

CENTER FOR STUDY IN CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

THEATER PUBLIC IN SERBIA

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1 Introduction

The research of theater public situated in a broader context of studies in cultural life in general is of high social importance today. The subject as such is a very complex one and, moreover, almost neglected, theoretically and empirically, in this country. The public of all professional theaters in Serbia was the subject of our research.

From the research point of view, making any kind of public subject to research means separation of a single dimension of a certain cultural need. However, the development of sociological methodology brought about considerable insights into the characteristics of particular or special publics. Wherever sociological research is well developed, it includes an organized, systematical research of particular types of public, with the respective degree of scientific interest on the side of scientific institutions and an adequate social recognition of the importance of public in culture.

The main characteristic of the current moment in the development of our society is a deeply contradictory social articulation of life which further sharpens the already existing contradictions, and directly or indirectly influences cultural life of all social groups, especially those with well profiled interest in the domain of cultural life. Therefore, so far insufficiently developed scientific and organized research of the so called special public in this country becomes an exceptionally important scientific and social need.

The processes of (self)destruction are so dramatic in our society that in some of its spheres have almost reached the phase that justifies talking of a *destroyed society*. It is well-known that the society-culture relationship is the most efficient link between individual and creative, on one, and social and public, on the other hand. As a basic dimension of a society, culture is crucial for better understanding of the creation, profiling and cristalization of value systems. The times of great social turbulences, as these which the Serbian society is undergoing, bring about great and sudden shifts in value systems. The old value system has been radically abandoned, but a new, consistent one is not established yet. Parallel to this process, different political and ideological forces tend to attain control over certain segments of cultural life and creativity, thus making it hard for cultural institutions to preserve a necessary degree of autonomy, as an essential precondition of creative freedom.

2 Research Subject

The research subject is *the structural analysis of the drama public of all Serbian professional theaters*. Or rather, this is a sociological research of the theater public, i.e. a kind of research of *particular publics* or particular social groups aimed to result in the definition of a specific public. This type of research facilitates recognition of certain dimensions of cultural needs otherwise inaccessible. Of course, theater public, or for that matter any public, could not be studied as an isolated phenomenon. Despite a relatively small number of social groups with integrated set of up-to-date cultural needs, people should not be observed as isolated individuals with individual cultural needs, for no man is limited to a single dimension of cultural needs. There is always a certain structure of cultural needs mostly shaped by cultural heritage, actual social experience, a paradigm of the very cultural life in a given environment. Besides, with individual life cycles the structure of cultural needs changes, the focus shifts from one to another set of needs, and new needs emerge. Hand in hand with this process go processes in cultural industry also influencing the structure of cultural needs.

Having in mind that so far this kind of research has been rare¹, our major interest was to define all relevant characteristics (demographic and social) of the theater public. So, the subject of our research here is public, *and not a potential public (non- public)*², that might be subject of some other studies.

Our prime interest was to find out the frequency of attendance to theater performances, and relying on that, to make a categorization of the theater public.

We also attempted to reveal the major factors influencing the frequency of attendance, and then to derive a dominant one or a set of related ones. On the other hand, we wanted to find out more about public's opinion of theater repertory, time of performances, ways of getting informed of theater activities, ticket prices, theater interior, and choice of particular performance.

¹ The quotation from *Politika* daily directly supports and illustrates our thesis: „*It is an interesting and true fact that there are more theater festivals than theater institutions in Serbia. In this respect, really crucial are the criteria by which the State will differ festivals of national importance to be financially and otherwise supported by the Ministry of Culture, from those to be left, financially as well as in other ways, to local governments and private sponsors. I think it is a matter of the State, i.e. cultural policy, but the decision is, by no means, to be arbitrary. It must be based upon the opinion of the professional public, media, critique, research of the public. We have no relevant research not only of the festival public, but of no public at all. The box office is the only measure of the interest of public in this country*“ (Ivan Medenica, *Politika*, May 16, 2009). As to this author's knowledge, the latest research of the kind were done in the Center for Study in Cultural Development in 1973 and 1985 (Vera Ikonomova, Tihomir Vučković, Vujadin Jokić, *Pozorište i publika /Theater Public/*, Beograd: Zavod za proučavanje kulturnog razvitka, 1973; and: Vera Ikonomova, *Pozorište i publika: sociološko istraživanje publike beogradskih pozorišta /Theater Public: A Sociological Research of the Beograd Theater Public/*, Beograd, Zavod za proučavanje kulturnog razvitka, 1985).

² The term „non-public“ introduced Francis Jeanson whose research mainly dealt with the theater public, and whom we owe distinction between „public“, „potential public“ and „non-public“. Only Jeanson's „public“ was subject of our research here.

2.1 *Research Relevance*

A complex research of the public of all professional Serbian theaters might be a considerable contribution in the solution of some issues of the future and development of cultural institutions and cultural industry in general. When this kind of research practically does not exist, such a project and its scientifically attained objectives, might be of great help in better understanding of the position and perspectives of theaters in our cultural and social reality.

Therefore, the research of any aspect of the theater public is both scientifically and socially relevant. For some time our society has been undergoing a great economic crisis which, quite understandably, manifests itself in all the spheres of human life. The problems in satisfying basic human needs (individual and group) such as income, clothes, food, housing, education, cultural needs, health and the like, inevitably result in various disorders in human behaviour. The decline of life and social standards is especially visible in cultural consumption. The decline of standards very soon becomes obvious in theaters too - theater productions are losing in quality, and the public is no more so interested to go to theater, or any other cultural institution.

As for the scientific relevance of any research, this included, it should be said that each scientific procedure resulting in the objective scientific knowledge of its subject is an important contribution to the science itself. Each scientifically and methodologically well conducted research adds to the existing body of knowledge of its subject matter, latter applicable in a practical social action.

The findings of our research and the enriching of the existing knowledge of its subject influence future research of other segments/aspects of the phenomenon our research did not cover.

2.2 *Research Objectives*

The major *scientific objective* of this research was to: (1) describe all relevant characteristics of the drama theater public of all professional theaters in Serbia; (2) find out the frequency of attendance to performances of professional theaters; (3) categorize the theater public; (4) reveal the most influential factors effecting frequency of attendance, and attempt to derive a dominant factor or a set of factors; (5) investigate what the public thinks of theater repertory, time of performances, ways of getting informed of theater activities, ticket prices, etc., and (6) how the public chooses a particular theater production to see.

The basic *practical/action objective* of the research was to: (1) define measures (recommendations) expected to facilitate better attendance of professional theaters in Serbia; and (2) establish indicators applicable in a more realistic understanding of the position and perspectives of theaters in our cultural and social reality.

Beside its practical applicability in improving quality and professional level of Serbian theaters, this study is also meant to draw attention of certain social subjects to issues of culture and cultural life in general as a profitable investment in the future of our society. Since this type of research necessarily entails a kind of social relation, it automatically provokes certain reactions of various type and intensity of all its subjects.

2.3 Hypotheses

- The basic hypothesis of the research is that in the Serbian professional theaters public prevail occasional, younger, better educated, urban theater-goers;
- Socio-demographic variables will be an important cause of frequency variances;
- The majority of the drama public of Serbian professional theaters are highly educated theater-goers, and the trend of their increasing number in the public will continue;
- The Serbian theater public actively uses its free time;
- The decisive factor in frequency of attendance is satisfaction of cultural and artistic needs;
- Due to their heterogeneity and complexity, it is impossible to derive a system of factors with a common denominator that influence going to theater;
- The Internet becomes dominant source of information of theater repertory and activities;
- There is a significant connection between a theater repertory (degree of satisfaction with it) and frequency of attending;
- Comedy and drama are the favorite genres of the Serbian theater public, and will remain it, with the decreasing trends of other genres;
- There is no significant connection between the ticket prices and the frequency of attendance.

3 Research Methods and Techniques

The problem, subject and objective of research demanded implementation of the appropriate methods and techniques. In the course of our research two main methods were used: *method of analysis* and *method of enquiry*.

The method of analysis included: *the method of content analysis of documents by application of the technique of direct quantitative (statistical) content analysis of documents* and *the method of structural analysis by the technique of classic qualitative content analysis of documents*.

The method of enquiry included *the poll technique* or more precisely, *poll by a formalized (standardized) written questionnaire*.

3.1 Instrument

The instrument (questionnaire) used in this research made some of the members of the team³ and had not been used before, either partially or completely. The questionnaire is an attempt to synthesize so far theoretical knowledge of the research subject and the need to collect measurable indicators in line with the research objectives.

The instrument is made of six parts, with 32 questions, mostly of a closed type.⁴ The first part is a standard set of questions related to the data on theater and socio-demographic characteristics of the respondent. It provided the data on the name of the theater, its location, respondent's sex, age, education, occupation and the size of the settlement. The second part of the instrument deals with the public-theater relation. The collected data are related to the manner respondent uses free time, frequency of going to the theater and major reasons for doing so, satisfaction with the theater interior and the way the employees treat the public. The third part is focused on the theater's repertory. It provides data on the ways the public gets informed of the theater's activity, public's knowledge and satisfaction with the repertory, favourite genre and genre needs, plays by authors and times of origin and needs thereof, as well as on the choice of particular theater production to be seen. The fourth part of the questionnaire is devoted to the theater critique and its influence on the theater public. The collected data informed us of the reception of theater critique, its influence and the role of the theater critics. The fifth part provided the data regarding public's opinion on the time of beginning and cancelling of theater performances, estimated frequency of cancelled performances, and the suggested behaviour of the theater management in cases of cancelled performances. The six, final part of the questionnaire is devoted to theater tickets, the modes of their acquisition, price and influence of the latter on the attendance frequency.

The variables related to the degree of satisfaction are accompanied by a five-grade scale of a Lickert type. Wherever possible, variables contain the option „anything else, write it down“, so to give legitimacy to uncertainty or insufficiently profiled attitudes, but also to provide new indicators for particular variables.

The reactions to the questionnaire were mostly positive, except for a statistically significant number of respondents who objected to its length, and a bit less significant number to its Latin script. Quite naturally, the author of the questionnaire is the only responsible for these justified objections.

³ Slobodan Mrđa, sociologist and Dušan Č. Jovanović, dramatist, an expert associate.

⁴ Beside the questionnaire in Serbian, a number was also printed in Hungarian for the poll in the Novi Sad „Ujvideki Színház”. Silvija Bunjac translated it to Hungarian.

3.2 *Sample*

Since prior to the sample formation we had no data and necessary information regarding the population to be in the focus of our research (the features of the basic set from which the sample is to be derived as well as their distribution were unknown to us), one of the research objectives was to define characteristics of the theater public in Serbia (distribution of socio-demographic characteristics). In such a situation, the only logical choice was *a simple, random sample*. In the working out of the sample plan we collected the following data on each professional theater 2007/2008 season: theater's capacity, number of productions, number of first nights, number of performances and number of attendants (public).⁵ The number of respondents in each theater was established in proportion with its public in the previous season. When these data were collected, a sample of 3,000 respondents was defined (Table 1). Such a relatively big sample was chosen because a characteristic of a simple random sample is that it better shows variability of population, and when enlarged, better coincides with the basic set.

⁵ Dušan Č. Jovanović, dramatist, an expert associate to the project collected the data.

Table 1. Sample Plan and Its Realization

<i>Theater</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Capacity</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number of titles</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>First nights</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Performances</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Attendants</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Number of respondents</i>	<i>Realized</i>	<i>% of realization</i>
Atelje 212	Beograd	506	3.84	39	8.09	7	4.35	318	7.35	66,952	7.03	211	208	98.63
Beograd Drama Theater	Beograd	495	3.75	19	3.94	10	6.21	430	9.94	84,334	8.85	266	217	81.69
BITEF Theater	Beograd	178	1.35	15	3.11	3	1.86	41	0.95	6,490	0.68	20	20	97.84
Yugoslav Drama Theater	Beograd	938	7.11	37	7.68	9	5.59	378	8.74	66,637	7.00	210	177	84.33
Opera and Theater „Madlenianum“	Beograd	596	4.52	10	2.07	5	3.11	71	1.64	22,319	2.34	70	65	92.46
Principal Serbian Theater	Kragujevac	313	2.37	26	5.39	3	1.86	120	2.77	14,981	1.57	47	0	0.00
Kraljevo Theater	Kraljevo	226	1.71	16	3.32	4	2.48	67	1.55	9,495	1.00	30	28	93.62
Kruševac Theater	Kruševac	301	2.28	0	0.00	7	4.35	205	4.74	40,180	4.22	127	125	98.77
„Bora Stanković“ National Theater	Vranje	300	2.27	9	1.87	5	3.11	54	1.25	7,795	0.82	25	27	109.97
Šabac Theater	Šabac	427	3.24	16	3.32	7	4.35	115	2.66	35,000	3.67	110	98	88.90
„Nepszinhas“ National Theater	Subotica	310	2.35	27	5.60	9	5.59	200	4.62	19,537	2.05	62	55	89.38
„Sterija“ National Theater	Vršac	300	2.27	10	2.07	5	3.11	120	2.77	15,000	1.57	47	17	35.98
„Toša Jovanović“ National Theater	Zrenjanin	366	2.77	16	3.32	5	3.11	115	2.66	31,600	3.32	100	70	70.33
Beograd National Theater	Beograd	820	6.22	55	11.41	10	6.21	467	10.80	162,277	17.04	511	438	85.69
Kikinda National Theater	Kikinda	314	2.38	14	2.90	5	3.11	85	1.96	15,840	1.66	50	48	96.21
Leskovac National Theater	Leskovac	302	2.29	7	1.45	4	2.48	87	2.01	18,448	1.94	58	35	60.23
Niš National Theater	Niš	546	4.14	5	1.04	4	2.48	69	1.60	16,289	1.71	51	51	99.40
Pirot National Theater	Pirot	350	2.65	6	1.24	6	3.73	62	1.43	15,680	1.65	49	34	68.84
Priština National Theater	Leposavić	200	1.52	5	1.04	2	1.24	50	1.16	5,000	0.52	16	0	0.00
Sombor National Theater	Sombor	325	2.46	16	3.32	4	2.48	80	1.85	11,298	1.19	36	28	78.68
Užice National Theater	Užice	560	4.24	12	2.49	4	2.48	60	1.39	7,876	0.83	25	17	68.53
Slavija Theater	Beograd	350	2.65	23	4.77	10	6.21	330	7.63	80,000	8.40	252	161	63.89
„Ujvideki Szinhaz“ Theater	Novi Sad	320	2.43	13	2.70	0	0.00	118	2.73	13,268	1.39	42	43	102.89
Youth Theater	Novi Sad	548	4.15	8	1.66	6	3.73	51	1.18	11,883	1.25	37	35	93.51
Terazije Theater	Beograd	588	4.46	15	3.11	4	2.48	144	3.33	64,887	6.81	204	192	93.94
„Zoran Radmilović“ Theater	Zaječar	371	2.81	0	0.00	8	4.97	45	1.04	14,673	1.54	46	36	77.89
Serbian National Theater	Novi Sad	1,494	11.32	41	8.51	12	7.45	181	4.18	32,728	3.44	103	58	56.26
„Boško Buha“ Theater	Beograd	289	2.19	8	1.66	2	1.24	66	1.53	14,798	1.55	47	32	68.65
„Zvezdara“ Theater	Beograd	560	4.24	14	2.90	1	0.62	197	4.55	47,191	4.95	149	91	61.22
Total		13,193	100	482	100	161	100	4,326	100	952,456	100	3,000	2,406	80.20

Of 3,000 planned respondents, 2,406 were subject to the poll which makes 80.20% of realized sample. By the closing of the field work of our research we have not received filled up questionnaires from only two theaters (The Kragujevac Principal Serbian Theater and the Leposavić Priština National Theater). A bit smaller was sample realization in the Vršac „Sterija“ Theater (36.0%), the Novi Sad Serbian National Theater (56.3%), the Leskovac National Theater (60.2%), the Beograd Zvezdara Theater (61.2%) and the Beograd Slavija Theater (63.9%). In all the other theaters the realization was above 70%. For incomplete answers or contradictory information in the questionnaire a number of respondents (4.5%) was excluded from the analysis.

The sample sex structure was made of 64.4% of women and 35.6% of men (Figure 1). In the age structure prevailed respondents from 19 to 30 (38.2%), than 31-45 (27.1%), and 46-55 (21.8%). The smallest number of respondents were those under 18 (8.5%) and above 65 (4.4%).⁶ Among the respondents prevailed those with university education (43.1%), followed by those with the secondary school degrees and undergraduates (27.7% and 11.7%, respectively). There was 7.6% of MAs among the respondents, while the other education degrees were represented in less than 3%. Territorially speaking, 66.5% of the sample was from Beograd, and 33.5% from other cities with professional theaters in Serbia. The other characteristics and statistical parameters of the sample will be analyzed in detail and presented in the planned study after the research of the drama, opera and ballet public is completed.

3.3 Course and Conditions of Research

The research project *Theater Public in Serbia* was part of the Center for Study in Cultural Development 2009 working plan. In the first phase, the research of drama theater public was completed, while the research of the opera and ballet public is planned for the second project phase (the Beograd National Theater). By its very nature this *research report* contains only the basic findings of the first phase of the project, i.e. research of the *drama theater public*, while the second phase (research of the opera and ballet public) is planned for March, 2010. The final study on the theater (drama, opera, ballet) public in Serbia, with necessary theoretical considerations and analyses of former relevant studies in the field is planned to be completed by the end of June, 2010.

We planned to conduct polls in each theater in cooperation with its administration or marketing divisions, as well as to jointly choose drama productions prior to the poll. The basic

⁶ It is worth mentioning here that the Leskovac National Theater sent back filled up questionnaires where 97.1% respondents were under 18. Obviously, it was a case of inconsistent choice of respondents and an inadequate choice of production, or maybe some other unknown reason. A statistically significant influence of that relatively small number of questionnaires on the results and representativeness was not expected, we decided to include them in the general analysis, but not in a comparative one. On the other hand, an individual analysis of the Leskovac National Theater data was not made due to the mentioned error in the choice of respondents.

criteria of choice were: that it was that theater's production, how long it was on (production's lifetime), that it was a classic or modern play. The majority of theaters respected these criteria, though some simply were not in the position to do so due to the ongoing repertory. The *choice in a regular interval* was recommended in the selection of respondents.

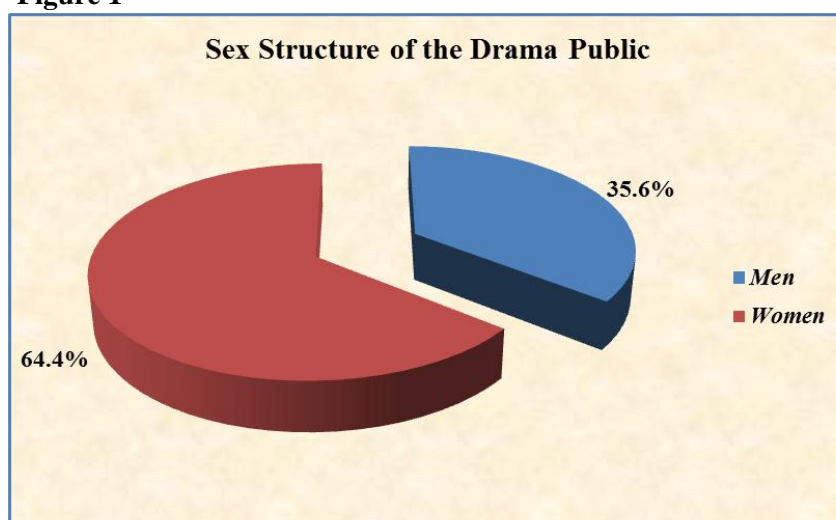
The poll was conducted from October 1 to November 15, 2009. It was done by each theater associates⁷, mostly from the administration, after a short training in application of questionnaires and choice of respondents. In the Beograd and Novi Sad theaters the trainings were direct; in other theaters done by phone.⁸ After collection, members of the project team.⁹ did the control of questionnaires, coding and input of the data. According to the field associates, most of the respondents were on average interested in the questionnaire's contents, and answered all the questions, which makes the collected data relevant for the analysis.

