

ALTERNATIVE THEORIES OF ETHICS: TOM STOPPARD'S
PROFESSIONAL FOUL

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ABSTRACT

The issue of individual freedom has always occupied human mind and has taken a significant place in almost art forms including literature. Drama, too, has given great prominence to the concept of freedom because the scene has traditionally been a place where individual and social aspects of life have been considered with a focus on individual rights and freedom. Tom Stoppard, a distinguished representative of modern British drama, dwells on the particulars of individual freedom in totalitarian regimes in *Professional Foul*, and notes that individual and state ethics may interpret the same issue in different ways, which ultimately leads to opposing interpretations of one of the most traditional concepts of human experience on earth: ethics.

Key Words: Tom Stoppard, individual ethics, state ethics.

Alternatif Etik Teorileri: Tom Stoppard'ın Professional Foul Oyunu

ÖZET

Bireysel özgürlük kavramı her zaman insan zihnini meşgul etmiş ve edebiyat dahil hemen hemen bütün sanatlarda önemli bir yere sahip olmuştur. Tiyatro da özgürlük kavramına büyük önem vermiştir; çünkü sahne geleneksel olarak yaşamın bireysel ve toplumsal yönü üzerinde, bireysel haklar ve özgürlük kavramları da göz önüne alınarak durulan bir yer olmuştur. Çağdaş İngiliz tiyatrosunun seçkin temsilcilerinden olan Tom Stoppard, *Professional Foul (Kasti Faul)* adlı oyununda totaliter rejimlerdeki bireysel özgürlük olgusu üzerinde durur ve bu rejimlerde aynı konunun birey ve devlet tarafından farklı yorumlanabileceğini, bunun da insan deneyiminin en geleneksel kavramlarından olan etik olgusunun farklı yorumlanmasına neden olabileceğini belirtir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tom Stoppard, bireysel etik, devlet etiği

Tom Stoppard (1937-) is one of the most intellectual and prolific playwrights of the last two quarters in Britain. He writes about political, economic and social realities focusing on the theatrical aspects of life. He wants the individual to discuss with himself and organizes his plays within this context raising questions on the nature of life at large. Although his plays may include comic elements in expression, they are serious as regards their contents which include a large variety of domestic and international issues.

The overall condition of individual life is of significance for Stoppard, whose analysis of human existence in detail is worthy of consideration because of his mind-stimulating presentation of the affairs of the world. Witnessing the never-ending power struggle in the history of the world, caring for the realities of societies, contemplating the absolute need

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for freedom of the individual, and not neglecting the requirements imposed on the individual by the social system, Stoppard takes notice of human life in the real sense. He is in full grasp of the absolute need for change in every sphere of human life and thought at present and future. And he believes that it is absurd to inflict pain upon the individual by temporarily effective rules and political preferences because he is of the strict opinion that many of today's rules will change in the future or will be changed by future generations. This means that he finds it difficult to accept many things as absolute truth in the present world. However, it should be noted that his present stance is in favor of the moral standards acceptable and appreciable by every single person in every society.

As a playwright bringing to the stage a different issue concerning the affairs of the world in each single play, Tom Stoppard is deeply interested in the reaction his plays are to evoke in the audience. He regards the stage as a place intended to share mutual thoughts and ideals, and tries to convey as many details as possible in his dramatic works. The subjects of Stoppard plays are so versatile: from personal relations of individuals to social issues, from philosophical discussions to utopian ideals, from the lives of journalists to sexual preferences of persons, and so on. Being a Czech by birth, the issue of totalitarian regimes existing in the twentieth century in Eastern Europe is also among issues Stoppard deliberately focuses on. With an aim to present the realities and grave difficulties of individuals under oppressive regimes in certain parts of the world, he sees it as a must to acknowledge the audience of what the essence of life is and what individuals are supposed to face in some modern world countries with unfair systems. *Professional Foul* (1977) is to be weighed up within the light of the dramatist's dedication of his art to human life within this framework. The play, the background of which is based on real episodes, is a genuine reflection of the playwright's interest in human freedom and security in the modern world. It is a genuine dramatic interpretation of personal and governmental approaches to the issue of liberty by a perfectionist playwright who insists on "seeing a philosophical base to political argument". (Bull 2002: 146)

