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“IRREGULARLY BUT FULL OF HOPE” High culture and minority nation-building in the Hungarian theatre of Oradea during the 1980s

Some years ago, when my research on the 1980s local theatre censorship had been started, discussions on state-communism were overwhelmingly present in the national political and social agenda. The President of Romania officially condemned state-communism, student-made expositions were organized, and a pupil drawing-contest was launched in order to depict sufferings and injustices of Ceaușescu's Romania. All these practices lean on the mainstream representation of communism, regarded as a total type of control, a full repression capturing the whole personality. Meanwhile a mandatory repertoire of patriotic songs and poems on a powerful present and a more glorious future was provided to the citizen's mind in order to mitigate economy of shortage, the body was an object of custody-taking, too. It faced a series of restrictions beginning with the “rationalizing” of foodstuff ending up with its imprisonment within the state borders. Subsequently, when the Securitate archives became partly open to the Romanians, a series of well-known names were launched into the public sphere, all seriously deprecated for being too closely connected to the former state power.

My findings on the system of theatrical censorship as well as techniques of evading it are meant to complete and nuance such a black and white picture. During such a modest enterprise horrors and sufferings provided by Ceaușescu's Romania would never be contested, but beside grieves and sorrows the ways people faced and survived them are, too, revealed.

Communism and negotiation. Anthropological approaches

In taking hold on the ambiguous nature of totalitarian systems, a framework called “anthropology of communism”, having duplicity in

its core, was applied. Anthropology of socialism goes beyond official representations of the East European state-communisms, and regards them as fragile systems instead as powerful structures,¹ where politics of duplicity, a certain type of “opposition” is embedded in everyday life-practices;² East Europeans built up a state-conformable behaviour for official situations, and a “real” one kept in the private sphere. By doing so, citizens were either panders to the system, or, simultaneously parts of its resistance. Such a systemic fragility – providing an interlocked status of power and resistance, right and wrong – was displayed under a peculiar setting in case of the Romanian cultural elite under communism. On one hand, as every formal elite group, the cultural one was part of the system, too, therefore “making it work” was among its duties: to produce, to issue, to control, and to try to fit in systemic requirements in order to maintain its positions. Beside such internal resources, the elite groups usually needed also an external legitimation, credibility in the eyes of the masses, who rejected official practices. In order to achieve such dichotomous goals, the cultural elite invented alternative discourses³ on society, polity, culture, questioning their official representation. Many of such alternative representations on society and power were created through products of high culture: literature, theatre, newspaper articles. Practices of using works of art for expressing political purposes in state socialism were defined as cultural politics by Katherine Verdery.⁴ In grasping such a difficulty and complexity of elite positions, the notion of “ambivalent discourses” was proposed by József D. Lőrincz,⁵ as a term defining interplay between duplicity and complicity for elite positions.

In understanding such complexity, there is no need for discerning ethnic minority and majority elites as both were engaged in resistance through culture, both being affected by the nature of control in Ceaușescu’s Romania. However, mechanisms of controlling culture were alike, majority and minority intentions still differed: due to the ethno-centric character of the system, minority Hungarian society was more engaged in enforcing the Hungarianness, rebuilding minority borders. In the following chapters an examination of such minority nation-building follows. It starts with a stock-taking of controlling mechanisms and techniques of evading it, then a case-study analyzing minority resistance and its context comes up; the last part is dedicated to the investigation of minority resistance through a comparison with the majority cultural field in order to contextualize the ethnic elements in this process. In other words I shall try to go beyond the

victimizing character of minority narratives, in order to find out, whether the censorship was more permissive with the majorities or not.

Grasping the mechanisms of controlling culture in the '80s – a period of a severe control – in the local theatre from Oradea, a town close to the Hungarian border, has many reasons. Urban societies, settled far from the political centre were rare subject of anthropological studies on socialism. Analyzing theatre-activities may also convey certain “objectivity” to this research: the number of the audience – taken as cultural consumers – was registered in different statistics in the '80s (some made by theatre managers), thus few conclusion about reception of cultural politics can be followed. Moreover this site is my native town, where I had the opportunity to see the plays performed during the '80s. Last but not least, I thought, a common institutional setting would make an adequate form for comparing the ethnic side of censorship.

The system

Crucial for identifying some mechanism of controlling theatres was the setting-up of the repertoires. These collections of plays to be presented were first validated at the local level by members of theatre elite: manager, literary secretary, artistic manager of both sections (an assembly identical in some sources with COM-members, *Comitetul Oamenilor Muncii ai Teatrului*, Committee of Theatre Workers). After passing a first filter, the repertoire was validated by the local institution responsible for controlling culture, *Comitetul Judeţean de Cultură* (County Cultural Committee). After obtaining the Cultural Committee's consent, the repertoire was sent to Bucharest to be verified at a national level by the *Consiliul Culturii şi al Educaţiei Socialiste* (Committee for Socialist Culture and Education),⁶ where a special department (*Directia Teatrelor*, Department for Theatres) was assigned to turn the programme into a final form. In order to defend their initial aims, the local theatre elite made up certain documents, called *referat* (reference), in order to argue for the presentation of plays chosen for the repertoire. However, a well developed technique in writing references was elaborated, it could have been changed even after the validation for a play was obtained.⁷ When the repertoire was approved, the rehearsals began and ended up in a final process, called *vizionare* (viewing, presentation). First of this series was an internal one, held in the

presence of the Committee of Theatre Workers (COM), where usually the theatre director, literary secretaries, stage directors, actors were present. Such an internal verification was followed by a new one, in the presence of local and sometimes national party bureaucrats: usually one inspector from the local party branch (*Comitetul Județean de Partid*) was invited, accompanied by a secretary from the Cultural Committee, assigned with theatrical control, occasionally a member of the national Committee for Socialist Education and Culture came together with the above-mentioned COM members. Vigilance of the censors seemed to be determined not only by their background, education etc., but by the play itself. In case of a first set on the stage, an approval from the national level was required, meanwhile for a re-play (*reluare*) validation of the local party bureaucrats was enough.

Techniques of evading the control

As all works I had consulted on the Romanian censorship are based either on collecting documents, or on a less meticulous interpretation of them,⁸ my investigations are based on my own document-collection (found in local and national archives), interviews and memoirs with members of both Romanian and Hungarian cultural elite. During my research the following set of techniques were identified as sources of outwitting the control: dodging with the quotas, duplicity in the language of plays or scenography, personal arrangements, negotiations.

