

PERFORMING QUEERNESS THROUGH TRANSLATION AND ADAPTATION

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Abstract: This article analyses the process of translating and adapting Charlie Josephine's *I, Joan* (2022) for the Komedie Theatre in Prague, tracing how queerness is negotiated across linguistic, cultural, and theatrical contexts. Drawing on my dual role as a translator and a collaborator of the creative team, I examine the tensions that arise when the play's explicitly queer dramaturgy – deeply embedded in the fluid and inclusive possibilities of contemporary English – encounters the grammatically gendered and more normatively structured landscape of Czech. The article explores how linguistic inclusivity, gender-neutral pronouns and performative ambiguity function in the source text, and what happens when these strategies are transposed into a language with more limited tools for expressing gender fluidity. Commissioned in the aftermath of the Globe production, the Czech version developed within a dramaturgical framework that sought to foreground queer experience and collaborate with artists from the Prague-based platform PiNKBUS. I discuss the translation's linguistic constraints and creative solutions. The article further considers the subsequent adaptation led by dramaturge Lenka Dombrovská and director Alžběta Vrzgula, featuring the creation of the allegorical figure Q and the integration of drag, choreography, and embodied queer performance. Drawing on agonistic pluralism, I argue that the Czech *I, Joan* demonstrates how translation, adaptation, and productive contestation can together generate new forms of queer agency and expand the expressive limits of language.

Keywords: translation; adaptation; queerness; performativity; non-binary language; agonistic pluralism

Introduction

When Charlie Josephine's *I, Joan* premièred at Shakespeare's Globe in 2022, it prompted heated discussion about gender, history, and the politics of representation. Reviewers quickly recognised the production's intentional

provocativeness – as Anya Ryan put it, “[b]eginning with a monologue on the divinity of trans people, Josephine’s script is as much protest as play.”¹ The play reimagines Joan of Arc as a non-binary queer figure and frames this interpretation not as a revision of historical facts but as an artistic invitation to reconsider how gender, embodiment, and political agency operate in the stories we choose to tell.

This article examines how translation and adaptation intersect within the artistic process of staging *I, Joan* in Prague, illustrating the challenges of performing queerness in languages and cultural contexts that differ markedly in their treatment of gender, which in turn foregrounds questions of representation, linguistic inclusivity, and the politics of performance. The reflections offered here draw on my dual role as a translator and a collaborator within the creative team, tracing how specific creative decisions evolved as the play travelled from English into Czech and from page to stage.

For an international readership, it is important to note that as a Slavonic language, Czech is a grammatically gendered language. Where English can rely on gender-neutral constructions – particularly the inclusive pronoun “they” – Czech typically demands gender-determinant binary choices. As Czech gender linguist Jana Valdřová observes about the consequences, “the use of the masculine creates the mental image of a man and functions as ‘advertising for men’ [...]. It marginalises women and erases non-binary people.”² This dynamic is reinforced by the fact that Czech requires gender-specific agreement across multiple grammatical categories. Such structural asymmetry produces significant challenges when translating a play that not only features a non-binary protagonist but embeds queerness in its linguistic fabric. My task, therefore, was not simply to reproduce the meaning of the English text but to negotiate between the queer-inclusive potential of English and the more rigid grammatical landscape of Czech.

In the Czech production, decisions regarding pronouns and grammatical gender worked alongside other performative elements such as choreography, costume, drag performance, and the creation of the allegorical figure Q, all of which contributed to making queer identity legible beyond the limits of the Czech language. In the concluding section, I draw on Chantal Mouffe’s concept of agonistic pluralism to articulate the creative process as one shaped by productive tension rather than consensus – an approach that proved particularly apt for a project

¹ Anya Ryan, “*I, Joan* Review – Non-binary Joan of Arc Proves a Rousing Protest Piece,” *Guardian*, 2 September 2022.

² Jana Valdřová, “Inkluzivní vyjadřování v češtině. Metodická doporučení” [Inclusive Expression in the Czech Language. Methodological Guidelines], *Gender a výzkum / Gender and Research* 25, no. 1 (Winter 2024): 133. All quotations from Czech in this article are by the author.

negotiating between divergent linguistic, cultural, and political expectations. These concepts serve not as an extensive theoretical apparatus but as concise tools for understanding how translation and adaptation operated within this particular artistic context. By tracing the journey of *I, Joan* from London to Prague, this article shows how translation and adaptation can operate as creative practices that navigate constraints, generate alternatives, and open imaginative spaces where different forms of gendered and political agency can emerge.

