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**THEATRE AND CULTURAL DIPLOMACY: THE ROLE OF  
THE PERFORMING ARTS IN HOW NATIONS DEAL WITH  
EACH OTHER**

by

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June 2010

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PERFORMING ARTS IN HOW NATIONS DEAL WITH EACH OTHER**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The role of culture in foreign and security relations has advanced to a prominence in the present and demands further analysis and reflection by those responsible for the making of policy and strategy. At the same time, an understanding of this vital term as a feature of society and state suffers from a blinkered perspective of culture. Many observers neither understand the past and present role of culture in society and politics, nor have much interest in culture in the form of high culture, especially in the performing arts other than at an unsophisticated level. Further, the psychological impact of war and terrorism and economic upheaval channels sentiments of reason away from religion and culture into such phenomena as escapism or political resignation. Or the impact of war channels the desire for symbols, narrative, metaphor and an interpretation of politics and society into extremism that camouflages itself in the realm of culture with damaging effect for state and society on the western, liberal and tolerant model. As a result, people learn about cultures through a distorted lens of fear that leads them to an unconscious habit of profiling individuals into cultural stereotypes or images of the enemy reflecting cultural ideas.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Culture as an aspect of foreign security and policy has attained a new prominence since the 11 September terror assaults. The performing arts occupy an important place in the realm of culture. Further, the performing arts have also been a central aspect of U.S. cultural diplomacy in the twentieth century within the foreign relations of the U.S.

With these facts in mind, the present study poses the question whether theatre and the arts can assist U.S. or allied government by offering humanity hope for a more peaceful and tolerant world in the face of demagoguery, hatred and violence. Can the performing arts defeat the primacy of fear in the present and replace such fear with civilization and tolerance through culture via the performing arts? Would not a stronger government promotion of theatre in cultural diplomacy provide an aesthetic experience to society in the form of educational entertainment and enlightenment that would defuse the destructive forces of fundamentalism, extremist, and violence? Does not such use of culture and the performing arts have a tradition in U.S. statecraft that makers of policy do well to consider in the present crisis? What were the accomplishments of such policy in the past and how did government and society combine in the arts and performing arts not only to the needs of war time propaganda but also to the peaceful resolution of conflict?

Where is the center of gravity in cultural diplomacy? How can government aid be used to promote this cultural diplomacy through theatre and art? This idea does not suggest that government impose arts education, or theatre on its societies that do not want them or cannot afford them, but rather governments make them available to people through various forms especially through the means of cultural diplomacy and outreach as was the case in the mid-twentieth century.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

ACE	Arts Council England
CEMA	Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts
CEMEA	Vrntre d'Entraînement aux Méthodes d'Éducation Active or Active methods for education training center
DCMS	Department for Culture and Media and Sports
FRG	Federal Republic of Germany
FTP	Federal Theatre Project
FY	Fiscal Year
ITI	International Theatre Institute
LIFT	London International Festival of Theatre
NEA	National Endowment for the Arts
NYSCA	New York State Council on the Arts
U.S.	United States
WPA	Workers Project Administration

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## I. CULTURE

A definition of the term culture remains a hard task because the specific concept is elusive in practice and depends on context. Chris Jenks in his book *Culture*,<sup>1</sup> quotes Raymond Williams, a Welsh academic, to the effect that “culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language.” Omar Abdolall in his article *Misconceptions about Culture* agrees with this statement. He says, “Culture is a vague concept, and it is complicated even more so by the fact that what constitutes it can change across space and time.”<sup>2</sup> Jenks says further that rather than experiencing solely nature as the dominant aspect of life and society, humans experience culture in its many forms. The difference is that in the end a human leaves the world with representations of themselves and their ideas in some tangible and enduring form.<sup>3</sup> This type of culture has also allowed the unification of people throughout nations and the world.<sup>4</sup> Some believe that culture is a system that is not inherited by genes that it is what we learn from society.<sup>5</sup> President Lyndon Johnson in the 1960s said, “I believe that a world of creation and thought is at the very core of all civilization, and that our civilization will largely survive in the works of our creations.”<sup>6</sup> He also said that as we struggle to uphold art, “the stakes may well be the survival of our entire society.”<sup>7</sup>

For the purpose of this study, culture will be used in two meanings that is: a) being the shared values and traditions from one specific group of people and b) refer to the fine arts and humanities.

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<sup>1</sup> Chris Jenks, *Culture*, (New York: Routledge, 1993), 12.

<sup>2</sup> Omar Abdolall, *Misconceptions About Culture*, August 28, 2007, [www.koreatimes.co.kr](http://www.koreatimes.co.kr) (accessed May 5, 2010).

<sup>3</sup> Jenks, *Culture*, 12.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Phil Bartle, “Preserving Culture,” *Community Empowerment*, March 24, 2010, <http://www.scn.org/cmp/modules/emp-pre.htm> (accessed May 5, 2010).

<sup>6</sup> *The First Annual Report of the National Council on the Arts*, Annual Report, (Washington DC: United States Government, 1964–1965).

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

## A. WHAT IS CULTURE AND POLITICS?

### 1. What Is Culture in Modern World History?

Culture has the power to control and influence the public mind and civil society and with the age of industrialization and the diplomatic revolution since the late nineteenth century it has become a tool of diplomacy. According to Bihikhu Parekh, in his article, "A Commitment to Cultural Pluralism,"<sup>8</sup> he states:

All societies today are culturally heterogeneous in different degrees. Thanks to such forces as industrialization, the easy mobility of goods and people, and the global reach of the multinational media, members of even the most traditional and isolated societies are daily exposed to new ways of life and thought. The influence on their language, aspirations, patterns of consumption, life-styles, self-understanding and innermost fears is often so subtle and systematic that they do not even notice it.

The world that is experienced by the world's nations today is different than the world of a century ago. Today, with the exception of small aboriginal tribes almost all cultures are mixed. There is no such thing as a pure national culture. Before industrialization, traditional societies such as they were, had limited exposure to outside cultures or even to the high culture of the ruling estates in the case of Europe. Culture and especially high culture did not expand beyond towns walls. Today, within one city or town multiple cultures reside provoking a plea for unity among them which is never really possible in a pluralistic society of the past and present. In a sense a new culture has been born in the past century, one that can be defined as a melting pot that includes diversity and individualism within a variety of people. However, this melting pot has a problematic character. Parekh explains it as:

When a cultural community feels threatened, it panics and tends to become self-obsessed, suppress internal differences, avoid all but minimal

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<sup>8</sup> Phil Parekh, *A Commitment to Cultural Pluralism*, <http://www.powerofculture.nl/uk/archive/commentary/parekh.html> (accessed April 28, 2010).

contacts with other cultures, and to spawn a fundamentalist orthodoxy which fragments the wider society and undermines its cohesion and unity.<sup>9</sup>

Culture has the power to unsettle a society when it becomes more diverse, but diverse societies also must find a balance in order to work. Exposure to other cultures is nearly impossible to avoid in the present day. People from different ethnic backgrounds, dress, music, and language, are encountered everyday by modes of literature, television, and radio. Yet, certain people still prefer to live, eat, and socialize separately. If we are unable to live harmoniously what does this say for our future? According to Neil Rudenstine in his speech *Free Expression in a Diverse Society*, given at the Commencement Day Address at Harvard on 4 June, 1992, he states:

...when the populations of the world have quarreled and fought for millennia in order to protect their religious, ethnic, national, linguistic, and other characteristics or symbols of group identity, why should we expect thousands of younger people-even when working with faculty and staff- to create easily or swiftly the kind of community that virtually all humanity has tended to resist?<sup>10</sup>

Although his speech is directed toward the university such stands true for people in every nation. Wars have begun due to differences in culture and its effects on politics. History is replete with examples that do not allow the younger generation freedom to collaborate with different societies instead it encourages its resistance. Rudenstine goes on to say:

Indeed, to see the continuing strength of the world's resistance, we need only read about what is taking place in the streets of what was once Yugoslavia, or in regions of the former Soviet Union, or Northern Ireland, or the Middle East, or parts of Africa, or elsewhere.<sup>11</sup>

Since the America of the 1950s, diversity has definitely expanded and grown, but there is still a long way to go in order to overcome or understand the differences in the

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<sup>9</sup> Parekh, *A Commitment to Cultural Pluralism*.

<sup>10</sup> Neil Rudenstine, "Free Expression in a Diverse Society." *Pointing Our Thoughts*. June 04, 1992. <http://www.neilrudenstine.harvard.edu/pdfs/expressi.pdf> (accessed May 05, 2010).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

world. We need to rise above the differences that are shared in the world and use that power genuinely to accept one another or at the very least live peacefully in each other's neighborhoods.

The power in today's world is the understanding of other cultures and the ability to live amongst them. If people lack in their culture education of one another, they are building an avenue of animosity and creating a wall of oppression in one another.<sup>12</sup> It is thus even more important of governments to understand this power of culture and use it to establish relationships for the common good of its societies rather than to divide mankind.<sup>13</sup> Parekh says:

...cultural diversity enriches and vitalises collective life, and is desirable not only for minority communities but also for the society as a whole. It adds a valuable aesthetic dimension to society, widens the range of moral sympathy and imagination, and encourages critical self-reflection. Since no culture realises all that is valuable in human life, each needs others to correct its inescapable biases, to appreciate its specificity, to help it arrest its tendency to absolutise itself, and to deepen its appreciation of the nature and possibilities of human existence.<sup>14</sup>

Culture is power in the modern experience of society. We have the choice to be enlightened and educated in ways that were not possible in centuries past. People need to learn and to know what is available to them in the realm of the arts and culture in order to create a collective life without bias or the thought that the unknown is the enemy.

## **2. Why Is It Important to Understand Culture in the Realm of Power?**

High culture and performing arts went from the realm of the elites in old regime Europe to mass entertainment amid the rise of the era of nationalism in the industrial revolution. Theatre allows us to enter a world in which symbols represent subjects that play with our emotions.<sup>15</sup> With the help of theatre, an enlightened and liberally inclined

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<sup>12</sup> Hamilton, *Federalist Papers* (Westminster, MD: Bantam Dell Publishing Group, 1982), 52.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Alexander Parekh, *A Commitment to Cultural Pluralism*.

<sup>15</sup> Tim Prenki and Jan Selman, *Popular Theatre in Political Culture Britain and Canada in Focus* (Bristol: Intellect Books, 2003).

government that desires the peaceful resolution of conflict, mutual understanding as well as the reduction of tensions in the realm of politics, religion and culture would be able to help people understand culture and humanity through catharsis, and at the same time help the economy by funding the work of creative artists which revitalize urban areas. By funding more theatres, the government would create employment for artists which in turn will increase human capital, as well bring revenue to business in the local urban areas. Such policy was a feature of the U.S. government in the mid-twentieth century and even in the Cold War, an aspect of government that has been forgotten since 11 September 2001.

Cooperation and dialogue challenges our world with many languages. We need to find a common ground, a common language that can be spoken, often times without actual words. Lizbeth Goodman, in the *Routledge Reader in Politics and Performance*,<sup>16</sup> describes many different cultures that she has had the opportunity to work. She gives one example as, “Orghast—a text which we played in collaboration with a Persian group. Though the actors had no common language they found the possibility of a common expression.” Most communication that is performed between one person and another does not involve using verbal skills, but rather using non-verbal behavior such as facial expressions or body posture.<sup>17</sup> Often time’s people get lost in language and its limitations rather than opening their ears to listen or their eyes to see culture and art. Theatre is a manifestation of this worldly language that unites multiple cultures.

Goodman goes on to question, “Where is Franco-Algerian or Germano-Turk theatre? Why are they never promoted? It seems that the institutions, sensitive in spite of everything to the ill-feeling caused by this situation, prefer to individualize every exchange with another culture.”<sup>18</sup> This unity of culture in any country needs to be embraced by government leaders if we are going to learn to appreciate and accept each other. Steve Wilmer in his writing of *Theatre & the American Nation* believes that theatre

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<sup>16</sup> Jane de Gay and Lizbeth Goodman. *The Routledge Reader in Gender and Performance* (London EC4P 4EE: Routledge, 1998).

<sup>17</sup> Ellen Summerfield, *Crossing Cultures Through Film* (Yarmouth, ME: Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data, 1993), 82.

<sup>18</sup> de Gay and Goodman, *The Routledge Reader in Gender and Performance*.

has aided America with the adjustment of political change. Theatre has often served as a touchstone for moments of political change or national definition and as a way of exploring cultural and ethnic identity.<sup>19</sup>

If theatre can be used as a tool to define culture, why is it not utilized more? Are people afraid of the power that it holds? Or are people too ignorant or poorly educated in its force for tolerance. “It is practiced all over the world by growing numbers of people,” says Eugene van Erven in his book *Community Theatre, Global Perspectives*.<sup>20</sup> He believes that community theatres are spreading due to its ability to raise topics that people can embrace. Van Erven comments on community theatre:

The stories that form the basis for its scripts come straight out of life and are presented unapologetically, sometimes literally on a street corner, by the very people who live them. Community theatre is moving, pertinent, powerful, and effective in strengthening the groups of people it caters to. Yet, because it mostly manifests itself in out-of-the-way places, this art form is often ignored by inner city elites, by policy-makers, and by cultural commentators.<sup>21</sup>

According to Goodman, “culture is thus transmitted as much by showing as by imitation, and functions by means of an indissoluble bond uniting people.”<sup>22</sup> She also says, “it is a question of a way of ‘performing a culture’ (cf. Schechner 1982: 4; Schechner 1985), of ‘acquiring a kinesthetic understanding of other sociocultural groups’ (Turner and Turner 1982: 34).”<sup>23</sup> By exposing people to this kinesthetic understanding we are creating an outlet not only for artists to express themselves, but we are creating an outlet for people to escape their everyday lives and be entertained and enlightened. Many communities do not have this outlet and are given clouded perceptions of the world beyond their front door step. These communities need to be given the opportunity to not

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<sup>19</sup> Steve Wilmer, *Theatre and the American Nation* (Port Chester, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 1.

