

Review of the Dissertation

by Soni Bohosyan

“Dimensions of Solitude in the Dramaturgy of Jaime Salazar Sampaio”

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The dissertation of Soni Bohosyan, *“Dimensions of Solitude in the Dramaturgy of Jaime Salazar Sampaio”*, is an in-depth study not only of the plays of Jaime Sampaio, but to a considerable extent also of dramaturgy of the 20th and the early 21st centuries. Based on the observations made by the author of the dissertation, conclusions can be drawn regarding the specificity and development of modern dramaturgical thinking. This is not only because solitude is a central theme in the dramaturgy of the 20th and early 21st centuries, but also because the analysis of the formal features of Sampaio’s plays can be applied to the interpretation of the poetics of a number of modern dramatic texts.

The perspective of a fruitful expansion beyond the narrow context of the dissertation toward other authors and works is already set out in the first chapter. There one of the main merits of the study becomes evident: its theoretical self-awareness. Quite justifiably, the dissertation begins by problematizing one of the fundamental concepts on which it is based: the concept of “Theme.” For many researchers this concept seems self-evident, yet it is far from such. S. Bohosyan constructs a complex network of statements by various authors in an attempt to clarify the meaning of the concept and its function in the literary text.

The same applies to the other central concept of the work: solitude. The analysis of this concept—so important for philosophy and literature—begins as early as Antiquity. Particularly striking is the careful attention given to its presence in the legacies of Unamuno, Heidegger, and Blanchot. It is commendable that the author of the dissertation has also taken into account the Bulgarian philosophical contribution to the theme of solitude: Kalin Yanakiev’s remarkable book *Philosophical Essays on Solitude and Hope*, as well as the interpretations of other Bulgarian thinkers.

A valuable element of the study is its aspiration to comprehensiveness. The second chapter presents the creative path of Jaime Salazar Sampaio, summarizes the critical reception of his legacy (an important gesture for any in-depth literary undertaking), and reviews the plays included within the interpretative scope of the dissertation.

The third chapter makes a significant contribution to the study and also contains a number of promising ideas for the interpretation of modern drama in general. It seeks to discuss drama in terms of its own specificity, without reducing it to a general “literary analysis.” The dissertation classifies Sampaio’s plays according to their motifs, analyzing solitude in the dialogues and monologues of the works. Dialogue and monologue are the basic structural units of drama. S. Bohosyan skillfully demonstrates how solitude stands out in the very construction of dialogue and monologue, in their communicative and discursive aspects. Valuable here is the author’s consistent effort to begin from the formal, poetological dimension of the work, rather than “delving” into reflections provoked by its content. In this way, the commentary avoids “sinking” into the clichés accumulated around the theme of solitude.

The final, fourth chapter of the dissertation focuses on space and time in the plays of Jaime Salazar Sampaio. The theme of space and time is frequently addressed in literary studies, yet S. Bohosyan’s research clearly distinguishes itself. Here, the issue of space and time is not considered in general terms, but from the perspective of the dramaturgical genre. Particularly fruitful is the comparison drawn with the theatre of the absurd. This chapter once again demonstrates the researcher’s ability to construct typologies: Sampaio’s diverse plays are convincingly “distributed” according to the different schematizations of space and time within them. If the preceding, third chapter illustrates S. Bohosyan’s strengths in poetological analysis, here the hermeneutical approach clearly dominates.

The dissertation is written in a very good academic style. It is accessible both to a specialized and to a broader audience.

I firmly recommend to the esteemed academic jury that Soni Bohosyan be awarded the educational and scientific degree of “Doctor” in the field of Higher Education Area 2. *Humanities, Professional Field 2.1. Philology, Scientific Specialty Literature of the Peoples of Europe, America, Africa, Asia and Australia (Portuguese Literature, 20th–21st centuries)*. I vote “IN FAVOR.”

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Respectfully,

M. Fadel