Step 1: Dramaturgy

The decision to stage *I, Joan* at Komedie Theatre emerged from a longer-term dramaturgical effort to expand the venue's collaboration with independent artists and experimental performance platforms. Komedie Theatre, one of the venues managed by the Prague City Theatres, functions as an open stage oriented toward contemporary, formally innovative, and often politically charged work. In the Czech Republic, explicitly queer theatre is far more frequently associated with underground, club, community, and independent stages than with established municipal or national institutions, whose programming has only rarely foregrounded LGBTQ+ experience as a central dramaturgical concern. However, thanks to theatre directors such as Jakub Čermák or Daniela Špinar, the situation has started to change in the last couple of years even in bigger theatres. As dramaturge Lenka Dombrovská notes, the theatre sought "a larger project in collaboration with choreographer Martin Talaga and the queer art platform PiNKBUS," emphasising that these performers were not to become "a mere background or chorus," but artistic partners fully integrated into the production.³

PiNKBUS is a Prague-based queer art platform founded by dancer, choreographer, and drag performer Martin Talaga. According to their website, PiNKBUS "brings a new creative wave to the Czech Republic," drawing on the traditions of Prague cabaret and variety shows while infusing them with the "poetics of the globally popular drag phenomenon."⁴ The collective foregrounds themes such as sexuality, embodiment, bodily autonomy, and queer joy, and positions itself as "a safe space that raises awareness and connects people."⁵ Their work bridges club culture, physical theatre, drag artistry, and performance art.

³ Lenka Dombrovská, "Já, Johan*a: Boj za svobodu, jinakost a právo být sám sebou" [*I, Joan: Fighting for Freedom, Otherness, and the Right to Be Oneself*], *i-divadlo.cz*, 25 October 2023, https://www.i-divadlo.cz/zpravy/ja-johan*a-boj-za-svobodu-jinakost-a-pravo-byt-sam-sebou-/.

⁴ Project PINKBUS, "About PiNKBUS," <https://pinkbusplatform.com/>.

⁵ Project PINKBUS, "About PiNKBUS."

Their members cast in *I, Joan*, i.e., Martin Talaga, Karel Vladyka (Just Karen), and Alyssa Dillard, operate fluidly across dance, theatre, multimedia, and queer nightlife scenes. For Komédie Theatre, staging a production with and about queer performers therefore represented not only an aesthetic proposition but a structural intervention into the landscape of Czech institutional theatre. The platform's presence offered both a natural complement to Josephine's play and an opportunity to bring queer performance practices into an institutional context where they have seldom been centred. The fact that the Czech version of *I, Joan* is additionally advertised for young audiences and was presented during Prague Pride in summer 2024 further aligns the production with the mission of the Prague City Theatres.

The Prague production also differed from the Globe staging in its casting and in the working processes that followed. Whereas the London production centred a queer performer Isobel Thom in the title role, the Czech adaptation cast Martina Jindrová as Joan, working alongside members of Komédie Theatre's resident ensemble and invited performers from PiNKBUS as well as other queer artists. Rather than reproducing the casting logic of the original, the creative team sought to build an ensemble through which multiple embodied experiences of gender could coexist onstage. The rehearsal process therefore required an approach distinct from that of the Globe production, attending not only to questions of representation, but also to the translation of queer dramaturgy into an institutional context with different performance traditions and different forms of lived expertise.

The Prague production of *I, Joan* was therefore shaped from the outset by a collaborative framework that exceeded a conventional staging of a contemporary British play. It involved the meeting of multiple artistic traditions: institutional Czech theatre, professional and non-professional actors, queer performance scenes, choreographic and physical theatre practices, and the dramaturgical heritage of cabaret. This constellation placed questions of gender, embodiment and representation at the centre of the production's conceptualisation. In this sense, the dramaturgical process was not simply a matter of selecting a suitable text but of creating the conditions for a dialogue between the play's explicitly queer politics and the cultural and linguistic environment of Czech theatre. As Dombrovská remarked, once the dramaturgical decision was made, "[t]here was nothing left to do but wrestle with the Czech language, which still has certain gender limitations."⁶ And that was the moment I was commissioned by the theatre to translate this queer reimagining of Joan of Arc into Czech. I was given about two months to translate the text and consult the first version with Lenka Dombrovská and Slovak director Alžběta Vrzgula, who then worked for about half a year on its adaptation for Komédie Theatre.