Professional Foul, a play with a focus on how things operate in countries with undemocratic systems is also to be deliberated on, as almost all other plays of the dramatist, as a work through which the writer conveys messages of vital importance as regards moral principles and theories of ethics. As stated above, the emergence of the play is based on a real experience. The idea behind the play is a week's trip to Moscow and Leningrad, during which Stoppard accompanied a friend of his who worked for Amnesty International. In Moscow, he came into contact with a number of Russians concerned with human rights. He met Irina Orlov, the wife of Yuri Orlov, who had been arrested three days before. She told Stoppard and

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his friends how K.G.B. men searched their flat and when she tried to get help, she had her arm twisted behind her back. Stoppard was shocked to hear such a story. He found it a very unpleasant experience in a modern world country, and he was not sure whether she would be there the next morning. That was not all; he had to be concerned about his own safety, he also knew that he was being followed. Stoppard also heard in 1977 the arrest of Vaclav Havel, the playwright whom he admired, an actor and a journalist in Prague, because he, with a group of intellectuals, attempted to give the Czech Government a document asking it to implement for the Czech people the human rights that had been called Chapter 77, which was signed by 241 people (Schulman 1997: 109-110). In consequence, what he witnessed during his visit to Russia and his reaction to Havel's arrest were brought to the stage as a play, which he promised to write by the last day of 1976 to mark Amnesty International's Prisoner of Conscience Year, which he dedicated to Vaclav Havel, and which was first shown on BBC (Stoppard 1983: viii). Why Stoppard chose not Russia but Czechoslovakia as the setting of the play is most probably due to his being Czech by birth however much he is a British citizen at present. Saying that he feels himself as Czech as Czech can be, he notes: "So you can see that with my desire to write something about human rights, the combination of my birth, my trip to Russia, my interest in Havel and his arrest, the appearance of Chapter 77 were the linking threads that gave me the idea for *Professional Foul*" (Shulman 1997: 110-111). Although the iron curtain country brought to the stage with this play is Czechoslovakia, the writer's intention is to shed light on undemocratic systems in general.

As a playwright with a deep interest in how things should work in the modern world, Stoppard is of the opinion that social ethic should be based on individual ethic. For him, what a person lives is his experience in the real sense, and experiences of individuals should not be negatively affected by social systems. Individuals are to be given the chance to direct their lives in accordance with their beliefs and expectations. With this in the playwright's mind, the ethical centre of the play "resides in the feeling behind the reason that prompts the action. There is a difference of quality between feelings. Principles may sometimes be broken in the interest of the putatively higher principle when they collide. Pragmatism must sometimes take precedence". (Hodgson 2001: 95)

Professional Foul is about a real place-Prague-and real dilemmas" (Hebert 1997: 127). It starts with the scene of a tourist class cabin of a passenger plane. Two British scholars of philosophy, Anderson and McKendrick are on their way to Czechoslovakia, where they will present papers in the conference, 'Colloquium Philosophicum Prague 77'. In their introduction of themselves to each other, aspects of their field of interest and

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study come to the forefront. When McKendrick says, pointing out Anderson's photo, that it is younger, Anderson replies: "Young therefore old. Old therefore young. Only odd at first glance" (134). Their talk about the country in which they are supposed to participate in a conference gives the first clues of the regime to which Stoppard intends to attract attention. Anderson happens to see in the same flight Andrew Chetwyn, a third scholar of philosophy, who is understood to have ideas not favoured by those in power in countries like Czechoslovakia because of his letters to "*The Times* about persecuted professors with unpronounceable names" (136), and is surprised the Czechs gave him a visa, which is also designed to call attention to the regime of the host country.

The writer's view of ethics, as reflected in the play, needs to be considered from a variety of perspectives since it includes many sides. For him ethics is a person's freedom as well as a state's right to defend its political system. Yet, although the controversy in the definition of ethics may have so many standpoints, Stoppard maintains that the ultimate aim should be the benefit of individual persons. Thus, he focuses on the particulars of freedom in an undemocratic country in order to give his messages concerning human rights in general. The delineation of how things operate in Czechoslovakia is important in that it prepares the background for the writer's approach to the balance between individual and state ethics. Anderson and McKendrick's dialogue reveal that Czechoslovakia is a country, where unexpected things happen:

ANDERSON: There are some rather dubious things happening in Czechoslovakia.

Ethically.

MCKENDRICK: Oh yes. No doubt.