Dodging with the quotas was due to fragility within the system, and helped local Hungarian theatre elite in fulfilling their major aims: to promote minority culture in a socio-political context, that rejected to provide large public recognition to it. According to interviews and other sources, references were compiled according to different rules, among which “decency” of the writer was of utmost importance (contemporary or not, Romanian or not). Although, interviews present such requirements in different ways, one distinction remains constant: theatre plays set on in the ‘80s should have been 75 percent Romanians (written by Romanian authors), and 25 percent by non-Romanians. As the category of “Romanianness” was vaguely defined, the system provided good opportunity for the Transylvanian Hungarian elite to promote minority culture: a Romanian writer – according to the interviews – could be anyone, who was once born on the actual territory of Romania, therefore

some classical Hungarians born within the borders of present-day Romania could be included as “Romanian writers” in the quotas. Moreover there was another attempt of the minority theatre elite to include contemporary Hungarian writers (living in Hungary) in order to fill in the quotas reserved for “the non-Romanians”.⁹

The second of this series of techniques could be grasped in the language of references, documents wrote to second the argument of theatre elite for presenting a play. Such references were ambiguous as they tried to write all important information about the play to be performed (plot, characters, ideology) in a state-conform language, although these plays conveyed messages opposite to the official ones. Subsequently a reference on *War and Peace* sees Tolstoy’s work having “characters endowed with noble features, justifies our contribution to educate our audience in the spirit of friendship, peace and collaboration among people”.¹⁰ The language of the references was quite identical for minority and majority (Hungarian and Romanian) theatre sections. In order to prove it, Tolstoy is followed here by a reference on Pirandello, written by the Romanian literary secretary:

Written in 1921, the play *Six characters in a quest for an author* remains interesting even nowadays, after four and a half decades. A tragic conflict of the individual in the capitalist world, where adherence to moral rules is only “formally” required, the individual is in fact intentionally and even violently pushed to a fall [...] into a swamp of immorality – in a full concordance with the social structures, which shape it.¹¹

Convicting “capitalist behaviour” and praising simple minds in concordance with the official discourses, was only one in the set of techniques outwitting the control. Another strategy, occurred exclusively on the Hungarian section, was filling quotas up with never, or clandestinely presented plays (usually with strong ideological character) in order to “top in” the repertoire, and making room for plays more welcomed by the public. Such an ambivalent discourse provided a double source of legitimation for the elites: helped them to keep their systemic positions and – simultaneously – to gain recognition from the public.

It was easier for the Romanian section, as the director could gain some money from factories. For instance the theatre hall was let to Alumina (a local factory) for big money. We could not do so in lack of networks. Thus we set on more than those six plays from the repertoire. We had,

12-14 new plays per year, as the [New Year's Eve] Cabaret and actor's plays celebrating their jubilees were out of the quotas. And we put in the repertoire 4-5 Romanian playwrights, performances never played, and we could ask for more plays to be approved; musical ones, for instance, as it was demanded by the public. Studio plays could also be sold, as they were sort of a *reciclare* (professional trainings) for the actors. Therefore we could play more by topping in the quotas.¹²

It is quite debatable, how powerful the following technique was and how often could it have been used, still it should be mentioned among other forms of "outwitting". Members of the local theatre elite – or at least the Hungarian ones – were sometimes up to bring some rear consumer goods to the censors in Bucharest, in order to smooth their verdicts on the repertoire. Besides handling such precious goods, finding the weakest figure in the system was also important. Therefore local elite usually turned to those Committee members, who seemed to be eager to collaborate:

I remember the presentation of a play, had some arguing with the director, as he did not understand, why we should set it so early. Could not tell him, I was let known from Bucharest, from a nice guy in the Ministry that one of them is to be sacked as his daughter emigrated in France. I booked for a flight to Bucharest, and wrote a reference during the journey and visited him. Had some 'small courtesies' with me to offer him, as I always did in my way to Bucharest. M. was a sharp minded and erudite man, I told him the plot, something in the critic of capitalism, he listened, as said, let it be. But I was also told, the play is approved, but the new bureaucrat would not be that permissive.¹³

Local and broader contexts – a case study

The following case study was chosen to illustrate the above-mentioned techniques "in work" and also to set resistance through culture in a broader context, showing why resistance through culture was so important. The Hungarian section of the Theatre from Oradea presented András Sütő's *Happy Mourning* in the summer of 1987 and this effervescence collective-like performance had met the local public's success. Local theatre audience were standing up and clapping, as a sign of admiration and respect towards an institution, which – in the darkest years of the over-controlled Ceaușescu regime – had dared to talk about themselves,

the Hungarian minority society. Such events are problematic to grasp for the present-day social researches, as they are regarded as memories of the past, impossible to understand, obscure and irrelevant after two decades. Still, analyzing such phenomena has several reasons. On one hand, it meant to prove that the post-89 events are strongly related to the pre-89 ones, symbolical and cultural politics of the state-communism are not parallel with the events that followed them. On the other hand, Ceaușescu's Romania was known as one of the darkest among East European state socialisms, where – according to its image – there was no room for alternative discourses. My case study – as mentioned above – tries to identify how was still possible that an elite group could launch works of art, against the system.

Discourses of the '80s

In the above-mentioned period there were several ways to produce and reproduce an image of the minority society. Although the “minority problem” was represented by a series of agents within the Hungarian cultural field via various ways, stock-taking of such discourses does not represent a subject for my study. I try instead to depict a set of representations and practices regarding „the Hungarians from Transylvania” relevant for my case study. The first category of manifestations are represented by those formal protest, which were issued either by the local intelligentsia, and meant to trigger the Romanian party elite, or the ones broadcasted in different places of the second public sphere, all claiming a renegotiation of formal minority-politics (language-rights, cultural- and educational ones). Besides “the Transylvanian question” was also represented through metaphorical ways, through moralizing items carried on by products of high-culture, encompassing a series of genres (works of art, letters, and different sorts of writings). A deeper investigation of such cultural forms deserves an analysis, different from my original goals, therefore only one aspect of such products is to be mentioned below.

Minority identity-politics shaped through high culture was a legacy of the interwar period. Nation appeared in the contemporary literary reviews¹⁴ as a mere cultural and moral community, where national membership is an ethic obligation. In accordance, emigration is regarded as a sort of betrayal, an act of the unworthy. This communitarian perspective re-emerged in the public sphere of the '70s, albeit not as a dominant issue, but still, as

a severe verdict.¹⁵ Persistence of such a representation in the '80s is due to a series of factors, usually non-ethnic ones. The second part of the decade is the period of international isolation. Economy of shortage is predominant, access to luxury goods almost impossible, the public sphere severely controlled. Besides, Ceaușescu's Romania was using a national ideology and practices for legitimization. Minority language rights and minority school system had faced severe interdictions. All this, together with the strengthening ethnic borders by migration policies and in spite of ethnic Hungarians being regarded as "Romanian citizens of Hungarian origins" in the public sphere. It is somehow comprehensible that minority nationalism is a response to the systemic claims. Such a growing need for a retreat into minority national society produced – on one hand – a series of victimizing narratives by the Hungarian elite, as well as – on the other hand – an increasing popularity in representing Hungarian national identity. As the number of migrants to Hungary increased and their voices in the Hungarian mass-media became more and more "heard", those who remained in place had to find an explanation for their stay. Their response was a moral one: scorn towards the leavers, moral perseverance meant to judge the unworthy, who ceased to resist. Introducing the theme of moral superiority – as an important source for defining minority identity politics – was relevant not only for the old nation-builder generation, but even for those intellectuals, who in their writings offer a more critical and less communitarian image of the Hungarians from Transylvania.¹⁶