4 Research Findings

4.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Drama Public

The results show that almost two thirds of the drama public of professional theaters in Serbia are women, and a bit more than one third men. All probable and expected deviations in a random choice of respondents in a regular interval taken into account, such a huge difference could not be caused by simple inconsistencies in choice, and therefore with a great degree of certainty the realized sample could be considered as representative for total population of the drama theater public.

Figure 1



Since among the research goals was to find out the sex structure of the drama public of the Serbian professional theaters, the prevalence of females (64.4%) is evident, meaning that women

⁷ A complete list of associates in each theater will be included in the final study of the project to follow by the end of June, 2010.

⁸ Jelena Kostić, manager, was in charge of organization, coordination with associates and trainings.

⁹ The data input was done by team members: Jelena Kostić, Dušica Milovanović, Peđa Pivljanin and Slobodan Mrđa.

consider theater-going as a better way to spend their free time in an active way. Comparing sex structure of the public in different locations (cities where theaters are), it appears that the sex structure of the Beograd public is almost identical to that on the national level, which indicates great influence of the realized sample structure. The same goes for the public structure in Kruševac, Subotica, Zrenjanin, Kikinda, Niš and Novi Sad. On the other hand, a somewhat more balanced sex structure is in Kraljevo, Vranje, Šabac, Pirot, Sombor, Užice and Zaječar. The case of Vršac is quite different: males dominate (70.6%) over females (29.4%), which is a significant deviation from the Serbian average. Among the most important reasons is, for sure, a very small percentage of the realized sample. Moreover, such results usually are the outcome of the so called *situation factor*, highly influential in small samples. This fact is to be taken into account in elaboration of individual theaters' results.

The drama public sex structure per theaters (Table 2) shows that of all Beograd theaters only National Theater and Slavija Theater have a bit more balanced sex structure different from the national average, and from the structure of other Beograd theaters as well.

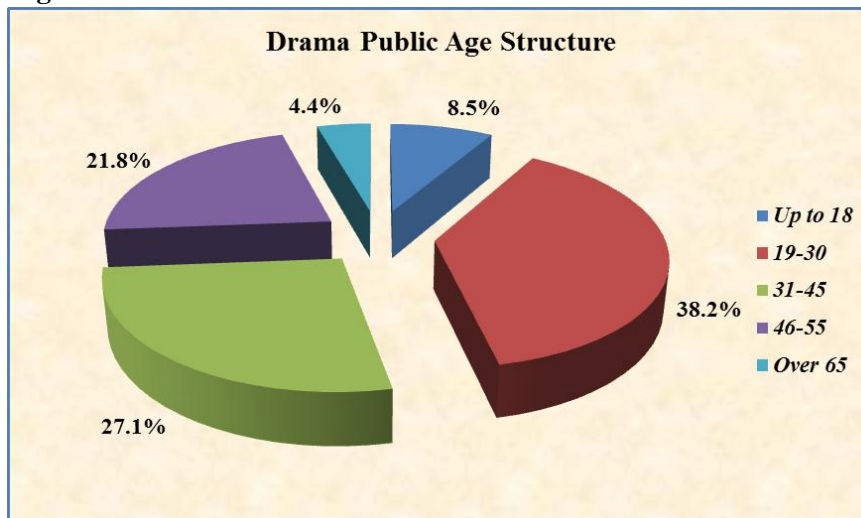
Table 2. Sex Structure of Individual Theaters in Serbia (%)

Theater	Place	Sex		Total
		Male	Female	
Atelje 212	Beograd	26.9	73.1	100
Beograd Drama Theater	Beograd	33.6	66.4	100
BITEF Theater	Beograd	30.0	70.0	100
Yugoslav Drama Theater	Beograd	30.5	69.5	100
Opera and Theater „Madlenianum“	Beograd	18.5	81.5	100
Kraljevo Theater	Kraljevo	53.6	46.4	100
Kruševac Theater	Kruševac	32.8	67.2	100
„Bora Stanković“ National Theater	Vranje	48.1	51.9	100
Šabac Theater	Šabac	41.8	58.2	100
„Nepszin haz“ National Theater	Subotica	36.4	63.6	100
„Sterija“ National Theater	Vršac	70.6	29.4	100
„Toša Jovanović“ National Theater	Zrenjanin	30.0	70.0	100
Beograd National Theater	Beograd	43.8	56.2	100
Kikinda National Theater	Kikinda	33.3	66.7	100
Leskovac National Theater	Leskovac	34.3	65.7	100
Niš National Theater	Niš	31.4	68.6	100
Pirot National Theater	Pirot	52.9	47.1	100
Sombor National Theater	Sombor	42.9	57.1	100
Užice National Theater	Užice	41.2	58.8	100
Slavija Theater	Beograd	47.8	52.2	100
„Ujvideki Szinhaz“ Theater	Novi Sad	46.5	53.5	100
Youth Theater	Novi Sad	25.7	74.3	100
Terazije Theater	Beograd	26.0	74.0	100
„Zoran Radmilović“ Theater	Zaječar	47.2	52.8	100
Serbian National Theater	Novi Sad	17.2	82.8	100
„Boško Buha“ Theater	Beograd	28.1	71.9	100
„Zvezdara“ Theater	Beograd	30.8	69.2	100
Total		35.6	64.4	100

However, as expected, the age structure is a bit more heterogeneous. The majority of public is 19-30 (38.2%), the minority over 65 (4.4%). Having in mind that the age group of those between 31

and 45 makes for a significant 27.1%, it appears that almost two thirds of the drama public belong to 19-45 years old.

Figure 2



In most age groups the sex structure does not significantly differ from the overall one (almost one third of women), except in the group of public over 65 (56.1% women: 43.9% men). Since pensioners dominate in the group, it is justified to assume that such a more balanced sex structure is an outcome of the fact that people of that age usually go to theater in pairs (as the author himself witnessed by sheer observation during the field work). The empirical proof of the thesis is the best balanced sex structure of the Pirot National Theater and the Kraljevo Theater public, despite a relatively older theater-goers than national average. In fact, a group of theaters have more than a half of the public over 46: the Pirot National Theater (61.8%), the Užice National Theater (58.8%) and the Novi Sad National Theater (51.7%). The results evidently show a relatively high correlation between the age of public and a balanced sex structure, i.e. older the public, better balanced its sex structure, and *vice versa*: younger the public, higher percentage of females in it.

Table 3. Age Structure By Sex of the Drama Public

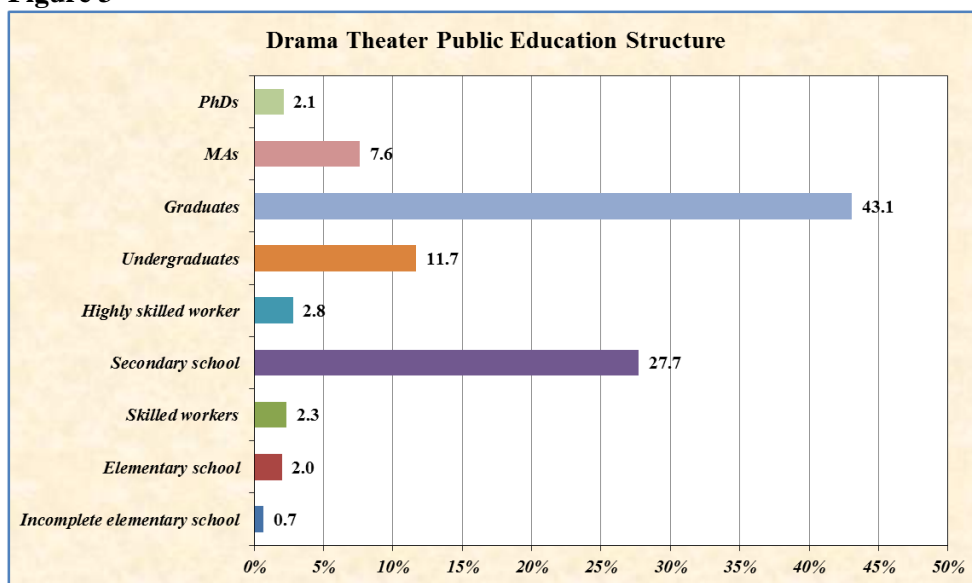
Sex/Age		Age					Total
		Up to 18	19-30	31-45	46-65	Over 65	
Sex	Male	38.5	36.1	38.2	28.6	43.9	35.6
	Female	61.5	63.9	61.8	71.4	56.1	64.4
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

The above table partially confirms the correlation: it is obvious that in three strata of younger public the sex structure does not significantly differ from the usual, while in the two older ones the deviation becomes more significant. Namely, in the stratum of over 65 the sex structure is more balanced, while the public stratum of 46-65 confirms correlation only partially, that is in the sense that with greater percentage of younger theater-goers, the percentage of females rises.

On the other hand, some theaters have a considerable percentage of young¹⁰ public up to 18 (more than 25.0%): the Vranje „Bora Stanković“ National Theater (48.1%), the Niš National Theater (27.5%), and the Sombor National Theater (25.0%).

As for the education structure (Figure 3), those with university degrees prevail (43.1%), with secondary education make for 27.7% of the public, and undergraduates 11.7%. MAs make for 7.6% of the public. Other education degrees individually make for less than 3%. No significant differences in the sex of the public are noticeable, but it is obvious that there are more graduates, MAs and PhDs in the Beograd theater public compared to other theaters in Serbia where is a somewhat higher percentage of the public with secondary education.

Figure 3



If we compare level of education and the age of public, it becomes clear that the graduates prevail in all age groups, except naturally in one of up to 18. The number of MAs is the greatest in the 31-45 group, and number of PhDs in the oldest one of over 65. So, there is no significant difference regarding the age, and such a distribution completely coincides with the expected frequencies in line with actual possibilities to attain certain education degree in certain age. The distribution of public by education completely confirms our initial thesis that the majority of the drama theater public in Serbia are those with university degree, and that the trend of their greater share in the public will continue proportionally with decreasing number of those with secondary education. Such a trend is the outcome of the fact that *persons with higher education degree have a more developed structure of needs with a better profiled interest in satisfying their cultural and artistic needs.*

¹⁰ Except the Novi Sad Youth Theater (for obvious reasons) and the Leskovac National Theater (see ft.6).

As for the occupations of the public, the greatest number is as expected of experts and students,¹¹ with a statistically significant number of clerks (12.1%), mostly with secondary and undergraduate degrees. It is interesting that there are 9.1% pensioners, 7.2% unemployed, while even 8.4% have not answered the question.

4.2 *Drama Public and the Theater*

We attempted to investigate the attitude of the drama public towards the theater through a set of questionnaire questions related to free time spending, frequency of attendance to theater and key reasons for that, satisfaction with the theater interior and the way theater personnel treats the public.

Free time is that part of time left after the daily obligations been fulfilled. Having in view people spend their after working hours in various activities, free time, so to say, includes various segments. Being time when a person could pursue his/her own choices, we attempted to investigate ways the drama public of professional theaters in Serbia spends its free time.

The phenomenon of *free time* is characteristic of the 20th century industrial and post-industrial society. The free time in its modern meaning emerged only when the phase of industrial development was completed and when further technological development, on one, and shortening of working hours, on the other hand, enabled it. Namely, in the pre-industrial societies majority of population spent its free time simply as a rest after hard labour hours. The rapid technological development, boom of consumption and profit, computerization of production processes, and shortening of working hours, crucially changed modern man condition. As a characteristic of global society, free time inevitably reflects all these changes. Namely, quantitative increase of free time led to qualitative social changes. However, the quantity of free time is not the only that matters; essential is its content. That is to say that some earlier research showed high correlation between the level of living standard and the modes of free time spending, since under a certain level of living standard tendency to use it for an additional job becomes stronger.

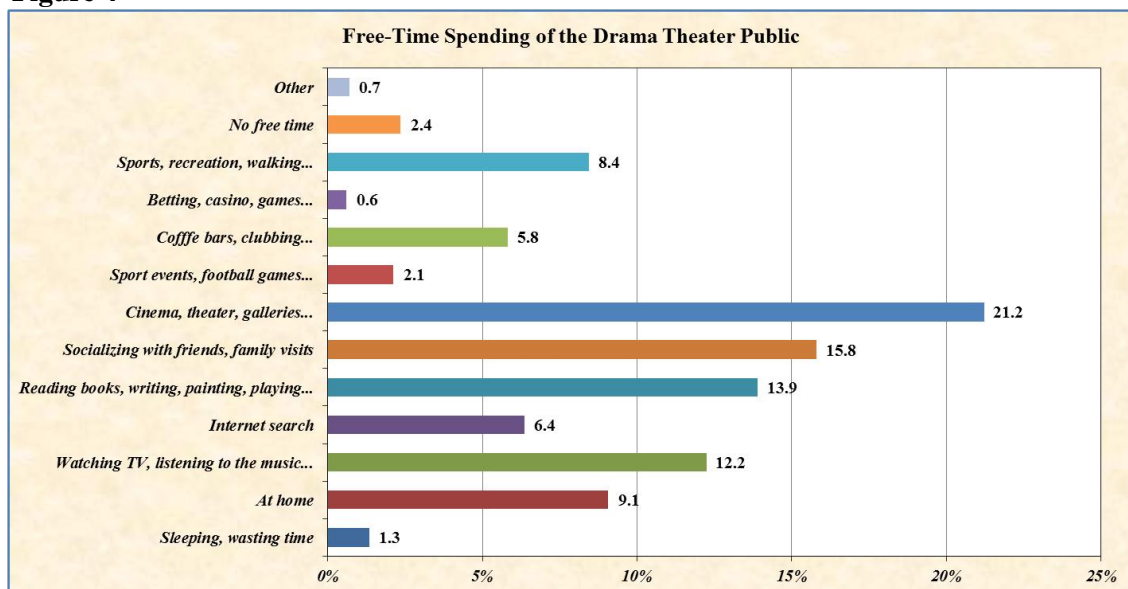
However, as after working hours, free time is a complex and segmented period. It is partly spent in a necessary rest, family and social activities, additional job, going to and back from the working place, etc. Many of these activities are of a mixed character, and therefore are sometimes classified as free time, sometimes as obligations. Such a „type“ of free time could be called a *semi-free time*. In reality, there is no clear cut between these segments because depending on circumstances certain activities could be pleasant free time activities or obligations. The other, maybe the most important part of free time, is *leisure*. It is a period bereft of any obligations when a

¹¹ The analysis of the variable regarding basic occupation of respondents we observed that a statistically significant number of them asked about their education degree answered they were graduates, and in the same time asked about occupation answered they were students. Having in mind that it was highly improbable all of them were unemployed post-graduates, and our questionnaire was not ment to register such a difference, we decided to use these data only in informative-descriptive segments of the analysis, and not for a more detailed analyses and conclusions.

person is free to pursue his/her own choices. The attempt to make a clear cut between free time and leisure faces certain methodological problems. Namely, it is possible to differ free time from the time spent at an additional job, but its far from easy to differ free time from other activities as such, for what is someone's leisure, is work for the other. Therefore, our starting point in the analysis of free time was the fact that during it certain activities are practiced, and others are not. Of course, these activities vary. Someone sees them as relaxation, entertainment, act of creation; the other sees them as effort. Our approach to the analysis of free time is, due to the characteristics of the population covered by our research, based upon the analysis of activities practiced in free and leisure time. Our primary interest was to get a better insight into the ways free time is spent, but also how it influences the frequency of theater-going.

The respondents were asked to say how they spent their free time (Figure 4), choosing three out of 11 offered activities regardless of frequency.

Figure 4



The drama theater public in Serbia most usually spends the available free time combing visits to cultural institutions (21.2%) with visits to friends (15.8%) and reading books, writing, painting and the like (13.9%). So, *the drama theater public is very active in its spending of free time*. Only after these active forms come two extremely passive ones - watching TV, listening to the music (12.2%) and staying at home with family (9.1%). It is worth mentioning that 8.4% of this public spends free time in sports and recreation. A very significant finding is that only 2.4% reported the lack of free time, thus confirming the already noted tendency of higher educated people to have better elaborated structure of needs with profiled interest in satisfaction of cultural and artistic needs, and *will to spare enough of their free time for such activities*.

The statistical analysis shows that the three most usual free time activities of the drama theater-goers are: visiting cultural institution (50.8%) (Table 4); „socializing with friends“ (37.8%), and reading books, writing, etc. (1/3). However, it should be noted that 29.35% spend their free time passively (watching TV, listening to the music, reading newspapers...), but usually combined with two active modes. A similar situation is with spending free time at home with family and in sports and recreation (20.0%).

Table 4

<i>Free-Time Spending of the Drama Theater Public</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Percentage of cases</i>
Sleeping, wasting time	1.3%	3.2%
At home	9.1%	21.7%
Watching TV, listening to the music, reading newspapers	12.2%	29.3%
Internet search, playing games	6.4%	15.2%
Reading books, writing, painting, playing music	13.9%	33.3%
Socializing with friends, family visits	15.8%	37.8%
Cinema, theater, galleries, museums, concerts	21.2%	50.8%
Sport events, football games	2.1%	5.1%
Coffe bars, clubbing	5.8%	13.9%
Betting, casino, games	0.6%	1.5%
Sports, recreation, walking	8.4%	20.2%
No free time	2.4%	5.6%
Other	0.7%	1.7%

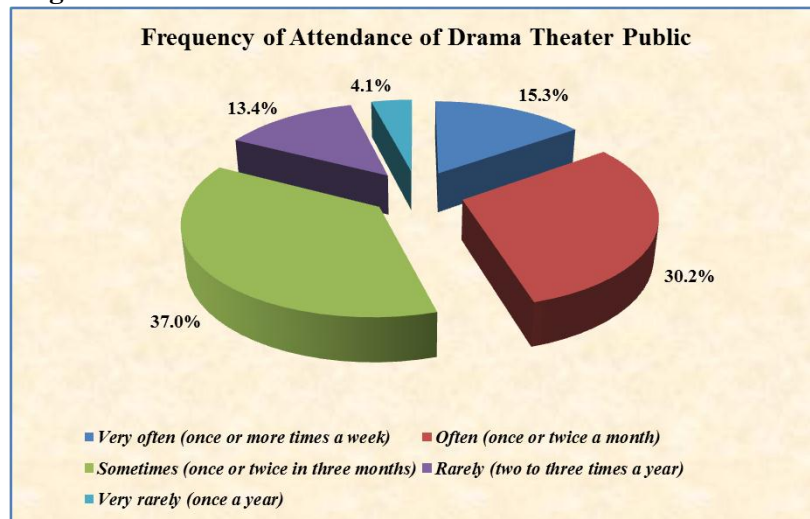
With the most usual way of free time spending the sex structure corresponds to that of the sample, but with the other two – „socializing with friends“ and „reading books, writing, painting“ - women prevail (74.3%:25.7% and 71.4%:28.6%, respectively). In other variables of free time spending no significant sex differences were observed. There are no statistically significant differences between age groups, except that (as expected) with aging rises number of theater-goers spending free time at home with the family, while younger tend to spend more free time in watching TV, listening to the music and Internet search. However, correlation of these trends is relatively weak for any grounded prognosis.

