

ABSTRACT

Satirical drama *The Ass and the Shadow* was introduced in the context of the historical, political, literary and theatrical events of the year 1933. The contemporary context was shaped and composed by comments V+W about their own production (in the *Vest pocket revue* magazine, in another periodicals and in the correspondence between the years 1945–1962), by contemporary publicism, the critique, other literary and non-literary texts. The context was also mediated by the secondary literature of the first and the second half of the twentieth century and of the present. With the kaleidoscopic interpretation, a new arrangement was created. An arrangement in which *The Ass and the Shadow* was still left to its natural world: to the jazz scenery, literary and artistically avant-garde, scenery which was influenced by the silent grotesque, circus clownery and cabaret shows. Attention was paid to the variations in the comicality of V+W (the drift from the so-called groundless humour to their own political satire) and to the possibilities and limits of political satire: its judgment, procedures and also, more specifically, its intertextual references. This literary and non-literary area was further extended by the dimension of economic and political-power field. It pointed to a high cultural and economical status of the Liberated Theatre and brought insight on the process of transformation from the original experimental theatre to a professional theater ensemble. The events of so-called *great* history of 1933 were confronted with a dramatic interpretation in *The Ass and the Shadow*, in which the own historicity of the artwork was also typically presented. It was also observed how the drama provoked international response because of its directness. The drama *The Ass and the Shadow* then came into a position directly controlled by the field of power: it became the subject of diplomatic negotiations between the German embassy and the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The confrontation between historically-political events and literary and non-literary influences with illustrations from the work made a clear justification and advisability of the choice of a contextual literary-historical approach to a literary work. The choice has been from the beginning regarded purely as one of the options.