ANDERSON: We must not try to pretend otherwise.

MCKENDRICK: Oh quite... (136)

Stoppard increases the tension of the play by adding a Czech citizen, Pavel Hollar, into the action of the play. When Anderson is in his hotel room, Hollar, Anderson's former student from Cambridge, knocks at the door. Anderson is both surprised and excited to see him. Hollar's elucidation of his living conditions indicates that things are not so good in Czechoslovakia. Anderson is disillusioned to learn that his former student, once studying philosophy, is working as a cleaner at a bus station: "Cleaning. Washing. With a brush and a bucket... the lavatories, the floors where people walk and so on" (142). And his disillusionment increases when he is informed of the fact that Hollar's problem is not the nature of his job. Hollar knows that he has to support his wife and son. In fact, his present job does not seem to be

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his permanent job: he had to work in a bakery, in construction and many other things to earn his and his family's living so far. Hollar's problem is the system in his country, the system which does not let individuals lead free lives. What makes him see Anderson is associated with this condition. He needs his professor's help to take his doctoral thesis out of his country.

On hearing that he is asked to do something illegal in the country where he is staying as a guest whose expenses are paid by the government, Anderson is discouraged to help Hollar, and even has the fear that it may not be good for him to be seen talking with Hollar. He cannot help asking "Is it all right for you to be talking to me?"(143), which is an expression that actually reflects his fear also for himself. In fact, Hollar does not want to give his old teacher any problem but has no other choice than to seek his help. Letting Anderson know of the possibility that there may be hidden microphones in Anderson's hotel room, Hollar wants to prove that he never wants to get Anderson into trouble. After a period of discussion about their mutual condition, Anderson, still uneasy, wants to learn how he can help Hollar:

ANDERSON: ... I hope you're not getting me in trouble.

HOLLAR: I hope not. I don't think so. I have friends in trouble.

ANDERSON: I know, it's dreadful-but ... well, what is it?

HOLLAR: My doctoral thesis. It is mainly theoretical. Only ten thousand words, but very formally arranged.

ANDERSON: My goodness ... ten years in the writing.

HOLLAR: No. I wrote it this month-when I heard of this conference here and you coming. I decided. Every day in the night.

...

ANDERSON: But can't you publish it in Czech? ... you know, really, I'm a guest of the government here.

HOLLAR: They would not search you.

ANDERSON: That's not the point. I'm sorry ... I mean it would be bad manners, wouldn't it?

HOLLAR: Bad manners?

ANDERSON: I know it sounds rather lame. But ethics and manners are interestingly related. The history of

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human calumny is largely a series of breaches of good manners. (143-44)

Stoppard wants *Professional Foul* to be a play properly reflecting an episode experienced in the real world by real people. For this reason he brings to the stage the somewhat adventurous experience of three British philosophers in Czechoslovakia. In a sense, the play is a journey “from a more self-contained world into another, less comfortable one” (Jenkins 1987: 137). The playwright, sending British scholars to a country with a totalitarian regime, aims to initiate a process of consciousness. In order to culminate this consciousness, he tells about the life of Hollar, who had to escape from Czechoslovakia crossing the mined border and studied philosophy in England, who had to return to his country for some reasons unmentioned in the play, and who now has no chance of going back to England. The only probability for him to send his thesis to be published in England is to give it to his former professor, Anderson. This is where Anderson’s dilemma emerges and the playwright’s perspective is visualized. Anderson, as noted above, tells Hollar that he is a guest of the Czech government, so he cannot be involved in an act unapproved by Czech officials. However, what he witnesses in the capital city paves the way for Anderson to help Hollar although unwillingly at first, and to realize that he should reconsider his belief of what truth and morality should be. The fact that Hollar is among the oppressed citizens of the country because of his political and ethical views convinces Anderson that he should somehow take Hollar’s thesis out of the country. The play’s focus on the nature of moral principles is directly related with Anderson’s assessment of this matter in question.