Forms of free time spending classified by criteria of activism (active v.s. passive) and answers distributed by education structure of public, reveal that higher educated public more actively spends its free time, while those with lower education degrees more usually prefer more passive ones. But, if we introduce the third, independent variable - age - into this correlation, we see that with higher educated younger public the connection is very strong, and with older public with the same education degree becomes weaker, as the passive modes of free time spending become more usual and active ones less.

Since among the major objectives of our research was to find out the frequency of attendance to the professional theaters' performances, the public was offered a five-graded scale with a

classical division to two levels of higher frequency (very often and often), two levels of lower frequency (rarely and very rarely), and a neutral option (sometimes). However, as the estimation of frequency was individual, to avoid possible errors in self-estimation, we decided each level should be more clearly specified. Thus, the highest level of frequency meant going to theater once or more times *a week*, and such respondents in ideal-type sense could be considered a *regular drama public*. Often visits to theater meant once or twice *a month*, classifying such respondents as a *potentially regular public*. The neutral option meant frequency of one or three times *in three months*, which is a classical *occasional public* (supposed to prevail). The lower levels of frequency meant rare theater-going of two or three times a year, and very rare once a year, making this group *rare and random public*.

Figure 5



The majority of professional theaters' public belong to a group of classic occasional public (37.0%), with an average frequency of one or two visits in three months. But, 30.2% public make those going to theater once or twice a month, and they are potentially regular public, that is, from this group future regular theater-goers are expected to come. With 15.3% of the regular drama public (coming once or more times a week) added to these numbers, we find 45.5% public in the upper part of the scale. Having in mind the current social circumstances (culture included) marked by the overall value disorientation, the existence of this, relatively numerous group of potentially regular theater public means that, with improvements in their activity and better communication with public, the professional theaters in Serbia could attain better attendance. On the other hand, 13.4% of the public goes two or three times a year (rare public), and 4.1% are occasional theater-goers „dropping by“ once a year.

The frequency distribution by sex (Table 5) reveals that in most groups the sex structure shows not statistically significant deviation (+/- 5%) from the sample. However, the sex structure of

the group of rare or occasional theater public completely differs from that of the sample: namely, there are 62.2% of men and only 37.8% women. So, men are more numerous among random theater-goers, which partly explains the fact that almost two thirds of theater public in Serbia are women, meaning they, contrary to men, find theate-going a more important mode of free time spending.

Table 5. Theater-Going Frequency Per Sex of the Drama Public (in %)

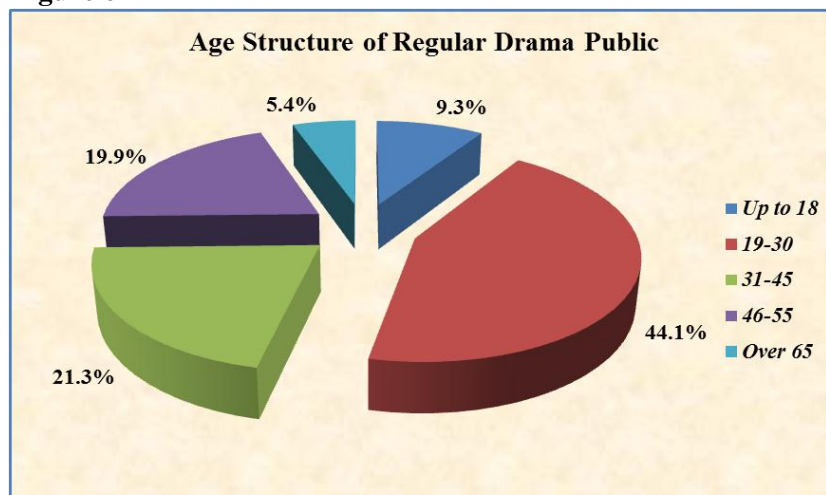
Sex/Frequency		Theater-Going Frequency					Total
		Very often	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Very rarely	
Sex	Male	33.8	33.3	34.9	36.8	62.2	35.6
	Female	66.2	66.7	65.1	63.2	37.8	64.4
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Pearson $\chi^2 = 32.966$; $\alpha = 0.05$; $C = 0.116$; Pearson's $R = -0.073$

As expected, because of the theater public sex structure (sample), the statistical analysis¹² showed that the zero hypothesis on independence of the modalities had to be rejected, but their connection was weak.

The attendance frequency distribution by age does not reveal any significant differences ($\chi^2 = 47.160$; $\alpha = 0.05$; $C = 0.139$; Pearson's $R = -0.043$). In all frequency groups public of 19-45 makes for 60%. The group of 19-30 dominates among the regular drama theater public (Figure 6). As for sex structure, it appears that in 44.1% of the regular public three thirds are women, and a third of men, mostly with university degrees.

Figure 6



¹² Within the statistical analysis (method of statistical conclusion), and in accordance with the level of scientific knowledge foreseen in our research, we used χ^2 test (Pearson Chi-Square Test) form of distribution and χ^2 test of modalities independence (level of significance $\alpha = 0.05$). Testing the hypothesis on independence of modalities on characteristics of the contingency table determines only confirmation or rejection of the hypothesis on their independence, but does not inform of the strength of connection (interdependence), if any. Therefore we also implemented contingency coefficient C . To reveal the connection of two variables we used linear correlation Pearson's R (Pearson Correlation).

Regarding educational level the only statistically difference is noticeable with the group of occasional public in which those with secondary school education prevail over those with university degrees. In other frequency groups the latter are majority public with no significant deviations from the sample education structure.

From the Table 6 presenting frequency distribution by individual theaters it appears that the greatest percentage of regular public have the Vranje „Bora Stanković“ National Theater and the Sombor National Theater. But, in theaters in question was a relatively small number of respondents, and the results could be mostly attributed to the standard error of small samples. Similar are the cases of the Užice National Theater and the Vršac „Sterija“ National Theater, where of considerable influence was a very poor sample realization in Vršac (36.0%). Except for these cases, higher number of regular public is in the following theaters: the Šabac Theater, the Kikinda National Theater, „Toša Jovanović“ National Theater, BITEF Theater, „Ujvideki Szinhaz“ Theater, the Yugoslav Drama Theater and the Kruševac Theater.

Table 6. Attendance Frequency By Individual Theaters (%)

<i>Theater</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Very often</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Very rarely</i>	<i>Total</i>
Atelje 212	Beograd	10.6	31.3	41.8	14.9	1.4	100
Beograd Drama Theater	Beograd	13.8	30.4	42.4	12.4	0.9	100
BITEF Theater	Beograd	20.0	45.0	30.0	5.0	0.0	100
Yugoslav Drama Theater	Beograd	18.1	28.8	42.4	8.5	2.3	100
Opera and Theater „Madlenianum“	Beograd	10.8	38.5	35.4	15.4	0.0	100
Kraljevo Theater	Kraljevo	14.3	35.7	10.7	25.0	14.3	100
Kruševac Theater	Kruševac	19.2	22.4	37.6	15.2	5.6	100
„Bora Stanković“ National Theater	Vranje	59.3	18.5	14.8	7.4	0.0	100
Šabac Theater	Šabac	35.7	24.5	23.5	11.2	5.1	100
„Nepszinhaz“ National Theater	Subotica	12.7	47.3	21.8	14.5	3.6	100
„Sterija“ National Theater	Vršac	35.3	5.9	41.2	5.9	11.8	100
„Toša Jovanović“ National Theater	Zrenjanin	21.4	27.1	41.4	10.0	0.0	100
Beograd National Theater	Beograd	14.6	33.3	32.9	13.7	5.5	100
Kikinda National Theater	Kikinda	27.1	25.0	39.6	4.2	4.2	100
Leskovac National Theater	Leskovac	0.0	40.0	54.3	5.7	0.0	100
Niš National Theater	Niš	3.9	47.1	29.4	17.6	2.0	100
Pirot National Theater	Pirot	8.8	44.1	29.4	17.6	0.0	100
Sombor National Theater	Sombor	53.6	17.9	21.4	3.6	3.6	100
Užice National Theater	Užice	35.3	41.2	17.6	5.9	0.0	100
Slavija Theater	Beograd	2.5	23.6	44.7	19.3	9.9	100
„Ujvideki Szinhaz“ Theater	Novi Sad	18.6	32.6	37.2	9.3	2.3	100
Youth Theater	Novi Sad	2.9	20.0	51.4	22.9	2.9	100
Terazije Theater	Beograd	12.5	26.6	39.6	15.1	6.3	100
„Zoran Radmilović“ Theater	Zaječar	8.3	11.1	47.2	25.0	8.3	100
Serbian National Theater	Novi Sad	12.1	39.7	37.9	6.9	3.4	100
„Boško Buha“ Theater	Beograd	12.5	34.4	28.1	18.8	6.3	100
„Zvezdara“ Theater	Beograd	12.1	29.7	40.7	13.2	4.4	100
Total		15.3	30.2	37.0	13.4	4.1	100

The regular public of National Theaters in Niš and Pirot is not numerous, but their potentially regular public is significant, as well as that of the BITEF Theater, the Užice National Theater, „Nepszinhaz“ National Theater, the Serbian National Theater and „Madlenianum“. The classical

occasional public prevails in the Youth Theater, „Zoran Radmilović“ Theater and „Slavija“ Theater, but it makes for more than a half (51.4%) only in the Youth Theater. On the other hand, though a bit more of its public is occasional, a third of the public of „Zoran Radmilović“ are rare or random theater-goers. The Kraljevo Theater is exceptional for having the smallest occasional public (10.7%), and the greatest in the lower part of the frequency scale (39.3%). Having in mind that there are no significant deviations from the average in numbers of regular and potentially regular public, a smaller number of occasional public obviously directly influenced the rise in number of public with lower frequency. The opposite case is with the Youth Theater where, beside more than a half of occasional public, there are 25.8% of rare one, meaning that here the decrease of regular and potentially regular public directly influenced the rise in number of rare public. Similar situation is with the „Slavija“ Theater.

As expected, there is a positive correlation between the frequency of theater-going and ways of free time spending. With greater frequency active forms of free time spending become more usual.

Thus, the initial hypothesis that the majority of public of professional theaters in Serbia is occasional, and belonging to younger, better educated, urban population is confirmed. So is the other hypothesis that social-demographic variables are important cause of variations in theater-going frequency, as obvious from the data on sex and education structure of the professional theaters public in Serbia.

Among the objectives of our research of the theater-going frequency was the attempt to define factors that greatly influence it, with the additional idea to isolate the most dominant factors or system of factors. The public with frequency classified along the *often-rarely* axis was offered separate questions with 9-11 reasons unhierarchically listed, with possible adding of an unlisted answer. The respondents were asked to state no more than three reasons for their often or rare going to theater, without ranking. The percentage structures of multiple answers are presented in Tables 7 and 8.

Table 7

<i>Reasons of Often (and Occasional) Visits to Theater</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Percentage of cases</i>
Satisfaction of cultural/art need	19.6%	42.9%
Repertory quality	14.7%	32.1%
Company's quality (actors)	10.1%	22.0%
Professional interest	4.9%	10.7%
Enjoyment in interior	1.4%	3.1%
Distance from location of housing	0.5%	1.0%
Going out (entertainment)	10.2%	22.4%
Education	7.4%	16.2%
Theater's popularity	1.0%	2.2%
I like theater productions	28.9%	63.2%
To make someone's company (by chance)	0.9%	1.9%
Other	0.5%	1.0%

The respondents going oftenly and occasionally to the theater named three major reasons for doing it: *liking theater productions*, *satisfying their cultural and artistic needs* and *repertory quality*. Interestingly, even 63.2% of the public among three major reasons said it was *their liking theater performances*, and for 42.9% it was satisfying of cultural and artistic needs. The *repertory quality*, expected to rank highly, was the answer of "only" 32.1% of the public. As for the sex structure no significant differences from the sample were observed, except for the answer *satisfying cultural and artistic needs* where women were more numerous (70.4% v.s. 29.6%), confirming they are more interested in theater as an institution meeting their cultural needs.

Such prevalence of the answer *because I like theater performances* is partly explainable by more and more heterogeneous character of the theater public - regarding its social origin, education level and occupation - which makes part of it more attached to the so called *entertainment function of the theater*, and the other to the *theater as a cultural expression of many values to broaden one's choices and enrich personality and life*. The cultural habitus of this part of the public enables them deeper understanding of the symbolic structure of the theater art. However, *situation factor* should be also taken into account: namely, being connected to the current socio-economic situation in Serbia and its processes characterized by a *destroyed value system*, prevalence of the *liking theater performances*, might as well be a sign of the public's wish for at least temporary escape from the gloomy reality.

So, the hypothesis that the most important factor of theater-going frequency is *satisfaction of cultural and artistic needs* was not confirmed. This answer is the second on the list - between *liking theater performances* (the first) and *repertory quality* (the third). Despite it, the hypothesis that, due to the heterogeneity and complexity of factors influencing theater-going, it is impossible to define a system of factors with common denominator was confirmed.

On the other hand, the public rarely going to theater underlines as the most important reasons: *lack of free time*, *family and living circumstances* and *lack of interest*. Almost half of the rare theater-goers (44.9%) named lack of free time among the three main reasons. However, the sex structure of respondents referring to the lack of free time and family and living circumstances corresponds to that of the sample, while men dominate in the group lacking interest (60.7% men; 39.3% women), indicating that lack of interest in theater prevails among males. The family and living circumstances are a bit more frequent with older respondents.

Table 8

<i>Reasons of Rare Theater-Going</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Percentage of cases</i>
Family and living circumstances	13.6%	20.5%
Lack of free time	29.7%	44.9%
Lack of interest	13.3%	20.0%
Inappropriate repertory	5.5%	8.4%
Financial reasons	12.8%	19.3%
Expensive tickets	12.5%	18.9%
Long distance from place of residence	7.0%	10.5%
Time performance begins	2.5%	3.8%
Inappropriate interior	0.8%	1.2%
Other	2.4%	3.6%

A statistically significant percentage of respondents referred to financial reasons (expensive tickets) as their major reason of rare theater-going. It should be noted here that we deliberately separated financial reason from expensive tickets, though the first implies the second. We did it in the attempt to separate financial reasons in general (living standard, family and personal budget) from the realistic estimation of the ticket price in general, as reasons of going or not going to the theater.

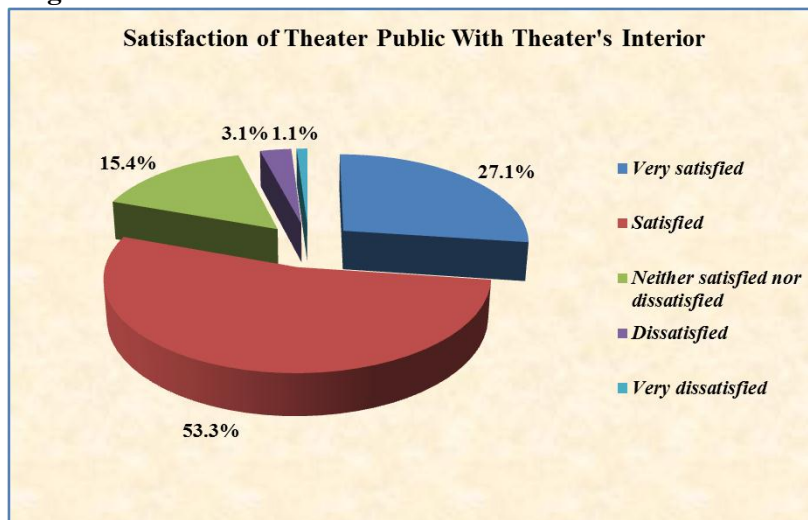
Considering the structure of reasons for rare going to theater as a whole, we will note that all the important reasons actually belong to socio-economic and value sphere of human life, while those directly connected to the theater (repertory, interior, time of performance beginning) are almost negligible. So, our research findings show that the most important reasons for rare going to the theater are not directly connected with the theater's activity and its features, but with socio-economic conditions of public's existence and the dominant value orientations in the society.

This finding additionally confirms the fact that 53.3% of the theater public is satisfied by the theater's interior, and even 27.1% very satisfied (Figure 7). It means that more than 80% of the public is satisfied with the interior, without any significant differences regarding sex, education level and occupation. The statistical analysis shows that the age and satisfaction with the theater's interior are independent modalities ($\chi^2 = 16.358$; $\alpha = 0.05$; $C = 0.083$; Pearson's $R = 0.023$), i.e. namely, the zero hypothesis that satisfaction with the interior does not depend on the age of public is confirmed.

The distribution of answers by theaters (Table 9) shows that the Sombor National Theater public is the most satisfied with its interior (even 77.8% of very satisfied and 22.2% of satisfied), and no answers in the lower part of the scale. The same is true with the Terazije Theater (97.4% satisfied) and „Madlenianum“ (96.6%), without dissatisfied, and a negligible percentage of undecided. More than 80% of the public satisfied with their interior also have The Beograd Drama Theater, the Zrenjanin „Toša Jovanović“ National Theater, Atelje 212, Yugoslav Drama Theater,

the Kruševac Theater, the Šabac Theater, the Beograd National Theater and the Kikinda National Theater. The greatest dissatisfaction with the interior is of the Kraljevo Theater public (32.1% of dissatisfied and 39.3% of undecided). Statistically significant number of dissatisfied and about a third of undecided are among the public of the Niš National Theater and the Zaječar „Zoran Radmilović“ Theater.

Figure 7

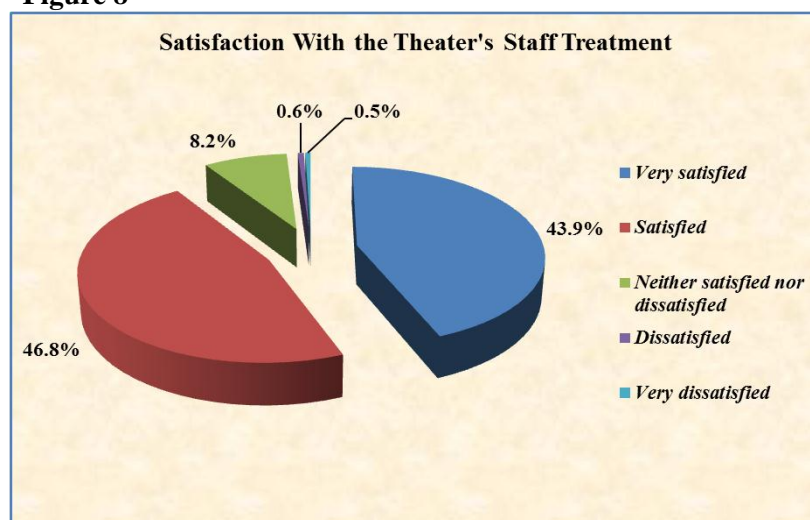


Beside the Kraljevo Theater, great number of undecided is in the Beograd „Boško Buha“ Theater (43.%), the Pirot National Theater (35.3%) and the Novi Sad Youth Theater (31.4%). So, our findings indicate that investments in the interior are necessary in the Kraljevo Theater, the Niš National Theater and the Zaječar „Zoran Radmilović“ Theater. Comparing these data with those on frequency of attendance, we will see that as the Kraljevo Theater has the smallest number of occasional public (10.7%), and the greatest number in the lowest part of the scale with small frequency (39.3%); „Zoran Radmilović“ Theater has a third of rare or random theater-goers; the Niš National Theater and the Pirot National Theater a small number of regular public, we may conclude that (apart from the dominant, Table 8) the inappropriate theater interior is also among the reasons for smaller frequency of attendance.

