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## Residual Nationalism. The Nineteenth-Century Hungarian Folk Drama as a Reinterpretation of European Theatrical Nationalism

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**Abstract:** In mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, along the theatrical model created by Vaudeville and Posse, the genre of the so-called *népszínmű* (folk drama) emerged in Hungarian literature. From its very beginning, the genre divided the Hungarian public, and despite the fact that these plays entered even into the core repertoire of the representative theaters, they were subject to ceaseless scrutiny and attack from a large group of the literary and cultural elite. Among other things, these dramas provided an alternative national representation to the elite image of the nation. My paper will foreground this successful, but highly debated and “residualized” local genre as a double ideological response of both to the local forms of theatrical nationalisms and to the misreading, reinterpretation and nationalization of Western European genres.

**Keywords:** Hungarian Literature; Folk Drama; Operetta; Nationalism; 19<sup>th</sup> Century; Cluj.

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It is a common feature of diverse variants of folk drama written for the new middle class in 19<sup>th</sup> century European literatures that their spread and quick rise to popularity had divided the public opinion of their time. Representatives of elite literature feared that the popularity of these plays would harm the canon of highbrow literature. Consequently, despite their unbelievable popularity, these works were, as a rule, pushed to the periphery of the canon and were only mentioned fugitively in treaties on the history of literature. In early 19<sup>th</sup> century Hungarian literature, folk drama (the so-called *népszínmű*) is the genre to represent, akin to Western European popular dramatic genres, a sense of literature quite different from that of elite literary genres, therefore it also targets a different public, employing different tools. Folk dramas were shaped following the example of the German *Lokalposse* and later that of the French vaudeville. Nevertheless, despite the similar structural and poetic solutions, in various regions these genres have developed quite different connotations. In order to entertain middle class audiences, the German *Lokalposse* delivered



representations of lower social classes, focused mainly on comic depiction, employing various dialects, jargons, local customs and also songs.<sup>1</sup>

French *vaudeville* as a genre is quite similar, it basically represents the values, world view and language of lower social classes, for the entertainment of a basically middle class audience. In the case of the vaudeville as well, one of its main assets is the representation of the language of lower social classes.<sup>2</sup> The genre of the vaudeville went a long way until acquiring its basic 19<sup>th</sup> century characteristics. A century earlier, it basically comprised songs, especially drinking songs, while later the word was used to refer to short, musical scenes added to dramatic plays.<sup>3</sup> These led to the formation of the simple story line and popular song inserts of the vaudeville, representing “a more respectable, bourgeois cultural ethnic triumphantly claiming ground by the 1830s.”<sup>4</sup> In her book on the history of ideas of modernity, Mary Gluck defines vaudeville as a genre related to folk theatre and representing the views over modernity of the recently constituted bourgeois middle class, even being a product of these views as opposed to former concepts of modernity represented in popular theatre by melodramas related to bohemian life-style as a cultural phenomenon.<sup>5</sup> From this angle, a common feature of the German *Lokalposse* and the vaudeville is that both are popular genres dedicated to the entertainment of the recently emerged middle class.

The Hungarian folk drama developed in relation to the two aforesaid genres. In his drama theory published in the 1870s, Ede Szigligeti, the Hungarian “father” of the genre, delivers a definition which renders the genre quite close to its Western

models.<sup>6</sup> He depicts the folk drama as a genre brought to life by the initial needs of a slow process leading up from class-structured society to a society built rather on meritocratic bases. In his book, Szigligeti envisages folk dramas within the socio-historical context of their birth and he confirms the necessity of the genre approaching it from two directions. On one hand, he considers the genre was a necessary development at the National Theatre in the 1840s, since the institution had been left without an audience and had faced a severe crisis, therefore needing plays that would produce substantial income by triggering other social classes than merely the withered Hungarian aristocracy. On the other hand, the theatre also needed to tackle the German-speaking public living in the capital, since the Hungarian-speaking population of Buda and Pest did not really consist of avid theatre-goers.<sup>7</sup> That is why the initially rather mixed musical repertoire of folk dramas also resembled the musical structure of the vaudeville, a *melange* that seemed to lure the new audiences.