Stoppard suggests that whatever their mutual positions are, people must care for each other, and presents Anderson’s experience to support his belief. Anderson is thought to disregard academic neutrality not because he ignores absolute moral values but because he is aware of the delicate difference between right and wrong. (Delaney 1990: p: 97). Having discerned the essence of the system with concrete evidence, he concludes that he should dedicate his energy to morality. As a matter of fact, Anderson is not the only character serving the playwright’s purpose: Stoppard discusses through three philosophers “whether moral principles are relative or universal” (Hodgson 2001: 95). And he uses Pavel Hollar as “the catalyst for the play’s illumination of the difference between moral theory and moral practice, how moral actions must be judged in real-world terms... Hollar’s writing of his thesis is itself a putting into practice of his belief that individuals have inalienable rights that cannot be abridged by the state”. (Fleeming 2001: 130)

Stoppard is especially careful when reflecting the nature of ethics. Anderson’s hesitation to help Hollar has mostly to do with this point of view. He is invited to a conference in Hollar’s country by Hollar’s government

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(which indicates that as a nation they do not prefer to be isolated from the world, and want to impress western scholars in some ways) and does not want to be involved in an act not approved by them:

HOLLAR: But my thesis is about correct behaviour.

ANDERSON: Oh yes?

HOLLAR: Here, you know, individual correctness is defined by what is correct for the state.

ANDERSON: Yes, I know.

HOLLAR: I ask how collective right have meaning by itself. I ask where it comes from, the idea of a collective ethic.

ANDERSON: Yes.

HOLLAR: I reply, it comes from the individual. One man's dealings with another man.

ANDERSON: Yes.

HOLLAR: The collective ethic can only be the individual ethic writ big.

ANDERSON: Writ large.

HOLLAR: Writ large, precisely. The ethics of the state must be judged against the fundamental ethic of the individual. The human being, not the citizen. I conclude there is an obligation, a human responsibility, to fight against the state correctness. (144-45)

Anderson's belief in the meaning of freedom in the universal sense is understood to direct his behaviour. He knows that there is the issue of individual freedom to care. Yet, he is also well aware that there is also the issue of state freedom. Which side is right or wrong depends on where one stands. The playwright's viewpoint on this controversy is clearly reflected by the character, who plainly describes the framework of ethics:

The difficulty arises when one asks oneself how the *individual* ethic can have any meaning by itself. Where does *that* come from? In what sense is it intelligible, for example, to say that a man has certain inherent, individual rights? Is it much easier to understand how a community of individuals can decide to give each other certain rights. These rights may

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or may not include, for example, the right to publish something. In that situation, the individual ethic would flow from the collective ethic, just as the state says it does. (*Pause.*) I only mean it is a question you should have to deal with. (145)

As indicated by Anderson above, Stoppard does not want to take either side but leave the issue as an open-ended discussion. He knows that there may be arguments corroborating or disproving either of the approaches. Whether individual freedom is a matter decided by the individual himself or the state is not clarified in the play. Besides, the point that a guest should not betray those who have invited him to their country is overtly stressed by the writer.

The playwright's approach to the issue of host and guest reveals a conclusion, as a result of which it becomes obvious to Hollar that Anderson will not take his thesis, written in Czech, to England to be translated by one of Hollar's friends, Peter Volkansky, who also was Anderson's former student, now living in England. This at first sight gives the impression that Anderson's part in the play is coming to an end. Yet, things develop otherwise. Hollar convinces Anderson that there may be agents following him, and asks Anderson to keep the thesis with him and bring it to Hollar's house the next day. Believing that this will not be understood as breaking any state rule, Anderson accepts it.

Yet, what Anderson meets when he takes Hollar's thesis to his house the following day is not what he expects. On arriving Hollar's house, he sees that Hollar has been arrested and the police are there to catch him as a collaborator. When Hollar's wife sees Anderson, she tells him that Hollar is innocent and asks him to help them. Although Anderson tries to convince the Czech police that he is a professor invited to speak at the Colloquium in Prague, and that the reason for his being there is to visit a friend, he cannot succeed in assuring the police. Besides, his request to call the British Ambassador is refused. The police tell him that Hollar has been arrested for a serious misdeed against the state.

Through this act of the Czech police, the playwright calls attention to oppressive systems charging their citizens with crimes in which they are not involved. The police decide to arrest Hollar for his political beliefs but since they cannot find a reason to do so, they put the blame on him finding the currency they themselves put in his house. The way a policeman explains this is worth considering: "Hollar is charged with currency offences. There is a black market in hard currency. It is illegal. We do not have laws about philosophy. He is an ordinary criminal" (161). Interestingly, while the policeman is uttering these sentences, they hear from the radio a penalty due

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to a foul in the football match between Czech and British national teams. It is a penalty for the home side, that is, the Czechs. Anderson calls it a "professional foul" (161), which is a footballer's term for obstructing the opponent from scoring a goal, and implies that what the police have done to Hollar is also a professional foul. The police also accept that it is a professional foul and know that they have done the same to Anderson, but still they give the implication that they are determined to do it to protect the political system of their country.