<sup>20</sup> Eugene Van Erven, *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives*. London EC4P 4EE: Routledge, 2001.

<sup>21</sup> Van Erven, *Community Theatre: Global Perspectives*.

<sup>22</sup> de Gay and Goodman, *The Routledge Reader in Gender and Performance*.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

be complacent.<sup>24</sup> People need the ability to better themselves by embracing other cultures and lives especially in the realm of politics.<sup>25</sup> If this does not happen then we are allowing our communities to think within a narrow scope not allowing them to grow and consider the bigger picture.<sup>26</sup> In the book *Popular Theatre in Political Culture*, the author describes theatre as an entity that can say the unsayable:

This capacity is perhaps its most central asset. Whether at the individual, group, or public level, theatre gives us ways to express: our dilemmas; our political views, whether conservative or radical; our insights, however tentative; our problems, shortcomings, fears, intentions, complaints, angers, commitments.<sup>27</sup>

In a sense instead of having only a theatre of entertainment we have a theatre of ideas.<sup>28</sup> The theatre of ideas allows the human mind to be exposed to new or unrealized possibilities.<sup>29</sup> It allows the expansion of human existence.<sup>30</sup> In an article written by Denis Dutton entitled “Freedom and the Theatre of Idea,” he compares the ideas of Plato and of Friedrich Schiller. In Plato’s view, Dutton explains that there was not a need for support in art because people already lived a utopian life.<sup>31</sup> There was nothing needed to enrich one’s life, but in the time of Schiller life was different. In Schillers world, to express art meant that one was expressing the freedom of humanity allowing people to question social arrangements and allowing the freedom to think.<sup>32</sup> This freedom to think

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<sup>24</sup> de Gay and Goodman, *The Routledge Reader in Gender and Performance*.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Prenki and Selman, *Popular Theatre in Political Culture*, 101.

<sup>28</sup> Denis Dutton, *Freedom and the Theatre of Ideas: Address to the Russian Institute of Aesthetics*. January 1990. [http://denisdutton.com/moscow\\_address.htm](http://denisdutton.com/moscow_address.htm) (accessed May 24, 2010).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

is something that is quite possibly the reason why theatre is feared from rulers in history as well as today.<sup>33</sup> After all, imagination is what makes a person human and it allows people to think beyond the box they are trained to stay in.

### **3. Misconceptions of Culture in State and Society?**

Many people have a blinkered perspective of culture, that is, they neither understand the role of culture in society and politics, nor have much interest in the performing arts other than at an unsophisticated level. Furthermore, the psychological impact of war and terrorism channels feelings away from religion and culture into escapism or political resignation.<sup>34</sup> Or the impact of war channels the desire for symbols, narrative, metaphor and an interpretation of politics and society into extremism that camouflages itself in culture with damaging effect. As a result, people learn about other cultures through a distorted lens of fear which leads them to an unconscious habit of profiling individuals into cultural stereotypes or images of the enemy which at times have a basis in cultural ideas. Although profiling is a resourceful tool for law enforcement, as well as national security, its usefulness inhibits everyday life of individuals based on ignorance in the realm of culture. Stereotypes must be unlearned if we are to encourage multi-cultural diversity. As Ellen Summerfield states in her book, *Crossing Cultures through Film*, “one of the most important goals of multicultural education is to help us move beyond stereotypes to discover a world of human beings with personalities and unique personal histories.”<sup>35</sup> By understanding and separating people and culture the validity in a stereotype changes form. Instead of suppressing and discriminating against one another a person may become more open minded and accepting.

Many people believe that having a diverse society will take away from one’s individual culture, but it seems as though it will actually enhance it. According to Parekh:

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<sup>33</sup> Dutton, *Freedom and the Theatre of Ideas*.

<sup>34</sup> *Bridging the Divide Between the United States and the Muslim World Through Arts and Ideas: Possibilities and Limitations*. Conference Report, New York: New York University, 2009.

<sup>35</sup> Summerfield, *Crossing Cultures Through Film*, 59.

...strange as it may seem, the greater and deeper the diversity in a society, the greater the unity and cohesion it requires to hold itself together and nurture its diversity. A weakly held society feels nervous in the presence of differences, sees them as potential threats to its unity and survival, and lacks the confidence to welcome and live with them. *Prima facie* this seems odd, for a strong sense of unity can be inhospitable to diversity and even undermine it. We are thus confronted with a paradox. A multicultural society requires a strong sense of unity, yet the latter could weaken and even undermine its ability to accommodate diversity!<sup>36</sup>

By accommodating diversity and creating a unified national culture of mixed cultures, the nervous tendencies of a weak society disappear.<sup>37</sup> The same is for members of a family. Members of a family are generally diverse in nature and work together as a family due to a shared bond.<sup>38</sup> This of course is not the case for every family, but more often than not, family as well as friends work well together because of their differences and acceptance of one another. Abdolall believes the opposite. He questions that if we are creating hybrid cultures how can one truly know of their origins? What Abdolall does not consider is that as evolution is unavoidable so is adaptation to culture.

Another misconception of culture is that countries that are unlike each other are most antagonistic. This is not a fair statement. Often time's countries that are most similar are the ones that are aggressive with one another. Abdolall explains:

Culture is not a homogenous entity that resides in a culturally homogenous country. A country can be as culturally heterogeneous within itself as it is heterogeneous against another country.<sup>39</sup>

Switzerland for example is not defined as having one common culture, but rather one nation with common values and history creating a culture of diversity. Switzerland does not have a written language of its own; instead it has four national languages that are influenced by its neighboring countries: Germany, France, Italy, Liechtenstein, and Austria. The traditional customs change depending on what side of the country a person

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<sup>36</sup> Parekh, *A Commitment to Cultural Pluralism*.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Abdolall, *Misconceptions About Culture*.

is in. What keeps Switzerland alive is its ability to be unified. A country defines itself by comparing itself to other countries.<sup>40</sup> However, in the case of Switzerland it defines itself by relating to its surrounding countries.

One also cannot look at the example of the Nazis. In World War II, through propaganda, all Germans were thought of to be Nazis and even today many people do not realize that the real amount of Nazis was a small percentage in comparison to the population of German people. Many of the German soldiers that fought in World War II fought on different fronts protecting against foreign militaries and were not part of the Nazi organizations. Nazis are often thought of as German culture, but it is not reasonable to say that they represent all German Culture or even represent European culture.<sup>41</sup> The same goes for modern terrorist groups. After the attacks of September 11, many people associated terrorism with Muslim cultures. This misconception leads to the stereotype of a certain culture that is often undeserved. Culture cannot be defined solely by political groups associated with them. Misconceptions of culture in state and society lead to the confusion and discrimination of people.

#### **4. Preserving Culture Within Policy and Statecraft**

Theatre allows us to enter difficult and dangerous territory of thought and symbols.<sup>42</sup> Governments and political institutions should make available opportunities for citizens to interact with one another.<sup>43</sup> In providing these opportunities, it will present exposure to other cultures encouraging cooperation and understanding.<sup>44</sup>

Phil Bartle, in his article “Preserving Culture,”<sup>45</sup> would argue that there is a difference between preserving culture and empowering it. He states:

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<sup>40</sup> Abdolall, *Misconceptions About Culture*.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Prenki and Selman, *Popular Theatre in Political Culture Britain and Canada in Focus*.

<sup>43</sup> Parekh, *A Commitment to Cultural Pluralism*.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Bartle, “Preserving Culture.”

The process of preservation is one which modifies something so that it will last, so that it will not change, so that it will not live. To be alive requires something to move, to change. So if you want to keep something from changing for a long time, kill it. It will change eventually anyway (just ask any Buddhist) no matter how it is preserved.

In this idea of life and death Bartle is correct. Culture is living, if we try to conserve it in a locked imprisoned and nostalgic state, it will stay the same and never have the chance to grow. Preservation is impossible in a changing and evolving world. If we allow communities, which are poor to stay stagnant we are allowing them to be weak, but at the same time we cannot force them to change their culture.<sup>46</sup> They have to want the change and be willing to be enlightened and stimulated.<sup>47</sup> Culture is what people learn and what causes them to be strong; therefore, we must provide guidance to grow if they so choose.<sup>48</sup> Since culture is living, it must change just as a child becomes an adult.

It is important to have a policy in which protects theatre as a living art, but theatre is not the only aspect that has had difficulties surviving. All forms of art have been financially attacked, cut, and eliminated both in education as well as in non-profit organizations. Often times these non-profit organizations is the only chance that lower income citizens are able to see this form of culture. Although many countries, states, and or counties have a policy on providing funding to allow art to survive, many times it is not effective. In the United Kingdom, an announcement was made by Chancellor George Osborne that the arts would be taking a decrease in funding for FY2011:

On Monday, cuts were announced to organizations funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport—3% across the board. Except, inexplicably, Arts Council England, which must absorb a 4% cut, picking up the extra percentage from its own reserves. That injunction—the extra 1% amounts to £5m—has baffled and angered ACE, and understandably so.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Bartle, “Preserving Culture.”

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Charlotte Higgins, “Culture Secretary Jeremy Hunt Wields His Axe,” May 25, 2010, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture/2010/may/25/arts-council-england-cuts> (accessed May 30, 2010).

The Arts Council Enland (ACE) will be required to take not only take a 4 percent budget cut but are expected to cover the loss by using their savings. The Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) has claimed that the savings made by the Arts Council is because of under spending of previous governmental aid.<sup>50</sup> In an article written by Will Gompertz, the BBC's editor for arts journal, he compares what the DCMS is doing to ACE by relating it to a normal organizations employment. He says:

Put another way, it would be like an employer reducing the salaries of all its employees by 3%, then cutting the salary of Shelly Jones from IT by a further 1% because she has saved a bit each month and put it aside.<sup>51</sup>

When put this way the reasoning for the budget cut seems ludicrous and preposterous, but England is not the only area in which arts are being cut. The same is happening in the U.S.

In New York, Governor David Patterson announced that there would be a major cut to the arts budget. This budget cut is so large that it would place New York just above Arkansas and Minnesota.<sup>52</sup> New York will be substantially lower than the national average by 23 cents per capita, taking a \$1.71 per capita hit.<sup>53</sup> In an article entitled "Arts Leaders Blast NY Gov. Paterson's Proposed Slash of Culture Funding," the author, Leonard Jacobs, includes a statement given by New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) Chairman Danny Simmons, he states:

The arts provide over \$25 billion of economic impact to our state and are historically part of the solution when it comes to community and economic revitalization. Powerful examples of this fact exist in every county of New York State. From Brooklyn to the Bronx, from Lower Manhattan to Harlem, from Westchester to Schenectady, from the Hamptons to Buffalo, Syracuse and Rochester, the arts drive tourism, enhance quality

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<sup>50</sup> Will Gompertz, "The Arts Council Reserves Precedent," *BBC*. May 29, 2010, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/thereporters/willgompertz/> (accessed May 30, 2010).

<sup>51</sup> Gompertz, "The Arts Council Reserves Precedent."

<sup>52</sup> "Possible 40% Midyear Funding Cut to Make MN More Pro-Arts Than NY," *The Clyde Fitch Report*, April 28, 2010, <http://www.clydefitchreport.com/2010/04/proposed-40-midyear-arts-cut-to-make-mn-more-pro-arts-than-ny/> (accessed May 30, 2010).

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

of life, and create economic stability. The rich diverse culture that NYSCA supports is what makes the state unique in the nation and is often cited as a reason why people and businesses locate in New York.<sup>54</sup>

The article goes on to explain that a 40 percent cut to the arts budget would severely damage the well-being of the state. The revenue received to local business such as hotels, restaurants, and shops that survive off of tourism will be severely impacted by this budget cut. As of right now there is a \$25.7 billion economic impact in which the arts have brought to New York in the form of tourism.<sup>55</sup> With the proposed budget cut it is hard to say if the same impact will continue to occur.

## **5. Preserving Culture and the Modern Experience in Theatre**

In this section two examples will be looked at. The first example will show how theatre can preserve a moment in time whether it be a look at society, mannerisms, dress, customs, as well as many other unique aspects that are crucial for a certain period in time. For this example, this thesis will present Shakespeare. The other will be an example of how theatre can take an event and or subject valid for one time period such as the early to mid-1800s and have it represent a similar subject matter to another era such as the 1990s. In doing this, this thesis will compare the opera *La Bohème* and the musical *Rent*.

### **a. *La Bohème* and *RENT***

*La Bohème* is an opera adapted by Giacomo Puccini from Henry Murgers novel *La Vie de Bohème* also known as *Scènes de La Vie de Bohème*. In its original form, *La Vie de Bohème* was a novel consisting of many stories or scenes. When Puccini added the Italian libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa, he formed a four act opera what we call *La Bohème* today. This opera is one of the most popular operas in the U.S.

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<sup>54</sup> Leonard Jacobs, "Arts Leaders Blast NY Gov. Paterson's Proposed Slash of Culture Funding," *The Clyde Fitch Report*, May 06, 2010, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/leonard-jacobs/arts-leaders-blast-ny-gov\\_b\\_561160.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/leonard-jacobs/arts-leaders-blast-ny-gov_b_561160.html) (accessed May 30, 2010).

<sup>55</sup> "Arts Council Fights Budget Cuts," *The Daily Mail*, May 21, 2010, <http://www.thedailymail.net/articles/2010/05/21/news/doc4bf61a1e6d795483460452.txt> (accessed May 30, 2010).

This opera however, is known by another name and has had much success in surviving beyond the 1800s when it was written. Today, although many do not realize, it is known as the musical *Rent*.

The opening scene for both shows begins with two poor artists on Christmas Day:

To provide heat, Rodolfo lights the stove with one of his manuscripts. Two friends arrive: Colline, a philosopher, and Schaunard, a musician, the latter bringing food and wine. Benoit, the landlord, arrives to collect his overdue rent, but in a humorous encounter he is quickly dispatched; the bohemians fill him with wine and proceed to express mock outrage at his amorous encounters.<sup>56</sup>

The difference in this scene is that in *Rent* the overdue rent is charged by the character of Benjamin, an old friend and past roommate of the other characters. Benjamin marries into money and has decided to charge his old friends the past year of rent, going against his original promise that they could live in the apartment for free.