Table 9. Satisfaction of the Drama Public With Theater's Interior (%)

<i>Theater</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Very satisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Very dissatisfied</i>	<i>Total</i>
Atelje 212	Beograd	18.4	69.1	11.6	1.0	0.0	100
Beograd Drama Theater	Beograd	22.3	67.9	8.8	0.5	0.5	100
BITEF Theater	Beograd	20.0	60.0	15.0	0.0	5.0	100
Yugoslav Drama Theater	Beograd	34.3	49.1	12.0	2.9	1.7	100
Opera and Theater „Madlenianum“	Beograd	43.3	53.3	3.3	0.0	0.0	100
Kraljevo Theater	Kraljevo	7.1	21.4	39.3	28.6	3.6	100
Kruševac Theater	Kruševac	31.5	54.8	10.5	2.4	0.8	100
„Bora Stanković“ National Theater	Vranje	19.2	57.7	19.2	0.0	3.8	100
Šabac Theater	Šabac	45.9	43.9	8.2	0.0	2.0	100
„Nepszinhaz“ National Theater	Subotica	7.3	58.2	23.6	5.5	5.5	100
„Sterija“ National Theater	Vršac	29.4	41.2	23.5	5.9	0.0	100
„Toša Jovanović“ National Theater	Zrenjanin	41.4	50.0	5.7	1.4	1.4	100
Beograd National Theater	Beograd	33.9	49.3	14.9	1.4	0.5	100
Kikinda National Theater	Kikinda	23.4	57.4	17.0	2.1	0.0	100
Leskovac National Theater	Leskovac	8.6	62.9	22.9	5.7	0.0	100
Niš National Theater	Niš	10.2	42.9	32.7	12.2	2.0	100
Pirot National Theater	Pirot	5.9	50.0	35.3	8.8	0.0	100
Sombor National Theater	Sombor	77.8	22.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	100
Užice National Theater	Užice	11.8	64.7	23.5	0.0	0.0	100
Slavija Theater	Beograd	6.4	53.2	29.5	9.6	1.3	100
„Ujvideki Szinhaz“ Theater	Novi Sad	20.9	41.9	25.6	9.3	2.3	100
Youth Theater	Novi Sad	5.7	51.4	31.4	8.6	2.9	100
Terazije Theater	Beograd	56.5	40.9	1.6	0.5	0.5	100
„Zoran Radmilović“ Theater	Zaječar	5.6	52.8	30.6	2.8	8.3	100
Serbian National Theater	Novi Sad	6.9	62.1	25.9	5.2	0.0	100
„Boško Buha“ Theater	Beograd	9.4	43.8	43.8	3.1	0.0	100
„Zvezdara“ Theater	Beograd	18.4	69.1	11.6	1.0	0.0	100
Total		27.1	53.3	15.4	3.1	1.1	100

The data on satisfaction of the public regarding the manner theater staff treats them, also support the already mentioned thesis that the reasons of rare theater going are not in direct connection with the theater's activity and its features, but with socio-economic conditions of the public's existence and dominant value orientations in the society (Figure 8).

Figure 8

Even 90.7% of the professional theater's public is satisfied with the theater's staff treatment. The satisfaction mostly refers to the people in everyday direct connection with the public (box office, host of the performance, ushers). That the professional theaters' staff in Serbia is highly professional in its treatment of the public support the fact that there are no significant differences either in socio-demographic variables, or frequency of attendance (regardless of frequency the public is equally satisfied with the staff's treatment).

4.3 Theater's Repertory

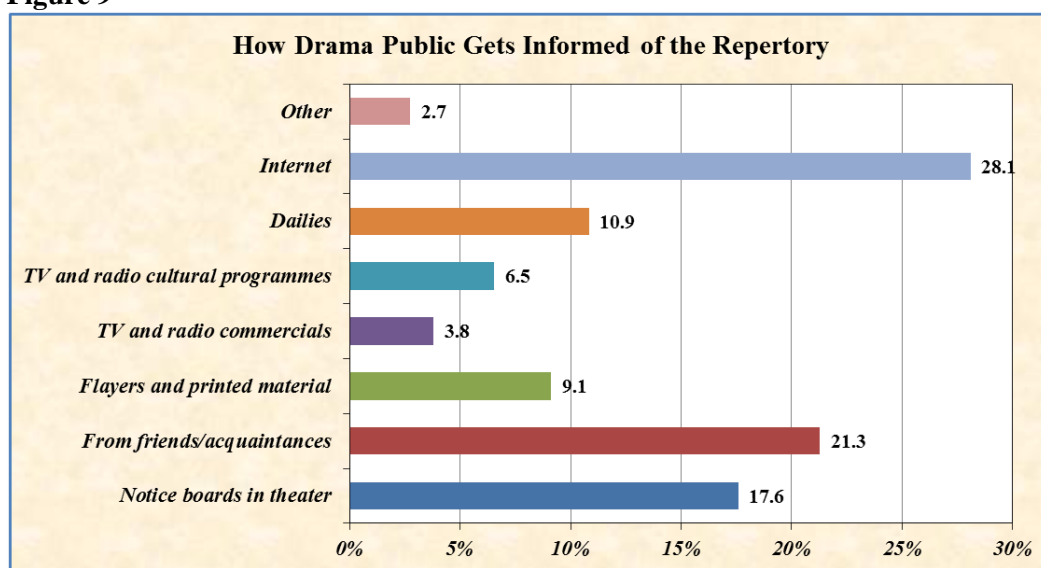
In the attempt to define the public's attitude towards the theater's repertory we used a set of questions on the ways of getting informed on the repertory (performances), knowledge of the repertory in the ongoing season and estimated satisfaction with the repertory. In the second part we tried to find out which genres were the most attractive and which productions (by genres) the public wished to see more on the repertory. We also attempted to investigate interest in classical and contemporary drama, by domestic or foreign authors, but also the structure of the related needs. And finally, we were interested to know how the public chose a particular production to see, i.e. which factors are the most influential in their choices.

The majority of the public informs themselves by Internet (28.1%), and friends' recommendations (21.3%). The usual ways by notice boards in the theater or ads in dailies are still frequent, but with trend of stagnation and further decrease with prevalence of modern ways via information technologies. The radio or TV spots are by far the least represented ways of getting information on the theater's repertory for two major reasons. First, they are relatively rare, probably because advertising in the electronic media is expensive and theaters could hardly afford it. Second, though TV is the electronic media in the broadest use, that a relatively small public gets informed by TV cultural programmes, supports the fact that programmes dealing with culture in general, theater included, are rare. The already mentioned structure of the free time spending of the theater public (Table 4) where watching TV appears as the third form in 29.4% answers also partly supports the latter thesis.

The rising share of the Internet as information source is expected due to current trends in the sphere of information and communication technologies. Namely, the development of communication technologies, with Internet as its basis, has been rapid and of great influence in changing ways of communication, business, information and advertising. The global communication network reshapes each segment of our everyday life, and particularly improves the efficiency of inter-institutional communication and business. The Internet in Serbia is developing slower than needed, and significantly lags behind more developed countries. According to the

Republican Office of Statistics, 33.2% of households were connected to the Internet in 2008. The 2008 data show that about 2 million people used Internet of whom 1,250,000 used it daily in 2008. Compared to 2007 the number of users increased for some 300,000. However, Serbia still lags behind the European Union countries, where some 60% of households are connected to the Internet, with even 70% of them using global network. According to the available data, the Internet in Serbia is mostly used for *e-mails*, information, *on-line* reading of dailies and journals, but it is disturbing that even 29.3% of citizens are not interested in the Internet at all.

Figure 9



Despite that the Internet is not among dominant modes of free time spending (Table 4), it is the most usual way the public gets information on the theater repertory, which indicates that the majority of theater public uses the Internet for targeted search (going to specific sites with relevant information), and not for search as a way to spend free time. On the other hand, the data suggest that the theater absolutely needs a quality Web presentation if it is to follow the communication and information trends in the contemporary information society.

However, to attain it, cultural institutions need the appropriate ICT equipment. The field research is rare and insufficient to define the current situation and needs of cultural institutions in the sphere of information technologies. So, the Center for Study in Cultural Development conducted one,¹³ which showed that the development of IT infrastructure in cultural institutions in Serbia was chaotic, poorly organized and slow in comparison with rapid changes pertinent to current information-communication technologies. For example, 40% of theaters estimated their equipment as satisfying, the same percentage was unable to estimate, while 20% considered the situation as dissatisfying. The data clearly indicate that greater investments in equipment in theaters

¹³ Biljana Jokić, Slobodan Mrđa, *Informacione tehnologije i ljudski resursi u kulturi Srbije* (Information Technologies and Human Resources in Culture in Serbia), Beograd: Zavod za proučavanje kulturnog razvitka, 2009.

are necessary, i.e. in gradual replacement of obsolete PCs with better ones. Still, some 60% of theaters consider their Internet connection as satisfying, and 30% as dissatisfying. Having in mind the continual increase of the Internet use in information on theater activities, and the mentioned data on equipment at theaters' disposal, more than half of the Serbian theaters evidently have to improve the quality of their information systems.

As expected, the manner public gets informed of the theaters' repertory does not depend on its sex ($\chi^2 = 7.248$; $a = 0.05$; $C = 0.055$; Pearson's $R = 0.001$). In two dominant groups of university and secondary education no significant differences are observed, and the distribution is in line with the general one. However, in distribution by age, certain differences between age groups are obvious (Table 10).

Table 10. Ways Public Gets Informed of the Theaters' Repertory Per Age (%)

Information source/Age	Age					Total
	Up to 18	19-30	31-45	46-65	Over 65	
Notice boards in theater	26.1	16.9	15.2	19.0	14.7	17.6
Friends/acquaintances	24.6	21.9	21.6	19.1	18.6	21.3
Playlets and printed repertory	13.3	8.5	7.9	10.6	6.9	9.1
Radio and TV spots	4.9	2.1	5.4	4.1	4.9	3.8
Radio and TV cultural programmes	0.5	3.0	8.5	10.4	17.6	6.5
Dailies	6.4	7.7	8.4	18.6	24.5	10.9
Internet	16.7	38.0	31.2	14.9	9.8	28.1
Other	7.4	2.0	1.9	3.3	2.9	2.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Pearson $\chi^2 = 268.376$; $a = 0.05$; $C = 0.319$; Pearson's $R = -0.001$

The youngest age group usually gets information from the notice boards in theater lobbies combined with friends' recommendations. They hardly watch or listen to the TV and radio cultural programmes, and only a bit more than 5% get informed reading dailies. It was expected since some earlier research¹⁴ of the group showed that TV and particularly radio cultural programmes and dailies were far from usual information sources of teenagers. The most numerous age group in the theater public (19-30), absolutely prefers Internet in getting informed of the theater repertory. It makes Internet the dominant information form, and led us to conclude its dominance is going to become even more obvious. The 31-45 age group is almost identical to the most numerous one,

¹⁴ Slobodan Mrđa, *Kulturni habitus omladine (Cultural Habitus of the Youth)*, in: Milan Nikolić, Srećko Mihailović (Eds.), *Mladi izgubljeni u tranziciji (The Youth Lost in Transition)*, Centar za proučavanje alternative, Beograd, 2004, pp. 166-172. According to the research findings, a bit more than the half of respondents did not read dailies. Poor reading of dailies was characteristic specially of teenagers and youth living in cities of over 100,000 inhabitants (except for Beograd), where even 65.1% of youth did not read dailies at all. Two thirds of the respondents did not read weeklies and journals, with teenagers again dominant, so it naturally followed that the group very rarely use printed media as information source. The readers, for their part, besides elementary political information were mostly interested in entertainment and sports, cultural information not even mentioned. The research showed that teenagers belong to the group of regular TV public, as only 2.42% of the young reported they watched TV very rarely or never. However, the youth mostly watched movies (26.2%), sports (15.5%), and entertainment programmes (14.8%), than music programmes (13.6%) and series (11.8%), while cultural programmes practically had no public in that age group.

with a minimal increase in watching TV and listening to the radio cultural programmes. The information forms are the most equally distributed in the 46-65 age group, with a more significant increase in use of dailies as information source. The oldest group is understandably most inclined to dailies and TV cultural programmes as the way to inform themselves of the theater repertory.

The connection of the two forms of information (dailies and TV and radio cultural programmes) is also evident: namely, with age the public becomes more disposed to the more traditional information forms, and vice versa - the younger the public, traditional information forms become less usual. It is worth mentioning that the friends' recommendation remains an important and stable information form in all age groups.

Table 11. Ways Public Gets Informed of the Theaters' Repertory and Frequency of Attendance (%)

<i>Information source/frequency</i>	<i>Frequency</i>					<i>Total</i>
	<i>Very often</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Occasionally</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Very rarely</i>	
Notice boards in theater	30.7	19.1	14.3	11.7	7.1	17.6
Friends/acquaintances	12.7	15.6	24.4	28.1	44.9	21.3
Flayers and printed repertory	12.7	9.2	8.7	7.3	5.1	9.1
Radio and TV spots	3.3	2.8	4.1	6.3	2.0	3.8
Radio and TV cultural programmes	4.4	6.3	7.0	6.9	10.2	6.5
Dailies	9.4	10.7	10.3	12.9	15.3	10.9
Internet	23.8	32.1	29.3	24.9	14.3	28.1
Other	2.8	4.3	1.9	1.9	1.0	2.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Pearson $\chi^2 = 165.064$; $\alpha = 0.05$; $C = 0.255$; Pearson's $R = -0.006$

The above table reveals a relative connection between frequency and information sources. The regular theater public usually gets information on the theater's repertory from the notice boards in theater lobbies and the Internet. The potentially regular public prefers the Internet and than notice boards in theater. It means that more than a half of frequent theater-goers combines the two information forms. The most numerous, occasional public prefers Internet, but also listens to friends' recommendations. A rarer theater-goers are more inclined to follow what their friends/acquaintances recommend, and the occasional ones are even more doing so, since almost every second of them came to theater that way. On the other hand, more frequent theater-goers have formed the criteria of choice of their own, and less often follow recommendations, because it is highly probable they are those *who give recommendations*. As for notice boards in theater lobbies, its use decreases with decreased frequency, and importance of recommendations increases with decreased frequency.

Table 12. Ways Drama Public Gets Informed of the Theaters' Repertory per Theater (%)

<i>Theater</i>	<i>Notice boards</i>	<i>Friends/acquaintances</i>	<i>Flyers, printed material</i>	<i>Radio and TV spots</i>	<i>Radio and TV cultural programmes</i>	<i>Dailies</i>	<i>Internet</i>	<i>Other</i>
Atelje 212	5.8	23.7	5.8	1.4	7.2	10.1	43.5	2.4
Beograd Drama Theater	4.7	25.1	6.5	0.9	5.1	9.8	45.6	2.3
BITEF Theater	5.0	45.0	5.0	5.0	0.0	10.0	30.0	0.0
Yugoslav Drama Theater	11.4	22.3	9.7	1.7	5.7	13.1	32.6	3.4
Opera and Theater „Madlenianum“	10.0	11.7	10.0	1.7	10.0	23.3	31.7	1.7
Kraljevo Theater	17.9	50.0	10.7	7.1	10.7	0.0	0.0	3.6
Kruševac Theater	46.0	21.8	7.3	3.2	4.0	2.4	12.1	3.2
„Bora Stanković“ National Theater	19.2	15.4	26.9	19.2	0.0	.0	15.4	3.8
Šabac Theater	57.1	12.2	10.2	6.1	2.0	4.1	7.1	1.0
„Nepszinhas“ National Theater	12.7	21.8	21.8	5.5	3.6	3.6	21.8	9.1
„Sterija“ National Theater	29.4	47.1	5.9	0.0	5.9	0.0	11.8	0.0
„Toša Jovanović“ National Theater	31.4	14.3	11.4	7.1	2.9	7.1	24.3	1.4
Beograd National Theater	16.9	16.7	6.4	2.7	8.2	17.2	30.9	0.9
Kikinda National Theater	29.8	25.5	10.6	2.1	10.6	12.8	2.1	6.4
Leskovac National Theater	42.9	31.4	8.6	2.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	14.3
Niš National Theater	20.4	24.5	12.2	6.1	4.1	4.1	20.4	8.2
Pirot National Theater	28.1	34.4	3.1	9.4	3.1	0.0	0.0	21.9
Sombor National Theater	25.9	29.6	18.5	7.4	0.0	0.0	14.8	3.7
Užice National Theater	70.6	17.6	5.9	0.0	5.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
Slavija Theater	5.1	22.2	8.2	5.1	7.6	11.4	39.9	0.6
„Ujvideki Szinhaz“ Theater	18.6	7.0	30.2	2.3	2.3	16.3	23.3	.0
Youth Theater	11.4	14.3	28.6	8.6	5.7	20.0	8.6	2.9
Terazije Theater	9.7	26.9	3.8	4.3	8.1	10.8	34.4	2.2
„Zoran Radmilović“ Theater	30.6	25.0	8.3	16.7	16.7	0.0	0.0	2.8
Serbian National Theater	12.1	13.8	22.4	5.2	5.2	17.2	22.4	1.7
„Boško Buha“ Theater	15.6	15.6	6.3	0.0	6.3	15.6	40.6	0.0
„Zvezdara“ Theater	11.1	17.8	7.8	4.4	13.3	14.4	27.8	3.3
Total	17.6	21.3	9.1	3.8	6.5	10.9	28.1	2.7

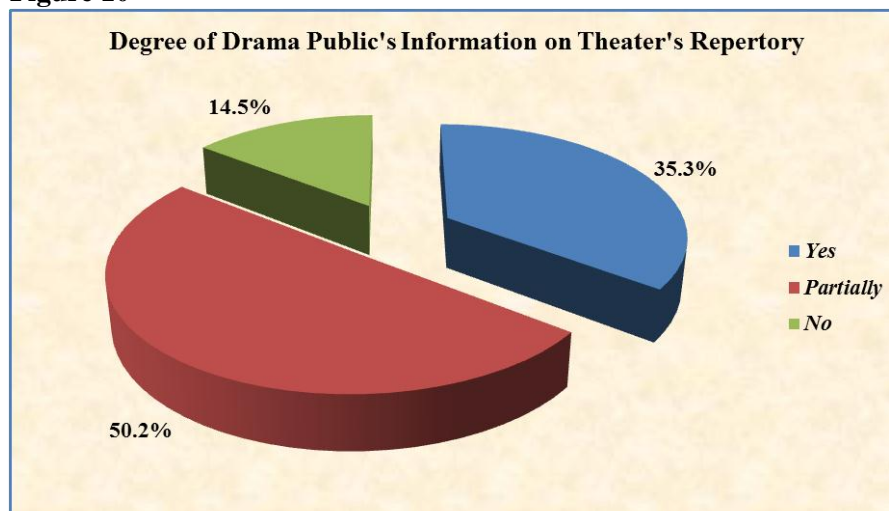
The Table 12 shows that in the public of the Beograd theaters, except for the BITEF Theater, prevails Internet which is not the dominant form of information of the public in other Serbian cities, where the public prefers notice boards in theater lobbies and friends' recommendations. According to our data, all the theaters except for that in Pirot, have their Web presentations. But, suprisingly, no public gets information from such pages of the Kraljevo Theater, the Leskovac National Theater, the Užice National Theater, and the Zaječar „Zoran Radmilović“ Theater, opting for notice boards and recommendations. In line with the observed trends of increasing use of Internet and information technologies in general, especially with the younger potential public, these theaters should improve their presentations and make them more attractive. Similar are the cases of the Kikinda National Theater, the Šabac Theater and the Novi Sad Youth Theater, where less than 10% of the public gets informed by Internet. A relatively significant percentage of all the Novi Sad and two Beograd theaters (the Beograd „Madlenianum“ and National Theater, the Novi Sad Youth Theater, the Serbian National Theater and „Ujvideki Szinhaz“) prefer dailies as their source of information on the theater repertory. Such a finding indicates that these theaters are more visible than others in dailies, and should stick to that form of advertising, especially important for older public.

