

Universitatea „Babeş-Bolyai” Cluj-Napoca
Facultatea de Teatru și Film

TEZĂ DE ABILITARE

De la problema teatralității la studiul istoriei teatrului

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Abstract

Titled *De la problema teatralității la studiul istoriei teatrului/ From The Question of Theatricality to the Research of Theatre History*, this habilitation thesis in the field of theatre and performing arts submitted for consideration to the Doctoral School of Theatre and Film presents my foremost scientific and professional achievements after obtaining the PhD degree, more specifically over the past thirteen years, from 2008 until 2021, as well as the projects for developing my teaching and research career. My main area of expertise is Theatrology, and my scientific research and academic teaching activity, primarily focused on the study of theatricality and the history of theatre, have been conducted under the sign of interdisciplinarity. In my publications I have interpreted theatricality in terms of both its anthropological dimension (which I have highlighted by analogy with oral cultures or through the analysis of the culture of duplicity of the Communist regime, for example) and its aesthetic dimension. I have dealt mainly with its literary representations or its metamorphoses at the intersection of the dramatic and epic genres (see my debut volume, *Cărțile omului dublu. Teatralitate și roman în regimul comunist/ The Books of the Double Man. Theatricality and the Novel in the Communist Regime*, Limes, 2010). As to my investigations into the history of theatre, I have been primarily interested in the condition of women in theatre, the political and social context of the emergence of the first professional actresses in the Romanian Principalities, and in the role of theatre in shaping national consciousness, considered especially from the standpoint of its relevance to representations of communality and identity. At the same time, I have participated, with entries dedicated to the Romanian theatrical avant-garde, in the elaboration of a *Lexicon of the Central and Eastern European theatre avant-garde*, within an international project coordinated by the "Zbigniew Raszewski" Theatre Institute in Warsaw (Poland). The resulting book is due to be published in 2023. Also, I have dedicated myself to the reconstruction of artistic biographies and theatre productions for the *Dicționarul multimedia al teatrului românesc/ Multimedia Dictionary of the Romanian Theatre* or www.dmtr.ro (a collective work, under the coordination of the theatre critic Cristina Modreanu). From this endeavour, especially, and from the portraits I drew of our first actresses in my second book (*Dimineața actrițelor/ The Dawn of the Actresses*, Polirom, 2019), derives my current preoccupation with the writing of a psychobiography

that aims at the conjunction (with psychodramatic valences) between the biography and the work of the theatre and film director, actor and scenographer Liviu Ciulei (of which I have already published some fragments). This does not imply that I have abandoned the other research directions mentioned above. As of late, I have also been interested in sketching the panorama of the Romanian post-communist theatre (for another volume that is due to appear next year at the Polirom publishing house), as I plan to develop an academic course on this topic in the near future.

My career in higher education began in 2005, when, as a PhD student, I started to lead seminars at the Faculty of Theatre and Television within the "Babeş-Bolyai" University. After obtaining the PhD degree, with the "Summa cum laude" distinction, in 2008 (with a thesis called *Teatralitate și roman sub regimul comunist/ Theatricality and Novel Under the Communist Regime*), in 2012 I won the position of Assistant Professor at the Theatre Department of the same faculty (which later changed its name and became the Faculty of Theatre and Film). Last year, in 2020, I became an Associate Professor. In this capacity, I teach the following subjects at the Faculty of Theatre and Film of the "Babeş-Bolyai" University from Cluj: *The History of World and Romanian Theatre (The History of Romanian Theatre* for the students enrolled in the first academic year, covering both semesters, and for those enrolled in the second year, covering the first semester, and *The History of World Theatre* for the students enrolled in the second academic year, covering the first semester) and *Theory of Drama* (for the students enrolled in the first academic year, covering both semesters), at BA level. I also lead the seminar of the course *Project Production and Dissertation Elaboration* at MA level. Since 2020 I am a member (elected) in the Council of the Theatre Department, representing the Theatrology specialization.

The research I have undertaken over the past years on the notion of theatricality, on the one hand, and in the field of theatre history, on the other hand, has resulted in the publication of: several studies in journals indexed in international databases; chapters in volumes published at academic publishing houses abroad (*Das rumänische Theater nach 1989. Seine Beziehungen zum deutschsprachigen Raum/ Romanian Theatre after 1989. Its relations with the German speaking world*, Frank & Timme, 2010, *Heralds of a New Order*, Zbigniew Raszewski Theatre Institute, 2019) and at home (*Cărțile supraviețuitoare/ Surviving Books*, Aula, 2008, *Ghid de supraviețuire pentru teatrologi/ Survival Guide for Theatrologists*, Eikon, 2014, *Feminitate și literatură/ Femininity and Literature*, Școala Ardeleană, 2016, *FestLit 2016*, Școala Ardeleană, 2017, *Echinox 50*, Școala Ardeleană, 2018, *Enciclopedia imaginariilor din România/ Encyclopaedia of the*

