It *must* come to an end. I can sense it. I feel so tired.

PRINCE [*concerned.*]

GRACCHUS: I am here to remind you of the fact that you should pay close attention to the call of your ancestors. If you fail to do so, however, you will be doomed forever. Uncanny demons will be dancing upon your grave once you become their slave. Heed the call of the Fallen Angels, who arise from their graves, and free their spirits.

PRINCE [*weak at the knees.*]

[*A long pause.*]

GRACCHUS: You have already become a seeker of danger, and it's too late to withdraw. Stand together with me... hear the words I say to you, and heed the call of your ancestors, and allow me to reach my eternal rest.

[*Lights fade away.*]

At this point of discussion, it would be reasonable to embark on a slight digression with respect to the staging theories of the twentieth century, which can plausibly constitute the theoretical framework necessary during the course of moving “The Warden of the Tomb” along with “The Hunter Gracchus” from page to stage. In a manner evoking the literary movements of the twentieth century, the theatre dynamics of this age were shaped by the prominent figures born in the nineteenth century as well. A general look at the staging theories of this century suggests the names of theorists, such as Vsevolod Meyerhold, Adolphe Appia, and Edward Gordon Craig, all of whom can be regarded as the most essential names that contributed to the contemporary understanding of staging and interpretation of a written text on the stage. The key figure, which all those theorists derived their ideas, on the other hand, was one of the most powerful composers of the nineteenth century: Richard Wagner.⁴⁴ Thanks to the ideas, theories, and the music of the German composer, the theories of the contemporary stage have flourished in the hands of the above-mentioned influential figures succeeding after him in the twentieth century.

In the words of Arthur Symons, “*Wagner’s best service to drama, in his theories as in his practice, is the insistence with which he has demonstrated the necessary basis of the play in theatre.*”⁴⁵ The necessary basis of the play in theatre, according to Richard Wagner, lies at the heart of the great unity artwork of the Ancient Greece. The components of this integrated artwork (e.g. sculpture, music, dance, tragedy, comedy, rhetoric, and so forth), however, were shattered during the course of time among various branches of art. By returning to the roots of the integrated artwork of the Ancient Greece, Wagner founded his concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, that is to say, a total artwork. Wagner’s introduction of the concept of a total artwork offered the chance to (re)approach to the components of the dispersed Grecian tragedy, and make them created anew in the following artworks; in other words, in the creations of the artwork of the future.⁴⁶ In this respect, one can see how the very word *Gesamtkunstwerk* acquired a dual meaning in the theories of Richard Wagner: The former referring to a “united, whole, collected artwork”, while the latter indicating the theatre/artwork of the future.⁴⁷ In order to fulfil the needs of his theories, Wagner –in addition to the music, and stage setting– composed the dramatic texts of his operas as well, therefore, brought the concept of “music-drama” to the notice of critics. At this point, one of the most important features of Wagner’s concept of total artwork, namely the composer’s usage of Ancient German myths and sagas as a dramatic leitmotif in his music-dramas, becomes quite significant due to the theorist’s employment of the nuances of the Grecian tragedy in his music-dramas with the purpose of building a national awareness.⁴⁸

It would be this concept which would influence the Swiss stage designer Adolphe Appia to develop his staging theories in the twentieth century. By considering the music-drama as the focal point of all his highest artistic performances, the theorist indicates the momentous emphasis he puts upon this concept of Richard Wagner.⁴⁹ Additionally, “[*Adolphe Appia*], by insisting on the plasticity of light, had demonstrated in detail, how stage lightning could be used and controlled so as to establish a completely unified three-dimensional world on the stage,”⁵⁰ signified the dynamic notion

⁴⁴ Adolphe Appia’s writing a book entitled *The Staging of Wagnerian Music and Drama*, cf. Lee Simonson, “The Ideas of Adolphe Appia” in Eric Bentley (ed.) **The Theory of the Modern Stage**, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983, p. 28, as well as Vsevolod Meyerhold’s staging of *Tristan and Isolde*, cf. Edward Braun, **Meyerhold: A Revolution in Theatre**, Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1995, pp. 86-95, can be shown as some of the representative examples of Richard Wagner’s influence on the theorists of the twentieth century.