So, the hypothesis that the Internet is becoming dominant information source regarding theaters' repertory and activities is completely confirmed, particularly in the case of the Beograd

theaters. However, a significant percentage of the provincial theater-goers still prefers friends' and acquaintances' recommendations. The classical forms (notice boards and dailies) are losing importance, but remain statistically significant.

The set of questions on theater's repertory and public's opinion about it was meant to reveal the degree of public's information (Figure 10). In order to get as precise answers as possible, beside positive and negative, our respondents were also offered a medium option. It turned out that a third of them chose to answer they were partially informed of the repertory, and a bit more than a third they were completely informed.

Figure 10



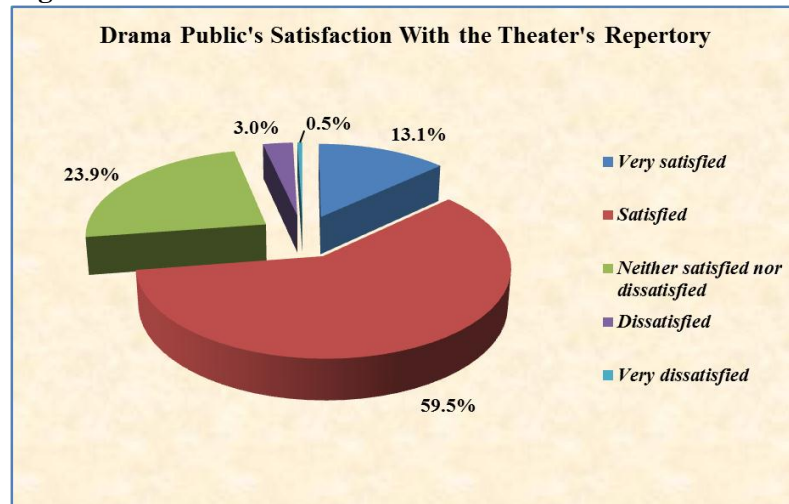
The sex structure of the groups informed of the theater's repertory is almost completely identical with that of the sample, while among the uninformed prevail men. As expected, there are no significant differences in distribution per age and education level, but there is a significant correlation between the frequency of attendance and degree of information on theaters' repertory ($\chi^2 = 669.098$; $\alpha = 0.05$; $C = 0.469$; Pearson's $R = 0.485$) i.e. with frequency rises the percentage of the informed public. Also, the information on the repertory is better with those informed by the Internet and notice boards in theaters, and worse with the public informed by friends (usually a single production recommended) or dailies.

Better than average informed is the public of the Beograd BITEF Theater, the Beograd „Madlenianum“, the Šabac Theater, the Subotica „Nepszinhaz“, the Zrenjanin „Toša Jovanović“ Theater, and the Novi Sad „Ujvideki Szinhaz“. On the other hand, poorly informed is the public of the Kraljevo Theater, the Kikinda National Theater, the Novi Sad Youth Theater, the Zaječar „Zoran Radmilović“ Theater, and the Beograd „Boško Buha“ Theater.

Our next objective in this research segment was to find out the degree of public's satisfaction with the theater's repertory (Figure 11). It should be noted here that though 14.5% of the public

reported they are not informed of the theater's repertory, 8.8% of them answered the question on satisfaction with it, which is a typical example of inconsistency in their answers.¹⁵

Figure 11



The majority of public informed or partially informed of the theater's repertory (64.7%) is mostly satisfied with it under the given circumstances. Namely, even 59.5% are satisfied and 13.1% very satisfied with the repertory. There is a significant number of undecided (23.9%), and more than 3% of dissatisfied. As for the sex structure, there is a bit higher percentage of men in the group of dissatisfied. In most age groups the proportions do not significantly differ from those in the sample, except for the youngest group where very satisfied (22.4%) outnumber those in the sample (13.1%).

The regular theater public is mostly satisfied with the repertory (27.2% of very satisfied and 48.6% of satisfied), as well as the potentially regular public (14.4% of very satisfied and 67.8% of satisfied). The most numerous occasional public is a bit less satisfied with the repertory (8.3% of very satisfied, 62.9% of satisfied and 26.4% of undecided). With rare or random theater-goers rapidly rises percentage of undecided (over 40%). This attitude is probably the result of the absence of personal evaluation criteria in close connection with rare theater-going or lack of interest in repertory in general.

The statistical analysis shows a certain correlation, i.e. that the satisfaction with theater repertory influences frequency of theater-going, but the connection is relatively weak ($C = 0.288$). Though not a decisive factor influencing frequency of theater-going, satisfaction with the repertory could be incorporated into the so called system of factors expected to influence frequency in future. However, due to the proved relatively weak connection between these modalities, the hypothesis on

¹⁵ Possible errors in data input taken into account, the detailed control of input was impossible due to a small number of associates engaged in such a big project (sample) and deadlines planned. However, we do not think this percentage of inconsistency could significantly influence the validity of final results.

the significant tie between the theater repertory (satisfaction with it) and frequency of theater-going is not confirmed.

Moreover, the mentioned data are in full accordance with the most important reasons of frequent or occasional theater-going (Table 7), where the repertory quality - which was expected to be ranked very highly - appears among the three main reasons in „only“ 32.1% of the public.

The satisfaction with individual theater's repertory (Table 13) shows that the public of most professional theaters is generally satisfied with their repertory. The most satisfied public is of the Novi Sad „Ujvideki Szinhaz“ Theater, the Subotica „Nepszinhaz“, Terazije Theater, and the Šabac Theater.

Table 13. Satisfaction of Drama Public With Repertory Per Theater (%)

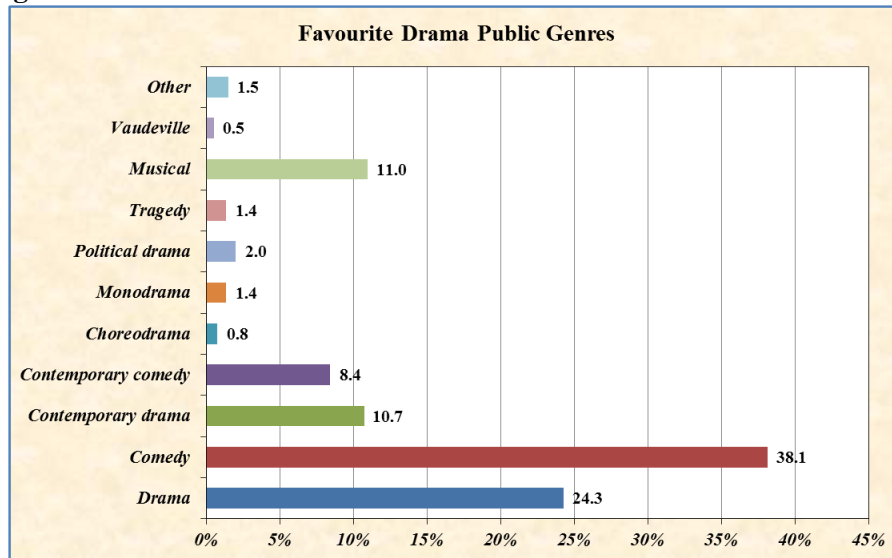
<i>Theater</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Very satisfied</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Very dissatisfied</i>	<i>Total</i>
Atelje 212	Beograd	9.0	64.6	24.3	2.1	0.0	100
Beograd Drama Theater	Beograd	9.8	62.7	24.4	2.6	0.5	100
BITEF Theater	Beograd	0.0	73.7	21.1	5.3	0.0	100
Yugoslav Drama Theater	Beograd	13.5	58.8	24.7	2.9	0.0	100
Opera and Theater „Madlenianum“	Beograd	15.3	59.3	23.7	1.7	0.0	100
Kraljevo Theater	Kraljevo	0.0	50.0	46.4	0.0	3.6	100
Kruševac Theater	Kruševac	13.8	65.9	16.3	3.3	0.8	100
„Bora Stanković“ National Theater	Vranje	34.6	46.2	19.2	0.0	0.0	100
Šabac Theater	Šabac	26.4	52.7	18.7	2.2	0.0	100
„Nepszinhaz“ National Theater	Subotica	14.5	72.7	10.9	1.8	0.0	100
„Sterija“ National Theater	Vršac	18.8	25.0	43.8	6.3	6.3	100
„Toša Jovanović“ National Theater	Zrenjanin	7.2	59.4	29.0	4.3	0.0	100
Beograd National Theater	Beograd	16.3	57.0	24.4	1.8	0.5	100
Kikinda National Theater	Kikinda	6.5	58.7	30.4	4.3	0.0	100
Leskovac National Theater	Leskovac	16.0	72.0	12.0	0.0	0.0	100
Niš National Theater	Niš	10.4	50.0	33.3	6.3	0.0	100
Pirot National Theater	Pirot	5.9	50.0	32.4	11.8	0.0	100
Sombor National Theater	Sombor	11.1	51.9	25.9	7.4	3.7	100
Užice National Theater	Užice	23.5	58.8	11.8	5.9	0.0	100
Slavija Theater	Beograd	6.6	66.2	24.5	1.3	1.3	100
„Ujvideki Szinhaz“ Theater	Novi Sad	36.6	53.7	9.8	0.0	0.0	100
Youth Theater	Novi Sad	0.0	37.1	45.7	14.3	2.9	100
Terazije Theater	Beograd	21.7	65.1	12.7	0.6	0.0	100
„Zoran Radmilović“ Theater	Zaječar	2.8	30.6	50.0	13.9	2.8	100
Serbian National Theater	Novi Sad	0.0	66.7	28.1	5.3	0.0	100
„Boško Buha“ Theater	Beograd	3.7	55.6	25.9	14.8	0.0	100
„Zvezdara“ Theater	Beograd	12.8	59.3	26.7	1.2	0.0	100
Total		13.1	59.5	23.9	3.0	0.5	100

On the other hand, a bit less satisfied is the public of the Zaječar „Zoran Radmilović“ Theater and the Novi Sad Youth Theater. A statistically significant number of dissatisfied public is also in the Beograd „Boško Buha“ Theater and the Pirot National Theater.

As expected, regarding the repertory structure by genres (Figure 12), the public is predominately interested in comedies (38.1%) and drama (24.3%). However, interest in comedies is traditionally high, but notable is rising interest in contemporary comedies and drama, and

particularly in musicals (with women more interested). The comedies are a bit more popular with the younger public, drama with the older, while musicals are equally popular in all age groups.

Figure 12



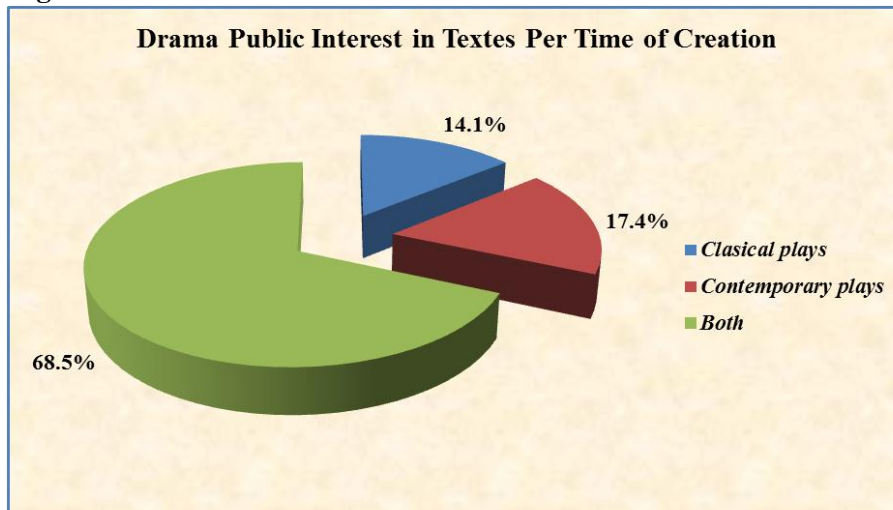
There are no significant differences in theater-going frequency by genres, though the most numerous potential public shows greater interest in contemporary drama productions.

Musical is the favourite genre of the Terazije Theater (35.5%) and „Madlenianum“ Theater (22.4%) public, while in others prevail comedy and drama.

These data clearly confirm part of the hypothesis that comedy and drama are two favourite genres of the theater public in Serbia, but does not its other part, i.e. that interest in other genres will decrease. On the contrary, the findings show the rising trends in interest in musical and contemporary drama and comedy.

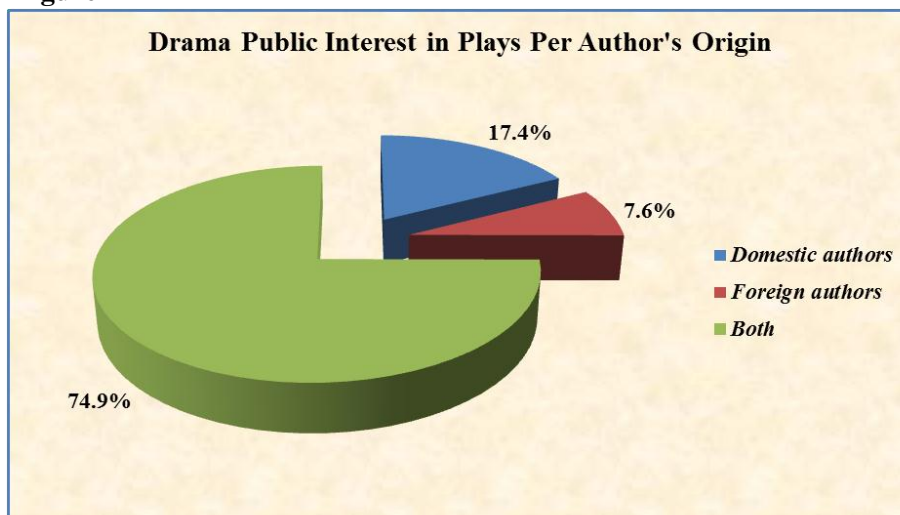
More than two thirds of the public of the Serbian professional theaters (68.5%) are equally interested in classical and contemporary works, and a third - more interested in contemporary texts (Figure 13). The latter confirms the observed increasing interest in contemporary productions.

Figure 13



The similar situation is with the public's interest by authors (Figure 14): namely, even 74.9% are equally interested in plays of domestic and foreign authors. The rest of 25% show greater interest in domestic production. So, the observed rising interest in contemporary works could be more precisely defined now as interest in *contemporary plays of domestic authors*. There are no significant statistical differences in socio-demographic variables whether in interest for works by time of creation or author's origin.

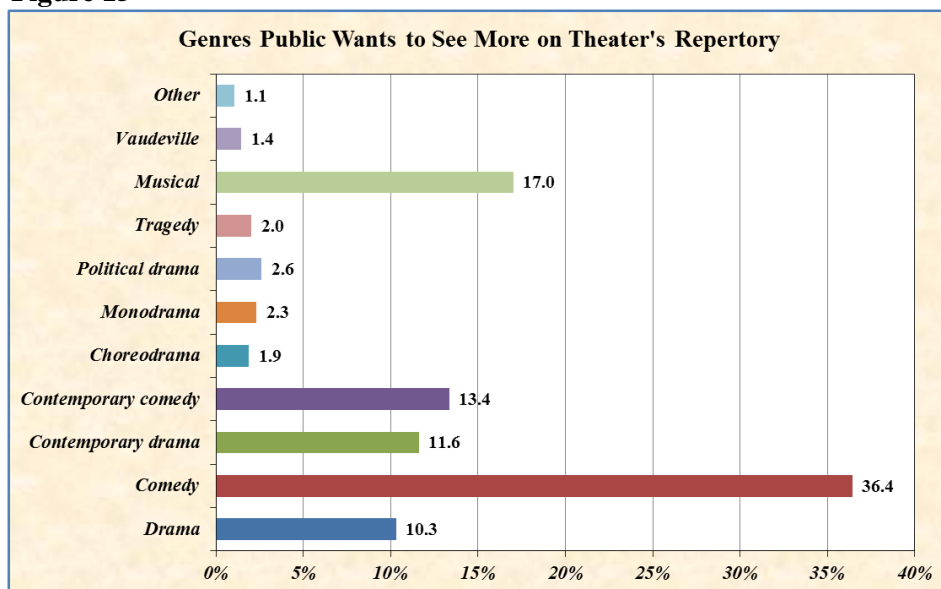
Figure 14



After we found out the favourite genre of the professional theaters' public and its preferences regarding classical and contemporary plays of domestic and foreign authors, we were eager to know to which genres belong productions the public would like to see more on the repertory (Figure 15). The findings on the favourite genre taken into account, there is no surprise in that the majority of

theater public (37.7%) in Serbia would like to see more comedies (if we add to it the option for contemporary comedy, it is almost 50% of the total public). The interest in classical comedy remains high, but the interest in modern comedy rises (Figures 15 and 16). Beside the evident popularity of the genre, another important factor probably influenced the result. It is closely tied to the current socio-economic situation in Serbia, and some comments of the public clearly illustrate it. So, a woman, 31-45, says: *Unfortunately, our everyday life is overwhelmed with images of criminal and all sorts of corruption. Spare us in the evening, when we are looking for fun*; another one, 46-65: *If you want to be happy, this theater is the right place. I always leave it full-hearted*; a man, 31-45: *It should be more high quality and good productions with plenty of laughter and music, for in this gloomy times people need fun and laughter*; woman, 31-45: *I suggest more productions making people laugh, and less tragedies and war themes*; man, 46-65: *Theater should be „magic“, it should not reflect everyday depressive themes, we have too much of it in the media already.*

Figure 15



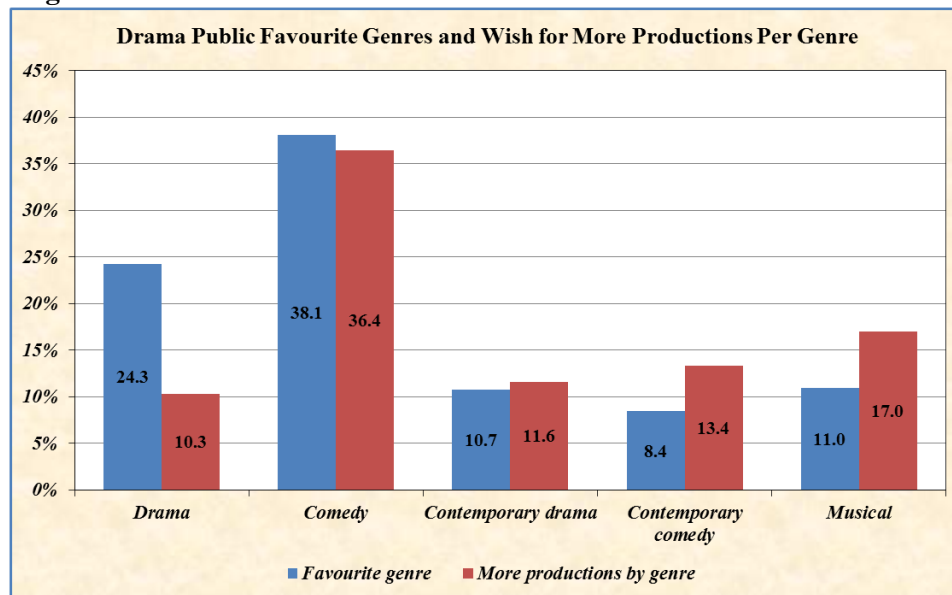
This is obviously the case of the so called *situation factor*, even more decisive in this country since we are living in a society so deeply marked by destruction to be called *a destroyed society*. The identity crisis, psychic burdens, ruined value system and uncertain future are the outcomes of the current socio-economic and cultural and historical situation in this society. All that results in a kind of a *delayed life*. With the overall pauperization, all these factors finally resulted in a regressive dislocation from objectives and values (fall to „lower“ aspirations, behaviour and values) to literal, physical dislocation (leaving the country).