Both of the shows go on to show many more similarities, however, dealing with the issues or problems of their time. Also a factor that stands out is the list of characters:

Table 1. Cast List for *La Bohème* and *Rent*

Cast:

*La Bohème*

*Rent*

Mimi, a seamstress	Mimi, an exotic dancer with HIV
Rodolfo, a poet	Roger, musician who is HIV Positive
Marcello, a painter	Mark, a filmmaker
Musetta, a singer	Maureen, bisexual performance artist

<sup>56</sup> Burton D. Fisher, *Puccini's La Bohème: Opera Journeys Libretto Series* (Opera Journeys Publishing, 2003, revised in 2007).

Colline, a philosopher	Tom Collins, homosexual philosophy professor
Schaunard, a musician	Anarchist philosopher with AIDS
Alcindoro, a state councilor	Angel, cross dressing percussionist with AIDS
Parpignol, a vendor	Joanne, a lawyer and a lesbian
Benoit, the landlord	Benjamin, the landlord

(The *La Bohème* list of characters taken from “Puccini Opera La Bohème: Plot Synopsis and Character Description of Italian Drama.” October 10, 2008. [http://italian-opera.suite101.com/article.cfm/puccini\\_opera\\_la\\_boheme](http://italian-opera.suite101.com/article.cfm/puccini_opera_la_boheme) accessed June 2, 2010 and *Rent* list of characters taken from “Rent Musical,” see Mahalo. <http://www.mahalo.com/rent-musical> that was accessed June 1, 2010)

Although the professions of the characters differ slightly, they represent their era and class well. During the 1850s, tuberculosis, a bacterial disease that generally attacks the lungs,<sup>57</sup> was spreading through the lower classes of Europe at a fast pace. Most people who did not have the usual symptoms of fever, fatigue, and persistent cough, did not know that they had the disease<sup>58</sup> and were slowly dying. In the 1980s, a similar disease called AIDS began to spread. Although AIDS is not transmitted by air as tuberculosis is, it is a disease that spread rapidly without warning and without cure. In the musical *Rent*, most of the characters, all of a lower class, are infected with this disease. The play shows how the characters are affected by it in their everyday lives both with having to deal with their own health and inevitable death as well of their friends.

The beauty of the two shows is that they are almost exactly the same, but addressing the issues of their own era. In *La Bohème*, a person can go back in time and experience music, wardrobe, language, and events that represent the 1850s getting a

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<sup>57</sup> “New York State Department of Health Tuberculosis (TB),” *Department of Health*. June 2007. [http://www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/communicable/tuberculosis/docs/fact\\_sheet.pdf](http://www.health.state.ny.us/diseases/communicable/tuberculosis/docs/fact_sheet.pdf) (accessed May 30, 2010).

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

snapshot of history. In *Rent*, the experience is different. If *Rent* had not been adapted to concerns of the new era, the lesson, or experience would not have been as powerful. People in the twentieth century would not be able to relate to diseases such as tuberculosis as easily as they would be with AIDS. Also, the characters in *La Bohème* are mostly all artists, which at the time were the lowest class a person could be in France. This would be another area that people of the twentieth century would find hard to relate to. Although there are plenty of starving artists, there are many that are successful. In order to allow an audience the *La Bohème* experience, the characters were given a different element to struggle with, homosexuality. By taking *La Bohème* and adapting it to something people could understand and relate to in the twentieth century allows people to have a different aesthetic experience than just watching something being performed. It allows them to share an emotional bond with the characters on stage. Perhaps in 150 years people will not be able to relate to AIDS or homosexuality and will be looking at *Rent* as the snapshot of history we see *La Bohème*.

## **B. CONCLUSION**

Culture is important in our evolving world. It is what teaches a person how to interact with their own people, as well as with others. Technology today, such as the Internet, allow people to be exposed to new cultures at a rapid pace and the cultures of the world have the power to influence others on a wide scale. How culture is spread on the other hand is a complication to national security. When the wrong information hits a society, it can cause upheaval and confusion. This confusion transforms into fear and in turn causes unrest in one culture usually toward another within one society.

Since culture can be spread with ease, it seems logical to use some form of cultural education toward people regardless status. It is our government's position to protect its citizens and doing so in a financially sound way to promote understanding of all peoples. Culture is a weapon that if not understood could lead to the unsettling and deterioration of a society, a weapon that many are not aware of or ready for.

Plays, musicals, and operas give not only an experience of living history when set in another era, but when adapted to current events it can help an audience to understand history by relating to it.

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## **II. THEATRE, ART AND POLITICS IN THE PAST: SUPPRESSION AND PROMOTION**

This chapter describes certain historical examples of suppression and promotion of theatre by governments in such nations as England, France, Germany, and the U.S. It will interpret the promotions and limitations presented in England during the Elizabethan era and the prosecution of the Puritan rule in the seventeenth century. Within France, it will cover each regime starting with the rule of Louis XIV in the seventeenth century and finish with the Third Empire in 1940 in the twentieth century. The analysis of issues in France is followed in turn by a section on Germany, which will explain the propaganda efforts of the Nazi regime and its cleansing of theatre. It will finish with the U.S. censorship of the Federal Theater Project in the 1930s, and then lead into the beginning of the blacklists in the late 1940s, and the fundraising efforts of the American Theatre Wing. At the end of this chapter, the reader will be able to take away an understanding of the struggle artists have had in order to survive even when it is being promoted.

### **A. ENGLAND**

#### **1. Elizabeth I**

During the reign of Elizabeth, the role of the actor in England was under close supervision of the state as in the sixteenth century.<sup>59</sup> During the reign of Elizabeth I, which began in 1559, many changes took place including restoring England to its original state after surviving the wrath of Mary.<sup>60</sup> In an attempt to restore the Church of England to Catholicism, Mary had suppressed the belief of Protestantism. Prior to this point, Mary had to pray in secret, she had been a believer in Catholicism her whole life that was not the religion under Henry VIII, her father, or Edward VI her brother.<sup>61</sup> Mary had been

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<sup>59</sup> Susan Frye, *Elizabeth I: The Competition for Representation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 6–70.

<sup>60</sup> Leo F. Solt, *Church and State in Early Modern England, 1509-1640*, (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc, 1990), 60.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

forced by Henry VIII to invalidate her mother's marriage to him not valid and that she was illegitimate.<sup>62</sup> One of her first rulings with Parliament was to reinstate both her and her mother's name. Once this occurred, her next action was to change the religion of England. In doing so, she ordered the executions of hundreds of people earning her the name Bloody Mary. The people of England grew tired of all the bloodshed and Mary's subjects had grown tired, frustrated, and disconnected with their queen.<sup>63</sup> People were starving due to failed harvests and disease was spreading rapidly.<sup>64</sup> Many attempts were made to overthrow her, but eventually she died from an illness, possibly caused by multiple failed pregnancies, leaving her with no heir and her sister Elizabeth to rule.<sup>65</sup>

According to Oscar G. Brockett in *History of the Theatre*,<sup>66</sup> he writes, "when she succeeded to the throne, Elizabeth was faced with the challenge of gaining effective control over the numerous forces that made for divisiveness throughout English life." He goes on to say:

The theatre was among those activities over which the crown gradually gained control, and since the attitude of the court was always more favorable to professional actors than that of local governments, the growth of the theatre paralleled the central government's assumption of authority over performances.<sup>67</sup>

Before the Elizabethan era, plays were not done in theatres. Instead, they were performed in courtyards or inns and at times in the personal home of the nobility<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> John Hamilton Baker, *The Oxford History of the Laws of England: 1483–1558* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 60.

<sup>63</sup> James Dunn, *Elizabeth and Mary: Cousins, Rivals, Queens* (London, England: Harper Collins, 2003).

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Michael Farquhar, *A Treasury of Royal Scandals: The Shocking True Stories of History's Wickedest, Weirdest, Most Wanton Kings, Queens, Tsars, Popes, and Emperors* (London, England: Penguin Books, 2001), 146.

<sup>66</sup> Oscar Brockett, *History of the Theatre* (5th Ed.) (Library of Congress Cataloging-in-publish data), 198.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> David Ross, *Elizabethan Theatre: From the Reign of Henry VII to the Death of Elizabeth. History and daily life*, Britain Express, <http://www.britainexpress.com/History/elizabethan-theatre.htm> (accessed April 21, 2010).

Elizabeth began to regulate all art in order to control any representation of her.<sup>69</sup> In order to regulate actors and the material that they performed, Elizabeth ruled that they come under the control of a nobleman. No actor was allowed to perform unless they had representation from the nobility. However, even when plays were being censored by the Master of Revels, not all representations of Elizabeth were controlled. For example, in the book *Elizabeth I: The Competition for Representation*, Susan Frye writes:

As is often the case for drama and poetry during this period, her own Master of Revels and the city's censors tolerated images associated with Elizabeth even when they were placed in compromising positions—for example, when the queen of fairies, Titania, sleeps with an ass in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*; when “Celia,” the fairy queen of *Tom a Lincolne*, conceives a bastard; <sup>31</sup> or when Elizabeth stands half-naked before the reader's gaze in the figure of Belphoebe in *The Faerie Queene*.<sup>70</sup>

The representation of her celibacy was not a means of alarm by the Master of Revels or by Elizabeth herself; instead, it was the position of being a woman was performing a man's role in running the country. There was a confusion of gender role and people had to be constantly reminded of her place in society as well as in parliament and to understand her place as a physical body separate from a political body. The protection of Elizabeth's image therefore was possibly more important than preserving that of any other rulers before her. Not only was Elizabeth's image under high censorship, but there were other reasons for state control over actors.

There were two reasons for the attempt of the nobility to exert control with so called “strolling players.” Strolling players would go from town to town performing such racy plays as *Robin Hood* in which the government was concerned would motivate the people to rebel against the established order.<sup>71</sup> The government did not want any portrayal of the royal family to be in a bad light, but at the same time they did use it in a

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<sup>69</sup> Frye, *Elizabeth I: The Competition for Representation*, 6.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Antonia Fraser, *The Royal History of England: The Tudors*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: Cassell & Co, 2000).

propaganda effort against other governments to control the way people thought.<sup>72</sup> An example of this would be during the conflict of Phillip II with the use of the play *Alarum for London*.<sup>73</sup> This play was performed in the 1580s, and portrayed innocent people being mutilated by Spanish soldiers.<sup>74</sup>

The second reason strolling players were frowned upon were because of their roaming nature granted the nature of the estates and the structure of town and land life. This was a time in which disease spread easily and fast and the black plague was attacking at the population. It was believed that actors were spreading the diseases because of their traveling from town to town in order to perform, as well as the general suspicion against those of lower social rank whose place in the social and political order was uncertain and prone to chaos.

Many illegal companies were then created by actors in order to express their artistic freedom which interacted with the religious upheaval of the era. Elizabeth then suppressed religious performances and “actors were brought under closer supervision.”<sup>75</sup> In 1559, she banned the presentation of unlicensed works, forbade plays on religious or political subjects, and made local officials responsible for all public performances in their areas.<sup>76</sup> This banning of unlicensed works was short lived, however. Instead of controlling chaos, such policy suppressed beliefs and religion. In order to fix this, Elizabeth added the right to receive a license from the Justices of the Peace, which gave actors the right to express themselves in the local vicinity in which they lived, although this still did not allow them to act in other communities. Many local officials did not approve of the crowns decision and came up with their own regulations for reasons why actors could not perform in their communities.

The Master of Revels was given complete control over the theatre. Actors were able to perform anywhere in the kingdom, but the amount of troupes became limited. The

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<sup>72</sup> Fraser, *The Royal History of England: The Tudors*.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Brockett, *History of the Theatre*, 200.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

role of the Master of Revel collected fees of the theatre which in time increased more and more. Brockett explains that during this time, Sir Henry Herbert was receiving the fees charged for each licensed play, “the annual income from these fees to be 4,000 pounds, an enormous sum for the time.”<sup>77</sup> The role for the actor soon became embraced by the crown and new sanctions were introduced.

After the rule of Queen Elizabeth came the rise of James VI of Scotland, as well as the decrease of performances. James VI, also known as James I of England, forbade plays to be performed on Sundays.<sup>78</sup> He also used the Master of Revels as a position to control theatrical activities.<sup>79</sup>

The Puritans believed that theatre should be forbidden, because it was not mentioned in scripture.<sup>80</sup> In 1632, a book was published called *Histrionomastix* by William Prynne. Prynne strongly believed that stage plays should be banned because of their unholy nature. *Histrionomastix* consisted of reasons why stage plays were an inappropriate form of escape for people and that they should concentrate on scripture and religion. <sup>81</sup> The Puritan ideas began to rise in popularity during the English Civil War and the theatre began to diminish and was soon ordered to be destroyed.<sup>82</sup> Such places as the Globe Theatre were closed down. The Elizabethan theatre was halted until the restoration period of King Charles II starting in 1661.<sup>83</sup>

Theatre constantly struggled and was caught between wars in society, especially when religion and or politics were involved. Theatre represented what was happening in a society and often times this was censored because of fear of public opinion. However, England was not the only country with these issues. France had its own set of history.

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<sup>77</sup> Brockett, *History of the Theatre*, 200.

<sup>78</sup> *History of the Elizabethan Theatre*, <http://www.elizabethan-era.org.uk/history-of-the-elizabethan-theatre.htm> (accessed April 20, 2010).

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Debra Bruch, *The Journal of Religion and Theatre*, Vol.3 No.1., Department of Fine Arts Michigan Technological University, 2004, <http://www.rjournal.org> (accessed April 20, 2010).

<sup>81</sup> *History of the Elizabethan Theatre*.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

## B. FRANCE

### 1. A Fight Between Church and State

In France of the era of the seventeenth until the eighteenth centuries, theatre formed a subject of controversy characterized by censorship by both the state and the Catholic Church. With each political revolution censorship was either lifted or re-established.<sup>84</sup> Censorship became a way in which the state could maintain and control power and the Church could have power over popular beliefs.