⁴⁵ Arthur Symons, “The Ideas of Richard Wagner” in Eric Bentley (ed.) *The Theory of the Modern Stage*, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983, p. 313

⁴⁶ Burç İdem Dinçel, “Bütüncül Tiyatro Anlayışının Belirgin Örnekleri: *Peer Gynt* ve *Rüya Oyunu*.” in **Tiyatro Eleştirmenliği ve Dramaturji Bölümü Dergisi** 7, Istanbul: Istanbul University Press, pp. 96-97

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 96

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 103. Actually, it would be this purpose of Richard Wagner which would eventually become the subject of manipulation under the Nazi regime.

⁴⁹ Cf. Lee Simonson, “The Ideas of Adolphe Appia” in Eric Bentley (ed.) **The Theory of the Modern Stage**, Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983, pp. 27-29

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 33

of the usage of light in staging. The usage of light, casting shadows on the theatre scene, laid the foundations for the unification of the shattered components (i.e. sculpture, actor, stage design, music, dance, and so on) of the most primitive model of a total artwork on the contemporary stage thanks to the third dimension it created on the scene.

In the light of this basic theoretical framework underlying the main understanding of the staging theories of the twentieth century, it can be inferred how a total approach to “The Warden of the Tomb” and “The Hunter Gracchus” can be applied to the texts during the course of moving them from page to stage. When the texts are (re)read from the viewpoint of the total theatre concept, it can be perceived that they comprise the basic features of a dramatic text which an integrated approach can be applied to. The Babel myth, the exotic homeland of the Hunter Gracchus, the peculiar structure of “The Warden of the Tomb”, and the image of the undead instantiate the applicability of a total approach to both of the texts. In terms of acting, additionally, Kafka’s construction of dialogues in “The Warden of the Tomb” in a manner evoking a narration of a short story rather than a theatre piece, suggests the usage of music and dance in accordance with the main theme of the script. In this respect, Kafka’s construction of the dialogues in his one-act drama suggests itself as a primary issue to be pondered about in order to comprehend the gist of “The Warden of the Tomb” in terms of specifying the suitable acting style.

In spite of the fact that the first impression which “The Warden of the Tomb” leaves in the mind of the reader is that it is an unfinished work, a close reading of the text signifies that it has a unity, and offers a relatively innovative writing style which intends to forge narration on a theatre scene. Indeed, a close reading of the play suggests the fact that in “The Warden of the Tomb”, the essential components of a prose work, like the lengthy descriptions of the nightly wrestles of the Warden in the *Friedrichspark*, are accompanied by stage directions –even implied in the monologues of the play characters– that would eventually require an acting style original enough to depict the grotesque image of Duke Friedrich along with the other family members who want to rise out of their graves:

*WARDEN: All? My real service begins only now. I rush out of the door, around the house, and promptly run into the Duke and there we are, locked in combat. He so big, I so small, he so broad, I so thin, I can fight only with his feet, but now and again he lifts me up in the air and then I fight up there too. All his comrades stand around in a circle and make fun of me. One, for instance, cuts open my trousers behind and they all play with the trail of my shirt while I’m fighting. Can’t understand why they laugh, as until now I’ve always won.*⁵¹

Thanks to a crucial shift in the translation, the dual notion of the acting style implied in this monologue vanishes into thin air. The fundamental hint suggesting this twofold acting style can be inferred by consulting the German text. While the third sentence of the monologue in original text reads as: “[...] *und schon schaukeln wir im Kampf*”,⁵² the translators of “The Warden of the Tomb”, renders it as: “[...] and there we are, locked in combat” thereby falsifying the essential meaning of “*schaukeln*” which refers to “swinging, swaying, dandling, bouncing, and moving back and forth” in German. By taking the German text written by Kafka as a point of reference then, one can see how “The Warden of the Tomb” requires an acting style which would require fulfilling one of the basic necessities of the concept of total theatre of Richard Wagner. In this regard, it can be inferred that such a model of acting would suggest a way of representing the undead on the stage. The Warden’s depiction of his nightly battle/s accompanied by the dances of ghostly figures on the stage would also call forth the other essential features of the concept of total theatre: the usage of music and light. As previously offered in the presented Interlude, *The Tragic Overture* of Johannes Brahms can be used on the entire staging process thanks to the upside-down tempo, and the dramatic motifs the piece