⁶ Dombrovská, "Já, Johan*a: Boj za svobodu, jinakost a právo být sám sebou."

Step 2: Translation

Non-binary Language and Linguistic Debate in Czech

The translation of *I, Joan* into Czech unfolded within a linguistic environment in which gender is not merely a social category but a grammatical requirement: Czech predicates, participles, and adjectives must align with the gender of the speaker and the subject. Unlike English, Czech typically obliges speakers to choose between masculine and feminine forms. (The neuter form also exists, but is used for objects, animals, etc.) The absence of a widely accepted non-binary pronoun means that linguistic representation of non-binary identities remains contested in both everyday communication and artistic practice. For instance, the English sentence “I was brave” must become either “Byl jsem statečný” (masculine) or “Byla jsem statečná” (feminine) in Czech – there is no widely accepted non-binary equivalent.

The public debate on gender-inclusive Czech demonstrates that the issue is not only grammatical but ideologically charged. Linguist Karel Oliva, representing a conservative position, suggests that some proposed neologisms sound “almost like a National Revival style attempt to reform Czech” and therefore are “artificial and perhaps unnecessary, because the Czech language already has words for the concepts in question.”⁷ He adds, however, that he “cannot dictate what Czech people should or should not do,” since it is “the natural language of a cultural nation, and it develops on its own.”⁸

A more adaptive perspective is articulated by linguist and philologist Vít Kolek, who emphasises that emerging forms reflect no mere linguistic play, but communicative need. In his view, these expressions cannot be regarded “unnecessary at all,” since they are terms “created by the non-binary community, or rather used by it in accordance with the rules of Czech word formation.” While acknowledging that they “may sound somewhat archaic,” he frames linguistic change as a matter of habituation: “the more often we encounter them, the more natural they will sound.”⁹ Responding to objections that existing Czech terminology is sufficient, he points out that collective nouns such as “diváctvo”

⁷ Karel Oliva quoted in Karolína Koubová, “Jazyková neutralita je iniciativou zdola, říká filolog. Nesmíme to přehánět, oponuje jazykovědec” [Language Neutrality Is an Initiative from Below, Says Philologist. We Should Not Exaggerate, Linguist Opposes], *Český Rozhlas Plus*, 13 August 2024, <https://plus.rozhlas.cz/jazykova-neutralita-je-iniciativou-zdola-rika-filolog-nesmime-prehanet-oponuje-9291824>.

⁸ Oliva quoted in Koubová, “Jazyková neutralita.”

⁹ Vít Kolek quoted in Koubová, “Jazyková neutralita.”

(audience) may function more naturally in certain contexts than the established expression “divácká obec” (community of spectators), since “addressing someone with ‘esteemed community of spectators’ (vážená divácká obci) sounds strange,” whereas Czech already knows analogous collective forms such as “studentstvo” (students) or “žactvo” (pupils).¹⁰

A further strand of the debate foregrounds the role of linguistic innovation as a community-driven process. As Jana Valdřová observes, speakers engaged in queer-inclusive language practices “approach linguistic experimentation playfully and without prejudice,” and some activist initiatives explicitly explore the emotional and social dimensions of linguistic change. One working group of the Institute of Anxiety, she notes, “tests and promotes ‘queer Czech,’ a form of language intended to be welcoming and inclusive to all.”¹¹ Valdřová further advocates for flexible, self-chosen pronouns, recommending to leave it up to the non-binary speakers to choose how they want to be addressed.

Finding Joan’s Voice on Page and Stage

A translator needs to keep these theoretical discussions in mind, although they are of little assistance when they are pressed to make concrete choices regarding gender-marked speeches. Switching between various pronouns might be possible in real-life conversation but it does not work well on stage. While it is possible sometimes to attempt to mark gender inclusivity typographically with an asterisk – as I suggested for the title in Czech *Já Johan*a* – such solutions are difficult to realise in spoken performance. As dramaturge Lenka Dombřovská observes, “[n]one of these options, however, can be used in stage speech without disrupting the intelligibility of dialogues and monologues and making it more difficult for audiences to follow the story.”¹² The challenge, then, was not only how to translate Joan’s voice, but how to make it speakable and theatrically legible within a language whose morphology resists non-binary self-designation.