In France of the Old Regime, theatre was not supported by the church. In fact, the church thought that actors were a threat to belief because of their ability to change their emotions from being on stage and off stage. Paul Friedland, in his book *Political Actors: Representative Bodies and Theatricality in the Age of the French Revolution*,<sup>85</sup> comments on the position of **Jacques-Bénigne Bossuets**, the French bishop, by saying:

For Bossuet, the parallel with actors on the stage must have been all too clear; they too chose to feel the passions within their bodies; they too knew the script in advance. If the actor's performance could be said to bear a resemblance to Christ's Passion, the danger, of course was that Jesus himself might, by corollary, be taken for an actor.

Actors were a threat to religion because they caused people to question the position of Christ as well as His officers on earth. This thought is what caused the church to want to censor theatre, although historically, the church had used the theatre to spread the story of Christ. During the reign of Louis XIV 1643–1715, theatre was almost untouchable even though suppressed by the Church. Louis XIV had a soft spot in his heart for performance, since he was once trained to be a dancer and earned the name the Sun King from the many productions he performed in.

The best example of Louis XIV's protection of the arts would be of attempted censorship of Moliere. Moliere, a stage name for Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, a French

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<sup>84</sup> John McCormick, *Popular Theatres of Nineteenth Century France* (Florence, KY: Routledge, 1993), 99.

<sup>85</sup> Paul Friedland, *Political Actors: Representative Bodies and Theatricality in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithica, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003).

playwright and actor in the 1600s who was under constant attack by the church. *Tartuffe* ou *L'Imposteur*, or *Tartuffe* for short, was one of the plays that the church tried to censor. In the original version of *Tartuffe*, the main character, also called *Tartuffe*, was believed to be about a cleric, or someone in close relation to the church.<sup>86</sup> In the beginning of the first act Madame Pernelle, the mother of Orgon, the owner of the home that welcomes *Tartuffe* to live with them, tells all the other characters that they do not measure up to the holiness of *Tartuffe* and that they should strive to be more like him. However, *Tartuffe* is quite the opposite of holy and is actually portrayed as a hypocrite who attempts to destroy the happiness of Orgon. Throughout the play, the other characters try to prove to Orgon that *Tartuffe* is not what he says he is. King Louis XIV saw that the play was written against hypocrisy and encouraged its performance.<sup>87</sup> The Church, however, saw the play as a direct attack on the foundations of religion.<sup>88</sup> Even a Parisian priest tried to publish a denunciation against Moliere, but instead of censoring Moliere as the priest wished, King Louis XIV censured the priest.<sup>89</sup>

Without King Louis XIV, Moliere would not have been able to make the impact on the history of French and western culture that has been his. There was a constant struggle for theatre to survive and without the support of the state, it may have disappeared altogether.<sup>90</sup> Throughout the French Revolution from 1789 onward, theatre was thought of as a voice for public opinion which in turn proved to be a foundation for political power.<sup>91</sup> People began to take solace in the theatre which caused concern for the Ministry that the revolution would be lost because of the decrease in their ability to

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<sup>86</sup> Wayne S. Turney, *A Glimpse of Theatre History; The Tartuffe Controversy*.  
<http://www.wayneturney.20m.com/molieretartuffefight.htm> (accessed April 18, 2010).

<sup>87</sup> *Tartuffe, A History of the Play by Moliere*. 2002,  
<http://www.theatrehistory.com/french/tartuffe001.html> (accessed April 18, 2010).

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Turney, *A Glimpse of Theatre History*.

<sup>90</sup> Emmet Kennedy, *Theatre, Opera, and Audiences in Revolutionary Paris: Analysis and Repertory* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996).

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

control the public's minds.<sup>92</sup> King Louis XIV used the theatre as a tool to gain the love of the people, but as people began to express thought, absolutist rule began to decline.

During the First Empire, censorship was controlled by the police and all plays had to be approved by Lucian Bonaparte the Minister for the Interior.<sup>93</sup> Many of the restrictions applied within this censorship were by direct order of Napoleon, who banned the representation of any religious character in which may be represented in a bad light as well as plays that told recent history.<sup>94</sup> In the mid 1700s, the restrictions of theatre limited the amount of plays having to do with politics in order to control public thought.<sup>95</sup> According to John McCormick in his book, *Popular Theatres of Nineteenth Century France*, he states:

King Lear was forbidden on the stage of the Cirque in 1857 because it showed 'the degradation of royalty', and this was considered unsuitable for a boulevard audience. French foreign policy also affected censorship and resulted in the banning in 1852 of the Ambigu's Napoleon play, *Le Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*, because it showed the English in an unfavourable light at a time when a rapprochement with England was part of government policy.<sup>96</sup>

Instead, Napoleon supported and preferred plays that encouraged patriotic enthusiasm.<sup>97</sup> Also during this time the amount of theatres were controlled and limited.<sup>98</sup>

By 1830, many plays that had been banned were being staged and many of them involved a relationship between sex and Church, which lead into the censorship of the Second Empire.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Kennedy, *Theatre, Opera, and Audiences in Revolutionary Paris*.

<sup>93</sup> McCormick, *Popular Theatres of Nineteenth Century France*, 100–110

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Friedland, *Political Actors*, 52.

<sup>96</sup> McCormick, *Popular Theatres of Nineteenth Century France*, 100–110.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

According to McCormick, “The strait-laced morality of the Second Empire, which subscribed to the family as the cornerstone of society, and objected, at least publicly, to anything that might diminish the family, such as adultery, brought about a new era of prudery.”<sup>100</sup> This was an era in which the state tried to instill a wholesome ideal.<sup>101</sup> McCormick goes on to explain:

Disturbances were less to be feared in the theatres, but, as an awareness of a class-based society grew under the Second Empire and Third Republic, the focus shifted to the moral influence of the theatre and to the unspoken need to maintain the dominant bourgeois ideology.<sup>102</sup>

In Germany and Austria, the dominant bourgeois ideology affected many artists of the eighteenth century, including Mozart who was limited by the class-based society. Many artists could not live to their full capability and were suppressed by the limitations put upon them from the higher classes and royalty.

## **C. GERMANY/AUSTRIA**

### **1. Mozart**

Peter Shaffer’s play *Amadeus* demonstrates the importance of the arts, in this case music, in eighteenth century Germany, as well as the hazards of an artist competing for aristocratic patronage against rivals. Mozart had to tailor his music to aristocratic tastes, while at the same time provide innovative and original compositions that reflected favorably on the prestige of his patrons from the nobility.

The role of the arts in eighteenth century Germany and Austria went under a major transformation that established the artistic voice that is heard today. The arts were deeply related with politics and allowed an avenue in which people could use in order to express their inner emotions as fitted the spirit of the age.<sup>103</sup> Prior to this point, Artists

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<sup>100</sup> McCormick, *Popular Theatres of Nineteenth Century France*, 100–110.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> Paul Brians, *Romanticism*, October 1, 2004, <http://www.wsu.edu> (accessed April 29, 2010). Use books, too.

were limited in what they were allowed to produce, as well as who they were allowed to perform in front of. Material was censored and artists were expected to dilute their art for popular consumption.<sup>104</sup> An actor expressed the ability to create an emotion they had not felt before and easily disposed of it as they exited the stage. The Church and the nobility were afraid of public opinion and attempted to suppress it. People began to take solace in the theatre that caused concern for the Ministry that the revolution would be lost because of the decrease in their ability to control the public's minds.<sup>105</sup>

The sudden confidence in lower classes to express themselves began a time in which individuality and freedom were more articulated. This new age of reason caused the birth of a new era. People were no longer confined to do the will of the church or the higher class and were able to pursue other audiences.<sup>106</sup> It was an era of Baroque that crossed classical and met romanticism that stressed emotion and freedom to express against social conventions.<sup>107</sup>

Mozart had the ability to listen to music and instantly know how to play it, even without the sheet music in front of him. A great example was his memorization of Miserere. Miserere was a piece written by Gregorio Allegri that was performed during Holy Week and was forbidden to be reproduced without the consent of the Pope. It is believed that only three copies of this score ever existed...three copies and the copy inside Mozart's head. He was able to listen to the music and immediately translate it to paper. Alarming his father, but also impressing him, he decided that Mozart needed close supervision in order to keep Mozart's genius from getting into trouble; however, this did not last for long. It is rumored that Mozart gave the score to Dr. Charles Burney, a historian of music, who published it in 1771. Instead of being excommunicated by the

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<sup>104</sup> Andrew Bonnell, *People's Stage in Imperial Germany: Social Democracy and Culture 1890–1914* (Tauris Academic Studies, 2005).

<sup>105</sup> Kennedy, *Theatre, Opera, and Audiences in Revolutionary Paris*.

<sup>106</sup> Brians, *Romanticism*.

<sup>107</sup> Rick Brainard, *18th Century History*, 2005, <http://www.history1700s.com> (accessed April 29, 2010).

Pope, which was the punishment of reproducing *Miserere*, he praised him.<sup>108</sup> Mozart was saved by his musical genius and the ban on *Miserere* was lifted and Mozart was awarded the Cross of the Order and the Golden Spur.<sup>109</sup>

Mozart yearned for public success and to not be limited as a court composer. The church as well as the nobility tried to control Mozart by allowing him to only produce certain types of music and in certain languages. Political bickering in the Viennese Court also prevented Mozart from becoming wealthy. The Emperor often attended many of Mozart's productions and thought highly of Mozart, but did not help him financially beyond a small sum of money.

Mozart's ability to write music was far more advanced than was normal for the era in which he lived. So advanced, that one would have to extensively study his music in order to play it, and most of the time it was too difficult for others to understand. Mozart was in a constant battle with the music he wanted to produce and with what his patrons wanted to hear. He had to alter his music in order to please aristocratic patronage, which involved simplifying his musical creations to please aristocratic tastes.

The writer's interpretation of Mozart's life may have been fabricated, but it gives the audience a feeling of what it must have been like to live as Mozart did, as well as the elite that lived in his shadow. Many people were amazed by Mozart's musical ability and how he was able to bend the rules that other musicians were not able to do in turn. He had a power over the elite like the Pied Piper of Hamelin. Mozart was not a wealthy man and lived well beyond his means. He embodied the future of the common man and even though the nobility were awed by him they were frightened and threatened by him.

Shaffer does a great job in showing the struggle in Mozart's life, as well as the struggle of the elite to suppress him. An example would be the scene where the nobility is trying to convince The Emperor that an opera cannot be done in German, that it is too vulgar of a language and that opera's should remain in Italian. The argument is lost when

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<sup>108</sup> Services Informatiques des Forges, *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791)*. <http://www.early-music.com> (accessed April 29, 2010).

<sup>109</sup> Services Informatiques des Forges, *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*.

Mozart is presented with the project to create the opera. He argues that to have an opera done in German would accomplish greatness in art and that it would achieve international greatness.

Popular tastes in music began to change as people wanted to bring emotions and feelings to the stage rather than reason. The artists of the Romantic era wanted to live and breathe art rejecting rules and conventional society. It allowed the notion that society could be better, that it could progress, and that one could live to their full potential.<sup>110</sup> The Baroque era lasted until about 1750 in which opera became increasingly popular as well as did the interest in instrumental music.

After the death of Mozart music became increasingly popular and the Romantic era was in full swing. Composers turned to folk stories and literature to create a new genre of music known as Bel canto opera.<sup>111</sup> As the eighteenth century carried on into the nineteenth century, music became richer and symphonies, ballets, and concertos grew. The sense of belonging to ones country drove musicians to concentrate on their nation thus beginning the idea of nationalism and pride in which later lead to unification.<sup>112</sup>

## 2. Cleansing of Theatre

In Germany at the beginning of Hitler's reign and during World War II, the theatre flourished but with productions approved by Nazi rule. The Nazis believed that modern theater in the Weimar Republic was filthy and that it corrupted the images of history that were good, and in order to have theatre provide proper art that represented German Culture, it needed to be cleansed of un-German influences.<sup>113</sup> Some artists were banished from the stage, such as directors Otto Brahm, Max Reinhardt, Leopold Jessner,

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<sup>110</sup> Lorri Brown, *The Romantic Movement: Romanticism Defines the Early 19th Century in Western Europe*, January 27, 2008, [http://weuropeanhistory.suite101.com/article.cfm/the\\_romantic\\_movement](http://weuropeanhistory.suite101.com/article.cfm/the_romantic_movement) (accessed April 2010, 2010).

<sup>111</sup> Robert Sherrane, *Music History 102: A Guide to Western Composers and Their Music*, <http://www.ipl.org> (accessed April 29, 2010).

<sup>112</sup> Brown, *The Romantic Movement*.

<sup>113</sup> Glen W. Gadberry, *Theatre in the Third Reich, the Pre-War Years: Essays on Theatre in Nazi Germany* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, Incorporated, 1995), 4.

and Erwin Piscator.<sup>114</sup> The Nazis believed that these individuals were one cause of the corruption and downfall of German theatre.<sup>115</sup> In fact, the drive for all aspects of the theatre to be cleansed began with the re-writing of many political and historical plays in order to show support of the Third Reich.<sup>116</sup> The power of an actor became a weapon in the creation of a new and improved German culture under Nazi principles as well as a political movement in which supported the government. If an artist did not support the government, they were considered to be suspect.<sup>117</sup>

The creativity of theatre disappeared into politics and it became difficult to differentiate between the aesthetics of politics and the aesthetics of art itself.<sup>118</sup> Theatre was evolving into a Nazi creation and traditional theatre was disappearing. According to Glen Gadberry in his book *Theatre in the Third Reich, the Pre-War Years: Essays on Theatre in Nazi Germany*, he states, “The theatre pieces rejected by Hitler and his supporters were mostly late nineteenth and twentieth-century ones.”<sup>119</sup> He goes on to say, “of new productions in October 1933 clearly reflected the result of a calculated and well organized effort to launch a cultural revolution.”<sup>120</sup> It became a necessity to learn about the new tradition of theatre. Schools were opened for people to take training sessions to help understand the new theatrical spirit versus the old bourgeois tradition.<sup>121</sup>

Hitler, after he took power, placed Joseph Goebbels as head of the ministry of entertainment and propaganda. The idea of the propaganda movement was to be able to control public opinion and create one mass mind set. All Jewish characters were portrayed as villains that preyed on Aryan women.