It should be noted here that Serbia underwent dramatic changes in the 1990s. A lot was written about it, many empirical research was done in the attempt to contribute to deeper, scientific

understanding of the transition process in Serbia. A general view is, that after great social changes of 1990s, the Serbian society of 2000s radically differs from that of the previous decade. The changes were greatest in the social structure resulting in change of dominant social actors. Besides, the changed "logic" in the society functioning led to new social problems and new contradictions. It seems that the majority of public in its wish for more comedies actually seeks in the theater, at least temporary, refuge from gloomy realities and everyday problems.

The next ranked is drama (21.9% of the public), with rising interest in contemporary drama, and after that musical (17.0%). However, high interest in comedy and drama could be said to be expected, but a significant rising interest in *musicals* is quite a new trend and should be further investigated. The more so as according to our findings the trend will continue in future. The relation between favourite genres and its wish for more productions per genres is presented in the Figure 16.

Figure 16

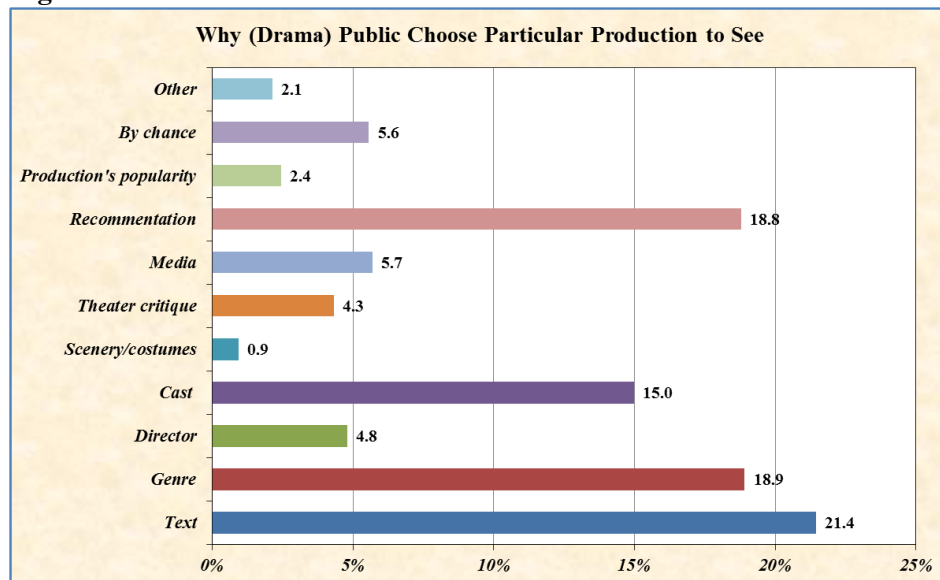


Generally speaking, regardless of genre, about a half of the professional theaters' public in Serbia is interested both in classical and contemporary works, with the evident rising interest in the latter. We expect this trend to continue. With drama and comedy prevail contemporary works of domestic authors, and with musical the public is equally interested in foreign and domestic authors.

The last in the segment related to the theaters' repertory is the question about the ways public selects productions to see (Figure 17). As visible from the figure, there is no dominant way of selection. The choice usually depends on the text (21.4%), equally on genre (18.9%) and recommendation (18.8%), and in 15% on the cast. Interestingly, only 4.8% of the public chooses production because of its director, and still less (4.3%) because of the theater critique. The scenery and production's popularity are of no influence. There are no significant differences regarding sex,

education or profession of the public. The finding that 18.8% of the public rely in their choices on friends' recommendation is in line with the other one, namely, that the majority of the public gets informed on the theater's repertory by the Internet (28.1%) and friends' recommendations (21.3%). The latter is pertinent to all groups of theater-goers, and remains significant and stable, equally in decision to go to the theater and in selection of performance to be seen.

Figure 17



The age distribution (Table 14) shows that the youngest group almost equally chooses productions to be seen for three major reasons: for work, genre and recommendation (20%), and 11% for cast and by chance. It should be noted that the youngest group dominantly comes to theater by pure chance. The most numerous age group (19-30) usually chooses production because of the text and recommendation, and a bit less because of the genre and cast. The older public is more inclined to choose by genre, while somewhat interestingly, the oldest group chooses particular production to see mostly because of the cast (even 23.8%), and only after that because of the text and genre, relying mostly on the theater critique, though not in a statistically significant percentage.

Table 14. Choice of Particular Production By Age of Drama Public (%)

<i>Choice of particular production/Age</i>	<i>Age</i>					<i>Total</i>
	<i>Up to 18</i>	<i>19-30</i>	<i>31-45</i>	<i>46-65</i>	<i>Over 65</i>	
Text	21.9	23.6	20.2	19.6	17.8	21.4
Genre	22.9	16.5	18.7	23.2	12.9	18.9
Director	2.0	4.0	5.2	6.8	5.0	4.8
Cast	11.9	14.3	16.1	14.2	23.8	15.0
Scenery/costumes	0.5	0.9	0.9	1.2	1.0	0.9
Theater critique	3.0	3.3	4.4	6.0	6.9	4.3
Media	3.0	5.4	6.4	6.2	6.9	5.7
Recommendation	20.4	21.9	18.5	14.6	10.9	18.8
Production's popularity	2.5	2.7	2.4	2.2	2.0	2.4
By chance	11.4	6.2	4.2	3.2	7.9	5.6
Other	0.5	1.2	3.0	2.8	5.0	2.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

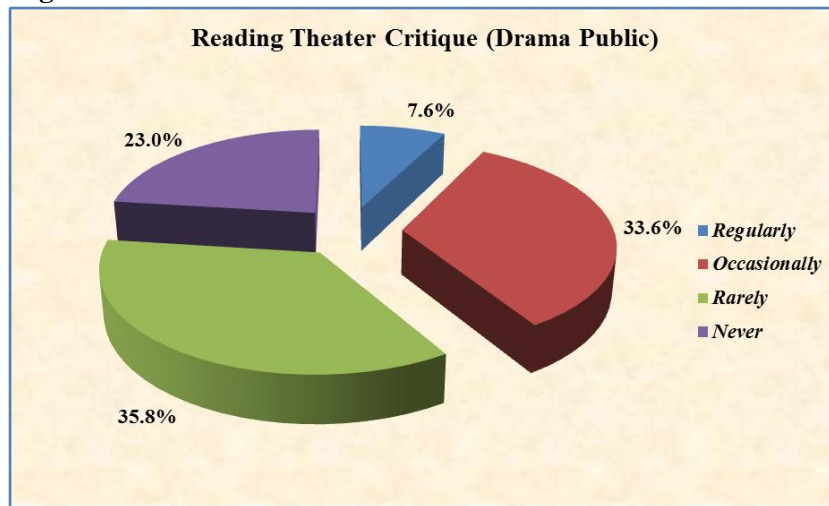
Pearson $\chi^2 = 91.269$; $\alpha = 0.05$; $C = 0.194$; Pearson's $R = -0.025$

The regular and potentially regular public, as two groups of the most frequent theater-goers, usually choose production because of the text, than genre and cast. The most numerous, occasional public mostly relies on recommendations, and does it in the percentage almost identical with that related to it's way of getting information about theater's repertory (from friends and acquaintances). Both findings confirm the thesis that recommendations are of significant influence in going to theater and the choice of particular production. A very similar is the case of rare and random theater-goers, except the cast is less important in their choices.

4.4 Theater Critique

Theoretically speaking, the most important function of the theater critique is "to evaluate" theatrical art making it subject to objective analysis grounded on professional criteria. However, such a tentative definition is partial, and does not explicate another more important function of this critique - namely, that of a specific mediator between the theater performance and the public. This "mediation" is actually education of the public or potential public by cultivating its reception of the theatrical art.

Figure 18



According to our data, the reading of theater critique is not popular with the professional theater public in Serbia: 58.8% rarely or never reads it, and only a third does it occasionally. The regular readers are absolute minority (7.6%). There are now significant differences by sex ($\chi^2 = 29.964$; $\alpha = 0.05$; $C = 0.111$; Pearson's $R = -0.085$), except that in the group of occasional readers we find a bit more women, and among those never reading theater critique a bit more men. As the already discussed finding that the oldest theater-goers mostly rely in their choice of particular production on the theater critique (Table 14) suggested, the results on reading it led us to abandon zero hypothesis on independence of these modalities and adopt the alternative one, namely that the reading of theater critique *depends of age of the public* (Table 15). So, the oldest public is more regular in reading theater critique than the younger one, who rarely or never reads it.

Table 15. Reading Theater Critique Per Public's Age

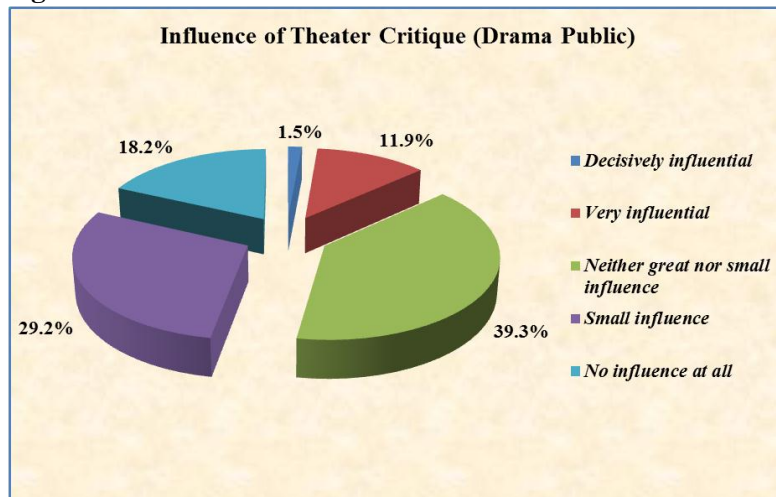
Age/Reading theater critique	Regularly	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	Total
Up to 18	4.9	14.3	40.4	40.4	100.0
19-30	4.9	27.9	39.8	27.4	100.0
31-45	5.5	36.5	37.0	21.0	100.0
46-65	13.3	45.2	27.9	13.7	100.0
Over 65	20.6	44.9	23.4	11.2	100.0
Total	7.6	33.6	35.8	23.0	100.0

Pearson $\chi^2 = 198.668$; $\alpha = 0.05$; $C = 0.277$; Pearson's $R = -0.265$

The reading of theater critique is also in positive correlation with the theater-going frequency, for more regular public more regularly reads theater critique, with a considerably stronger connection ($\chi^2 = 381.696$; $\alpha = 0.05$; $C = 0.371$; Pearson's $R = 0.372$).

The rare theater critique reading is proportional to its influence on attitude to the repertory and particular productions (Figure 19).

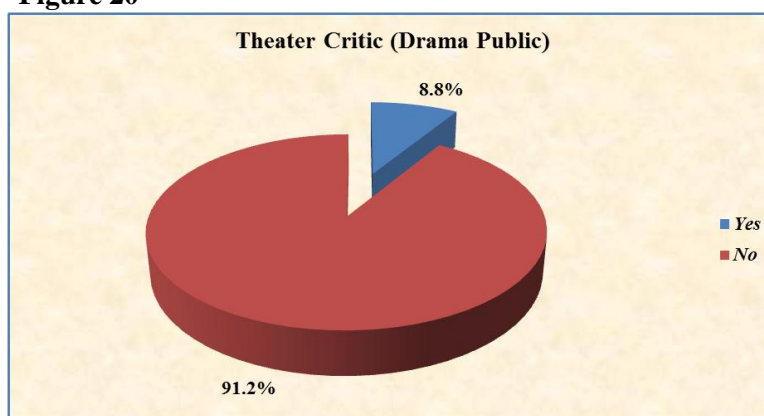
Figure 19



The majority of public reading theater critique is undecided in this answer (39.3%), being unable to estimate the degree of influence due to rare reading, while it is small with 29.2% and none with 18.2% of the public. Only 13.4% of the respondents estimate influence of the critique as significant in formation of their opinion on the repertory and particular productions. This is an older regular or potentially regular theater public more regularly reading the critique. The statistical analysis shows that sex structure of critique readers and its estimated influence are independent modalities ($\chi^2 = 6.811$; $\alpha = 0.05$; $C = 0.063$; $Pearson's R = 0.000$), as well as the age structure and influence ($\chi^2 = 21.598$; $\alpha = 0.05$; $C = 0.112$; $Pearson's R = -0.034$).

In line with the above data, 91.2% of the respondents being asked to name a theater critic whose analyses and opinion they respect more than others answer there is no such person, and only 8.8% that there is.¹⁶

Figure 20



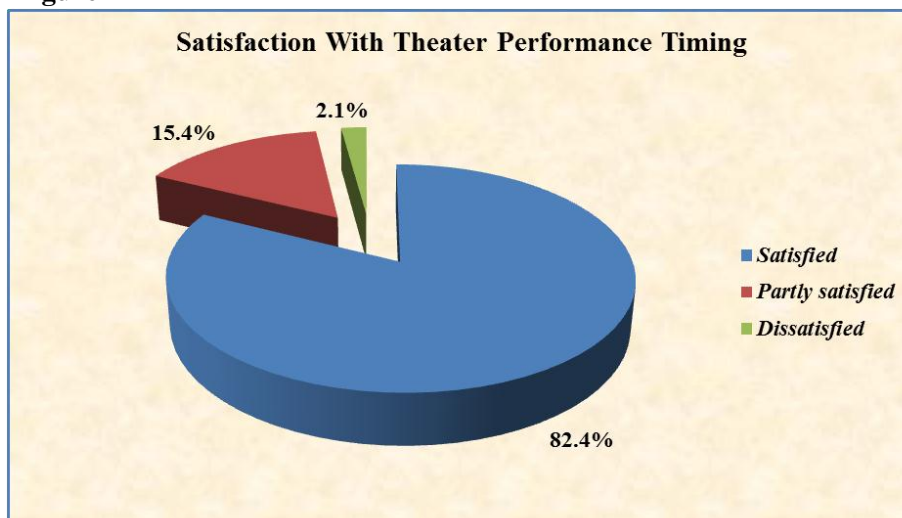
¹⁶ The following critics were mentioned: Jovan Ćirilov, Ivan Medenica, Muharem Pervić, Vladimir Stamenković, Velja Pavlović, Feliks Pašić, Ana Tasić, Dragan Stepanović, Goran Cvetković, Dragana Bošković, Miloš Petrović, Dejan Penčić Poljanski, Željko Jovanović, Aleksandar Milosavljević, Gerold Laszlo, Đorđe Kuburić, Mira Nikolić, Branka Krilović, Olivera Milošević, Olga Dimitrijević, Slobodan Obradović, Miroslav Miki Radonjić, Igor Burić i Milisav Buca Mirković.

It clearly turns out that the theater critique is a very poorly developed segment of theatrical life with insignificant influence, and therefore unsuccessful in fulfilling both of its major functions: that of mediator between theater production and the public, as well the one of educator. However, our research was not meant to investigate in further detail the situation of the theater critique, for it was focused on the latter's relations with the theater public. Still, herein mentioned findings suggest that further research of the subject is needed.

4.5 *Beginning and Cancelling of Theater Performances*

Our questionnaire partly dealt with questions related to the time of beginning and case of cancelled theater performances. We wanted to know whether the public found the timing of performances appropriate, and if not what time they should suggest. On the other hand, we were interested to know how frequently the productions they wanted to see were cancelled, and what should be done in such a case.

Figure 21



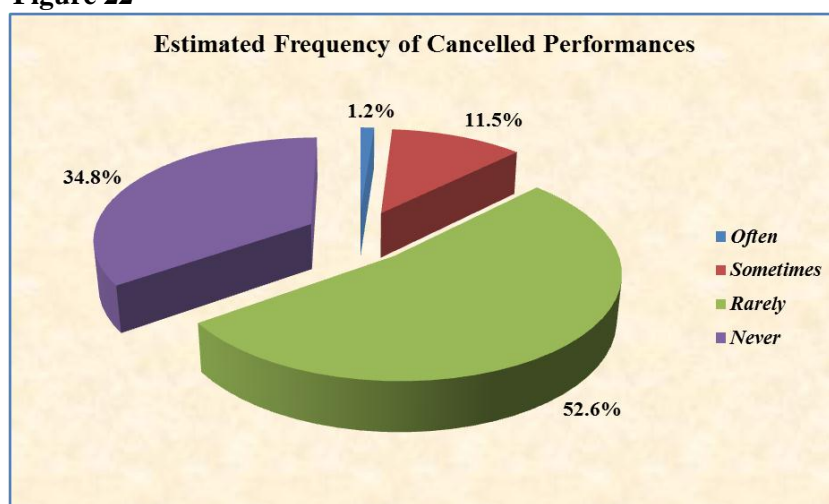
The beginning time of the Serbian professional theater performances its public finds satisfying (82.4%), 15.4% partly satisfying, with statistically negligible 2.1% of dissatisfied. The latter usually suggest 21.00 (43.6 %), pa 20.00 (30.7 %), 19.00 (17.6 %) i 18.00 (8.1 %).¹⁷

As for cancelling of the performances, the public estimated¹⁸ that it happens very rarely and is no problem as such.

¹⁷ For easier grouping of the answers, the answers were encircled. Namely, whenever the suggested time was at hour and a half it was enlisted to full hour (eg. 19.30 to 20.00), or at less (eg. 19.15 to 19.00) to a previous full hour.

¹⁸ That is, respondent's personal estimation.

Figure 22



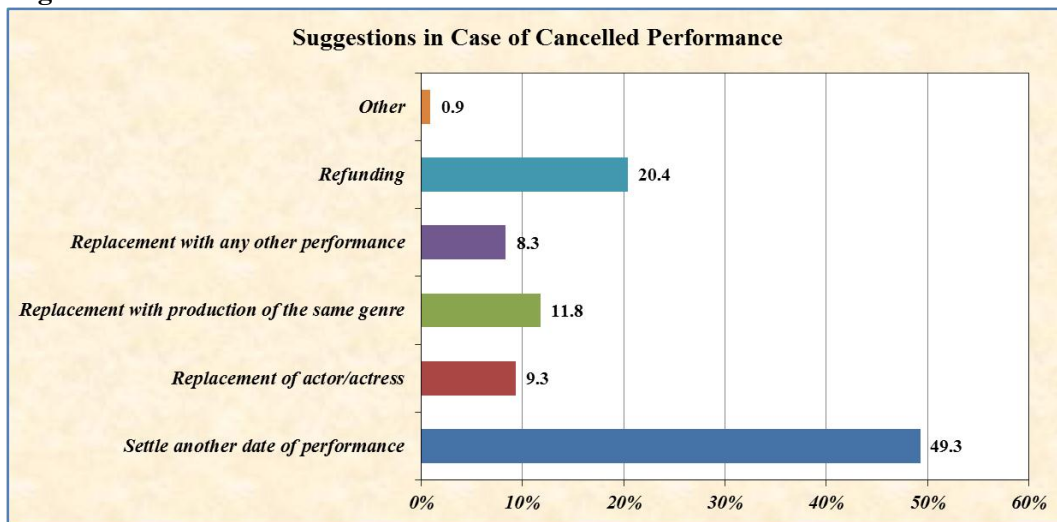
The distribution of estimated frequency of cancelled performances per theaters (Table 16) additionally confirms this finding.