It seems you do not take into account the loss caused by your leaving; your departure diminishes the minority society decreased in number and moral strength: there would be no other Hungarian teacher hired for your vacant job, the departure of your child would abate the chance for approving a class with Hungarian teaching language [...], your apartment is to be allocated exclusively to families pertaining to the majority. In other words: the space you created by your voluntary departure would make the power of the majority to grow upon us, who remained here. [...] Are you aware, that vacancies in minority cultural institution are supplied voluntarily by those, who remained?¹⁷

Thus migration is a moral issue, as migrants leave behind them a difficult situation for those who remained. Making minority cultural institution to work by a voluntary contribution of the remaining employees was not only an impressive metaphor, but a common practice revealed by a series of interviews referring to the period.

In stock-taking of mechanism responsible for conveying such moralizing discourses to the minority public-sphere, three mechanisms should be mentioned, among which two are interrelated. The first, as the case study strives to highlight, is the endeavour of the elite to outwit the controlling mechanism. Minority intellectuals find occasions to place discourses of Hungarianness into the public sphere, enabling to re-creation of their positions. The other two techniques are coming from outside, from the socio-cultural space provided by the Hungarian state. Starting with the '60s the Hungarians outside the border were regarded with an increasing attention by some Hungarian institutions (the Central Committee of the Hungarian Communist Party, the MSZMP KB, carried on a press-monitoring of the Romanian, Czech-Slovakian, Yugoslavian mass-media, the canonization of the Hungarian literature included works of art belonging to writers outside the border, reports were issued by the Central Committee on the topic¹⁸). Such an attention gets its climax in the '80s, when a series of agents and groups have Hungarians outside the border in the focus of their attention. By this time either the democratic opposition, or the „national” writers (*népi írók*), together with the Central Committee are stating that minority politics of the “posterior states” are not just a matter of internal affairs.

Such an attitude is not only present through political statements and reports; it is present even in the immigration policies of the Hungarian state during the late '80s. Immigration laws of the decade are more permissive with the (mainly Hungarian) migrants, who could easily obtain a temporary residence (even the illegal border-crossers) beginning with 1988.¹⁹ The migrants become well-known characters of the Hungarian public discourses, usually embodied by the figure of the “Transylvanian refugee”, a protagonist, who occurred in many feature and documentary films.²⁰

The Hungarian public sphere was keen not only on “thematizing” migration, as a critic towards the Romanian minority politics,²¹ but it also served as a second public sphere to many minority discourses banned in the Romanian, Czech-Slovakian, Yugoslavian mass-media. By issuing books, broadcasting a series of letters, protests, manifests signed by writers and intellectuals outside the Hungarian border, the Hungarian mass-media helped in strengthening the positions of the elite of the minority and empowered the figures of cultural resistance. Although men of letters like András Sütő and Sándor Kányádi had been banned from publishing in the late '80s, they became important figures of the literary field in Hungary,

well-known as ambassadors of the “cause of the minority”.²² The way such resistance became known for the Transylvanian community, in other terms the way Hungarian mass-media was acting as a secondary public sphere may be illustrated by citing a passage from Sütő’s diary written during the ‘80s. The passage below relates the broadcasting of one letter signed by Sütő meant to protest against the Romanian minority politics on the 7th of May 1988:

As soon as the broadcast had finished, I found a letter in my mailbox: Thank You!. After a while the phone was ringing: Thank you! Many – understandably – do not present themselves.²³

“Socialism ... and what comes next”

There are many reason for investigating state-communism and its forms of cultural resistance: in spite of a change within the political and cultural sphere, the post-89 formal political actions could not be discerned by their pre-89 forms, the formers being deeply enrooted in the latter. In the case of protest continuity seems to be direct and easy to trace: texts claiming minority rights were turned into official and public political programs after 1989. The first number of *Counterpoints*, an important Hungarian samizdat of the ‘80s claims minority institutions and language rights,²⁴ a set of political goals similar to those stated in the first program of the Hungarian Democratic Alliance.²⁵ Such a pre-89 heritage enables the minority Hungarian elite to come out in the newly shaped public sphere with well developed “nationalizing” social projects even in the first days of the transition.

Texts regarding community-membership as a moral issue suddenly appeared in the public sphere after 1989: works of art and their authors banned during state-communism are then publicly cited. Such symbolical issues, based on a coded language and sustained by half-public political rituals vanish in a political democracy, which – regardless of its efficiency – is following certain formal rules; therefore traces of such cultural forms are difficult to highlight after twenty years. Still, such a minority morality could be tracked in present-day Romanian emigrant-narratives of ethnic Hungarians,²⁶ who – unlike others– recognize migration as a question of morality, even though it took place after 1989. I also think such a moral power is preserved in a series of minority politics shaped by the Hungarian state, where “remaining in the motherland” becomes a major target.²⁷

From page to stage

As I mentioned at the beginning, stages of presenting a play followed a well built-up scheme. After the annual repertoire, including a detailed presentation of every play was approved by the local censorship as well as from the central one; the rehearsals could begin, ending up in a final one, called *vizionare* (viewing, presentation), in the presence of the local and sometimes the national censors. According to the documents, these activities were usually accompanied by negotiations, enabling the theatre elite to launch their original views, or something close to them. Such a trajectory was common for either the Hungarian, or the Romanian theatres and theatre sections as the system of controlling culture was common. The quotas nationally designed, requiring at least 25 percent of national plays to be performed, were also non-ethnic. Differences occurred in the intentions of ethnicizing culture by the minority theatre elite: as Ceaușescu's Romania looked for legitimation in (Romanian) ethno-nationalism accompanied by a series of measurements regarding the assimilation of the minority groups. Such nationalism raised minority counter-nationalism, embodied in our case by a major intention for presenting and representing Hungarianness through high culture. Although outwitting the censors followed the same patterns either for the Romanian or for the Hungarian theatre sections, intentions and aims of the latter were different. For the minority elite such outwit was rather specific: discourses against the state could sometimes be – not always, indeed – discourses of the Hungarian national identity. Such discourses were aiming not just a launch of “forbidden” contents, not just a representation of the minority Hungarian culture, but also a reproduction of community goals. The following case-study tries to show the mechanism through which such a boundary-making became possible.