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<sup>114</sup>,Gadberry, *Theatre in the Third Reich*, 18–160.

<sup>115</sup>,Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

Many artists were prosecuted for performing in theatre, especially if they were Jewish. However, some were able to buy themselves time before being sent to the concentration camps. Camilla Spira, a famous actress at the time, tried to cooperate with the Nazis by staying within the Juedischer Kulturbund, a Jewish theatre. Although this worked for some time, she was eventually sent to Westerbork concentration camp and performed on the stage provided there.<sup>122</sup> Acting saved her life. Luckily for Spira, she was able to make it out of the concentration camp and lived a long life performing on film. Not everyone was as lucky as she was. Kurt Geron had the opposite experience.

Geron performed in many stage performances as well as films. He starred with Marlene Dietrich in the film called *The Blue Angel*. Dietrich offered Geron to come to the U.S. to flee Germany during WWII, but Geron, thinking of his experiences from WWI, refused.<sup>123</sup> Geron was picked up and sent to Westerbork, the same concentration camp as Spira but was soon sent away to Theresienstadt, a holding place where people were sent before being placed at Auschwitz.<sup>124</sup> At Theresienstadt, Geron was able to run a cabaret theatre where he could entertain the other inmates. However, Theresienstadt did not have the best living conditions. Phil Hall, in his article “The Bootleg Files: The Fuhrer Gives a City to the Jews,” states, “A recorded 33,000 people died from hunger or disease from the miserable conditions at Theresienstadt.”<sup>125</sup> There were many attempts by the International Committee for the Red Cross to challenge the German government about the conditions at Theresienstadt until finally, the German government gave in and decided to create a propaganda piece using Geron to show the humane conditions they had at Theresienstadt.<sup>126</sup> It is not clear to why the Nazis chose to use Geron, but he became the only Jewish person to have directed a Nazi affiliated film production during

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<sup>122</sup> Gadberry, *Theatre in the Third Reich*, 18–160.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Phil Hall, “The Bootleg Files: The Fuhrer Gives a City to the Jews,” posted 23 Feb 2007, <http://www.filmthreat.com/features/1894&archive=Date&match=0&page=5/> (accessed April 19, 2009).

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

WWII.<sup>127</sup> Soon after this film was made Geron was sent to Auschwitz where he was murdered on November 15, 1944, right before the orders came out that the gas chambers were to be destroyed.

In some concentration camps, such as Westerbork as mentioned before, theatre performances were allowed. The allowance of theatre in a camp depended on who the officer in charge was.<sup>128</sup> Gadberry states:

Similarly, after the outbreak of war, in Malines in Belgium, where prisoners of French, German, Flemish, and Dutch origins were interned, the SS arranged for those who had been theatre performers to present “variety shows” in the camp yard on Saturdays and Sundays. Following these performances reports would appear in the Belgian press to present a better picture of camp life and to diminish rumours of German atrocities.<sup>129</sup>

Generally Jewish entertainment was not permitted, but when it was these performances became some artist’s last chance at life. Often times if the performance was not enjoyed by an audience, the artist was beaten and sometimes killed.<sup>130</sup> When a performance went well, it allowed inmates to escape reality and gave them a moment of relief from the life they were living.<sup>131</sup>

## **D. UNITED STATES**

### **1. The Old World to Civil War**

Cleansing of theatre was hardly new to artists when it came about in World War II with Hitler. The U.S. beginning with the 1750s also went through a transition phase. With European influences on the U.S. theatre was banned because of the belief that it represented un-patriotic thoughts and actions. Theatre was defined and shaped by each level of society thrusting it to embrace melodrama, burlesque, vaudeville, and the little

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<sup>127</sup> Hall, “The Bootleg Files.”

<sup>128</sup> Gadberry, *Theatre in the Third Reich*, 18–160.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

theatre which evolved into community theatre. This section of the history of theatre in the U.S. addresses a) the effects of banning plays in 1750, b) the involvement of melodrama in the civil war, c) Franklin D. Roosevelt support of the National Theatre project, and d) theatre during World War II.

According to Jeffrey Richards in his book *Early American Drama*, once theatrical troupes first came to America they were shunned by all groups, not just one. He states:

When Lewis Hallaman and David Douglass brought professional troupes to American shores, they encountered some hostility in nearly every venue. This led to the practice of turning plays into “lectures,” whereby scenes from *Othello*, for instance, could be passed off as a lecture on jealousy. During the Revolutionary War, Washington, a great supporter of the theater who sometimes used plays like Joseph Addison’s *Cato* to encourage morale, had to bow to the will of the Continental Congress when it banned plays in patriot-controlled territory in 1778.<sup>132</sup>

People were afraid that theatre would show support against the colonies that is why plays were masked as lectures and used to teach or show examples of emotion.<sup>133</sup>

Even prior to 1778, theatre was banned. The U.S., just like England in 1662, was influenced by the Puritans who believed that emotion should not be expressed on stage. In an effort to save the community from being exposed to this guilty pleasure, as well avoid political expression, theatre was banned from the early colonies.<sup>134</sup> By 1750, five states had censorship acts including New Hampshire, Rhode Island, New York, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts.<sup>135</sup>

After the war theatre stood on soft ground until the classics were reintroduced. Many plays were only represented in areas that were predominantly English because they were thought to represent the enemy and the Old World. It was not until melodramas began to become popular that theatre began to spread.

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<sup>132</sup> Jeffrey H. Richards, *Early American Drama* (New York: Penguin Books, 1997), xii.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Don B. Wilmett and Tice L Miller, *Cambridge Guide to American Theatre*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 87.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

Melodrama, also known as the voices of the people,<sup>136</sup> allowed an audience to express their likes and dislikes with the interaction of yelling “boo” and “yay” when characters came on stage. Melodrama was lighthearted and introduced music to theatre in a new way. One of the most popular melodramas performed was *Uncle Toms Cabin: Life among the Lowly*, originally a novel written by Harriet Beecher Stowe. *Uncle Toms Cabin* opened the eyes of Americans to the evils of slavery creating a divide between the North and the South.<sup>137</sup> Stowe received many threats because of what she wrote, but it did not stop the novel from becoming a best seller. As the novel spread so did the play allowing the anti-slavery message to reach people of all classes leading the nation into Civil War.<sup>138</sup>

## 2. Federal Theatre Project

During the 1930s, Franklin D. Roosevelt began a program called the Workers Project Administration. This was created in an effort to take people out of unemployment and put into the workforce based on their skills. In this program, Harry Hopkins, a trusted advisor of Roosevelt, wanted the Workers Project Administration to create a program that promoted culture.

By domesticating the very idea of “culture,” the New Deal arts programs catalyzed a new-found sense of cultural nationalism and brought everyday people in touch with what had been previously considered “high” art. Some Americans distrusted this fusion of culture with American democracy, fearing that an “emphasis on numbers would inevitably lessen quality.” Harry Hopkins, head of the WPA, however, was convinced of the necessity to democratize and celebrate American culture and, seeing that it made no sense to put an actor to work filling holes in a highway, developed a way to employ thousands of unemployed actors through federal patronage of the arts.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Mark Knowles, *Tap Roots: The Early History of Tap Dancing* (Library of Congress Cataloguing-in-Publishing Data, 2002).

<sup>137</sup> Stuart A. Kallen, *The Civil War and Reconstruction* Paul Joseph, Ed. (Edina, MN: ABDO Consulting Group, Inc., 2001), 14.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> *Audio History: An Experiential Model for Teaching 30s Era American Culture*, <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~MA04/mccain/audiohist/intro5.htm> (accessed April 10, 2010).

Hopkins hired Hallie Flanagan, a theatre professor at Vassar College, to lead the Federal Theatre Project. This project not only created jobs to employ those involved with the theatre, but it also brought live theatre to people who had never had the resources to experience it before.<sup>140</sup> Flanagan's ideas for the Federal Theatre Project sprouted from the realist acting style she learned from Constantine Stanislavsky, at the Moscow Art Theatre.<sup>141</sup> This acting style had a strong emphasis on the common man, and therefore, Flanagan wanted to extend theatre, so that it was understood by every person and gave the opportunity of social advancement.<sup>142</sup>

She wanted to go beyond the restrictions theatre had to entertain the white collar elites. The projects model was to create a federation of theatres producing productions that mirrored both local and national issues with the funding and support of the government.<sup>143</sup>

The Federal Theatre Project quickly became popular, and by 1936 there were over 153 theatres within 28 states.<sup>144</sup> These performances, on a weekly basis, reached over 359,000 people.<sup>145</sup> The Federal Theatre Project employed over 13,000 Americans with its productions. Dramatists including Arthur Miller, Orson Wells, and John Houseman all began their careers with this program.<sup>146</sup> Without the Federal Theatre Project, these people may have not made the impact that they have on literature today.

With Flanagan's model the theatre became free and accessible to all citizens across the country as well as free from censorship by the government. Many of the

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<sup>140</sup> "Arts and Culture. History of Political Theatre." *PBS Now*. March 18, 2005. <http://www.pbs.org/now/arts/politicaltheater.html> (accessed April 05, 2010).

<sup>141</sup> Alan Lawson, *Commonwealth of Hope: The New Deal Response to Crisis*, (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 142–195.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>144</sup> *MsC 314 Manuscript Register, Federal Theatre Project Scripts and Papers*. This document describes a collection of material by the Special Collections Department at the University of Iowa Libraries. Made available on the Internet March 2004 Collection Dates: 1936-1939. [www.lib.uiowa.edu](http://www.lib.uiowa.edu) (accessed April 05, 2010).

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>146</sup> "Arts and Culture. History of Political Theatre."

performances were done in a variety of languages explaining local history and exploring diversity and shared values.<sup>147</sup> Flanagan borrowed the idea of Living Newspapers, which emerged in the early 1900 in Russia during the Bolshevik Revolution. This style of performance was done by actors who would find current events from newspaper clippings, research them, and then perform them to an audience.<sup>148</sup>

Many shows emerged from the Living Newspapers, such as the production of *One Third of a Nation* by Arthur Arent. This play was based off of Roosevelt's ideas that began the Workers Project Administration: that the country was equally ill-housed, ill clothed, and ill nourished. The production was well received and performed over 200 performances.

Another production of a Live Newspaper was that of Ethiopia. Ethiopia, written by Elmer Rise, was about Mussolini's attack on Ethiopia. It was written with many speeches, which both Mussolini and Roosevelt had made. This play was not as well received as *One Third of a Nation*. The state ignored the free speech ideal in which Flanagan and Hopkins supported the Federal Theatre and instituted a censorship on this play, never allowing it into production.

Another show that was attacked by censorship was *The Cradle Will Rock* by Orson Welles and John Houseman. This production, however, was not successfully denied production. According to Pedro Ponce in his article, "An Hour upon the Stage: The Brief Life of Federal Theatre," he states:

The controversy over *The Cradle Will Rock* is now the stuff of legend. Set in Steeltown, U.S.A., the play deals with unionism and corruption. Rehearsals began in the spring of 1937, at a time when violence between striking steelworkers and the police had been escalating for months. There was great public interest in the play, and between fourteen and eighteen thousand advance tickets were sold.<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Lawson, *Commonwealth of Hope*, 157.

<sup>148</sup> "Arts and Culture. *History of Political Theatre*."

<sup>149</sup> Pedro Ponce, "An Hour Upon the Stage the Breif Life of Federal Theatre," *Vers. Humanities*, Vol. 24, No. 4. July/August 2003, <http://www.neh.gov/news/humanities/2003-07/federaltheatre.html> (accessed April 06, 2010).

Just before the production opened, Flanagan received word that the Federal Theatre project was to receive budget cuts and to not allow any productions of any plays to open that month.<sup>150</sup> Anger at the obvious ban of the show encouraged Welles and Houseman to produce the show. They found another location for production of *The Cradle Will Rock* that was free from government sanction and with a single piano the show went on.

The Workers Project Administration was strongly supported by the liberals and intellectuals; however, there was an increasing animosity of the conservatives.<sup>151</sup> Shows such as *Ethiopia* and *The Cradle Will Rock* threatened certain parties and the performances soon were considered as un-American propaganda.<sup>152</sup> According to Alan Lawson in his book, *Commonwealth of Hope: The New Deal Response to Crisis*, he states:

The concentration of its workers in New York City alienated many congressmen, whose resentment came to the fore when Representative William Sirovich of New York proposed in 1938 that WPA support for the arts be made permanent by creation of an independent Bureau of Fine Arts. In a response that shocked Sirovich in its vehemence, Congress buried the idea with ridicule.<sup>153</sup>

Soon a Committee was created by Congress called the House Un-American Activities Committee and was lead by Representative Martin Dies.<sup>154</sup> Lawson says, “Dies proved to be a zealot of shifty ethics and oratorical power who used the committee to aid the conservative attack on the New Deal.”<sup>155</sup> Lawson goes on to explain, “the final blows came more from the patriotic and frugal side than from the philistine. In 1938, HUAC member J. Parnell Thomas of Connecticut announced that the Arts Project was a

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<sup>150</sup> Ponce, “An Hour Upon the Stage the Breif Life of Federal Theatre.”

<sup>151</sup> M.J. Heale, *Franklin D. Roosevelt: New Deal and War* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

<sup>152</sup> “*Arts and Culture. History of Political Theatre.*”

<sup>153</sup> Lawson, *Commonwealth of Hope*, 194–196.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*

hotbed of Communism and needed to be investigated.”<sup>156</sup> As this was going on, Harry Hopkins, left the WPA behind. His replacement was by no means a supporter of the arts and supervised over its downfall.<sup>157</sup>

Flanagan was the first person that Dies put under investigation for communism. She defended her art and explained that some productions created by the Federal Theatre were expressions of propaganda that educated people in democracy, and that they were not in any way an avenue for communism.<sup>158</sup> Unfortunately for Dies, he was unsuccessful at proving Flanagan as a communist and walked away with nothing but a grudge.