In the original script, the protagonist is described in the following way:

JOAN – They/Them. Seventeen years old. AFAB, nonbinary, working class.
Strong and sweet, tender and brave. ADHD is part of their superpower.¹³

¹⁰ Kolek.

¹¹ Jana Valdřová, “Johan*a znovu bojuje: tentokrát o jazyk” [Joan Fighting Again: This Time for Language], *Moderní divadlo*, no. 2 (November – December 2023): 13.

¹² Lenka Dombřovská, “Od Johanky k Johy” [From Joan to Johy], in *Já Johan*a* programme notes, Městská divadla pražská, <https://www.mestskadivadlaprazska.cz/inscenace/1889/ja-johan-a/>.

¹³ Charlie Josephine, *I, Joan* (London: Samuel French, 2022), Characters, n.p.

The issue of pronouns proved especially complex. Joan's use of they/them in English is central to their queer identity and reads naturally in English. But the available binary options in Czech – "on" (he) and "ona" (she) – fail to reflect non-binary identities, and alternatives like the neuter "ono" (it) or plural "oni" (they) are either infantilizing or suggest overly formal "onikání," an outdated second-person plural form akin to the German "Sie."

My initial solution was to mark queerness in the character's name on the page, altering Joan – They/Them to Johan*a, using an asterisk to denote gender inclusivity. But while my solution worked visually and was used as the official title of the Czech version of Josephine's play and on posters, it fails once spoken on stage. The turning point came through collaboration with dramaturge Lenka Dombrovská and director Alžběta Vrzgula, who proposed renaming the character Johy. This version retains the non-binary resonance, feels natural in Czech, and functions effectively both on the page and stage.

The linguistic rigidity of Czech required creative strategies, such as rephrasing sentences to avoid gendered constructions and selecting non-gendered synonyms as much as possible. Charlie Josephine underscores the significance of inclusive language by showing respect for Joan's identity through their only real ally Thomas's choice of a gender-neutral pronoun:

SOLDIER TWO. Sir? We are ready to get back on the road!

SOLDIER ONE. Where's Joan, is she ready?

JOAN. (*Quietly to herself.*) She.

(*JOAN shudders. THOMAS sees.*)

THOMAS. They will be soon. Thank you.

(*The SOLDIERS nod and get into formation.*)

JOAN. They. (*JOAN smiles at THOMAS.*)¹⁴

Scenes like these form the cornerstones of Josephine's new rendering of Joan of Arc's story. Joan not only gets the opportunity to seize the narrative, but also to confront the audience with the inadequacies of language itself for rendering queerness, fluidity, and trans-experience. Yet, how to translate a scene like this into Czech? My solution was to replace the gender-neutral pronoun they by the word "velitel" (commander) to show Thomas's respect for Joan by different means. In Czech it then reads "Velitel je připravený" (The commander is ready), instead of "They will be soon." And Joan replies in Czech "Velitel" (commander) instead of "They" thus embracing their military role associated with men, rather

¹⁴ Josephine, *I, Joan*, 81.

than their non-binary identity. It is a compromise, but it seemed to work in this particular dramatic situation. Nevertheless, it was eventually decided by the dramaturge and the director to leave out this scene altogether, as the respect the character of Thomas has for Joan became clear from other scenes that did not include this specific use of the inclusive pronoun “they.” The nature of the Czech language thus frequently led to cuts in the original script, and the resulting Czech version of *I, Joan* differs significantly from the original, both linguistically and conceptually, running 95 minutes instead of the original nearly three hours.

Last but not least, after dealing with the problems of naming the protagonist and grappling with the non-binary pronoun “they,” I also had to make, as a translator, an informed decision regarding all the other characters in *I, Joan* and their use of pronouns. Unlike the contemporary English used by all the characters in the play, regardless of their social status or the dramatic situation on stage, the Czech version necessarily employs a more individualised and differentiated linguistic register, and thus arguably becomes more performative. In Czech, there is a significant difference between the use of informal you (tykáni) and formal you (vykáni) when addressing people. The use of informal you can signal friendliness and closeness, but in other contexts it may indicate disrespect or condescension. The use of formal you conveys respect, but also detachment and coldness; however, when combined with a first name, it can signal both respect and friendliness. In addition, Czech allows for the use of the *pluralis maiestaticus* (the so-called majestic plural) when addressing a king, as well as when the ruler refers to himself or herself. All these distinctions are very natural to the Czech language, but they are absent from the original script, so I had to interpret the complex relationships between the characters in each situation in order to determine the appropriate forms of address, which then systematically influenced all other gendered and agreement-based word forms used in the translation.