By mid-century, along with the formation of the paradigm of folk-national literature, folk songs or folkish art songs became determining elements of folk dramas. The characteristic genre of the folk drama evolved among specifically Hungarian circumstances and, despite its afore-listed historic origins, it was expected to display the main features and the endurance of the nation. Within the paradigm of folkish Hungarian national literature of the middle of the nineteenth century, the most ancient characteristics of the nation were to be found in rural traditions, customs, world view, in folk culture and oral tradition. Thus during the

formation period of literary nationalism,<sup>8</sup> the folk drama, created to depict the commons, was a genre of outstanding importance. At the beginning of its formation, the genre stood much closer to its Western European models, the repertoire of songs employed in various plays was also much more eclectic in the first few such plays, if compared to later examples of Hungarian folk dramas. In the 1840s, like the vaudeville, the repertoire of folk dramas consisted of the most popular songs among the targeted mixed social classes of various ethnic origins, from popular vaudeville and operetta songs to popular items taken from vernacular poetry and folk songs.<sup>9</sup>

Within the peculiar social Hungarian context, in a relatively short period of time the initial role and connotations of the genre and also the expectations related to it had changed. Despite this, even in the 1870s, Szigligeti, one of the most successful writers of the genre, changed nothing in his concept on folk drama. Consequently in quite an ahistorical manner, folk dramas had to face certain expectations they could and would never meet.<sup>10</sup> By the second half of the century, the genre of the folk drama was examined and understood through standards of folkish national literature represented by the elite canon. Approached from the direction of these norms, several characteristics of the genre appear to be at least problematic, while it gets clearer and clearer how the genre situated on the verge of popular and elite literature would and could not meet the standards of elite literature. By the second half of the century, the genre meant to entertain a mixed Pest and Buda audience and to turn local citizens into theatre-goers, had to face expectations developed to expect literature, and drama

as well, to represent canonical characteristic features of the Hungarian nation. By the second half of the century, the folk drama changed according to these expectations in an attempt to meet the standards of elite folkish national literature. Thus it offered a representation of the nation complying with the aforesaid norms, while its musical repertoire continued to consist of popular folk songs and of popular folkish art songs.

Despite all these internal dilemmas, the folk drama remained a special genre of Hungarian literary nationalism that failed to completely meet elite literary standards, and in order to “forgive” its characteristics originating in popular literature, the leading critics of the time considered it to be a second-rate genre of national representation, *necessary and popular* as it might have been, but still inferior in importance, for instance, to historical drama.

This study seeks to interpret a later concept of folk dramas as developed from the phenomena described so far. The main characteristics of this special folk drama concept will unfold through an analysis of the reception of folk dramas staged in the Cluj (Kolozsvár) theatre during the 1870s.

The concept of folk drama is plural during the 1870s in Cluj not only owing to a collision and coexistence of diachronic connotations of the genre, but also to the fact that this special genre develops synchronic versions as well, and it is characteristically re-interpreted in several simultaneous regional versions.<sup>11</sup> By the end of the century, the popularity of folk dramas seems to move further and further away from the folk-national literature of the mid-century output (and from the previous concept of folk) towards regional type of representations focused on narrower



group-identity and an increasingly ethnographic approach.

Thus folk dramas have an immense importance in the building of national identity. An examination of certain stereotypes in the critique of representations of folk dramas will bring to light the specific contents and elements of the national representation the genre was expected to deliver. The author of a review of the farewell appearance of Pál Vidor, published in the journal *Kelet* in 1878, enumerates almost all the stereotypes of the literary and theatrical criticism published during the entire decade on folk dramas:

During the last four years, we have seen almost nothing, but folk dramas on stage, since these were the only ones producing income. Plays by Ede Tóth alone above 12.000 forints, as we know. His awesome folk songs, his lively, authentic Hungarian characters, their wonderful acting, all these have always secured a full house and will be remembered for long by the audience in Cluj. [...] And when the noise died out, Vidor began to sing again those unforgettable folk songs with clear and flavoursome Hungarian accent, with genuine feeling and an amazing voice.<sup>12</sup>

Even if these lines tackle the connotations of the stage representation, the terms *lively*, *authentic*, *flavoursome*, *popular characters* are frequently employed in pieces of criticism related to written drama as basic characteristics of valuable folk dramas. Nevertheless the quote reveals certain connotations born from various representations of folk dramas. The “clear and

flavoursome Hungarian accent” calls attention to another important factor, namely the regional effect. Let me follow the role and importance of regional characteristics depicted in folk dramas focusing upon two main source groups: critical reviews of performances by guest actors in Cluj, and the media echo of representations delivered by the Cluj theatre elsewhere.