The committee’s work was done so thoroughly that for the arts, as someone put it, the New Deal turned into the Dies Deal. The Relief Bill of 1940 exacted full revenge on Flanagan’s uppityness by eliminating the Theatre Project altogether and further placated the Dies Committee by imposing a loyalty oath on the other severely reduced projects.<sup>159</sup>

As a result, the Federal Theatre Project became a dream of the past. The accusations of communism spread and the culture of art diminished. The world of art became a frightening place to experience.

The Workers Progress Administration and the New Deal allowed the U.S. to utilize their citizens in areas of work in which they had been previously trained, including the role of the artist. By utilizing artists, the government was able to use propaganda for good. By having popular theatre, current events were able to spread to all people through living newspapers. Unfortunately, the Federal Theatre Project was not able to flourish and live to its full capacity, but it did provide Americans a social and political release it had not in previous years.

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<sup>156</sup> Lawson, *Commonwealth of Hope*, 194–196.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>158</sup> Ponce, “An Hour Upon the Stage.”

<sup>159</sup> Lawson, *Commonwealth of Hope*, 195.

### 3. Positive Examples of the Twentieth Century

Although communism had a big effect on artists during the upcoming years, U.S. history is replete with positive examples of the positive synergy of the arts and government, such theatres as the American Theatre Wing in the twentieth century, which would organize fund raisers to aid in the war efforts. Women such as Rachel Crothers, playwright of *Susan and God*, formed the Stage Woman's War Relief. According to the American Theatre Wings history on their Web site it states:

On the eve of America's entry into the first World War in 1917, seven ladies of theatre-Rachel Crothers, Louise Closser Hale, Dorothy Donnelly, Josephine Hull, Minnie Dupree, Bessie Tyree and Louise Drew-converged to discuss the possibility of forming an organization to aid in war relief. At the meeting, these ladies decided to summon members of the theatre world together to determine how to contribute to the war effort. Two weeks later people representing every segment of the family of theatre-from the internationally famous to wardrobe mistresses, stagehands, and producers-packed the Hudson Theatre to its doors.<sup>160</sup>

Recruiting members from all aspects of the theater community, the organization sold almost seven million dollars in war bonds, collected nearly two million articles of clothing for distribution, and provided entertainment for U.S. troops.<sup>161</sup> Even after the Treaty of Versailles, the efforts of the American Theatre Wing continued, and in 1920 a brother organization was created in order to aid the civilian population effected by the war.<sup>162</sup>

The Stage Woman's War Relief organization continued after the war in aiding veterans but was soon disbanded. According to Cathy K. Urwin, in her article, *The Original Stage Door Canteen*, she states, "Before the U.S. was drawn into World War II, the federal government asked Crothers to reactivate it." Not only did they reactivate the organization, but until the bombing of Pearl Harbor, they were aiding other countries.

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<sup>160</sup> *American Theatre Wing*, 2010, [http://americantheatrewing.org/about/history\\_of\\_atw.php](http://americantheatrewing.org/about/history_of_atw.php) (accessed April 19, 2010).

<sup>161</sup> Cathy K. Urwin, "No Liquor, but Damned Good Anyway," *America In WWII The Magazine of a People At War 1941-1945*. <http://www.nationalww2museum.org> (accessed November 6, 2009).

<sup>162</sup> *American Theatre Wing*.

The American Theater Wing opened canteens not only in the U.S. but also in London and Paris.<sup>163</sup> They were so successful that they were able to raise over \$81,000 in aid for British civilians.

Economically, the theatre provided a micro economic anchor to respond to devastating events. For example when the organization changed hands and the theatre was under renovations, it kept its doors open. The price of admission was food supplies for the kitchen and more than half a ton of sugar was collected.<sup>164</sup> Imagine if something were done like this today, not only in the U.S, but in France, England, Germany, Turkey, etc. A free show, for the price of canned goods, or blankets for the needy would be a great resource for raising goods in situations of disaster or war. By the end of the war, the American Theatre Wing was one of many theatres, or canteens, that were opened for the war relief. There was no segregation, and they were open to those of allied nations. The beauty of the Stage Door Canteens was that it provided people an escape and a hope for a peaceful future.<sup>165</sup>

The American Theatre Wings efforts expanded and soon sub groups such as the Victory Players and the Hospital Entertainment Program were created. The Victory player's mission was to bring plays to families that could give them a therapeutic release so that they were able to understand how to deal with their emotions from the war.<sup>166</sup> The productions performed by the Victory Players reached over 1000 performances including over 4000 artists and reaching over 100,000 people in amphitheatre type settings.<sup>167</sup> The Hospital Entertainment Program traveled to different ward units bringing entertainment to wounded soldiers. In sending artists to different hospitals, the program was able to reach over 97 units.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> *American Theatre Wing.*

<sup>164</sup> Urwin, ““No Liquor, but Damned Good Anyway.””

<sup>165</sup> *American Theatre Wing.*

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*

After World War II, the creation of the United Nations fueled interest in greater international understanding and the likely role of culture and the performing arts in same. Many programs began to emerge as part of the United Nations, including an international theatre known as, ITI (International Theatre Institute). From 1950 to 1968, the ITI published *World Theatre*, a periodical designed to disseminate information.<sup>169</sup> The ITI also held frequent international meetings, and after 1954 sponsored an annual festival, the Théâtre des Nations.<sup>170</sup> This spiked an interest around the world for theatre as well better understanding of others.

The U.S. has fought the survival of theatre since it became a country. At first, it was not welcome by religion because it was not theologically acceptable and then by U.S. congress for being un-patriotic. When theatre was allowed to be performed again it was masked in the form of a lecture, but as time went on it became more welcome and eventually was effected with the inevitable European influences. The form of melodrama opened the eyes of many individuals and even became the fuel for civil war. Years after the Civil War, Franklin D. Roosevelt created a program which allowed people to receive jobs that utilized their talents. This program, unfortunately, was short lived and was destroyed in the mid 1930s. The American Theatre Wing in the twentieth century helped to build a new type of patriotism through fund raisers to aid in the war efforts.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

In each of these countries, there was both promotion and suppression of theatre by the state. In France and in England, the church was a major contributor to suppression as the state contributed to the level of censorship. Both of these countries had major influences in revolutions of theatre. With the support of Moliere by King Louis XIV, the literature that we now have today would not be the same. In England, the Elizabethan era was dedicated to what could be considered the real birth of modern theatre today. Actual theatres were being built rather than actors traveling like nomads. In both of these eras, people began to read and educate themselves. In Germany, theatre was used by the

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<sup>169</sup> Brockett, *History of the Theatre*, 682.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

government to create cultural propaganda. Although propaganda was used prior to this point in history, it reached a new level in its ability to affect mass amounts of people. In some cases, as small as they may be, theatre saved people's lives both physically and emotionally. The same emotional aesthetic experience spread across the U.S. with the Federal Theatre Project. The Federal Theatre Project gave an education to citizens that allowed them to cope with the experiences with war. It led to mass fundraisers done by the American Theatre Wing and the foundation of the International Theatre Institute.

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### III. ART TODAY

I must study politics and war, that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics, philosophy and commerce; so that their children, in turn, may have the right and privilege to study painting, poetry, and music.

John Adams

Art today is embraced more than it has been in the past and every form of it has gone through hurdles to survive. Art has its own identity and instead of forming regulations and rules, it grows. It has its own set of rules that it follows. Today, theatre has a new revolution that people need to embrace. In our world of changing and moving parts and constant innovations in technology, theatre is capable of much more than in the past. It can reach a broader audience and it can give an impression that will last longer than the ordinary movie. Theatre is the bridge to intercultural cooperation. Patrice Pavis, in his book *The Intercultural Performance Reader*<sup>171</sup> he states:

It is in the search for extra-European inspiration—Asian, African, South American—that the genre of intercultural theatre has every chance of prospering, much more so than in the co-operations between European countries, which so often restrict themselves to accumulating capital, multiplying selling points, and confirming national stereotypes and the standing of actors.

Allowing theatre to be expressed in an intercultural manner both within a national and an international stage would aid co-operation efforts. Relationships need to be made between theatre and politicians. As Pavis says, “Theatre practitioners, theoreticians, and historians alike must now acknowledge the proliferation of theory in the arts and sciences that inform how we see and interpret the world.”<sup>172</sup> War and politics will always be a part of the world’s history and future; liberty, mathematics, and commerce are subjects that we teach our children, it is time to allow this generation to embrace art.

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<sup>171</sup> Patrice Pavis, *The Intercultural Performance Reader*, (New York: Routledge, 1996), 19.

<sup>172</sup> de Gay and Goodman, *The Routledge Reader in Gender and Performance*, 309.

This chapter will discuss the various national policies of the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and the U.S., as well as present examples of how these countries reach out to their communities and beyond in order to use theatre and performance as a way of cultural diplomacy. The programs that will be discussed are: The Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA), the Ministry of Culture and Communications of France, the state system of Germany including the Cultural Foundation, and the U.S. National Endowment of the Arts (NEA). The festivals for cultural diplomacy that will be discussed are: LIFT, ITC, Festival d'Avignon On, Berliner Theatertreffen, and Bridging the Divide Between the U.S. and the Muslim World Through Arts and Ideas: Possibilities and Limitations Conference. This chapter will conclude by explaining the economic benefits theatre could bring to a society by using Italy, Ireland, and the U.S. as examples.

## **A. NATIONAL POLICIES**

### **1. United Kingdom: CEMA**

The Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA) began in the United Kingdom in 1940. It started as a tool to help promote British Culture during a time of war. John Maynard Keynes, a British economist and a strong supporter of the arts, was given the position of Chair of the Arts Council England. Keynes believed that the Arts Council should consist of the best rather than the most and his views lasted well into the 1960s.<sup>173</sup> Keynes is best known for his school of thought known as Keynesian economics, which is still used today to help fiscal policy and economic recession. He was able to secure government funds for the arts without the arts becoming a government entity and in 1946 just after his death, the Council for the Encouragement of Music and Arts became incorporated in the Royal Charter.<sup>174</sup> At this time the name changed to the Arts Council of England and now it is called the Arts Council England.

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<sup>173</sup> *Arts Council England: 1940–45: CEMA and the Beginning of the Arts Council*, <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/about-us/history-arts-council/1940-45/> (accessed May 03, 2010).

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*

Threatened by World War II, the Arts Council found strength and expanded. In 1964, Jennie Lee became first Arts Minister and did not think that government should have the right to censor the work that was being created.<sup>175</sup> On the Arts Council England Web site, Lee states, “Political control is a shortcut to boring, stagnant art: there must be freedom to experiment, to make mistakes, to fail, to shock—or there can be no new beginnings. It is hard for any government to accept this.”<sup>176</sup> With this thought, the Arts Council started a new charter. The Web site goes on to explain that new objectives of the charter are:

...to develop and improve the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts, to increase the accessibility of the arts to the public throughout Great Britain and to advise and co-operate with departments of Government, local authorities and other bodies on any matters concerned, whether directly or indirectly, with the foregoing objects.<sup>177</sup>

In the 1970s and the 1980s, the Art Council come under attack and its funding was cut.<sup>178</sup> There was a decrease in the number or organizations that were funded by the Arts Council and only half remained.<sup>179</sup> Many artists tried to protest the lack of state funding but to no avail. In the 1990s the Department for National Heritage was created followed by the Lottery Act. The Lottery Act was able to give the Arts Council a boost in funds, but it had to share its funds with four other organizations.<sup>180</sup> In 1997, the Arts Council funding was once again decreased by the government.<sup>181</sup> Many efforts were made to raise extra money for the arts including entering the arts into the educational

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<sup>175</sup> *Arts Council England: 1960s: A Time of Balance*, <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/about-us/history-arts-council/1940-45/> (accessed May 03, 2010).

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>178</sup> *Arts Council England: The 1970s and 1980s: Criticism of Regionalism and Funding Controversies*, <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/about-us/history-arts-council/1940-45/> (accessed May 03, 2010).

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>180</sup> *Arts Council England: The 1990s: Lottery Funding and the DCMS*, <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/about-us/history-arts-council/1940-45/> (accessed May 03, 2010).

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*

realm, but it did not begin to become popular again until the 2000s.<sup>182</sup> At this time, the Arts Council motto is still “great art for everyone.”<sup>183</sup>

## 2. France: Ministry of Culture

The dichotomy between government support and disregard for the arts and theatre is best captured by Matthew Arnold in his article, *Culture and Anarchy*, “We have to unlearn, therefore, our long disregard of theatre; we have to own that the theatre is irresistible.” He suggests, that theatre, even when this was written in 1935, was disregarded and often times forgotten and that it needs to be reintroduced into society in a way that makes it more alluring. In *Arts as a Weapon*, Jorn Weingartner, cites another section of Matthew Arnolds *Culture and Anarchy*, when describing the French model of state funding of the arts:

Let the conditions of the grant be that a repertory is agreed upon, taken out of the works of Shakespeare [sic] and out of the volumes of the Modern British Drama, and that pieces from this repertory are played a certain number of times in each season; as to new pieces, let your company use its discretion....The people will have the theatre; then make it a good one.<sup>184</sup>

This model of taking literature from past centuries, the current time, and the emerging arts creates a model that educates target audiences on what has happened, or what has been preserved while at the same time as showing what is currently happening. It also can facilitate the education of culture upon an audience.

The Ministry of Culture in the Government of France is the cabinet authority in charge of protecting the arts not only within France, but also abroad. Charles de Gaulle created in 1959 what comprises the Ministry of Culture today and was preceded. In this effort by André Malraux who incorporated the right to culture in the French constitution. Malraux preserved the de Gaulle legacy of showing the greatness of postwar France but

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<sup>182</sup> *Arts Council England: The 1990s: Lottery Funding and the DCMS.*

<sup>183</sup> *Arts Council England: The 2000s Beyond*, <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/about-us/history-arts-council/1940-45/> (accessed May 03, 2010).