⁵¹ Franz Kafka, “The Warden of the Tomb” trans. Tania and James Stern, in Nahum N. Glatzer (ed.) *The Complete Short Stories of Franz Kafka*, London: Vintage, 1999, p. 213

⁵² See, <http://gutenberg.spiegel.de/kafka/gruft/gruft.htm>, (16.05.2009)

comprises. With respect to the usage of light on the stage, moreover, the dances of ghostly figures can be depicted as gigantic as possible, hence indicating the grotesque image which Kafka grants upon the undead, with the aid of a light casting shadows on them. The idea of setting in an interlude between the acts becomes quite significant when one thinks of the question of representing the crucial elements, such as The Tower of Babel and the Black Forest inherent in the texts in question. Furthermore, the presented Interlude can serve as a bridgehead, thus overcoming the problem of arranging the acts of the scripts under examination. “The Hunter Gracchus”, for instance, can be the first act of the play, and then may follow the Interlude, and afterwards the play can conclude with “The Warden of the Tomb”. The original settings of “The Warden of the Tomb” and “The Hunter Gracchus”, moreover, should be depicted on the stage as faithfully as possible in order to allow the spectator to comprehend Kafka’s intentions entirely. What is more, such an arrangement regarding the sequence of the acts might allow critic/s to evaluate the function of the added interlude in the play in its own right.

Conclusion

As argued throughout this study, Franz Kafka, one of the most prominent novelists and short story writers of the twentieth century, can also be evaluated as a playwright. However, as the analyses of the author’s one-act drama “The Warden of the Tomb” and “The Hunter Gracchus” have indicated, the writer’s dramatisation of the characters and the plotline of his pieces examined in this paper, comprise to a certain degree the components of a prose work. By merging symbolic narrative tools, such as The Tower of Babel and the exotic homeland of the Hunter Gracchus with the realities pertaining either to his own life or to the lives of other people in “The Warden of the Tomb” and “The Hunter Gracchus”, Kafka pushes the limits of a traditional way of staging of his own time. The traditional way of staging, which to a certain degree focused on the act of merely showing the audience what was written on the text, would in a certain sense remain inadequate in terms of answering the question of *how did this happen* on the stage. Kafka, by digging the pits of a theatre scene by moving a symbolic narrative tool like The Tower of Babel from page to stage paves the way for an acting style without words, which would eventually become one of the crucial features of the theatre of the absurd.⁵³

The ultimate goal of the proposed staging model as well as the dramaturgical approach to Franz Kafka’s “The Warden of the Tomb” and “The Hunter Gracchus” in this paper was to shed light on the works of the author from the perspective of theatre studies. The ideas raised throughout the study would to a certain degree bring into question the realization of them on the theatre stage. Furthermore, during the process of moving the texts under discussion from page to stage, the applicability of the theoretical framework of the proposed staging model in this study can be evaluated as well. Since it is more or less these theories, which gave a fresh impetus to the act of staging in the twentieth century, an evaluative approach to the framework of this study from the standpoint of contemporary staging theories, might also launch new debates within the realm of theatre studies.

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⁵³ This statement rests on a solid ground even more, when one thinks of Samuel Beckett’s influential plays entitled *Act Without Words I* and *Act Without Words II*.

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Özet:

Yirminci yüzyılın en önemli yazarlarından biri olarak nitelendirilen Franz Kafka'nın yapıtları, tiyatro sanatı açısından fazlasıyla dikkat çekici unsurlar içermektedir. Tiyatro sanatı bağlamında önemli gelişmelere sahne olmuş bir dönem olan yirminci yüzyıl boyunca Kafka'nın eserlerinden yapılan uyarlamalar bu iddiayı destekler niteliktedir. Kafka'nın roman ve hikâyelerinden yapılan uyarlamaların yanında, yazarın yarattığı kurgusal dünyanın, hatırı sayılır sayıda uyumsuz tiyatro oyununda tezahür etmesiyle, yazarın eserlerindeki öğelerin, tiyatro kuramları açısından verimli bir araştırma alanı olduğunu göstermektedir. Dolayısıyla Kafka ve onun eserlerinde betimlediği dünya, tiyatronun gerek uygulama gerekse kuramsal alanı için son derece önemli bir kaynak teşkil etmektedir.