During the decade in question, folk dramas are featured on Sundays more and more frequently, thus they might be considered as belonging to a typically “Sunday genre,” while concepts related to this situation integrate the said folk drama with less demanding, looser, more entertaining genres. Even the reviews of the time contain hints at the lesser value of such plays, nevertheless quite an impressive number of reviews are treating such plays with utmost respect. This dialectic within the reception of the genre is mostly an outcome of the special canonical position of the folk drama. As a piece on the verge of the elite and the popular, the genre might be considered a more popular instance of the elite or an elite realization of the popular, thus the evaluation given by a certain critic as a rule highly depends on his or her perspective.

Having been canonized as a Sunday piece did not make things easier for the folk drama. The values of the genre able to connect with social groups that used to visit theatres on Sundays were easily likened to the expectations of these groups as related to the genre. The majority of the comments in the Cluj press of the time make us think the genre had certain qualities that secured for it a key position in the theatrical repertoire. From this perspective folk dramas were usually treated as belonging to an important, valuable and serious



genre as opposed to operettas for instance, viewed as instances of a par excellence popular genre, whereas folk dramas were much rather considered as a genre requiring interpretative qualities akin to drama:

Rumour has it that Tamásy will join the national theatre in Pest as a dramatic actor. We wish him all the luck, even if folk dramas will lose a great asset with his absence. All he needs to do is to forget his intimations of the folk, which he can very well do, and the road towards higher dramatic roles and related fame is wide open to him.<sup>13</sup>

Thus according to the views of the times, playing parts in folk dramas and in other dramatic genres were not at all separated, but the situation was quite different for the operetta: the fact that folk dramas were constantly praised as more important and more valuable than operettas underlines two things in relation to the former genre: first, that critics sensed a close vicinity between folk dramas and the operetta, second, that they had a difficult time accepting the greater success and popularity of the operetta as compared to that of folk dramas, of lesser popularity and with a higher compliance to the requirements of elite art. Sources in the history of the Cluj theatre show that folk dramas were regarded as *a novel transition* between elite and popular genres, as something more valuable than the operetta, as a successful blend of artistic value and popularity. This seemed highly problematic, for instance critics often tried to underline the differences between the two, pointing it out that the operetta displayed bohemian and vain

characters whereas the authentic, Hungarian, lively and naive parts in folk dramas could only be interpreted by actors who did not act in operettas, blamed for marring authentic Hungarian intonation and the characteristic rhythm of Hungarian folk songs:

We saw miss Sarolta Krecsányi in the *Tolonc* [The Outcast] yesterday (Sunday) posing as a singer of folk songs. [...] Ms S. Krecsányi interpreted the role of Liszka quite well, nevertheless she lacked humour, true feeling and a certain warmth, her folk songs were shot through with the rigid emptiness of operetta couplets, and there is nothing to say about accent, flavour, Hungarian authenticity, things we grew fond of in interpretations delivered by Ms Balogh.<sup>14</sup>

Apparently the noble goals attached to the folk drama and the exaggerated “coquetry” and “impishness” of the operetta made the two genres incompatible to such an extent that any experience in operetta singing for female actors employed in folk dramas was considered a major hindrance for these actresses in a proper interpretation of folk drama roles. Despite the fact that in practice the same actors were widely chosen to interpret roles in representations belonging to both genres, and that these roles did actually belong to the same dramatic role type, those who canonized the standards of the folk drama were so keen on emphasizing the differences between it and the operetta that they presented the two genres as incompatible in terms of dramatic technique, world view and music. Not even Lujza Blaha, the famous actress



from Pest performing as a guest in Cluj, was an exception. Her acting always received superlatives, but not when she appeared in folk dramas.