<sup>184</sup> Jorn Weingartner, *Arts as a Weapon of War: Britain and the Shaping of National Morale in World War II* (London, GBR: I. B. Tauris & Company, Limited, 2006), 25.

also pushed for democratizing access to culture. Many regional centers were born as a result of Malraux as well the motivation throughout France, to support the arts.

In 1990, Jack Lang, one of Frances Minister of Culture, founded the Union of Theatres Europe. His vision was to create a theatre in which aided European integration especially in a time in which globalization was spreading with cultural diversity. The Minister of Culture and Communications is responsible for the Avignon theatre festival, which will be discussed further in the next section.

### **3. Germany: The State**

Germany has a long past with performing arts exhibiting culture as was seen in the history section of this thesis. It has had to overcome many hurdles to repair the damage that was done in World War I and especially World War II. Germany has no national policy on art; however, there is a policy with each federal state. As a state today the FRG system provides adequate funding for artistic development in order to provide the availability for high culture.<sup>185</sup> Germany has had to go through many efforts in order to erase or dull its image post World War II and Unification. Just as culture was re-assessed under Hitler, it has been re-assessed again to provide a more humble identity for Germany.<sup>186</sup> Peter James, in his book *Modern Germany; Politics, Society and Culture*, states:

One vision as to what this role might be was expressed by Federal President Roman Herzog when he addressed the German stage association on the occasion of its 150th anniversary in 1996. He spoke of finding ways for the theatre to become a place with which the people in any given city could identify, as they would with their local football club.<sup>187</sup>

Since the 1990s, Germany has restructured its cultural landscape, but it still has many challenges. Institutions are urged to obtain financial aid from sources other than the

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<sup>185</sup> James Peter, *Modern Germany: Politics, Society and Culture* (Florence, KY: Routledge, 1998), 152–160.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

state and generally rely on the city or community in which it lives. According to William Osborne in his article, “Marketplace of Ideas: But First, the Bill,” he states:

Germany’s public arts funding, for example, allows the country to have 23 times more full-time symphony orchestras per capita than the United States, and approximately 28 times more full-time opera houses. In Europe, publicly funded cultural institutions are used to educate young people and this helps to maintain a high level of interest in the arts. In America, arts education faces constant cutbacks, which helps reduce interest.<sup>188</sup>

Germany has a well-established theatre network supported by the state.<sup>189</sup> It has over 300 theatres, as well as 130 professional orchestras that are funded by state and public system.<sup>190</sup>

#### **4. United States: NEA**

The National Endowment for the Arts was established by congress in 1964 in order to promote the nations cultural progress.<sup>191</sup> Many presidents past, starting with George Washington, understood the value of artistic expression. Even President Buchanan tried to appoint a National Art Commission, but Congress shot it down and it collapsed within two years.<sup>192</sup> Also, President Franklin D. Roosevelt created a Federal Theatre Project that lasted a total of four years, as previously discussed in the history section of this thesis. After World War II, encouragement of the arts was still pushed, which inspired President Truman to require a detailed report on the state of art with government involvement.<sup>193</sup> Dwight D. Eisenhower pushed for the creation of a cultural

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<sup>188</sup> William Osborne, “Marketplace of Ideas: But First, The Bill: A Personal Commentary On American and European Cultural Funding,” *ArtsJournal.com*, March 11, 2004, <http://www.artsjournal.com/artswatch/20040311-11320.shtml> (accessed May 10, 2010).

<sup>189</sup> *Facts About Germany*, May 11, 2010, <http://www.tatsachen-ueber-deutschland.de/en/culture-and-media/main-content-09/theater.html> (accessed May 11, 2010).

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> *The First Annual Report of the National Council on the Arts*.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

center in the United States, but it would not be until 1964 that something was actually done to promote artistic growth with government involvement.<sup>194</sup>

Two months after President Kennedy's assassination in November 1963, Congress designated the National Cultural Center (designed by Edward Durell Stone) as a "living memorial" to Kennedy, and authorized \$23 million to help build what was now known as the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Fundraising continued at a swift pace--with much help coming from the Friends of the Kennedy Center volunteers, who fanned out across the nation to attract private support and nations around the world began donating funds, building materials, and artworks to assist in the project's completion. In December 1965, President Lyndon Johnson turned the first shovelful of earth at the Center's construction site, using the same gold-plated spade that had been used in the groundbreaking ceremonies for both the Lincoln Memorial in 1914 and the Jefferson Memorial in 1938.<sup>195</sup>

As a memorial, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts receives federal funding in order to keep it in working order, but in regards to its education or artistic agenda, the theatre survives off of its ticket sales and donations.<sup>196</sup>

The goal or mission statement in 1964 for the National Endowment of the arts states, "Enlarging audience participation in the Arts, and (providing) opportunities for wider professional activities and training."<sup>197</sup> Today that mission statement is as follows, "The National Endowment for the Arts is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts, both new and established; bringing the arts to all Americans; and providing leadership in arts education."<sup>198</sup> The National Endowment of the Arts started an International Literary Exchange program in 2007.<sup>199</sup> The program began with an

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<sup>194</sup> *The First Annual Report of the National Council on the Arts.*

<sup>195</sup> "The Kennedy Center: History of the Living Memorial," The Kennedy Center, <http://www.kennedy-center.org/about/history.html> (accessed June 10, 2010).

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>197</sup> *The First Annual Report of the National Council on the Arts.*

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>199</sup> *National Endowment for the Arts. Annual Report*, (Washington DC: United States Government, 2008).

exchange between the U.S., Ireland, and Russia and since 2007 commenced an international awareness with Egypt and Mexico.<sup>200</sup>

Americans for the arts is a program that allows Americans to reach out to congress in order to support the National Endowment of the Arts. Through this program Americans can sign onto the Web site and see what the current and local issues are with the government support for the arts and write congress about their concerns. According to the Web site:

The NEA contributes to the development and economic growth of communities nationwide. According to Americans for the Arts, the nonprofit arts industry generates \$166.2 billion annually in economic activity, supports 5.7 million full-time equivalent jobs and returns \$12.6 billion to the federal government in income taxes.<sup>201</sup>

The most current policy that is listed on the American for Arts Web site regards the FY11 budget for the National Endowment for the Arts. The NEA FY10 budget is \$167 million, if the FY11 budget proposed by President Obama is approved, the NEA will lose \$6.4 million.<sup>202</sup> This cut back could not only hinder the growth of the National Endowment for the Arts, but it would increase unemployment allowing the loss of jobs that are currently supported by its programs.

## **B. CULTURAL DIPLOMACY: FESTIVALS AND PROGRAMS**

### **1. United Kingdom: LIFT**

In “Women’s Intercultural Performance: Cultural Double Cross,” by Joanne Tompkins, she explains that culture can be a marketable product and are generally utilized best in the form of international festivals. She explains the view of the government as:

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<sup>200</sup> *National Endowment for the Arts. Annual Report*, (Washington DC: United States Government, 2008).

<sup>201</sup> *Arts Action Center: Two Minutes is All it Takes*, May 10, 2010, <http://capwiz.com/artsusa/issues/alert/?alertid=13209311&type=CO&azip=93943> (accessed 11 May, 2010).

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*

Governments recognize that festivals bring to their cities/ states/ countries artists and tourists who will spend money not just on theatre tickets but also on accommodation, restaurants, associated exhibitions and tourist venues, souvenir shopping, and, in all likelihood, follow-on tourism. Festivals have the potential to generate considerable revenue for local economies and, as a result, the often large public subsidy makes good political sense.<sup>203</sup>

She goes on to explain that people traveling to other countries or states for international festivals make valuable ambassadors for promoting their home countries. However, these festivals cannot survive on box office tickets alone, they need the government subsidy and corporate sponsorship to finance promoting and creating events.

In the United Kingdom, the mindset is one of bringing people to understand the utility of the performing arts in the resolution of conflict. The United Kingdom has an international festival of theater in which is centered in London called LIFT. The LIFT was first formed in 1981 and has had participation from over 60 countries. The LIFT mission statement is:

LIFT creates extraordinary cultural events, festivals and experiences for London. Inspired by the internationalism and multiculturalism of the city it invites artists from around the world to connect with Londoners and create theatre that lifts us out of the ordinary. It transforms our understanding of ourselves, our communities and the world around us. It strives to be a pioneer in developing a new participatory culture, new cultural ideas and imaginative uses of public space.<sup>204</sup>

The LIFT main goal is to embrace the multiculturalism of London and provide theatre from around the world to its society. In doing this it increases the knowledge and understanding people will have of cultures living in and around the UK. In the archive section of their Web site, there is a letter posted by an individual asking how LIFT was able to put on foreign productions without distorting the message. He came to a conclusion months later:

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<sup>203</sup> Julie Holledge and Joanne Tompkins, *Women's Intercultural Performance* (London EC4P 4EE: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>204</sup> *LIFT London International Festival of Theatre*, 2009, <http://www.liftfest.org.uk> (accessed November 5, 2009).

Both companies used theatre as a creative tool for survival and as a means to challenge oppressive regimes in their respective countries. Both did this with a clear message and intent to put across in their context. This question was also raised early on by LIFT in correspondence with Al Kasaba about bringing *Alive from Palestine* to London. Would it be understood here in the same way as *Palestine*?<sup>205</sup>

In response, LIFT recognizes that the productions in question, “*Alive from Palestine*” by Al Kasaba Theatre, and “*The Government Inspector and Three Sisters*” by Katona Jozsef, were indeed misconstrued to an extent, but due to the issues the companies chose to address that most affected them. LIFT goes on to explain that audiences were not bothered by this change, but that they were impressed during the production’s exigencies. In the last 20 years, we have witnessed radical changes to theatre in Great Britain. Small-scale touring theatre has all but “disappeared”; funding for theatre, in general, is at a premium; repertory theatres are closing down; and crucially, with the advent of digital television in Great Britain, along with cable and satellite television not to speak of film (both cinema and video), more accessible forms of entertainment have emerged both economically and socially.<sup>206</sup>

The Visiting Arts organization in the UK, which held a workshop in Tehran, Iran from 21–25 January 2010, says that it will “continue to broaden the channels of communication and exchange between the UK and Iran at a time when intercultural understanding is most needed.”<sup>207</sup> At this conference, the UK and Iran will do an exchange of myth-telling and performance to open the eyes of each other’s cultures.

## **2. France: Festival d’Avignon**

Festival d’Avignon began in 1947 under the direction of Jean Vilar. When he began the festival, it was comprised of himself and one team—today, it consists of an

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<sup>205</sup> LIFT London *International Festival of Theatre*.

<sup>206</sup> de Gay and Goodman, *The Routledge Reader in Politics and Performance*, 111

<sup>207</sup> Visiting Arts: Celebrating 30 Years of Strengthening Intercultural Understanding Through the Arts: Upcoming Activity in Iran. 2008. [http://newsweaver.co.uk/visitingarts/e\\_article001267259.cfm?x=b11,0,w](http://newsweaver.co.uk/visitingarts/e_article001267259.cfm?x=b11,0,w) (accessed December 2009).

international community playing 30–40 shows with over 300 performances.<sup>208</sup> Under the work of Vilar, an international Youth organization began called CEMEA, Centre d'Entraînement aux Méthodes d'Education Active or Active Methods for Education Training Center.<sup>209</sup> Vilar wanted to reach a broad audience and after his death his legacy moved on and the Festival d'Avignon continued to grow. Alain Crombecque led as artistic director after Vilar's death and gave it his own special flare. He encouraged the exposure to outside cultures inside Europe, including countries such as Africa, India, and Pakistan, but kept the importance of France as the focal point.<sup>210</sup>

The only year in which Festival d'Avignon was not held was in 2003 due to mass amounts of strikes by artists. Artists in France were carried under the unemployment laws and when reforms were being made to this law there was uproar. With all good things come the bad and the abused. There was a climb in the amount of people claiming to be Artists in which were benefiting from unemployment.<sup>211</sup> This is what initiated the government interest in changing the unemployment benefits and qualifications for artists.

In relation to the U.S., Robert Schneider from Northern Illinois University states in his journal article "Avignon Theatre Festival Strike:"

The \$950 million deficit of the unemployment fund is 8.5 times the NEA budget: French employees and taxpayers were paying 850 percent more to help artists who are not working than the federal government in this country is spending to help them work."<sup>212</sup>

He goes on to compare this with the German system in which there are fulltime workers in many theatres in which is even more expensive.<sup>213</sup> In doing his research, Schneider spoke with Eberhard Spreng a German Arts Journalist who said:

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<sup>208</sup> Hortense Archambault and Vincent Baudriller, *Festival d'Avignon: Origins*, <http://www.festival-avignon.com/en/History/6> (accessed May 06, 2010).

<sup>209</sup> Archambault and Baudriller, *Festival d'Avignon*.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> Frank Cadenhead, *Government Support for the Arts: A Cautionary Tale*, May 3, 2004, <http://www.scena.org/columns/reviews/040503-FC-frenchtemps.html> (accessed May 6, 2010).