Table 16 Estimated Frequency of Cancelled Performances Per Theater

<i>Theater</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Rarely</i>	<i>Never</i>	<i>Total</i>
Atelje 212	Beograd	0.0	9.2	53.9	36.9	100
Beograd Drama Theater	Beograd	0.0	11.1	54.2	34.7	100
BITEF Theater	Beograd	0.0	30.0	60.0	10.0	100
Yugoslav Drama Theater	Beograd	2.9	19.4	56.6	21.1	100
Opera and Theater „Madlenianum“	Beograd	0.0	12.7	52.4	34.9	100
Kraljevo Theater	Kraljevo	0.0	18.5	48.1	33.3	100
Kruševac Theater	Kruševac	1.6	7.3	46.8	44.4	100
„Bora Stanković“ National Theater	Vranje	0.0	0.0	55.6	44.4	100
Šabac Theater	Šabac	3.1	1.0	56.7	39.2	100
„Nepszínház“ National Theater	Subotica	1.8	3.6	56.4	38.2	100
„Sterija“ National Theater	Vršac	0.0	17.6	70.6	11.8	100
„Toša Jovanović“ National Theater	Zrenjanin	1.4	5.7	55.7	37.1	100
Beograd National Theater	Beograd	1.2	13.2	50.8	34.9	100
Kikinda National Theater	Kikinda	0.0	6.3	50.0	43.8	100
Leskovac National Theater	Leskovac	0.0	8.6	74.3	17.1	100
Niš National Theater	Niš	5.9	27.5	41.2	25.5	100
Pirot National Theater	Pirot	0.0	0.0	52.9	47.1	100
Sombor National Theater	Sombor	3.7	14.8	59.3	22.2	100
Užice National Theater	Užice	0.0	0.0	52.9	47.1	100
Slavija Theater	Beograd	1.9	8.9	46.5	42.7	100
„Ujvideki Színház“ Theater	Novi Sad	0.0	9.5	52.4	38.1	100
Youth Theater	Novi Sad	0.0	17.1	45.7	37.1	100
Terazije Theater	Beograd	1.1	7.7	55.2	36.1	100
„Zoran Radmilović“ Theater	Zaječar	0.0	17.1	51.4	31.4	100
Serbian National Theater	Novi Sad	0.0	23.2	46.4	30.4	100
„Boško Buha“ Theater	Beograd	6.3	15.6	53.1	25.0	100
„Zvezdara“ Theater	Beograd	0.0	15.7	50.6	33.7	100
Total		1.2	11.5	52.6	34.8	100

In case of cancelled performances 49.3% of the public preferred to see it some other day, and 20.4% would like their money back. Total of 29.4% of the public opted for the replacement of cancelled performance (Figure 23). That practically means that a bit more than two thirds of the public (69.7%) wished to see the particular performance, with the original cast, while a bit less than a third were willing to see some other instead of the chosen one.

Figure 23



Interestingly, suggestions in case of cancelled performances *do not depend on theater-going frequency* ($\chi^2 = 27.097$; $\alpha = 0.05$; $C = 0.110$; *Pearson's R* = -0.011), though it was expected that regular and potentially regular public were less inclined to compromise than occasional, rare or random public. The suggestions appeared to be independent of socio-demographic variables too, so the zero hypothesis holds with these modalities.

Table 17. Suggestions in Case of Cancelled Performance Per Theater (%)

<i>Theater</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>New date of performance</i>	<i>Replacement of actor/actress</i>	<i>Replacement with production of the same genre</i>	<i>Replacement with any other performance</i>	<i>Refunding</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
Atelje 212	Beograd	44.6	9.8	10.9	10.4	23.3	1.0	100
Beograd Drama Theater	Beograd	48.8	7.2	9.2	5.8	27.1	1.9	100
BITEF Theater	Beograd	35.0	10.0	15.0	10.0	30.0	0.0	100
Yugoslav Drama Theater	Beograd	45.0	8.9	13.0	5.9	26.6	0.6	100
Opera and Theater „Madlenianum“	Beograd	46.3	11.1	11.1	5.6	22.2	3.7	100
Kraljevo Theater	Kraljevo	46.2	7.7	7.7	15.4	23.1	0.0	100
Kruševac Theater	Kruševac	58.5	5.1	11.0	13.6	10.2	1.7	100
„Boša Stanković“ National Theater	Vranje	43.5	8.7	17.4	13.0	13.0	4.3	100
Šabac Theater	Šabac	53.2	4.3	7.4	14.9	19.1	1.1	100
„Nepszin haz“ National Theater	Subotica	45.7	19.6	2.2	13.0	19.6	0.0	100
„Sterija“ National Theater	Vršac	73.3	6.7	13.3	0.0	6.7	0.0	100
„Toša Jovanović“ National Theater	Zrenjanin	63.1	10.8	12.3	1.5	10.8	1.5	100
Beograd National Theater	Beograd	45.7	9.6	13.5	7.9	23.3	0.0	100
Kikinda National Theater	Kikinda	73.8	4.8	9.5	7.1	4.8	0.0	100
Leskovac National Theater	Leskovac	85.3	5.9	0.0	0.0	8.8	0.0	100
Niš National Theater	Niš	75.0	8.3	8.3	6.3	0.0	2.1	100
Pirot National Theater	Pirot	78.1	6.3	3.1	3.1	9.4	0.0	100
Sombor National Theater	Sombor	50.0	3.8	7.7	15.4	23.1	0.0	100
Užice National Theater	Užice	66.7	6.7	13.3	6.7	6.7	0.0	100
Slavija Theater	Beograd	33.1	11.5	23.0	9.4	23.0	0.0	100
„Ujvideki Szinhaz“ Theater	Novi Sad	62.9	11.4	8.6	8.6	8.6	0.0	100
Youth Theater	Novi Sad	42.9	11.4	20.0	11.4	14.3	0.0	100
Terazije Theater	Beograd	43.9	12.9	11.7	7.0	23.4	1.2	100
„Zoran Radmilović“ Theater	Zaječar	55.9	2.9	14.7	11.8	14.7	0.0	100
Serbian National Theater	Novi Sad	64.2	3.8	11.3	5.7	13.2	1.9	100
„Boško Buha“ Theater	Beograd	35.7	10.7	7.1	10.7	32.1	3.6	100
„Zvezdara“ Theater	Beograd	35.4	17.7	11.4	8.9	25.3	1.3	100
Total		49.3	9.3	11.8	8.3	20.4	0.9	100

Depending on selected suggestion the distribution per theaters (Table 17) slightly deviates from total sample. The least public interested to see the cancelled performance some other day have theaters in Beograd: BITEF Theater, Slavija Theater, „Boško Buha“ Theater and Zvezdara Theater. On the other hand, they also have a bit more public asking for refunding, which maybe indicate that their public is less tolerant. However, 17.7% of the Zvezdara Theater public opted for replacement of actor/actress who caused cancelling. The same is the attitude of the Subotica „Nepszin haz“ National Theater, where 19.6% of the respondents were of the same opinion. Interestingly, the smallest percentage of the public asking for refunding and the greatest of those willing to see the cancelled performance some other day have theaters in the country. It is explainable by the fact that the Beograd theatrical life is undoubtedly the richest in the country and its public is therefore less tolerant to cancelled performances. On the other hand, the provincial public having usually (except for Novi Sad) a single theater and pretty limited choice, is by far more tolerant.

4.6 Tickets

In the final segment of the questionnaire was a set of questions related to tickets' acquisition, their estimated and real price.¹⁹ Finally, we were interested to find out how and up to which degree the price influences theater-going frequency.

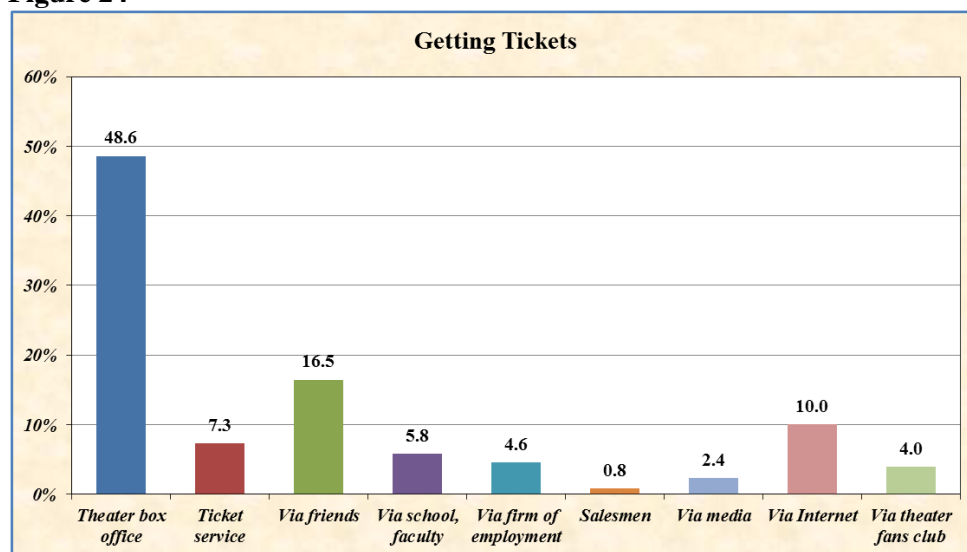
The majority of the public having chosen more than one option (though asked to chose the most usual one) regarding the way they get theater tickets, the question was coded as a multiple answer (up to three ways). The structures of multiple answers are presented in Figure 24 and Table 18.

Table 18

<i>Tickets acquisition</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Percentage of cases</i>
Theater box office	48.6%	55.6%
Ticket service	7.3%	8.3%
Via friends	16.5%	18.8%
Via school, faculty	5.8%	6.6%
Via firm of employment	4.6%	5.3%
Salesmen	0.8%	1.0%
Via media	2.4%	2.7%
Via Internet	10.0%	11.4%
Via theater fans club	4.0%	4.6%

The majority of the public get tickets at the theater's box office, than „via friends“ and the Internet. Other ways appear in less than 10% answers (Figure 24). Among the three most usual ways of acquisition 55.6% of the public ranked box office, while 18.8% of the respondents also mention „friends“.

Figure 24



¹⁹ It should be underlined again that we are dealing here with personal estimation of the respondents done after their own criteria we know nothing of. Our interest here was not either to define „real“ ticket price, or evaluate criteria and ways each theater applied in setting it, because it was not the subject of our research.

While prevalence of getting tickets at theater's box office was expected, a somewhat surprising is that „friends“ come as the second most usual way. It is hardly explainable having in mind our instrument (a closed printed questionnaire) was unable to „catch“ a more detailed (so called deep) information on tickets acquisition, so we left aside the analyses bereft of serious empirical and statistical support. The situation with the Internet is somewhat clearer: buying and especially payment by the Internet are still undeveloped and unusual in this country, and we are probably dealing here with possible booking and not buying tickets. On the other hand, such a finding is not surprising since a relatively high percentage of public informs itself of the theater's repertory by the Internet (Figure 9, Tables 10 and 11).

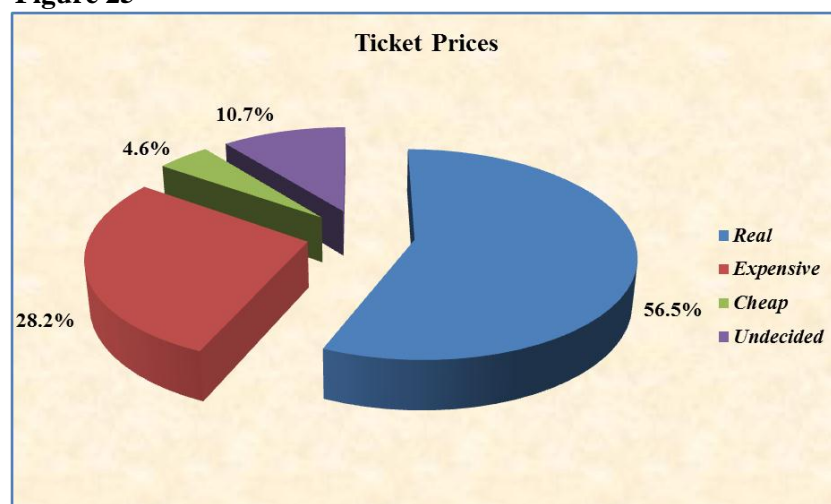
All the data collected by our research in connection with the Internet taken into account, this type of theater-public communication will continually develop and gain in influence, so if theaters are to improve their communication this should be their first task. Here we mean the Internet presentations with a detailed information on the repertory, company, staff, possible booking (later also buying) tickets, fora and *mail lists* (possibility to register and be regularly informed that way or by SMS).

There are no significant differences between sexes in the way tickets are acquired, but in the age structure is visible a somewhat more younger public "getting tickets" by the Internet, while "friends" are a bit more usual in the older group.

As expected, regular and potentially regular public most usually buy tickets at the theater's box office, with the growing role of the Internet with the most numerous, occasional public. With rare and random theater-goers the share of „friends“ increases.

More than a half of the drama theater public (56.5%) considers ticket prices real, 28.2% expensive, and 4.6% cheap, with 10.7% of undecided (Figure 25).

Figure 25



The greatest number of undecided is in the youngest group, while in the most numerous age group (19-30) prevail those finding tickets expensive, but without a more significant correlations ($\chi^2 = 28.360$; $a = 0.05$; $C = 0.109$; Pearson's $R = -0.038$).

Table 19. Estimated Ticket Prices by Theaters (%)

<i>Theater</i>	<i>Place</i>	<i>Real</i>	<i>Expensive</i>	<i>Cheap</i>	<i>Undecided</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Ticket price (RSD)</i>
Atelje 212	Beograd	49.8	41.1	2.4	6.8	100	800-1000
Beograd Drama Theater	Beograd	62.0	27.3	1.4	9.3	100	400-700
BITEF Theater	Beograd	60.0	25.0	5.0	10.0	100	400
Yugoslav Drama Theater	Beograd	45.1	42.2	1.2	11.6	100	100-1000
Opera and Theater „Madlenianum“	Beograd	47.6	41.3	3.2	7.9	100	400-1300
Kraljevo Theater	Kraljevo	71.4	3.6	10.7	14.3	100	250-300
Kruševac Theater	Kruševac	64.8	15.2	2.4	17.6	100	180-300
„Bora Stanković“ National Theater	Vranje	74.1	3.7	14.8	7.4	100	100
Šabac Theater	Šabac	62.9	21.6	6.2	9.3	100	400
„Nepszínház“ National Theater	Subotica	86.8	3.8	3.8	5.7	100	300-500
„Sterija“ National Theater	Vršac	58.8	0.0	0.0	41.2	100	100-350
„Toša Jovanović“ National Theater	Zrenjanin	72.1	2.9	11.8	13.2	100	250
Beograd National Theater	Beograd	53.6	30.9	4.4	11.1	100	100-800
Kikinda National Theater	Kikinda	74.5	10.6	10.6	4.3	100	150-200
Leskovac National Theater	Leskovac	77.1	22.9	0.0	0.0	100	300
Niš National Theater	Niš	60.8	29.4	0.0	9.8	100	500
Pirot National Theater	Pirot	57.6	0.0	42.4	0.0	100	200-400
Sombor National Theater	Sombor	29.6	29.6	11.1	29.6	100	300-400
Užice National Theater	Užice	64.7	0.0	17.6	17.6	100	200-300
Slavija Theater	Beograd	46.5	35.2	3.8	14.5	100	600-1000
„Ujvideki Színház“ Theater	Novi Sad	69.8	4.7	14.0	11.6	100	400-500
Youth Theater	Novi Sad	60.0	20.0	2.9	17.1	100	400
Terazije Theater	Beograd	52.4	34.8	2.1	10.7	100	600-1000
„Zoran Radmilović“ Theater	Zaječar	63.9	13.9	8.3	13.9	100	100-150
Serbian National Theater	Novi Sad	65.5	20.0	3.6	10.9	100	500-1400
„Boško Buha“ Theater	Beograd	40.6	50.0	3.1	6.3	100	300-900
„Zvezdara“ Theater	Beograd	42.9	48.4	3.3	5.5	100	800-1200
Total		56.5	28.2	4.6	10.7	100	

The theater ticket prices²⁰ in professional theaters in Serbia range from 100 to 1,400 RSD.²¹ As expected, prices in the Beograd theaters are on average higher than in the provincial theaters (Table 19), and it should be remembered in the elaboration of public estimations. It is worth mentioning that despite considerably cheaper tickets in the province, the majority of local theaters' public estimate prices as real. The major reason is probably in the economic situation (living standards) of the public out of Beograd. The latter is in much better economic position, and could

²⁰ Dušica Milovanović of the Center for Study in Cultural Development, associate to the Project, collected the relevant data from the official Internet presentations, or in direct contacts with theaters where such information was not otherwise available. The data are as of December 2, 2010.

²¹ As rule, the ticket price depends on whether the seat is in the pit or gallery, whether it is the first night or a guest performance, or company's production. The price also differs in case of special group visits (pupils, students, collective attendance and the like).

afford to spend more of its personal or household budget on satisfaction of cultural needs. On the other hand, the productions offered in the country do not provide for a choice rich enough to induce spending of greater sums for theater-going. In this connection should be underlined that the comments of the public (see chapter *Comments of the Public*, at the end of this report) show the provincial public would like to see more quality productions, and especially first nights, and more guesting performances (particularly of the Beograd theaters), and is willing to pay more in such cases.

The greatest number of the public considering ticket prices high have Beograd theaters - Atelje 212, the Yugoslav Drama Theater, „Madlenianum“, „Boško Buha“ (all over 40%), and partly Terazije Theater (34.8%). Most, but still less than a half of them (49.3%), think the price should be 300 RSD, and 15.7% about 400 RSD.

As already said, despite relatively cheaper tickets in the province, the public mostly estimate them as real, though in some theaters statistically significant percentage of the public (compared to the sample percentage) considers the prices low: the Kraljevo Theater, „Bora Stanković“ National Theater, „Toša Jovanović“ National Theater, the Kikinda National Theater, the Sombor National Theater, the Užice National Theater, „Ujvideki Szinhaz“, and particularly the Pirot National Theater (Table 19). The identical percentage of this segment of the public (32.4%) thinks the price should be 500 and 1,000 RSD, 21.1% 300 RSD, and 14.1% - some 400 RSD.

Generally speaking, that segment of public considering ticket price unreal - be it low or high - on average thinks the price should be some 500 RSD.