***Happy Mourning* – András Sütő's play in Oradea The play itself**

According to the playwright's diary from the '80s²⁸ as well as to my interviews conducted with the local theatre elite, Sütő András was almost entirely banned in the Romanian public sphere of those times. This is why the County Council for Culture (*Comitetului Județean de Cultură*) initially refused to approve the presentation of the *Wedding in Persepolis*

(*Szúzai mennyegző*) in 1986/1987, the year when local Hungarian elite meant to celebrate the playwright's 70th birthday. But – in accordance with recollections – the censors proposed a different play instead of the banned one, entitled *Happy Mourning* (*Vidám sirató*).

The text has two literary prefigurations: the first, *Fügedes in Heaven* (*Fügedes a menyben*) was issued in Târgu Mureș in 1965, the second was published in 1974 in *Művelődés*, a Hungarian cultural review. The final version of the play, a compilation of these two was prepared for the literary review, *Igaz Szó*, and issued in 1974 both in the latter, and in the review *Alföld* from Hungary. The play was presented for the first time in Târgu Mureș, later in 1984 in Timișoara, in 1987 in Oradea and in Cluj in 1988.²⁹

The plot of the play is about a conversion of a widower with five children, living in a Hungarian village settled in the Câmpia Region (*Zona Câmpia*). János Fügedes was purged (*purificat*) from the Communist Party during the '50s as a result of the new recruiting policies, although – in his words – he was not a person to order others about, but the one being ordered. Still – he resents – awards were given to those, who sent him here and there, and not to him, who was promised to be awarded and given a pension.³⁰ Under the influence of Emma, a beautiful widow, whom he proposed, János Fügedes converts himself and his daughters to a neo-protestant church. Such a decision implies not only the abdication from eating meat and drinking alcohol, but also an isolation from his initial community either in a geographic or in a symbolic sense. Such a break-up requires Fügedes to move out from the village and to settle down together with his daughters in an isolated place, in the margins of the village. He is also forced to give up all his duties, so – in other terms – he has to cease having connections with the community he belonged to.

The play starts with a discussion between Fügedes and Prédikás, the preacher in the neo-protestant church during their "last supper", when Fügedes drinks alcohol and eats meat for the last time, being assisted by the preacher. In the meantime the five daughters show up, singing either religious or communist propaganda songs, as – they argue – both have "flags" in their lyrics. Prédikás tries to learn them "true" religious songs, but it is just an occasion for him to ensnare them, especially Lenke, the oldest of the five. The daughter gives him the glad eye, in the hope for getting evidences against the preacher, whom she considers a fake person. Fügedes leaves shortly after Emma's arrival, who is engaged with organizing the christening of the six. Emma remains alone with the

preacher, who tried to seduce her as well, but Emma had chosen the more reliable Fügedes instead of him. After Fügedes reappears, Emma and his future husband are involved in preparing the ceremony, while Prédikás tries to initiate the five daughters in their new religion. The intention of the girls to retell the erotic versions of Biblical events during the session makes the preacher think, the daughters are up to accept his indecent proposals. As Lenke meets up his love, Miklós after the Bible course, her breaking the neo-protestant rules entails a punishment from his father. But Fügedes finds himself lost in the labyrinth of the requirements, as his new religion forbids application of corporal punishment. Solution comes from Prédikás, who suggests the building of a kicking chair in order to fulfil every rule and achieve goals, too. Prohibitions in the preacher's view are just barriers, stepped over by the tall, got through by the small, kicked only by the dummies.³¹ While Fügedes encounters Lenke's love, his daughters eat all the forbidden meals the latter purchases, and plan to elope from their father's house together with the five young men, who are courting them.

The christening-scene follows, anticipated by Fügedes' confession about his conversion. He recalls the events that brought him to the communist party, as its leaders find him suitable due to his large family, poverty and decent origin. His biography was written, and was sent to a series of courses in the promise of a good payment. But the purge came, entailing a categorization of each party member according to their past and family background. Fügedes was asked, what would he do in case of an imperialist attack? He says, he can cope having an uncle in the States, but he is not sure, his comrades could do the same. He was labelled, condemned and purged because of his answer.³² The christening scene begins with the appearance of the five daughters, who – wearing the folk customs of Sic region – are singing Hungarian folk songs in a sad and lofty tone, mourning the lost virtues.³³

Five men arrive after the christening, all wearing carnival masks. Fügedes, being convinced that Miklós is one of them, tries to punish the young. He puts a tub filled with hot water in the front of his entrance and a towel scattered with flour to punish the intruders. Still the victim of such farce is not Miklós, but the preacher, who purges the family from the neo-protestant church. In the final scene the daughters appear together with the boys. They let Fügedes know about their living, as the restrictions of the new religion are impossible for them to bear. The play ends with

a dialogue between Miklós and Fügedes, enabling the former to express his opinion about the father.

Miklós: We're searing waters, uncle Fügedes, but nothing remains of us if taking hundreds of directions. You refused the religious protestant song, In Thou We've Been Trusted, but you should believe in searing waters, which go away.

Fügedes: Where to, my son?

Miklós: To our way – irregularly but full of hope.³⁴

Duplicity in work

As previously mentioned, the play was recommended by the local censors to the Hungarian theatre elite. According to recollections, reasons for promotion laid in the "message" of this work of art; as for the official discourse it was a play, which treated ironically the religious behaviour. Although the official reference is lost, the description of the plot was found in some national records. It contains the following description:

Being a satire against mysticism, the play has its main protagonist a simple man temporary seduced by the chants of a religious sect; this hero is later brought back to vigilance, by proving him the real social goals.³⁵

A similar, state-conform interpretation is to be found in the remaining peace of the final rehearsal, held in the presence of the censors:

No ideological objections can be raised, but scenes depicting the relation between protagonists need some improvement. *Prédikás* should be more sharp-minded, Fügedes more stupid, less skilled, *Prédikás* vulgar, as character less worked-out, but the play can be presented in a week.³⁶

Labelled as anti-clerical by the power, the play conveyed opposite significance for its author. In one of his interviews Sütő interprets his work as follows:

Religious sects had spread in my region. Members of them are persons, assigned for community duties after the war, similar to Fügedes János. Such persons were followers of some orders prescribed by others, directions not

entirely clear to them. After filling out or being withtaken from public life these persons were in quest for new handrails. [...] People like Fügedes are literary lost ones for our small community, suddenly disappearing from our eyes. No community togetherness, common problem and concern is not relevant for them anymore, they go for an individual salvation, now, when all our prefixes are needed.³⁷

In such an interpretation the play is a moral verdict upon the ones easy to be influenced, the ones with no strong internal system of virtues and beliefs. Besides, such persons leave the community in a time, when adherence and staying together becomes crucial. Such a communitarian approach to belonging explains the end of the play, the double loss of Fügedes, who is left either by his family, or by the preacher.