To give just a few examples, in the Czech version King Charles uses the majestic plural and addresses everybody else with the informal you, thus demonstrating his superiority. There are, however, two notable exceptions – his mother-in-law Yolande of Aragon and his wife Marie, to whom he is required to show respect. Moreover, he seems to be afraid of both of them. Thomas addresses Joan using the formal you and the title Madam initially, but later stops using the word Madam, as Joan expresses discomfort with this form of address, and subsequently uses only Joan’s name together with the formal you. The soldiers on the battlefield use the formal you only when addressing Dunois (an experienced soldier), but not Joan, whom they initially address with the informal you, first signalling a lack of respect; but they eventually change their attitude and use the informal you to signify familiarity and Joan’s acceptance as a fellow fighter. In this

sense, the process went beyond translation and became a full adaptation, shaped by the cultural context, the gendered structure of the Czech language, and the creative contributions of the whole team.

Step 3: Adaptation

After completing the first version of my translation, the next phase in creating the Czech version of Charlie Josephine's *I, Joan* was led primarily by dramaturge Lenka Dombrovská and director Alžběta Vrzgula, with whom I closely collaborated on a second version of the text. This revised script was then passed on to the cast for the first readthrough.

As mentioned already in the Introduction, a key aspect of the Czech adaptation of *I, Joan* was the casting of queer performers from PiNKBUS. Their involvement marked a decisive shift from translation as primarily linguistic transfer toward what can be described as adaptive staging practice. Rather than operating solely on the level of language, the Prague production introduced a series of radical, target-culture-driven dramaturgical and performative interventions that reshaped how queerness was articulated and experienced on stage. While the process does not constitute an adaptation in the strict taxonomic sense of adaptation theory,¹⁵ the term is used here to foreground the extent to which meaning was reworked through embodied, dramaturgical, and cultural means rather than through language alone. Rather than reproducing the Globe production's dramaturgy, the Prague staging actively reconfigured Josephine's play through the presence, bodies, and performance languages of queer artists accustomed to working outside institutional theatre frameworks.

Most significantly, Martin Talaga, in addition to serving as choreographer, took on the role of a newly created character: Queerness, or Q. Conceived as an allegorical figure (described in the Czech script as "He/She/without gender, an allegorical presence; kinky, compassionate, and subversive – queer freedom personified"¹⁶), Q functions as a constant companion to Johy, repeatedly entering the stage action and intervening at key moments. This addition fundamentally reshapes the dramaturgy of the play. While Josephine's original text embeds queerness primarily in language and historical reimaging, the Czech adaptation

¹⁵ Cf. Linda Hutcheon with Siobhan O'Flynn, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2013); Julie Sanders, *Adaptation and Appropriation*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2016).

¹⁶ Charlie Josephine, "Já, Johan*a," trans. Hana Pavelková, prompt book, Městská divadla pražská, 2023.

externalises queerness as a visible, embodied force that actively shapes the protagonist's journey.

Crucially, it is Q who teaches Johy how to wield a sword, guiding them toward a physical understanding of power, balance, and agency. This scene redefines martial training as a form of queer embodiment rather than military discipline, transforming the sword into a metaphor for self-knowledge and bodily autonomy. Through choreography and physical interaction, Q empowers Johy to inhabit their body with confidence, reframing heroism not as sacrifice or martyrdom but as embodied self-affirmation. In this sense, the adaptation moves beyond linguistic negotiation of non-binary identity and situates queerness in movement, physicality, and kinaesthetic knowledge.

Other members of PiNKBUS further reinforced this shift toward embodied queerness. Alyssa Dillard, a singer, was cast as Marie, the wife of King Charles – a relatively minor role in terms of spoken text. Karel Vladyka (performing as Just Karen) took on the role of Yolande of Aragon, described in Josephine's script as "fearsome, gorgeous, powerful."¹⁷ Vladyka's commanding presence in full drag visually fulfilled this description, offering a striking image of queer authority and excess. While his performance was at times constrained by a lack of formal acting training, the casting nevertheless foregrounded drag as a legitimate theatrical language within an institutional setting.