Table 20. Estimated Ticket Price and Theater-Going Frequency

<i>Frequency/ticket price</i>	<i>Estimated ticket price for drama productions</i>				<i>Total</i>
	<i>Real</i>	<i>Expensive</i>	<i>Cheap</i>	<i>Undecided</i>	
Very often	56.4	23.8	8.8	11.0	100.0
Often	62.1	25.8	4.5	7.7	100.0
Occasionally	57.3	29.1	3.1	10.6	100.0
Rarely	46.7	34.7	4.1	14.5	100.0
Very rarely	39.2	34.0	5.2	21.6	100.0
Total	56.5	28.2	4.6	10.7	100.0

Pearson $\chi^2 = 65.190$; $\alpha = 0.05$; $C = 0.163$; Pearson's $R = -0.076$

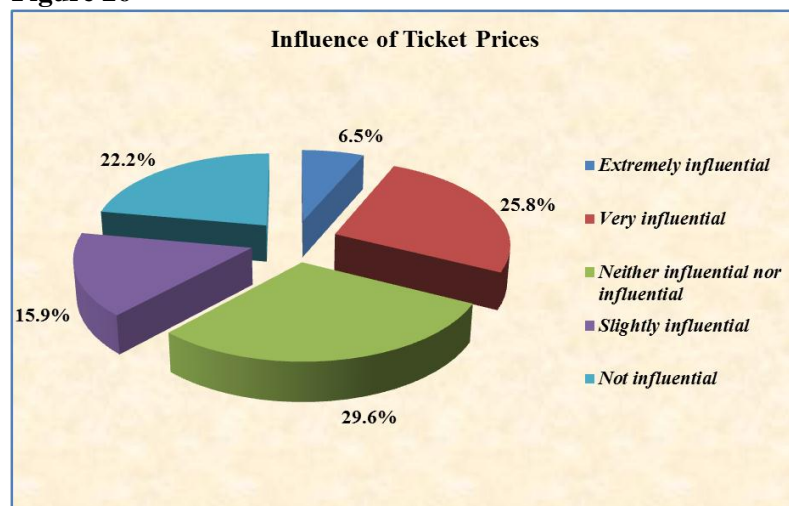
More than a half of regular theater public consider the ticket prices real, though 23.8% of the same group find the prices high. The latter belong to the regular public of the Beograd theaters where the tickets actually are the most expensive. Of the potentially regular public 62.1% (more than in regular public) find the ticket prices real, but also more people from this group find the price high. With the most numerous occasional public also prevail those considering price real (more than a half), and still 29.1% (a bit over the average of the sample) find them high. In the group of rare

and random theater-goers less respondents find the prices real, and more of them high, with a considerable number of undecided especially among random goers, as expected their low frequency kept in mind.

However, though the statistical analysis shows a certain correlation between these modalities, their connection is weak enough to conclude that the price of tickets *does not considerably influence* the frequency of theater-going. That initial hypothesis also support findings presented in Table 8, where the price of tickets appears only as the fifth among reasons for rare going to theater.

Directly asked to estimate the influence of ticket prices on number of theater performances they would like to see, the distribution of respondents' answers also partly confirmed the initial hypothesis. Namely, as presented in Figure 26, the majority of them (29.6%) were unable to estimate (two thirds of them from the group finding prices real), while the 32.3% estimated influence as great (28.2% of them from the group finding tickets expensive).

Figure 26



Quite understandably, in groups estimating influence of ticket prices as small or none, or are undecided in that respect, dominate those finding ticket prices real (some 70%). On the other hand, groups finding ticket prices high estimate this factor as very influential or even extremely influential, while for those finding ticket prices low it has no influence at all.

5 Conclusion

One of the first and major objectives of the *Theater Public in Serbia* research project was to describe all the relevant socio-demographic characteristics of the professional theaters drama public. According to our findings, in the drama public sex structure **dominate women (nearly two thirds) over men (nearly a third)**, meaning that theater-going ranks as an important mode of free-time spending of the female population with an active stance in that area. In the age structure **dominate the 19-30 group**, with the smallest percentage of individuals over 65. Having in mind the group of those between 31 and 45 is relatively significant making 27.1% of the theater public, it appears that nearly two thirds (65.3%) of the drama public are between 19 and 45 years old. **The most numerous public is that with university degrees** (43.1%), with 27.7% with secondary school degrees and 11.7% undergraduates. Other educational levels make for less than 3%. As for occupations, **the most numerous are experts** and students. So, it could be concluded that the **socio-demographic characteristics are an important cause of variations in the theater-going frequency**. That also confirmed our initial hypothesis that the majority of the professional theaters drama public in Serbia belongs to university graduates, and it is highly probable that the trend of fuller houses would continue with the rising educational standards in the country.

All socio-demographic characteristics taken into account, **an average drama theater-goer** of professional theaters in Serbia **is a woman between 19 and 30, with university degree, expert from urban surroundings, spending her free time actively**.

Our findings show that the drama public of the Serbian professional theaters is **strongly actively oriented in the free time spending** usually consuming it in a combination of visits to some cultural institutions and friends, reading books, writing, painting, and the like. Very interestingly, only 2.4% of the respondents mention lack of free time, which confirms that **the well educated individuals have a more developed structure of needs with better profiled interests in the domain of satisfaction of their cultural and artistic needs, as well as that they are willing to devote enough of free time to such activities, while with lower educational level increase more passive ways of free time spending**.

The investigation of frequency of the professional theater drama public attendance in the attempt to categorize drama public, shows that the majority of public is the occasional one (37.0%), with the average of one to two visit in three months. We defined this group as **classical occasional public** from the research outset expected to outnumber other groups. However, 30.2% of the public comes to the theater once or twice a month, and we defined them as **potentially regular public**, that is, a group from which a future regular public should be expected to come. The group coming to theater once or few times a week (15.3%) we defined **as regular drama public**. Those coming to

theater two or three times a year were defined *as rare public*, and individuals coming once a year (4.1%) *as random public*. The group observation of the frequency scale along the axis *often-rare* shows 45.5% of the public in its upper part of more frequent theater-goers. Of special interest is the group coming often to the theater, which we defined as potentially regular public. In view of the current social situation marked by value disorientation in all spheres, cultural one included, the existence of such, relatively numerous group of potentially regular public indicates that *that improvement of their activities and relations with the public could easily bring about fuller houses of the Serbian professional theaters. So, the professional theaters in Serbia could count on the average of 15% of the regular public, but also on twice as much of the potentially regular public as "reservoir" likely to provide for better and more stable attendance.*

One of the research objectives was to define factors decisive of theater-going frequency, along with the attempt to isolate a dominant factor or system of factors. The findings show that the more frequent theater-goers as the most important reasons mention *they enjoy theater performances, satisfaction of their cultural and artistic needs*, and only as a third *quality repertory*. Keeping that in mind, the hypothesis that the satisfaction of cultural and artistic needs is a decisive factor of frequent theater-going is not confirmed, but is the hypothesis that in this respect - due to the heterogeneous and complex factors influencing going to theater - *it is impossible to isolate a system of factors with a common denominator*. On the other hand, the respondents rarely coming to theater mentioned as the most influential *lack of free time, family and living circumstances and lack of interest*. Almost half of this group (44.9%) mentioned lack of free time among three major reasons. The overall structure of reasons of rare visits to theater shows that all relevant reasons belong to socio-economic and value spheres of human life, with reasons directly connected to theater itself (repertory, interior, timing of performances) far less influential. So, according to our findings, *the decisive reasons of rare theater-going are not directly connected to theater as such and its characteristics, but to socio-economic circumstances of the public and dominant value orientations in society.*

The research of the ways public gets informed of the theater's activities and its opinion of the repertory shows *the majority of public gets informed by the Internet and friends' recommendations*. Classical ways of information by board notes and dailies are still important, but with a significant degree of stagnation and further decrease proportional to further development of modern information technologies. The radio and TV advertisements are undoubtedly the rarest information sources of the theater public: namely, the prime time of electronic media is too expensive and hardly any Serbian theater could afford it. The radio and TV cultural programmes are also poor information sources, *being themselves scarce in the Serbian electronic media.*

Though the Internet search is not among dominant forms of free time spending of the drama theater public, it is the most usual way of getting informed of the theater repertory, particularly with the most numerous Beograd public, indicating that *the majority of theater public uses the Internet for targeted search* (going to certain links with information needed), and not as a way to spend free time. On the other hand, our findings suggest that *a quality Web (Internet) presentation is indispensable if a theater is to follow current communication and information trends in the modern information society*.

So, our initial hypothesis that the *Internet is becoming a dominant source of information on theater's repertory and activity* is fully confirmed. Still, there is a significant segment of the public informing themselves by friends and acquaintances (recommended performance), which is more usual in the province. The traditional forms of information (board notices and dailies) are in decline, but remain statistically significant.

However, it turns out that only *half of the theater public is partly informed of the theater's repertory*, and a bit more than a third is fully informed. Despite it, *59.5% of the public informed (partly or fully) of the repertory is satisfied with its quality*. Still, because of the weak connection between these modalities, we can only note that the hypothesis on *a significant link between theater's repertory (satisfaction with repertory) and frequency of theater-going* is not confirmed.

As for the repertory structure by genres, *the public is most interested in comedies and dramas*. The interest in comedies is traditionally high, but there is a notably *increased interest in modern comedies and dramas, and especially in musicals*. A more detailed analysis of interest by authors and increased interest in modern texts, it appears that the *public is more interested in up-to-date plays of domestic authors*.

The comedies are somewhat more popular with the younger public, while the older prefer drama, with all age groups equally interested in musicals. So, the part of the hypothesis that comedy and drama are favourite genres of the Serbian public is confirmed, while the other - namely, that the other genres would show declining trends - is not, since the findings show a constant increase of interest in musicals and contemporary drama and comedy.

The reading of theater critique, as an important segment of theatrical life, is hardly a forte of the professional theaters' drama public, *for more than its half rarely or never reads it*, and only a third does it occasionally. Poor reading of the theater critique is proportional to its negligible influence on opinion and attitude of the public towards theater repertory and particular productions, and therefore the finding that even 91.2% of the public has no particular critic whose critiques wants to read comes as no surprise. All the mentioned leads to conclusion that *theater critique is a highly underdeveloped segment of theater life*, of no influence at all, and thereof inferior in

fulfilling of both its social roles - that of mediator between the public and the theater, and of educator of broader public.

Our research shows that the majority of public (82.4%) is satisfied with the time theater performances begin, versus only 15.4% of them partly satisfied. It means that the *professional theaters in Serbia have appropriately set the time of their performances*. We also find out that *the cancelling of performances in Serbian theaters is relatively rare and is no problem for the public*.

Over a half of the professional theaters' drama public in Serbia considers current ticket prices as real, 28.2% of them high, 4.6% low, and 10.7% are undecided in this respect. The drama ticket prices are on average considerably higher in Beograd theaters than elsewhere in the country. Generally speaking, that part of the public considering ticket prices unreal (be it high or low), believes *the prince should be around 500 RSD*. Despite a certain correlation between these modalities, their connection is weak, and it could be concluded that ticket prices *do not considerably influence theater-going frequency*. The fact that the high ticket prices are fifth on the list of reasons of rare theater-going additionally supports the conclusion.

And, finally, we hope the findings of our research with basic information on the drama theater public and its attitude towards professional theaters, will be useful to the theaters and theater community as such, but would also urge other researchers to engage in further investigation of this very important segment of cultural life. In view of evident scarcity of this type of research, their findings could considerably contribute to better understanding of the position and perspectives of theaters in our cultural and social reality.

6 Comments of the Public²²

The Beograd National Theater

- Man (31-45): “I kindly ask that ladies coming to theater with back-combed hair either sit in the back or be sacked from the house”;
- Man (19-30): „The National Theater should give a 30% discount for 'primier' card holders and seats in the first gallery. Generally, tickets are expensive“;
- Woman (46-65): „A dress and behaviour code for the public should be introduced. Public being late and delayed performance are unacceptable“;
- Woman (19-30): „The public is inadequately dressed“;
- Man (46-65): „The public should be nicer dressed for the theater“;
- Woman (46-65): „Active promotion of the Serbian theater and actors, though I'am very satisfied with the foreign repertory“;
- Man (46-65): „See that the classical repertory stop being improvisation in our usual way, and be played in a wordly manner – precisely“;
- Man (19-30): „The other theaters should also introduce student's tickets half an hour before the performance thus making theater more affordable to a greater audience and their houses full“;
- Man (46-65): „Our theaters are good. We have good actors, directors, scene designers, costume designers, etc.;
- Woman (19-30): „The theater should be more popularized at faculties and in schools, with either free or cheaper tickets“;
- Man (19-30): „I suggest that with the ticket every visitor gets a flayer with information on the given performance“;
- Woman (19-30): „Those buying student's tickets should sit together“;
- Woman (19-30): „More guesing productions and more Beograd theaters tours in the country with the view of decentralization of cultural life in Serbia“;
- Woman (19-30): „More comedies and up-to-date plays. The dramatists and authors should be younger people“;
- Man (19-30): „I really do appreciate and like the National Theater productions. I especially like the ticket price students could afford, so I could come and see a performance without thinking of money. Thank you so much“;
- Woman (19-30): „I'd like to thank you for student's discounts, which other theaters do not practice. Greetings“;

²² Comments are quoted verbatim, with minimal stylistic corrections.

- Man (31-45): „The staff is very kind and attentive to the public“;

The Beograd Atelje 212 Theater

- Man (19-30): „A parking should be built“;
- Woman (46-65): „Attract more public of various profiles with lower ticket prices. Frequently coming to theater, a person gets tied to it and willing to pay even more than could afford. It is the matter of poor income, not of love for art or theater“;
- Woman (31-45): „Tickets are expensive. The Atelje has the best productions“;
- Man (46-65): „More plays of our authors should be on. A more 'aggressive' approach of the theater in all media is necessary“;
- Woman (31-45): „Unfortunately, our everyday life is overwhelmed with scenes of criminal and corruption. Spare us in the evening, when we look for fun“;
- Woman (46-65): „I'd like theater representatives to be more present in firms offering tickets“;
- Woman (46-65): „My best regards to this season's activity and concept of the Atelje 212, and Mr Kokan Mladenović“;

The Beograd Terazije Theater

- Woman (46-65): „If you want to be happy, this theater is the right place to come. I always leave it in high spirits“;
- Man (19-30): „It is impossible to book and buy tickets by the Internet. It's complete waste of time to stand in queue for 45 minutes to buy a ticket“;
- Man (19-30): „Cheap tickets should be understood conditionally: the regular public should have 'loyalty' programmes, while the occasional public not coming to theater to develop and satisfy cultural needs should pay more for certain programmes“;
- Man (31-45): „Introduce special discount cards at the theater box office to provide for cheaper tickets, if there are any“;
- Woman (19-30): „Introduce student's discount and Internet booking“;
- Man (19-30): „Establish cooperation with the faculties, so the students could buy tickets for 300-400 RSD, and sell them at faculties. Some performances should start at 19.00 because of the complicated public transport to suburbs“;

The Vršac Sterija National Theater

- Man (46-65): „Exciting productions should be on more oftenly, not only at the „Vršac Theater Fall“ festival, even if we are to pay more for that“;

- Man (31-45): „Younger actors should be employed. The club is perfect“;

The Novi Sad „Ujvideki Szinhaz“ Theater

- Woman (31-45): „The toilets should be reconstructed“;
- Woman (46-65): „I'd like to see performances on weekends too“;

The Beograd Drama Theater

- Man (31-45): „There should be more quality and good productions, with plenty of music and laughter, for in the gloomy times people need cheerful experiences“;
- Woman (46-65): „I really enjoy cooperation with the theater box office. People there are kind, productions good. Going to this theater is real pleasure“;
- Woman (19-30): „More aggressive popularization of theater as institution and its promotion among younger generations“;
- Man (31-45): „More advertising of the theater in the media“;
- Woman (31-45): „Make theater more popular by media campaigns, chronicles, reviews, comments. Better cooperation with schools and firms“;
- Man (46-65): „Programmes and tickets should be in Cyrillic alphabet“;
- Woman (31-45): „Should be more touring productios from ex-Yu, especially Croatia ad Slovenia“;
- Man (19-30): „Why not offer 'last minute' and discounts for certain productions or groups (youth, students, unemployed...)“;
- Woman (46-65): „Introduce a day, for example, the first Monday in month, with ticket cheaper than usual - public would be satisfied and the house full“;
- Woman (19-30): „If possible organize more on-line discounts (40%) or give students certain discount“;

The Kruševac Theater

- Woman (46-65): „More first nights per season and more guests“;

The Pirot Theater

- Man (over 65): „The provincial theaters that are hardly surviving need help of good directors, good guest actors and other artists, and the Republican Ministry of Culture should provide funds for that“;
- Woman (46-65): „I would like performances to start right on time“;

- Man (31-45): „More guesting productions from Beograd“;

The Niš National Theater

- Woman (19-30): „Discount for the unemployed“;
- Man (31-45): „I recommend „Zona Zamfirova“ and „Koštana““;
- Woman (19-30): „The Tempest“ has been cancelled for the third time“;

The Beograd „Slavija“ Theater

- Man (31-45): „Raise ticket price if necessary to invest in interior, chairs, so those taller than 185 cm could enjoy the performance“;
- Woman (31-45): „Greater discounts“;
- Man (31-45): „I recommend numerated seats, because otherwise there is mess and usurpation, and it is inappropriate in theater“;
- Woman (31-45): „New public should be educated, themes attractive to teenagers elaborated in theater productions the young public is interested in“;
- Woman (19-30): „I suggest introduction of annual subscriptions (cards) to attract public, and also think there should be a brief content, comments of the public and theater critic for each production on the theater site“;
- Man (19-30): „I suggest cheaper tickets to attract younger public“;

The Sombor National Theater

- Man (19-30): „Some old productions should remade, for example, „Maesto and Margarite“, „Siege of the St.Salvation Church“, „The Twelfth Night“, „Way to Nantes“, „The Mask““;
- Woman (46-65): „I suggest cheaper tickets for guesting productions“;

The Beograd Zvezdara Theater

- Woman (31-45): „I suggest more funny productions, less tragedies and war themes“;
- Woman (19-30): „More productions are needed“;

The Kraljevo Theater

- Man (31-45): „This theater has no toilet for the public, no wardrobe..““;
- Woman (46-65): „Establish a touring company to play in rural regions and smaller towns“;

The Kikinda National Theater

- Girl (up to 18): „The repertory should be available at the box office or in the theater club, for such information is rare and unavailable. When the location of the performance is changing (if it is going to be at the square, for example), it has to be announced on the board“;
- Woman (over 65): „The theater has a good quality repertory. It should host quality productions and meet its public's needs and provide for a good theatrical life“;

The Novi Sad Nepszinhaz National Theater

- Woman (31-45): „The productions' quality is poor, as well as the selection of plays and the company. The innovative spirit of small provincial theaters should be followed“;

The Beograd Yugoslav Drama Theater

- Woman (46-65): „There should be a special day for secondary school kids, with cheaper tickets. It is the way to develop the need to go regularly to the theater“;
- Woman (19-30): „Reconstruct the „Bojan Stupica“ lobby“;

The Zaječar „Zoran Radmilović“ Theater

- Woman (46-65): „The theater should work on weekends not only on working days; it should open at 21.00 because a lot of people work late; the theater should host amateurish productions which won awards on the international scene; the interior (seats and the house) should be reconstructed; the theater should be opened more regularly and not just during the festival“;
- Woman (46-65): „I suggest more modern plays“;
- Woman (19-30): „More information on the repertory in press, TV, radio and flyers“;
- Woman (46-65): „To build a bigger and new theater building instead of this small and old“;

The Vranje „Bora Stanković“ Theater

- Woman (31-45): „More guesting productions“;
- Man (31-45): „To enlarge the house and adapt the interior“;

The Novi Sad Serbian National Theater

- Woman (46-65): „The repertory of a national theater should be adapted to the secondary school reading list“;

The Užice National Theater

- Man (46-65): „The the theater should be „a miracle“ not a mirror of everyday scary themes, already too much present in the media“;
- Man (46-65): „More exchange between theaters; as many productions on the repertory as possible; more guesting productions“;

The Zemun Madlenianum Theater

- Woman (19-30): „I'd like to see more musicals and to provide free entrance for actors and artists - they need it“;

The Beograd Bitef Theater

- Man (19-30): „The show should start on time (at 20.00)“;
- Man (31-45): „The show should start on time (at 20.00)“.

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