Work of art as discourse

Recollections of the play identify its power in a comic depiction of state-communism, through a stock-taking of the '50s. Purging of Fügedes was not only a landmark of the enrolment of the elite in the '50s, but also an allusion to the present. Still, the most powerful element of discourse-making was the loading of the play with Hungarian folk culture. The five daughters wear folk customs in the stage, sing folk songs, and dance folk dances not only in the lofty moment of christening but also in many occasions during the play. Such a compilation, so typical for inventing national culture³⁸ was related as follows by the stage director:

Was the regional, local setting meaningful for the play?

It was, as it transmitted my attachment to homeland. Nobody did such a thing before; it was original, as the others had always chosen Seckler settings for depicting Hungarianness. It was welcomed by the power, engaged in setting forth folk traditions. I left for Episcopia Bihor as there was a lady there, an ethnographer, who helped me to reconstruct the local folk architecture. Meanwhile I looked after a series of things in the Museum; some of them were familiar to me from my childhood. [...] I left for villages to record the local dialect, to observe the houses and objects to put them on the stage. There was a happy scene following the christening, happy dances conveying the idea that we would never give up, nobody can confine our language, folk songs, customs. It was nowhere in the play, neither in other performances, it was original. Sütő was keen to accept such

a concept, setting the play into a context of the Bihor region. I'm curious, he said, as I have seen many Seckler representations. Sects, after all, are not strange to our region, we had many of them.³⁹

Working Hungarian folk culture into the play conveyed a new meaning to it. This new stratum was a double one: on one hand it was in accordance with the official discourse in its endeavour to "promote" folk tradition. On the other hand it was a form of cultural resistance for the local elite and public, a way of launching ethnicity in a public space in a period, when the official discourse rejected the existence of national minorities.⁴⁰

Such a practice modifies the written text, too. The daughters leave the scene in the original version, as they break up with the world offered by their father. In the version of Oradea they return in a couple of minutes singing and dancing, followed by loudly applause of the public. Interviews relate this moment as follows:

Our colleague brought the local-regional version of these authentic music and dances, and this is how the choreography was made up. I remember the scene, the girls leaving, as it was about emigration. They were leaving and I remember the sorrows on the faces in the public, as everybody was thinking of emigration. In those times the play was about staying together, it was, of course about the sects in the concept of the censors, but for us it was about our power to stay, the power of the youth. It was not in the play. Dances were conveying that we will resist the system, whatever happens. That's why the young leave the stage and come back after a while singing and dancing. It conveyed that we would not leave. Some of us do, but not us. We come back, as all the protagonists who leave the stage do return. It was the closing up of a circle, and from then on, bowing was the only thing left out.⁴¹

Romanian agents – Hungarian victims? Minority identity and its context

Since 1919 the minority elite regards itself as a separate part from the Romanian state, a socio-culturally distinct body aiming to reproduce its pre-1919 positions.⁴² Such an approach implicitly or explicitly states that ethnic Hungarians are not integrative part of the Romanian political structure, therefore ethnic boundaries follow redistribution of

power: “we” – as the Hungarians usually state – are distant from “them”, Romanians, who share the power, minorities are thus usually victims of the nationalizing state. Recent empirical researches⁴³ proved that some figures of ethnic Hungarian cultural elite, known as deeply involved in minority nation-building (such as writer András Sütő), or believed to be distant from the redistribution of political resources (such as poet Domokos Szilágyi) had in fact strong relations with the state power. Without questioning the social and moral need for finding out the ways of cooperation with Securitate, these results bring into light the complexity of the connections even between minority cultural elite and the political power in the last period of Romanian state communism. In other words, frameworks seem to be the same – in spite of the purposes the Hungarians used cultural resistance – therefore the question of victimizing should be reframed. In the context of censorship, a well-developed field for rebuilding elite positions, such reframing sounds as follows: are the Hungarians treated differently by the censors within the same institutional setting (local theatre in our case)?

A first dimension of analyzing such a phenomenon is that of ethnic boundaries,⁴⁴ in order to find out, whether a redistribution of power went along ethnic lines. Examining the ethnic background of the local censors (local branch of the Committee of Culture), it is obvious that no ethnic cleavage existed: one of the censors, who usually helped the Hungarian literary secretary in compiling the repertoires (in order to avoid any unpleasant interventions of the system), was of Hungarian origin. Some local and national censors, e.g. the local Committee-member responsible for theatres as well as a national committee-member in charge with minority culture had a good command of Hungarian, and they occasionally seemed to collaborate with local Hungarian leaders in order to “solve some problems with the text” (see interview-fragments above). Moreover, due to its status (a minority section within a bi-lingual theatre), the Hungarian “part” was inevitably subordinated to the Romanian direction: a first filter for the validation of repertoires was the Romanian theatre director, who – according to the interviews – had never raised any obstacles in approving it.

A second dimension of analyzing the nature of ethnic control was that of banned plays. During the period under discussion (1981-1989) there was no Hungarian play banned in the local theatre of Oradea. In the case of the Romanian cultural production, the situation was quite different. Tudor Popescu’s play *Jolly Joker*, presented roughly in the same period

with Sütö's, was banned after having some performances in the local theatre. Having an –apparently – state-conform signification, they play was a set of severe criticism of a sultanistic power. *Jolly Joker*, which, in an official reading, was regarded as

[S]ituation comedy, where an attitude of disguising bureaucracy and superficiality of some controlling organs is collectively affirmed, arguing for a main attitude and spirit of responsibility.⁴⁵

The play – with its allusions to Ceaușescu's Romania – ends with the appearance of the Comrade, whose entering on red carpet accompanied by applauses reminds the audience of the long-lasting ceremonies Party leaders praised themselves with. The final scene, soon after the Comrade's entrance, ends with the falling down of the iron curtain (on the stage) similar to the iron curtain separating all Romanian citizens from other countries. According to one Committee-members' memories, *Jolly Joker* was allowed to be played in the town, but a new approval would be needed for its "taking away". After a couple of performances the play was invited for a national festival. Due to a complicity among the stage director, the theatre director and one member of the Committee in charge with theatre-control, only the Hungarian censor (Committee-member) is asked in her quality of vice-president in the board to approve the participation at the festival. Unusually for the difficult circumstances, the play went through (as not being her duty to be present at the critical rehearsals of the Romanian plays), the Hungarian censor signs all the forms, the play is submitted for the festival, where a local Party leader finds appropriate to express his complains. The play is banned, the censor sanctioned.

The answer to the questions regarding the different standards the two theatre sections were subjected to (Romanian plays banned, Hungarians not) remains here at the level of hypothesis, although a viable one. The attention drawn by a play was due to its status, quality, acceptance, popularity. According to many recalls, the popular plays or the ones invited to festivals "benefited" of a more meticulous attention from the censors.⁴⁶ The Hungarian section was less prestigious in the market of symbolic goods than the Romanian, which participated at festivals and had a well-know young stage director in its staff. Banning therefore had nothing to do with ethnic belonging, it was merely a matter of symbolical reward. Besides, as suggested in many of the recollections quoted above, a local elite involved in nation-building had to face a series of well-defined restrictions, which

somehow belonged to a sort of common knowledge.⁴⁷ It was obvious, for instance, that red-green-white colours of the Hungarian flag must never ever be exposed in the same part of the scene that mentions events of the Hungarian history or Hungarian geography. Otherwise it brings the banning of the play. At the same time, names of socialist countries (except Hungary) should always be used in favourable contexts and references to Transylvania were not allowed. Such a well-coded topic as the minority identity was therefore easier to avoid by the Hungarian elite during the phases of control.