In *Falu rossza* [The Village Villain] she collected applauses as Rózsi Finom, a lively Hungarian maid presented with tremendous charm, originality and authenticity by Ms Soldos. Still, her acting reveals that Ms Soldos is quite at home in the world of the operetta, transferring some of the exaggeration and overpowering colour of the genre to our folk songs, even in respects where colourful presentation (gestures for instance) reminds one much rather of the light female characters of operettas than of a Hungarian country maid, even if her name is Rózsi Finom. All in all, Ms Soldos delivers even her mistakes with utmost charm and vividness. [...] But let us hint here at the improvisation Ms Soldos has incorporated yesterday into the folk song “Fogadásom tiltja szeretni” [I am Forbidden to Love], [...] a combination of sounds that is welcome in any type of song, provided it is not a Hungarian folk song.<sup>15</sup>

The critique of Lujza Blaha’s acting lets us understand that the concept of an elementary incompatibility between operettas and folk dramas was so powerful in the canonization of the latter, that it ruled even over the fame of successful actors. On the other hand, the acting of the invited lady artist clearly failed to comply with the local conventions of the genre. Blaha’s acting offended a sensitive portion of the folk drama-related requirements of the

Cluj theatre. Her lively and impish acting style transported certain representational conventions of the operetta into the folk drama, by which the tension between the two genres increased, as the folk drama was then considered to be above the operetta owing to an overall, more rigorous moral stance. In Cluj the basic differences between the representations of the two genres originate in the measure, existence or lack of a certain easiness, impishness of interpretation. To put it bluntly, in Cluj, impishness is forbidden in folk dramas, while it is accepted in operettas.

So the way the singing technique and gestures of Blaha on stage were presented as solutions incompatible with the folk drama shows how the conventional codes of presentation of the folk drama were different from one region to another, thus the folk drama as a genre was reinterpreted from region to region, yielding various local connotations. The competition between various implementations of the folk drama reflected in the Cluj media output appears to be a phenomenon in the history of the genre mostly related to the building of identity in various historical regions, and in this respect the greatest differences appear to have been between representations formulated in Hungary and in Transylvania. The role of the folk drama in the representation of local identity was formulated in an emphatic manner when the Cluj theatre delivered guest performances at Oradea (Nagyvárad). One thing to stand out was the difference between the Transylvanian and Hungarian norms of national representation, but furthermore, these two norms were incompatible to such an extent, that specific local representations could not be interchanged nor considered



as interchangeable elements belonging to the same overall concept of national identity. The local identity of the home location of the performance became dominant: folk dramas delivered at Oradea had to comply with the local folk drama concept, as audiences expected the performance to fulfil their own special expectations and to formulate their own concept of nation. The critical reviews published after the Cluj performance at Oradea formulated a very precise distance between the so-called Hungarian folk drama and Transylvanian folk drama. Critical texts published in the Oradea press had formulated their objections related to the Cluj performance of a folk drama focusing upon the differences between the two concepts of genre and nation, instead of criticizing a manner of acting.

The third evening – writes the consecutive issue of the paper *N-d.* [Nagyvárad] – was that of the folk drama; more accurately: it was supposed to be. Because I saw a performance that was anything but a folk drama.

Actually they played the “Kintornás család” [The Hurdy-Gurdy Family], by which they had managed to convince me of two things; first, that the Cluj company has no folk drama singer ladies and no folk drama character actors, second, that this specific genre is either totally neutral in Cluj or they have got a concept of it which is totally different from ours.<sup>16</sup>

The critic goes on to enlist a series of factors, from costume to the singing technique of players and to the very

interpretation of certain parts, factors that appear at least weird if not comical to the author, who considers that these elements of the Cluj performance fail to comply to the Hungarian standards and expectations attached to the folk drama. He considers the performance delivered by the Cluj company to be anything but a proper representation of a folk drama. The difference in representation was thus interpreted as a difference in terms of genre. A year later, on the occasion of another Cluj guest performance delivered at Oradea, the Cluj press published reviews of the performance tackling its reception at Oradea, and the Oradea critics, beyond repeating the objections listed a year earlier, hinted again at the difference between the Transylvanian and Hungarian concepts of the genre, resenting the lack of an aspect in the performance delivered by Cluj actors, the existence of which would not have been accepted as part of the norm in Cluj:

The paper *Nagyvárad* reports on the performance of “The Hurdy-Gurdy Family” as follows: [...] The folk drama, so it seems, is not the greatest asset of the new Cluj ensemble. – If not else, it is at least different from anything we have been accustomed to here. This might also be due to the fact that despite the “union,” folk life in the “highlands” is quite different from that of the motherland. [...] Szentgyörgyi delivers a very flat version of the character Náci Dáma. We can see the person but not the type, and in any case, not a person belonging to the Hungarian folk. Which is a major flaw in a Hungarian folk drama. Ms. Balogh (Jucika) was nice, a



good singer of folk songs, she collected huge applauses, but where was the sweetness of Hungarian folk “ladies,” where was their loveable but vivid impishness? One can hardly object to the acting manner of Ms Phillipovics, saying it was incorrect, yet the concept, the rococo mask would have rather suited a highly positioned French grandmother than the simple, good-humoured Hungarian granny, whose wig-like attire ruined any illusion of Hungarian origin.<sup>17</sup>

The author blamed the differences between the Hungarian and Transylvanian concepts of the national and ethnic for their apparent differences to be grasped through their interpretation and expectations from the folk drama. He stated that the actors of the Cluj theatrical company did not present authentic Hungarian folk life and typical Hungarian figures on stage, because they failed to represent the impishness of ladies belonging to the Hungarian middle classes. As we have earlier discussed, the notes in the Cluj press make it clear that in this region impishness was associated with the operetta and was perceived as being further removed from folk dramas, and in contradiction with the noble aim and pathos of the genre. At the same time, nevertheless, the features banned in Cluj were considered to be parts of the norm in Oradea / Nagyvárad.

It seems that great historical regions (such as Hungary or Transylvania for instance), or smaller, locally defined geographical areas lately discovered in ethnography, such as Calata (Kalotaszeg), Rimetea (Torockó) etc. have each developed their own, special expectations regarding folk

dramas as a genre. Accordingly, the audience in Oradea expected the guest company from Cluj to meet their own, local folk stereotypes and expectations with the performance of a folk drama.<sup>18</sup>

Thus the Cluj theatrical company received negative criticism in Oradea because it failed to comply with the expectations of the Oradea audience. A few years later, on the occasion of a guest performance delivered by the Cluj company in Vienna, they could not be blamed for the same flaw. In May and June 1880, the folk drama company of Cluj delivered performances in Vienna, displaying a colourful repertoire for Hungarians and Austrians in the capital. Before setting out for the tour, company members delivered in Cluj a series of experimental performances that were heavily criticized in local newspapers. These experimental performances revealed how, relying on the negative experiences of the Oradea visit, certain actors in the Cluj company had decided to correct Oradea flaws in Vienna and adjusted their interpretation of their part to the concept of nation of Hungarians in Vienna. Consequently they had slightly Germanized certain elements of the performance of the Hungarian folk drama in an attempt to please their future Vienna audience. Obviously, this led to avid objections in the Cluj press. Critics resented the way in which “Ms Krasznai impersonated a Swabian cook instead of Julis Kender”<sup>19</sup>, and also the fact that “the Hungarian folk costume of women players is partly tasteless and partly fake. Even more, Ms Philipovics sported the bonnet of a Vienna egg-marketeer.”<sup>20</sup> Whereas critics scolded the Cluj company for not trying to comply with the expectations of the Oradea audience on the occasion of their guest performances there,



in the case of the preparations made to meet the expectations of the Vienna audience, Cluj critics resented the bohemian elements closer to the world of the operetta and the stray Viennese flavours of the costumes. Keeping scenes up-to-date was consequently a basic requirement of folk dramas, nevertheless this was not a norm to be effected when going to Vienna, according to drama critics. But these type of texts are valuable also because they show that not all regions were entitled to their own concept of the folk drama, meaning that not all regional identities are worthy of being represented in a folk drama. According to this view, the Viennese or the Hungarians in Vienna (as a community with a Hungarian identity far from the original) should not be presented with their own version of a national identity on stage but with a canonical image of the Hungarian nation, fit to serve as an example for them to follow.