<sup>212</sup> Robert Schneider, "Avignon Theatre Festival Strike. Avignon, France. 8-10 July 2003," *Theatre Journal* 56.2, 2004: 296–299.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

You have to remember that the unemployment fund is only one element of a complex mechanism of arts funding which has provided flexibility to resourceful arts organizations for many years. It supported a large population of capable performers and technicians that were available to directors and theatre managers as needed.<sup>214</sup>

The concept to help artist's lives by creating an unemployment insurance program is hard for Americans to grasp, as it is equally hard for Europeans to understand why America does not have a Ministry of Culture.<sup>215</sup> Many Americans believe that choosing the occupation of being an artist is choosing the life to be poor, if you stay in the U.S. This is why many American artists prefer to work in France because of the large budget invested into the arts. It allows them to create art without the stress of financial limitations.<sup>216</sup>

The result of the strikes caused the town to lose a substantial amount of money and it showed the government that even though there is no union to protect the artists they can make a large impact. The strike was so large that even the salaried workers of the opera and ballet at the Opera de Paris closed their doors in support of their fellow artists.<sup>217</sup>

Every year since the 2003, strikes the festival has flourished and different associate artists from other countries are invited to help prepare the Festival. According to the Festival d'Avignon Web site, each year is focused differently:

In 2004, and with the German director and artistic director of Berlin's Schaubühne Thomas Ostermeier, the Festival put the emphasis on ensemble theatre engaged in the social and political questionings of their time. With the Antwerpian artist Jan Fabre in 2005, the Festival allowed for a multiplicity of exchanges and encounters between words, bodies and images, between performing arts and visual arts. In 2006, with Josef Nadj, a choreographer of Magyar culture, the 60th opus of the Festival proposed a more oniric approach and journeys between art forms and cultures.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> Schneider, "Avignon Theatre Festival Strike."

<sup>215</sup> Cadenhead, *Government Support for the Arts: A Cautionary Tale.*"

<sup>216</sup> Schneider, "Avignon Theatre Festival Strike," 296–299.

<sup>217</sup> Cadenhead, *Government Support for the Arts: A Cautionary Tale.*

<sup>218</sup> Archambault and Baudriller, *Festival d'Avignon: Since 2004.*

The Festival d'Avignon has become the future of theatrical diplomacy. Every year people are exposed to performances that represent different cultures. The festivals bring an education to people that instead of watching on a television they can experience in real life.

### **3. Germany: Berliner Theatertreffen**

The Berliner Theatertreffen began in 1964 and is sometimes referred to as the festival inside a festival because of its relationship with the Berlin Festival. It is funded by the German Federal Cultural Foundation, and its main objective is to support new programs that promote an international relationship.<sup>219</sup> According to the Kulturstiftung des Bundes web site it says in regards to the Cultural Foundation:

...the Foundation invests in projects which develop new methods of fostering cultural heritage and tap into the cultural and artistic potential of knowledge required for addressing social issues. The Federal Cultural Foundation also focuses on cultural exchange and cross-border cooperation by initiating projects of its own and funding project proposals in all areas of the arts with no stipulations as to theme or subject.<sup>220</sup>

The Cultural Foundation was created under the Federal Government Commissioner for Culture and Media in March of 2002 and was stated to be part of a civil law foundation by the federal government of Germany.<sup>221</sup> According to the Web site, "The Federal Ministry for Culture currently allocates 35 million euros of its budget to the Foundation each year."<sup>222</sup> The foundation urges theatres to establish

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<sup>219</sup> *Facts About Germany.*

<sup>220</sup> *Kulturstiftung, Des Bundes*, <http://www.kulturstiftung-des-bundes.de/cms/en/stiftung/> (accessed May 11, 2010).

<sup>221</sup> *Facts About Germany.*

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*

relationships with foreign theatres.<sup>223</sup> In building these relationships, it is also important that the last 250 years of German society is shown.<sup>224</sup> The most popular international and national shows are presented at the Berliner Theatertreffen.<sup>225</sup>

#### **4. United States: Bridging the Divide**

In June of 2010, there will be a conference held in New York City titled, *Bridging the Divide Between the United States and the Muslim World Through Arts and Ideas: Possibilities and Limitations*. In this conference, there will be performances done in which have the objective to open Americans minds and change their impressions of Muslims. Through art, they will try and open the eyes of people from all cultures in the U.S. and bring them something they may be able to appreciate rather than fear. In a sense, this conference is being created to show the humanity of Muslims. It seems to be difficult for Americans who have come to fear Muslims as opposed to simply resenting the high cost of gasoline as in the 1970s—to remember or believe that Islam has a rich culture that produced artistic masterworks and made original contributions to science, medicine, and philosophy.<sup>226</sup> This initiative by the New York Center for Dialogues is not only focused on Americans but rather targets all cultures, including Muslims themselves. It is an eye opener to remind people that all cultures fear for their identities and all cultures are struggling to preserve them.

### **C. BENEFITS OF TOURISM**

#### **1. Italy and Ireland**

In Monticello, Italy instead of reaching outside their immediate community, the people have brought the world to them. In the 1960s, residents of the town of Monticello,

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<sup>223</sup> *Kulturstiftung Des Bundes*.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>225</sup> *Facts About Germany*.

<sup>226</sup> New York University Center for Dialogues, *Bridging the Divide Through Arts and Ideas: Possibilities and Limitations*, organized by the Center as part of the “Muslim Voices: Arts and Ideas” initiative.

Italy began a tradition that saved their town. They began to write and perform plays as a way to show their empowerment to speak out and enter others minds. Before productions were given the name community plays in Monticello, they were recognized as historical dramas, stories created and passed down from real life. In the play *Quel 6 Del'44*, a story about the towns struggle with the German SS and how they had them lined up for execution. The Nazis were talked out of the project, partly by the parish priest, but mostly by the wife of the local landowner, who herself was German and from the same hometown as the SS commander.<sup>227</sup> Some of the actors in the show actually played themselves. The therapeutic value of such an exercise is so obvious that it hardly needs elaborating.<sup>228</sup> In retrospect, though, it now seems as if the villagers simply needed to get that particular experience out of their system, before moving on to dramatize something else.<sup>229</sup>

*Quel 6 Del'44* was only the beginning, the next year the town put on another show, but this time described their economic situation. By using the theatre to speak out, it gave the town a different reaction than the usual strike or march. According to Richard Boon in his book *Theatre and Empowerment: Community Drama on the World Stage*, he states, “By mounting the show in the village square, we made the audience come to us, and see us in the place where we lived.”<sup>230</sup> He goes on to explain that by having people come to them to see their show it was more powerful and memorable. The town of Monticello went from isolation to being noticed, according to Boon, “theatre had put the village on the map.”<sup>231</sup>

Monticello sets a good example for preservation of culture and the education of historical facts, as well an example of utilizing theatre as a way to boost one’s economy. The town of Monticello has united people in its own community by sharing their culture with others.

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<sup>227</sup> Richard Boon and Jane Plastow, *Theatre and Empowerment Community Drama on the World Stage* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 41–43.

<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Boon and Plastow, *Theatre and Empowerment Community Drama on the World Stage*, 41–43.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

Monticello, Italy is a great example of the economic benefits theatre could bring to a society, but so are Ireland and the U.S. In a very direct relation of the tangible value of arts and theatre, Cllr Sara Duncan of Ireland, an Alliance Party Spokesperson, welcomed government spending on theatre as a tool to support the region's economy. She stated, "More tourists will want use these improved facilities, therefore, our tourism industry and economy will be strengthened by these developments."<sup>232</sup> She went on to explain, "Understanding different points of view can be put forward by theatre."<sup>233</sup> Even in the U.S local cities are finding that Art helps boost their economy. In an article written June 8, 2007 titled, "An Art for Helping Boost the Economy," Bill Van Siclen, supports the idea of art aiding the economy. The study, conducted by Americans for the Arts, a Washington D.C. based arts advocacy organization, also found that non-profit arts and cultural groups supported nearly 3,000 full-time jobs and generated more than \$11 million in state and local tax revenues.<sup>234</sup> The article also states, "The findings of a national study showing that local arts and cultural organizations pump more than \$110 million annually into the State's economy."<sup>235</sup> The economic value is not limited. The article goes on to explain that on a national stage, the arts "generate 166.2 billion in economic activity"<sup>236</sup> and "generate 5.7 million full-time jobs, and local, state and federal tax revenue from arts-related spending totals more than \$29.6 billion a year."<sup>237</sup> In order to come up with these figures, economists tracked how the dollar was re-spent within a local economy. For example, if a theatre company bought costumes at a local Good Will store or wood from the lumberyard, the money used to buy those goods is spent a second time when employees are paid. Then the money is spent a third time when the employee buys goods for home, such as groceries.

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<sup>232</sup> "Opera House Extension and Theatre Funding Will Help Boost Local Economy," *Alliance, Northern Ireland's Cross Community Party*, October 20, 2006, <http://allianceparty.org/> (accessed November 5, 2009).

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Bill Van Siclen, "An Art for Helping Boost the Economy." *Providence Journal*, June 08, 2007, <http://www.projo.com> (accessed November 05, 2009).

<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

<sup>237</sup> Van Siclen, "An Art for Helping Boost the Economy."

## **D. CONCLUSION**

When comparing the art policies of the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and the U.S., one can see a wide variety of systems. In the United Kingdom, the Encouragement of Music and the Arts has had many cutbacks, almost to the point of extinction. One cannot say that theatre will become extinct in the United Kingdom; but without the Department for National Heritage and the Lottery Act, the theatre scene in the United Kingdom would be miniscule compared to what it is today. There is a drive for understanding culture in the United Kingdom, especially in the heart of London. With programs like LIFT that have the main goal to embrace multiculturalism encourages other countries to reach out beyond their borders.

The Ministry of Culture and Communications of France also reaches out this multiculturalism in society. With festival d'Avignon, theatre is exposed to people in many different forms representing different cultures. Artists are covered under unemployment laws that allow them to be self employed and available to work at any given time. The instances that occurred in 2003 show an example of how societies rely on the theatre and the revenue it brings.

In Germany, the only country visited in this thesis that does not have a national policy, leaves art policy to the federal state, but at the same time making it part of civil law. The federal states, with the help from the local communities fund theatre employees and theatres year round. The Berliner Theatertreffen festival promotes the best productions of the year while supporting programs with international understanding.

The U.S. is replete with examples in history of unsupported arts policy. The National Endowment of the Arts hangs on by threads and each year its budget gets cut. Using theatre as a tool for cultural diplomacy needs to be utilized more in the U.S. with Bridging the Divide between the United States and the Muslim World through Arts and Ideas: Possibilities and Limitations Conference, a dialogue will open between a variety of cultures. This conference will be able to educate people in Muslim culture so that their fears will be cast in the shadows.

The people of Monticello, Italy turned their town around and saved it by using theatre. Each year thousands of people visit this town to see its theatrical legacy. Without theatre, the town would have ceased to exist. In Ireland, theatre is embraced as a way to express different points of view and is also utilized as a way to build a higher tourism rate, which increases revenue for local businesses.

## IV. CONCLUSIONS

### A. CONCLUSIONS

#### 1. Theatre Can be Used as an Approach to Cultural Diplomacy

Culture forms the basis for collective identity in societies and yet remains the object of fundamental misunderstanding and polemics. The governments and societies of the advanced democracies have a vital interest in creating a situation in which the citizens of the present can experience culture without the weaponized aspect. Such culture can be their own (however dynamic) or someone else's such that the world can further development in peace, prosperity, and security. Without the citizen's education about various cultures, our contemporaries become more and more objects rather than subjects in a conflict of ideas and societies that is sadly the dominant characteristic of the twenty first century. Stereotyping via the negative route of culture as a weapon is an unavoidable habit that many people fall into, and if it is not corrected, it can cause undeserved discrimination to others. Instead of allowing the naïve profiling of people, governments should make more of an effort to support organizations in which provide this type of education.

There are more organizations have been formed in the countries studied in which allow intercultural exchange with others as well as local festivals that promote a better understanding of different societies than had been originally expected at the beginning of this thesis.

People learn best by experience that is channeled in what Schiller best called an aesthetic education. It is how one grows from being a child to an adult. Theatre can provide an aesthetic experience in which engrains itself into a person's mind and spirit in the best sense. This statement does not suggest that theatre be used solely as propaganda as it has in history, but simply used as an edification of culture that can support co-

operations between European countries in the realm of civil society, as it has evolved in the past three centuries, and which now may be stalled in an era of growing doubt and fear.

## **2. Historically Theatre and the Arts Have Been on a Rollercoaster Between Suppression and Promotion**

The history of Europe and North America is replete with examples of the suppression and promotion of art. In England there was a struggle between church and state that put theatre in the middle of a tug-a-war until Queen Elizabeth declared that theatres be built to house the actors profession. This allowed the actor to have a home in society rather than being on a constant move. It also allowed the actor to be appreciated by many class levels rather than just the elite. In France, the struggle was to perform to ones highest ability, something that was constantly shut down when not presented as the norm. In Germany, propaganda initiated by the government encouraged and spread nationalism in such a fashion that the damage that was done is still being repaired today. In the U.S., programs were created to aid the economy by utilizing talents in all fields. Until the spread of communism this was an effective way to present current events from around the world in the realm of a live performance. When the Federal Theatre Project was closed, new organizations such as the American Theatre Wing rose and provided fund raising for the war efforts.

## **3. Each Country Is Unique in Their Approach to Theatre and the Arts in Regards to Policy**

Politicians need to embrace art and utilize the cultural diplomacy dimension of theatre rather than dispose of it. The arts receive constant cut backs on their budgets making it hard to survive, especially with the current economic situation. Each time the budget is lowered, a piece of culture is slowly erased. Instead of forcing theatres and other art organizations to close, it seems that embracing them and promoting them will increase an economy through tourism. Theatre can also be used as a form of fundraising using the American Theatre Wing Model.

There are a variety of different systems used throughout all countries, and one is not better or worse than the other. The structures of each policy were created to work for the country that put it forth, but this does not mean that it is the only solution. There is always room for improvement and policies should be constantly reviewed for updates in order to support the trends of society. Perhaps by looking at the Policies of England, France, Germany, and the U.S. a new policy could be formed which allows theatre and the arts a place to remain safe and expressed away from the prosecution and suppression of governments. By changing policy and using theatre in the form of cultural diplomacy in the best examples interpreted in this study, such policy will create new relationships between governments and societies which is something that has not been approached in history. There needs to be a future for arts, if we want culture to live on. It cannot be presented or performed by cinema alone. When a movie is made, it cannot be changed; it cannot grow or be altered by new technologies. It must remain in its original form. With theatre, it remains the same only slightly changed. It has the ability to be performed multiple times throughout any era and with the ability to become a chameleon adapting to its surroundings. Theatre and the arts is a living entity that needs support in order to survive and live to its full potential.

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