Conclusions

My case study and fragments of other case studies try to nuance the official, dismissive image of censorship in communist Romania. The empirical material presents a series of double codes (language of references, folk culture, etc.) that enabled slacking off a strict control. It is also obvious, there are no clear cut cleavages emerging from the distribution of power or from the ethnic belonging. The censors were different, with different attitudes, some – as it is clear from the above-mentioned fragments – were sometimes more permissive than others, many being remembered as “clever”, “learned” persons. Returning to the idea of duplicity, it was a certain interplay of censors and cultural elites that undermined the sultanistic restrictions of the system. At the same time, ethnic boundaries do not seem to follow the relations of power. There was a Hungarian among the local controllers of culture; meanwhile many Committee members were Hungarian speakers. A victimizing image of the Hungarian minority falls when speaking of bans, too. Hungarians in this local context seemed to be more protected than their Romanian fellows, as the former theatre and cultural language was more clearly coded.

NOTES

- ¹ HANN, CH. M. (ed.), *Postsocialism. Ideals, Ideologies and Practices in Eurasia*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2001. VERDERY, K.: *What Was Socialism and What Comes Next?*, Princeton University Press, 1996. KLIGMAN, G.: *The Wedding of the Dead. Ritual, Poetics, and Popular Culture in Transylvania*, University of California Press: Berkeley – Los Angeles, 1990.
- ² KLIGMAN, G., *The Politics of Duplicity. Controlling Reproduction Ceausescu's Romania*, University of California Press: Berkeley – Los Angeles, 1998
- ³ Because the term “discourse” has several aspects and usages, a sort of definition should be given. I rely on Peter Niedermüller’s definition, which considers it a form of text, image and cultural practice that influences the socio-cultural vocabulary of a society.
- ⁴ VERDERY, K., *National Ideology under Socialism. Identity and Cultural Politics in Ceausescu's Romania*, University of California Press: Berkeley – Los Angeles, 1991.
- ⁵ D. LÖRINCZ J., *Az átmenet közéleti értékei a mindennapi életben* [Public Virtues of Transition in Everyday life], Pro Print: Miercurea Ciuc, 2004.
- ⁶ MALIȚA, L. (ed.), *Cenzura în teatru. Documente 1948-1989* [Theatrical Censorship. Documents 1948-1989], EFES: Cluj-Napoca, 2006.
- ⁷ KISS-TÖRÉK, I., “A nagy szorítás második korszaka” [Second period of the great clench], in: *Magyar Élet*, 1994 október, 21-23.
- ⁸ See for instance: MALIȚA, L. (ed.), *ibid.*, PETCU, M., *Puterea și cultura. O istorie a cenzurii* [Power and Culture. A history of censorship], Polirom: Iași, 1999; PETCU, M., *Cenzura în spațiul cultural românesc* [Censorship in the Romanian cultural space], Comunicare.ro, 2005; TRONCOTĂ, C., *România comunistă, propagandă și cenzură* [The Communist Romania, Propaganda and Censorship] Tritonic: București, 2006.
- ⁹ See National Archives, Fond: CC al PCR, Ideologie și propagandă, dosar 1984/25.
- ¹⁰ Fragment from a local referatium in the ‘80s: “personajele înzestrate cu atitudini și caractere umane noble, justifică alegerea noastră în dorința ca și prin această reprezentare să contribuim la educarea spectatorului în spiritul prieteniei, a păcii și a colaborării între oameni”.
- ¹¹ “Scrisă în 1921, piesa *Șase personaje în căutarea unui autor* continuă și azi după patru decenii și jumătate să intereseze. Conflictul tragic al individului în cadrul lumii capitaliste, în care se impune respectarea moralei doar ‘de formă’ în fond individul fiind împins cu bună știință, cu violență chiar, spre cădere, spre alunecarea în mocirla imoralității – în deplină consonanță cu structura socială, care o generează.” Fragment from a local reference in the 1980s.

- ¹² "A románoknak könnyebb volt, mert az igazgató megszerezte a pénzt a vállalatoktól. Például, hogy elment az Aluminába, és jó pénzéért kiadta nekik a termet. Nekünk ez nem ment, mert nem voltak kapcsolataink. Mi nem hat darabot mutattunk be, hanem a stúdióelőadásokkal és a repertoáron kívüli darabokkal 12-14 előadásunk is volt egy évben. Mert a kabaré repertoáron kívüli volt. Aztán egy színész jubileumi előadása is azon kívül volt. És akkor betettünk négy-öt hazai szerzőt, ahogy kellett, előadásokat, amiket soha nem játszottunk, és akkor el lehetett menni és lehetett kérni, hogy mi már a nagyrészt teljesítettük és még kértünk. Mondtuk, hogy kell zenés is, mert akarja a közönség. Ráadásul a Stúdióelőadást el tudtuk úgy adni, hogy ez a szénész reciclálása volt, és akkor lehetett több mindent játszani, mert a kvótákon felül volt." Fragment from an interview with the Hungarian section-director.
- ¹³ "Arra emlékszem, amikor abemutató volt, még veszekedtünk a rendezővel, hogy miért kell ezt ilyen korán kihozni, és nem mondhattam meg, hogy nekem szóltak a minisztérium színhazi osztályának referense, egy román fiú, nagyon rendes volt, hogy most kéne, mert most váltják le M.-t, aki nagy ember volt ott, mert a lánya kinmarradt. És a repülőn irtam meg a referátumot, és elmentem, és volt egy audiencia, vittem magammal valami apró figyelmességet, anélkül nem mentünk Bukarestbe. M. nagyon művelt és éles észjárású volt. Én elmondtam a darab cselekményét, hogy a szocializmus eszmeiségéről van szó, hogy van, aki ezt nyugati mintára akarja, de ez nem megy. Maciuca hallgatta, és alairta. De akkor megmondták, hogy amikor kezdődik az új évad, lesz egy új ember, az már nem fogja engedni." Fragment from an interview with the Hungarian section-director.
- ¹⁴ On the analysis of the idea of nation in *Pásztortűz* nemzetképének see: SATA K.-K., The Idea of the "Nation" in Transylvaniam. In: TRENCSENYI B., – PETRESCU, D. – PETRESCU, C. – IORDACHI, C. – KÁNTOR Z. (eds.): *Nation – Building and Contested Identities. Romanian and Hungarian case studies*. Regio Books, Budapest – Editura Polirom, Iasi, 2001, 42-61. A similar concept occurs in the *Nem lehet-vita* (Impossible to be-controversy), CSEKE P. – MOLNÁR G. (eds.): *Nem lehet. A kisebbségi sors vitája [Impossible to Be. Controversy on minority fate]*. Héttorony Könyvkiadó, 1989. On the centrality of such category see CS. GYÍMESI É, *Gyöngy és homok. Ideológiai jelképek a romániai magyar irodalomban [Pearls and Dust. Ideological symbols in the Hungarian literature from Transylvania]*, Kriterion, Bukarest, 1992. or SZILVESZTER L.SZ., A transzilvanizmus ideológiáján innen és túl tragikum, irónia és retorikai játék a hetvenes-nyolcvanas évek erdélyi költészetében [Beyond the Transylvanian ideology, tragic, irony and rhetorical play in the 70ies 80ies Transylvanian poetry] <http://nappalimenedekhely.blogspot.com/2008/07/transzszilvanizmus-ideolgijn-innen-s-tl.html>