Anderson cannot do anything to rid Hollar of what the police have done to arrest him. But now he faces another instance of professional foul and needs to rid himself of a critical situation. He sees that it is not difficult for the police to make up a reason to put him in trouble. The police saw that Anderson came to Hollar's house by taxi and told the driver to wait for a few minutes so that he could leave Hollar's thesis and then go to the football match by the same taxi, and pay the fare there. But when he got off, the police sent the driver away. Man 6, the policeman speaking English almost fluently, says that they may accuse Anderson of not paying the driver. The police have also questioned the taxi driver and learned that Anderson was delivering something in his briefcase. Witnessing this unexpected instance of professional foul, Anderson understands that things operate differently in that country and tries to find the easiest way to get rid of the problem. "The erstwhile professor of fastidious ethics does find that his cosy theories about social contracts crumble before the policemen's utilitarian sense of purpose and the evident despair of Mrs Hollar and her son" (Jenkins 1987: 140). He tells the police that it was one or two of the Colloquium papers that he put in his briefcase, and takes out his colleague McKendrick's and his own paper and passes them over to the police. Man 6 reads the titles "'Ethical Fictions as Ethical Foundations' ... 'Philosophy and Catastrophe Theory'", (163) and then, as if to do a favour to Anderson, lets him leave the house.

By calling attention to how oppressive systems of governments invent crimes for their citizens who are regarded as opponents of the regime, Stoppard brings to the fore what citizens who do not conform to the political systems of their countries are to face when they try to do something not accepted by the establishment. With this very thing in its centre, the play "blends its call for active partisanship with three of Stoppard's familiar themes: the alteration of appearance by shifting perspectives, the ambiguity of language, and the trickery of perception. These three overlap until they are almost indistinguishable. The difference between a foul and a necessary action is in the point of view" (Gabbard 1982: 144). Stoppard gives as many details as possible to reflect the nature of oppressive regimes. Anderson's meeting Hollar's wife and her son Sacha in the street is also to be mentioned as one of the details indicating the nature of undemocratic systems. Mrs

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Hollar cannot speak English well but her son translates what she wants to tell Anderson. There Anderson understands once more that Hollar's future is not so secure in such a system. He becomes fully convinced that the family as a whole will have no good future in this country. Besides, he recognizes the difficulty of taking Hollar's thesis out of Czechoslovakia. However, he knows that there is not much he can do to help them. He only asserts that as soon as he goes to England, he will try to help Hollar, he will write letters to Czech Ambassador and also to his own friends in the government. When he meets his colleagues back in the hotel, he gives a definition of the case in that country, which is another thing he can do to indicate the severity of life for those in opposition in their host country, and notes that there "would be no moral dilemmas if moral principles worked in straight lines and never crossed with each other" (169) in this allegedly democratic country.

Professional Foul reflects the hindsight on the nature of human behaviour under certain circumstances. Anderson's ways of behaviour by the Czech police, during his talk with Hollar's wife and son, and with his colleagues after all these are striking examples of different attitudes to particular conditions. He has to tell lies to the police in order not to get into trouble, he openheartedly confesses the wrongdoings of the police in his talk with Mrs Hollar, and can think and evaluate the issue from a separate perspective with his colleagues. This must have been purposely arranged by the playwright in order to shed light on the nature of human behaviour directed by instinct, fear, honesty, compassion, etc.

Stoppard maintains in the play that whatever the conditions may be, a universal truth is to be sought when human life is in question. Anderson, who may be regarded as the writer's spokesperson, gives allusions concerning this issue. In his talk in the Colloquium, starting with the expression "I propose in this paper to take up a problem which many have taken up before me, namely the conflict between the rights of the individuals and the rights of the community. I will be making a distinction between rights and rules", (177) he stresses his thought on human rights in the universal sense. What he says is the ultimate evaluation of the scenes he has witnessed in Czechoslovakia. However much the chairman tries to intervene and remind that this was not the paper Anderson would present, Anderson is decisive to tell Stoppard's views on this delicate issue. It is a good chance for him to change the content of his paper to reveal the particulars of the regime in the country, which can also be described as a professional foul:

If we decline to define rights as fictions, albeit with the force of truths, there are only two senses in which humans could be said to have rights. Firstly humans might be said to have certain rights if they had collectively and mutually agreed to give each other these rights. This would merely mean that

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humanity is a rather large club with club rules, but it is not what is generally meant by human rights.