The most explicit articulation of PiNKBUS's performance style emerged in a central drag show sequence, in which Talaga, Vladyka, and Dillard performed a high-energy karaoke rendition of Bonnie Tyler's 1980s hit "Holding Out for a Hero." This scene functioned as a deliberate rupture in the narrative, embracing performative excess, camp aesthetics, and queer joy. Rather than advancing the plot in a conventional sense, the sequence operated as a celebration of queer presence and resilience, aligning closely with Josephine's insistence on queerness as protest, pleasure, and survival.

Finally, the figure of Q plays a decisive role in the radically reworked ending of the Czech adaptation. Instead of culminating in Joan's martyrdom, the Prague production subverts both historical expectation and theatrical convention. At Q's urging, Johy steps down from the stage, refusing to fulfil the audience's anticipated tragic ending. Johy declares: "The writer refuses to kill another queer person in the name of good storytelling. They are not dying tonight! It's an honour to be a human! It's a beautiful thing!"¹⁸ This metatheatrical gesture directly

¹⁷ Josephine, *I, Joan*, Characters, n.p.

¹⁸ Josephine, "Já Johan*a," prompt book.

addresses the politics of representation and rejects the recurrent narrative of queer sacrifice. Instead, it chooses survival, agency, and joy as valid dramatic conclusions.

Through these strategies – the introduction of Q, the casting of queer performers, the integration of drag and choreography, and the transformation of the ending – the Czech *I, Joan* articulates queerness not only as an identity or theme, but as a performative practice. Adaptation here can be understood as a space of creative contestation, where linguistic limitations are supplemented, and at times overridden, by embodied expression. In doing so, the production expands the expressive possibilities of Czech and offers a compelling example of how adaptation can generate new forms of queer agency beyond the constraints of both language and historical narrative.

Conclusion

This article has traced the process through which Charlie Josephine's *I, Joan* was translated and adapted for the Czech theatrical context, focusing on how queer identity was negotiated across linguistic, cultural, and performative registers. As demonstrated, the seemingly insurmountable limitations of the highly gendered Czech language in articulating non-binary and queer identities can be addressed not only through inventive and thoughtful translation strategies, but also through the integration of non-verbal performative elements. In the Prague production, physical embodiment, visual aesthetics, choreography, make-up, drag, and musical performance played a crucial role in making queerness legible beyond the constraints of language.

The translation of *I, Joan* revealed the extent to which linguistic inclusivity is unevenly distributed across languages. While contemporary English offers relatively flexible tools for expressing gender fluidity, Czech requires speakers to make binary grammatical choices that often stand in tension with non-binary self-identification. Rather than attempting to resolve this tension through artificial linguistic fixes alone, the Czech production embraced a broader understanding of translation as an interdisciplinary practice embedded within theatrical collaboration. Queerness, in this sense, was not confined to pronouns or lexical choices, but emerged through bodies, voices, movement, and relational dynamics on stage.

The adaptation further demonstrated that the absence of fully inclusive language does not necessarily foreclose queer expression. On the contrary, linguistic constraint may function as a catalyst for creative experimentation and gradual cultural change. By supplementing linguistic strategies with embodied and visual forms of performance, the production opened alternative pathways for articulating queer agency. Over time, such practices may contribute to the

normalization of new expressions and to a broader receptivity toward linguistic innovation, both within the theatre and in public discourse.

Drawing on Chantal Mouffe's concept of agonistic pluralism, the Czech *I, Joan* can be understood as a site of productive contestation rather than consensus. The tensions between English and Czech, between institutional theatre and queer performance cultures, and between historical narrative and contemporary politics were not resolved but staged as visible and generative conflicts. Rather than smoothing over difference, the production allowed divergent positions to coexist, clash, and transform one another. In doing so, it exemplified how translation and adaptation can participate in the formation of a more democratic and inclusive public sphere – one that acknowledges dissent, embraces multiplicity, and resists the erasure of marginalised identities.

Ultimately, the Prague adaptation of *I, Joan* suggests that translation, when understood as a collaborative and performative process, has the potential to expand not only the expressive limits of a particular language, but also the imaginative horizons of the culture in which it operates. By refusing both linguistic purity and narrative martyrdom, the production affirmed queer survival, agency, and joy as legitimate theatrical and political values. In this sense, *I, Joan* becomes not only a play about history and identity, but an example of how theatre can function as a space where dissent, difference, and the multiplicity of identities can flourish.

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