Imaginaris in Romania, V, Polirom, 2020); dictionary entries dedicated to the theatre in the innovative *Multimedia Dictionary of the Romanian Theatre* mentioned above; and two books, *Cărțile omului dublu. Teatralitate și roman în regimul comunist/ The Books of the Double Man. Theatricality and the Novel in the Communist Regime* (Limes, 2010) and *Dimineața actrițelor/ The Dawn of the Actresses* (Polirom, 2019), both rewarded with prizes: the “Marian Papahagi” Award of the Romanian Writers' Union (the Cluj Branch) for 2010, for *Cărțile omului dublu*, respectively the “Al. Piru” Award of the National Museum of Romanian Literature, the “I. Negoitescu” Award of the *Apostrof* literary magazine, the Prize of “Babeș-Bolyai” University in Cluj for Research Excellence, the “Theatre Book of the Year 2019” Award of the *Clujul Cultural* website – all for *Dimineața actrițelor*. To these must be added a series of nominations for: the Romanian Writers' Union's Awards (the Cluj Branch), the Awards of the *Observator cultural* literary magazine, the *Book Agency*' Awards for 2019 – all for *Dimineața actrițelor* – as well as for the Young Writer's Gala (1st edition, from January 15, 2011), the Awards of the *Observator cultural* literary magazine for 2010, debut section, the Award of *Critic Attack* for 2010, the Awards of the Romanian Writers' Union for 2010, debut section, the Awards of the Romanian Association for Comparative Literature, the Promethevs Grand Prizes, awarded by Anonimul Foundation, 2011, 10th edition, Opera Prima section – all for *Cărțile omului dublu*.

Since obtaining the PhD degree and working at the Faculty of Theatre and Film in Cluj I coordinated two thematic issues of the academic journal *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai. Seria Dramatica* (a BDI-indexed journal in Ebsco and ProQuest, as well as CNCS B), one dedicated to the voice in theatre (no. 2/2014), and the other to the critical retrospective of Romanian theatre, on the occasion of the anniversary of the centenary of the Great Union (no. 1/2018). Both figure today in the bibliography of our students. I was also involved in several national and international research programs, being a member of the teams of the following projects: “The Encyclopedia of Imaginaries in Romania. Historical heritage and cultural-linguistic identities” (ROMIMAG), financed by UEFISCDI, a project coordinated by the “Babeș-Bolyai” University in partnership with the Cluj-Napoca Branch of the Romanian Academy and with the National University of Arts from Bucharest; the *Multimedia Dictionary of Romanian Theatre* (www.dmtr.ro), achieved due to a partnership between the Romanian Association for the Promotion of Performing Arts (ARPAS) and the Faculty of Theatre and Film of the “Babeș-Bolyai” University of Cluj-Napoca, as well as the University of Arts from Târgu-Mureș;

Emergence. Reclaimed Avant-garde. Utopias of Social Change, an artistic and research project completed with an exhibition at the Quadrennial of Scenography in Prague organized by the “Zbigniew Raszewski” Theatre Institute in Warsaw from 6th until 16th of June 2019 (curator Przemysław Strożek) and with the publication of the artbook *Heralds of a New Order*, with an introduction by Przemysław Strożek (Warsaw-Berlin, Zbigniew Raszewski Theatre Institute, 2019). A project still in progress in which I am involved is the *Lexicon of the Central and Eastern European theatre avant-garde* mentioned above, initiated in 2018 by the "Zbigniew Raszewski" Theatre Institute under the umbrella of a larger project called *Reclaimed Avant-garde*, funded by the Polish Ministry of Culture.

This thesis is divided into several sections, making reference to publications resulting from my doctoral and postdoctoral research. It presents, in the beginning, an overview of the research on theatricality, some of which furthers my doctoral research. The main research directions are structured as follows: 1. Theatricality and orality. 2. The emergence of the professional actress in the Romanian Principalities. 3. Theatre and nation. 4. The interwar theatrical avant-garde 5. *The Multimedia Dictionary of the Romanian Theatre*. The personal studies I have inserted aim to highlight the novelty and originality of my analytical approach. Correlated with these are my teaching activity and the courses and seminars in which I approach similar topics. The second section focuses on the evolution and development plans of my professional career, with a description of the projects I envisage: 1. The life and work of Liviu Ciulei – a psychodramatic and psychobiographical approach. 2. Romanian theatre in post-communism. 3. The 1989 Revolution in Romanian drama. The final bibliography completes the critical apparatus of this applied theatrological and didactic inquiry.