- ¹⁵ On the power of such communitarian view see the articles of *Csipkerózsika-vita* [The Sleeping Beauty Controversy] in the literary reviews from 1978-1979, as well as BODOR Á., *A börtön szaga. Válaszok Balla Zsófia kérdéseire*, [Smell of Prison. Answering Balla Zsófia's questions], Magvető, Budapest, 2001.
- ¹⁶ A good example is provided by CS. GYÍMESI É., *Honvágy a hazában* [Home Sickness at Home]. Pesti Szalon Kiadó, Budapest. 1993.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 159.
- ¹⁸ On analysing the Hungarian policies regarding minority Hungarians see BÁRDI N.: *Tény és való* [Factual and Real], Kalligram, Pozsony, 2004.
- ¹⁹ HORVÁTH I.: "Az erdélyi magyarság 1987-2001 közötti, nemzeti vándormozgalmának betudható népességvesztése" [Population decrease caused by the external migration of the ethnic Hungarians from Transylvania between 1987-2001], In: KISS T. (ed), *Népesedési folyamatok az ezredfordulón Erdélyben* [Population Dynamics-Processes in Transylvania in the Turn of the Millenium], [.http://kutatasok.adatbank.transindex.ro/download/kapcsolodo90.pdf](http://kutatasok.adatbank.transindex.ro/download/kapcsolodo90.pdf).
- ²⁰ Even the popular Hungarian soap, *Szomszédok* [Neighbours] had a Transylvanian refugee among its characters.
- ²¹ In these years emmigration is regarded a source of political protest, see HORVÁTH I, *ibid.*
- ²² BERTHA Z., *Sütő András*. Kalligram, Pozsony, 1995.
- ²³ See in SÜTŐ A.: *Szemet szóért. Naplójegyzetek* [Eyes for Words. Fragments of Diary], Debrecen, 1993, "Alig ért véget a műsor, máris levélkét találok a postaládamban: 'Köszönjük'. Aztán megszólal a telefon: 'Köszönjük'. Legtöbbször – okkal – nem mondják be a nevüket."
- ²⁴ <http://www.filatelia.wtcsites.com/Ellenpontok.htm>
- ²⁵ See for instance the DAHR resolutions from the I and II Congress and all DAHR documents issued in the early 80ies. Dokumentumok: <http://adatbank.transindex.ro/inchtm.php?akod=158>.
- ²⁶ KOVÁCS É. – MELEGH A., "Lehetett volna rosszabb is, mehettünk volna Amerikába is" – Vándorlástörténetek Erdély, Ausztria és Magyarország háromszögében [Could it have been worth, we could have leave for America. Migration narrative in the Transylvanian-Hungarian-Austrian triade. In SIK E. (ed.): *Diskurzusok a vándorlásról* [Discourses on Migration]]. Budapest, MTA Politikai Tudományok Intézete, 2000, 93–154.
- ²⁷ BÁRDI N., *ibid.*
- ²⁸ SÜTŐ A., *ibid.*
- ²⁹ SÜTŐ A., "Vidám sirató egy bolyongó porszemért" [Happy Mourning for a Wandering Dust]. In: SÜTŐ A., *Színművek* [Plays], Akadémiai Kiadó, Budapest, 1995.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.* 27. "Nem voltam én olyan, aki másokat küldözgetett, [...] Hanem olyan voltam, testvér, akit nálánál nagyobbak ide-oda küldtek, mozgósítottak

és ugráltattak” Mégis „a kitüntetést aztán azok kapták, akik akik engem küldözgettek, pedig nekem olyan kitüntetést ígértek, ami által nyugdíjmat is kaphatok majd”.

31 *Ibid.* 42. a tilalmak „olyanok, mint a vasúti sorompó. A nagyok átlélik, a kicsik átbújnak alatta, a buták meg nekimennek a fejükkel”

32 *Ibid.* 94. “Fügedes: Vallom itt a láthatatlan gyülekezet előtt, hogy a rengeteg tanfolyam. A tanácsi vezetőség azt mondta: Fügedes nagycsaládos, szegény ember, esze is van, jó származása is van, nincs semmilyen politikai szemölcsce, púpja, a mi részünkről menjen rajoni és tartományi tanfolyamokra, hogy legyen itthon minekünk képzett kéderünk. Megírták az életrajzomat, és minden évben küldtek és mentem. Szülészet, tyúkászat, propaganda, minden, és azt mondták, lesz jó fizetés is. Aztán beütött a purifikálás, mindenkit levizsgáztattl és kategorizáltak nézetei, múltja, rokonsága szerint Tőlem azt kérdezték, Fügedes elvtárs, mit csinálna, ha valmely támadás esetén jönnének az imperialisták? Mondom: én még én, de magik? Hogy értem ezt? Úgy, hogy nekem az USA-ban édes nagybátyjám van, adventista főpap. Akkor kipurifikáltak és megbélyegeztek, ámen.”

33 *Ibid.* 95. “Fájdalmas, veszendő értékeket sirató dallam [hallatszik] A lányok bevonulnak, tartásuk ünnepi sőt méltóságteljes. Ruházatuk az erdélyi Szék község népi viseletének stilizált formája. Uralkodó szín a fekete-piros. Kezükben gyászszegélyes zsebkendő. Énekelnek.”

34 *Ibid.* 103. “Miklós: Pangó vizek vagyunk, Fügedes bátyjám, de még azok se leszünk, ha százan százegyfelé vesszük az irányt. Nem kell magának a Tebenned bízunk, de bízunk legaláb abban, hogy a pangó vizek is elindulnak egyszer ...

Fügedes: Hová, merre, fiam?

Miklós: Amerre mi megyünk mostan – szabálytalanul, de reménységgel.”