...

In our time linguistic philosophy proposes that the notion of, say, justice has no existence outside the ways in which we choose to employ the word, and indeed *consists* only of the way in which we employ it. In other words, that ethics are not the inspiration of our behaviour but merely the creation of our utterances.

...

A small child who cries 'that's not fair' when punished for something done by his brother or sister is apparently appealing to an idea of justice which is, for want of a better word, natural. And we must see that natural justice, however illusory, does inspire many people's behaviour much of the time. As an ethical utterance it seems to be an attempt to define a sense of rightness which is not simply derived from some other utterance elsewhere.

...

There is a sense of right and wrong which precedes utterance. It is individually experienced and it concerns one person's dealings with another person. From this experience we have built a system of ethics which is the sum of individual acts of recognition of individual right. (179-81)

The play ends with the scene at the airport where the Czech police search paper by paper the briefcases of two of the professors: Chetwyn's, whose political perspective is not in line with the Czech regime, and Anderson's, who was involved in an event unexpected of him. They find in Chetwyn's briefcase a dozen sheets of writing-paper and a photograph of a man, and take him with them. Anderson and McKendrick leave safely. While the plane is taxiing, McKendrick asks Anderson why the police searched him and learns that Anderson put Hollar's thesis in McKendrick's briefcase lest the police should not find it. He purposely hid it in McKendrick's briefcase because he knew that the Czech police had nothing to do with him. Anderson, after explaining the reason for smuggling Hollar's thesis in this way, without permission, says "Ethics is a very complicated issue. That's why they have these conferences" (185). Anderson's professional foul to the Czech police, the last example of the fouls in the play, is as crafty as theirs to him. Anderson "discovers that the important truths are not simple and monolithic: his professional foul recognizes a set of problems rather than

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ready-made options” (Sammells 1988: 117). He comes to believe that ethical values may sometimes change or be changed depending on where and under which circumstances one lives.

For Stoppard, informing the audience of the impressions he had in Moscow through this play is almost a duty. He is of the estimation that the issue should be discussed in a wider perspective and some things should be done for those under pressure. The truth is that playwrights can only demonstrate the injustice in some societies. He, too, knows that this is not a very effective thing to do; however, he knows that without plays and artists the injustice will never be eradicated (Sandall 1995: 72). As assessed from his perspective art “is important because it provides the moral matrix, the moral sensibility, from which we make our moral judgements about the world...The plain truth is that you are angered or disgusted by a particular injustice or immorality, and you want to do something about it, *now, at once*”. (Hudson, Itzin, and Trussler 1997: 66-67)

Stoppard believes that a political play may be either about a specific or general political situation. Yet, it should be noted that *Professional Foul* is about both. In it Stoppard leads the audience to grasp the moral basis of political acts with stress on moral standards to be universally accepted; attracting attention to the abuses of Czech political regime and violation of ethical standards, he notes that there must be common not local or societal principles as regards political attitude. To attract attention to the issue, his main character, Anderson, in the effort of becoming wiser,

is not abandoning but is rather embracing at an experimental level the importance of absolute moral values... What happens in the course of the play is not that Anderson abandons moral absolute values; rather he comes to abandon dispassionate academic detachment as he recognizes that the irredeemable difference between right and wrong requires him to act. (Delaney 1990: 96-97)

Last but not least, in *Professional Foul*, Stoppard chooses Catastrophe Theory as an alternative model to seeing flat. Through the use of this model he presents an example of a sort of behaviour individuals find in the real world. This is a round model enabling the playwright to stress the significance of personal preferences and to reflect his priorities in cases of moral dilemma. Anderson’s dilemma is a plain instance of the playwright’s approach to the preference between his conviction that civil laws should be obeyed and his natural humanitarian instinct to help a victim of political oppression (Cobley 1984: 54-55). Stoppard seems eager to know: what would any one of the audience do if he were Anderson in such a complicated case of ethics and morality?

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