Bu durumun doğal bir getirisi olarak, Kafka üzerine yapılan incelemelerin çoğu, yazarın roman ve hikâyeleri üzerindeki teatral unsurlar üzerine odaklanmıştır. Bununla birlikte Kafka'nın ardında, kendisinin bir oyun yazarı olarak da değerlendirilmesine imkân veren, tamamlanmamış bir tiyatro oyunu bırakmış olması dikkate değer fakat çoğunlukla göz ardı edilmiş bir husustur. Kafka'nın 1916 yılının sonlarında yazdığı "Mezar Bekçisi" adlı tamamlanmamış oyunu, yazarın tiyatroyla olan yakın ilgisini ortaya koymaktadır. Kafka'nın 1917 yılında yazmış olduğu "Avcı Gracchus" adlı kısa hikâyesinin, bu oyunla koşut özellikler taşımasıysa, bahsi geçen eserlerin bir arada okunabilmesine olanak tanımaktadır.

Söz konusu varsayımsal olanağı çıkış noktası olarak alan bu makalenin temel hedeflerinden biri, Franz Kafka'nın "Mezar Bekçisi" ve "Avcı Gracchus" adlı eserlerine yönelik dramaturjik bir yaklaşım getirmektir. "Mezar Bekçisi" ve "Avcı Gracchus"un dramaturjik çözümlenmelerini sunan makale, daha sonra, bahsi geçen eserlerin birlikte okunmak suretiyle sahneye taşınabileceği fikrini tartışmaya açmaktadır. Bu bağlamda çalışma, yazılacak bir ara oyunun, "Mezar Bekçisi" ve "Avcı Gracchus"un bütünlüklü bir şekilde sahnelenebilmesine katkı sağlayacağını göstermeye çalışmaktadır. Ayrıca makale, Richard Wagner'in "bütüncül tiyatro" kavramıyla, Adolphe Appia'nın görüşlerinin, "Mezar Bekçisi" ve "Avcı Gracchus"un sahnelenmesi aşamasında faydalanılabilecek önemli referans noktaları olduklarını göstermeye çalışmaktadır. Makalenin bir başka amacıysa, "Mezar Bekçisi" ve "Avcı Gracchus" arasında köprü kurabilmesi amacıyla yazılan ara oyun ışığında, yirminci yüzyıl tiyatro kuramlarını şekillendirmiş olan Wagner ve Appia'nın sahneleme anlayışlarından, yirmi birinci yüzyılda, tiyatronun uygulama alanında nasıl yararlanılabileceğini ortaya koymaktır.

Abstract:

The works of Franz Kafka, who is regarded as one of the most influential authors of the twentieth century, entails striking features for the art of drama. The adaptations made from Kafka's works during the twentieth century, a time that witnessed important developments for drama, is an evidence for this characteristic of his works. Apart from the adaptations from Kafka's novels and stories, the reflection of the fictional world the author has created on a considerable number of absurd plays, shows that the elements in Kafka's works prove to be a fruitful site of research for the theories of drama. Therefore, Kafka and the world depicted in his works provide an ample source for both the practice and the theory of drama.

As a natural outcome of this situation, most studies on Kafka focus on the theatrical elements in his novels and stories. On the other hand, the fact that Kafka had written an unfinished play stands out as a mostly ignored fact that enables him to be regarded as a playwright. Written at the end of 1916, the unfinished play entitled "The Warden of the Tomb" reveals Kafka's interest in theatre. In a similar vein, his short story "The Hunter Gracchus", written in 1917, shows comparable properties with the aforementioned play, and as a result of this relation, it becomes possible to study these two works with regard to one another.

Taking this hypothetical possibility into account, this paper mainly aims, at first, to put forward a dramaturgical approach to the study of "The Warden of the Tomb" and "The Hunter Gracchus". In presenting a dramatic analysis of these two works, this study later on discusses the possibility of staging a play as a result of this dual reading. In this respect, this paper proposes that an interlude could serve for the staging of "The Warden of the Tomb" and "The Hunter Gracchus" as a unified text. To ground this argument, Richard Wagner's concept of "total theatre" and Adolphe Appia's views are proposed as relevant reference points for

the staging process of “The Warden of the Tomb” and “The Hunter Gracchus”. Finally, this study aims to illustrate, in the light of the interlude suggested so as to lay a bridge between these two texts, how Wagner and Appia’s approaches to staging can be benefited by the theatre practices of the twenty first century.