

## **Hungarian theatres in Transylvania (Romania) after the change of the political regime**

I am exploring the Hungarian theatrical life in Romania after the 1989 change of regime. Discussing the territory of Transylvania, it is not only a geographically determined region with a specific historical situation, but also a special ethnic minority existence. Yet, it is not a group of people living on a small territory but a country-seized land (from Timișoara to Miercurea Ciuc the distance is 550 km) inhabited by almost 2 million people with their own culture and cultural institutions (including theatre).

The first chapter briefly outlines the period before 1989, those social and cultural policies that were having an influence on the Hungarian theatrical life in Romania. Under the dictatorship pursuing heavy assimilation policies, the main role of ethnic theatres was the furtherance of the preservation of culture and language. This was a conventional period of textual theatre.

For a better understanding of the post-dictatorial period's theatre history the outline of the situation is necessary that characterized the Hungarian theatrical life in 1990 and the years to come: the shortage of actors and stage directors, college classes with a decrease in number, poor economical conditions, guest directors from Hungary and their activities in these theatres, the massive drop in the number of spectators due to the altered social conditions.

In one chapter I am describing the organizational structure of the theatres, the coming into existence of these, their geographical position, the internal structure, their relations with funding and supporting organizations and also their annual budget. Just here, I will also enlist all the general managers of these theatres.

As opposed to the Hungarian theatre heavily concentrating on the text itself, the Romanian theatre is a scenic one; the analysis of this difference is indispensable when discussing the evolution of the Hungarian theatre. This effect implements itself through different channels, the most important of which are: the mixed schools, the actors' guest performances (mainly the Romanian roles of Hungarian actors), the Hungarian directors' Romanian productions and vice versa. Such outstanding names can be enlisted among the Romanian directors as: Victor Ioan Frunză, Vlad Mugur, Dragoș Galgoțiu, Alexandre Colpacci, Mihai Măniuțiu, Silviu Purcărete or Andrei Șerban. The productions of these directors are also included in this section.

The Hungarian theatres are closely connected to the Romanian theatre, which in turn follows them closely, handles them with appreciation. The Romanian theatre's multiple effect has a modeling aspect on the Hungarian theatre. This factor has had an active influence on the shaping of these theatres; it is the engine and the consequence at the same time to that paradigm shift which took place in the last 20 years.

The length of the present paper does not allow the monographic analysis of each theatre or the specification of each director's career. My work aims to depict an overall picture of the Hungarian theatre's recent past, the main focus being on the exposition of the most important phenomena, creating a work that later may serve as a basis for further research.

Looking at the artistic development of the different theatres, despite the common effects, and in some places, despite the common aspects we cannot talk about a typical evolution: each theatre walks a different path. Among the atypical cases I am giving an emphatic analysis of the Tamási Áron Theatre from Sfântu Gheorghe, the last 20 years of its development and the course of proceedings. The main reason of my choice is that this is one of the most important Hungarian theatre workshops and the only one, established before 1989, that does not yet have a monograph or study on the period I am discussing. Since the mid-nineties the Tamási Áron Theatre diverged from the traditions of the word based theatre. Realistic acting has stopped to be an aim, it is just a tool, which is used at pinch. Instead of the illusion of reality, a sovereign theatrical world is born in their performances, a world with its very own system of denotations and statutory laws. The logocentric approach gives place to the focus on theatricality, in which scenery, sonority and theatrical presence lead to a freshness of forms and content, unique by the organic infiltration of specific traditions (both of the theatre's and Szeklerland's)

The development of the Tamási Áron Theatre, in contrast with the rest of the Hungarian theatres from Transylvania – first of all with the Hungarian Theatre of Cluj – is built powerfully from inside using its own energies. This development is almost exclusively based on the company's own strength, and did not happen counting on the fertile impulsions coming from the invited creators. This kind of introverted technology emphasizes even more the workshop character of the theatre from Sfântu Gheorghe.

Being related to the history of the Tamási Áron Theatre, I write about the most essential processes of two decades in the Figura Studio Theatre's life, thus presenting the

development of a theatrical thinking and spirituality, its evolution and its transmission from a theatre to the other one. In this chapter I track two processes: the first is the way, the theatre from Gheorgheni rebuilds itself from a status near the cessation (caused by the fact that the company's determining actors have contracted to Sfântu Gheorghe) by the founding of a student actors group and growing out of being a group again. The second process is how an amateur experimenting company forms the direction of the professional and stone theatre repertoire function.

As an appendix of my paper I compiled the full repertory of the Transylvanian theatres of the negotiated period, the used data from the internet and information which can be found imperfectly or partially in different brochures, program guides, and are complemented with collected ones from newspapers or from the theatres' literary secretariats, thus created an important theatre history database.