35 “*Satiră împotriva misticismului, piesa are ca erou un om simplu, căzut temporar în mreajmele unei secte religioase, pe care familia și soceitatea reușește să-l readucă la luciditate, demonstrându-i adevăratele scopuri ale acesteia.*” Archivele Naționale, Fond: Propagandă și Agitație, CC al PCR, dosar 1983/25.

36 “Nu se ridică probleme din punct de vedere ideologic, se necesită îmbunătățiri la unele scene despre relația dintre personaje. Prédikás să fie mai vicelan, Fügedes mai prost, mai puțin priceput. Prédikás să fie mai vulgar și mai puțin rafinat, dar piesa se poate prezenta peste o săptămână.” Fragment from the Hungarian section-leader’s diary written in the summer of 1987.

37 “Vidám siratók. Sütő András beszélget Ablonczy Lászlóval” [Happy Mournings, Sütő András in dialogue with Ablonczy László]. In: SÜTŐ A., *Színművek [Plays]*, Akadémiai Kiadó: Budapest, 1995, 5-22. „Ezen a tájon [ti. a Mezőségen] eléggé elszaporodtak a vallásos szekták. Ezekben olyanok is találhatóak, akik korábban a háború utáni években helyi közéleti

tisztséget is betöltöttek. Mint Fügedes János is. Számukra nem egészen világos nézetek végrehajtói voltak mások, felsőbbbségek utasítására, majd azután, hogy valóságos vagy vélt sérelmeik miatt elhúzódtak a közélettől, vagy éppenséggel félreállították őket, újabb eligazítót kerestek maguknak. [...] Otthoni kis közösségünk számára az ilyen fügedes károlyok már-már szó szerinti értelemben is elveszett emberek. Egyik napról a másikra tűnnek el a szemünk elől. Számukra már nem fontos semmilyen közösségi együttlét, közös gond és aggodalom, ők elmennek a magánüdvösségüket hajszolni, amikor minden igekötőnkre szükségünk van.”

38 See for instance: HOBBSWAM, E. – RANGERS, T., *The Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge University Press, 1983

39 “A bihari környezetnek volt- valamilyen jelentése?

Volt, mert kifejezte az én szülőföld iránti ragaszkodásomat, hogy ne csak minden székely milliőben legyen, mert ilyet még senki nem csinált, ez eredeti volt. Namost a hatalommal szemben ez pozitívnak jött ki, mert a bihari folklór felmutatása, az akkor pozitív volt. Kimentem püspökibe egy hölgyhöz, a fia református pap Élesden, ő néprajzos is volt, megkérdeztük, milyenek voltak a házak. Közben én a múzeumban is utána néztem, aminek lehetett. Meg sok mindenre én is emlékeztem a gyerekkoromból. Kerestünk mindent: tengeri csuháját, lopótököt, a paprikafüzért, ezek voltak a diszletek, és csak azt kértem, hogy verandája legyen a háznak. Kimentem Biharra, hogy megnézzem a házakat, és Kovácsiba, hogy eltanuljam a tájszólást. A keresztelő után jött egy vidám táncrész, hogy nem adom meg soha magam, hogy itt mi a nyelvünket, a dalainkat, a szavainkat, a szokásainkat, hagyományainkat nem vehetik el. Ez más előadásokban nem is volt benne, a darabban sem, ez a rendezői koncepció. Sütő is jónéven vette, hogy bihari milliőbe ültettem át az egészet, azt mondta, nagyon jó, kíváncsi vagyok, hogy néz ki a tettek, mert annyi székely volt már. Nem is idegen a téma különben, hiszen itt is voltak szekták, ez tőlünk nem idegen.” Fragment from an interview with the stage director.

40 VINCZE G., *A romániai magyar kisebbség történeti kronológiája 1944-1989* [*Historical Chronology of the ethnic Hungarians from Romania 1944-1989*] <http://vincze.adatbank.transindex.ro/index.php?action=ev&ev>.

41 “A kollégánk kikereste az autentikus zenét, és betanította a táncokat, és azt csinálta, hogy egy dalnak az itteni változatát tanította be és a koreográfus, ő is itteni elemeket tanított be. És erre emlékszem, ezek nagyon szépek voltak, ahogy mentek a lányok, és ebben benne volt a kivándorlás is, mentek a lányok a kis motyóval, és olyan sírós arcokat láttam a nézőtéren, mert benne volt a kivándorlás.

Akkor a megtartó erőről szólt a darab, az elvtársak felé a szektákról, ami elítélendő, de nekünk arról, hogy a jövő a megtartó erő. Hogy a fiatalokban van a megtartó erő, és azt tovább viszik. És ez kimondatlanul benne volt az előadásban. Az egész táncban ez volt meg, amikor volt egy nagy

táncbetét, és egymás után többet táncoltunk. Az nem ihaj-csuhaj volt, hogy belepusztulunk, hanem pontosan az, hogy kivilágos kivirradtig, de ezt ki fogjuk bírni. Ez benne volt az előadásban, hogy itt bármit csinálnak, de ki fogjuk bírni. Ahogy mentek a lányok, és ebben benne volt a kivándorlás is, mentek a lányok a kis motyóval, és olyan sírós arcokat láttam a nézőtéren, mert benne volt a kivándorlás. És azért volt, hogy a lányok a Miklós monológja végén elindulnak kifele, a fiúk is kifele, de aztán énekelve és táncolva visszajöttünk a színpadra, hogy mégsem megyünk el, hogy lehet, hogy elmennek egyesek, de mi mégis visszajövünk, mert ugyanannyian vagyunk a színpadon, ugyanannyian jövünk vissza. Visszakanyarodott a kör, és utána már csak a meghajlás volt.” Fragment with an actress in the play.

42 BÁRDI, N., *Ibid.*

43 BOTTONI, S., “A hatalom értelmisége az értelmiség hatalma. A Földes László ügy” [Intellectuals of power, power of intellectuals. The Földes László- case], in *Korall*, 2004 December, 113-134.

44 Ethnic boundaries are understood here in Barthian sense, denoting a culturally reinforced distinction between “we” and “them”. As the classical model was worked out for traditional societies, when recalling Barth, his newer réframes are to be taken into account, for instance BARTH, F., “Régi és új problémák az etnicitás elemzésében” [Enduring and emerging issues in the analysis of ethnicity], in: *Regio*, 1996/1, 2-25.

45 “Comedie de situație în care se afirmă plenar atitudinea de demascare a birocratismului, a superficialității unor organe de control, pledând pentru atitudinea principală și spirit de răspundere.”.Arhivele Naționale, Fondul CC al PCR, *ibidem*.

46 For such recollections see for instance: *Procesele comunismului*. In: *Teatrul Azi*, 1990/2, 12-18, or *ibid.*, 1990/6, 1990/9.

47 A serious of interviews, memoires convey such a thing. See for instance D. LŐRINCZ, *ibid.* My interviews underline this observation, too.