If the performance of a folk drama is truly a significant opportunity for a company to formulate a concept of regional identity during the 1870s, we might be able to offer an alternative explanation for the popularity of the genre in Cluj. The history of folk drama performances on the Cluj Hungarian stage is apparently very strongly related into the contemporary process depicted by Levente T. Szabó in his study “Erdélyiség-képzetek (és regionális történetek) a 19. század közepén” (Concepts of Transylvanian identity (and regional narratives) in mid-nineteenth century Hungarian literature).<sup>21</sup> The study traces the main stages of the process by which, during the signalled period, the representation of the region in Hungarian literature gains extra value beside or even as opposed to major discourses of national representation. The popularity of folk

drama performances representing a concept of regional identity can also be linked to a series of short stories by Mikszáth, focusing on *palóc* (Northern Hungarian regional) identities and by the huge attempt of Balázs Orbán designed to describe or construct a Mid-Transylvanian Szekler identity. In a similar fashion, folk drama performances seem to reveal the specific identity of a given region. For instance, for audiences in Cluj it foregrounded their own peculiar identity within nation-building, this local and regional identity of those in Cluj/Kolozsvár differed, within Transylvania as a historical terrain, from other canonical local identities, such as the Szekler, or that of the Kalotaszeg (Calata) or Torockó (Rimetea) regions. Thus the emerging nineteenth century folk drama becomes a valuable perspective that offers a peculiar insight into the vindication and construction of the regional and the local within a larger nation-building process Szabó was discussing. The local and the regional seem to enter an extraordinary struggle over which region and local value and characteristic should and could take the leading role in Hungarian nationhood. From this peculiar perspective, the highly popular folk drama is not a genre that should be forgotten since it contains key elements in understanding the inner struggling representations that constructed strong and effective elements of modern Hungarian nationhood.

A close study of the sources in the history of the Cluj Theatre reveals the fact that the history of the concept of folk drama cannot be precisely traced just by analysing dramatic texts in themselves, since many major elements can be grasped solely through stage performances. These are of equal importance for a clear understanding



of the role, connotations and significance of the genre. Based on criticism of these stage performances, we can clearly see the way the theatres and actors are adjusting the concept of the national and ethnicity to local and regional communities and audiences. Consequently, in the 1870s, the content of the concept of folk drama changes from one region to another: irrespective of the given region, audiences expected to see the representation of their own national concept on stage (their own folk costume, their own dialect, the embodiment of their own stereotypes). When the folk drama as a text did not make this possible, because it offered the representation of another canonical region, there were still certain local norms at play which the stage performance had to observe (the norm for impishness in Oradea and the ban placed on these elements in Cluj, for instance).

In the case of the theatrical performances of the folk drama in Cluj an

peculiar identity is brought into discussion in most of these texts. This identity isn't termed neither "Hungarian," nor Szekler, but Transylvanian – a very specific regional identity expecting folk dramas to represent its own specific features on stage. On the other hand, the special institutional position of the Cluj Hungarian Theatre, defined and positioned in relation to the Budapest National Theatre, gave birth to an institutional identity within the frameworks of which the folk drama received special place and significance. While in Budapest the folk dramas were transferred to the Folk Theatre and thus they were placed under the sign of popularity and in the vicinity of the operetta,<sup>22</sup> in Cluj the folk drama received a totally different role, its stage performance became a significant opportunity for constructing and representing regional identity (even vis-à-vis a Budapest-based Hungarian identity), whereas the prestige and weight of this task positioned it further away from the operetta.

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## NOTES

1. Jolán Pukánszky Kádár, "A magyar népszínmű bécsi gyökerei," *Irodalomtörténeti Közlemények*, vol. 40, no. 2, 1930, p. 146.
2. John McCormick, *Popular Theatres of Nineteenth-Century France*, London-New York, Routledge, 2004, p. 114.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 115.
4. Mary Gluck, "Theorizing the Cultural Roots of the Bohemian Artist," *modernism / modernity*, vol. 7, no. 3, 2000, p. 359.
5. Mary Gluck, *Popular Bohemia. Modernism and Urban Culture in Nineteenth-Century Paris*, Cambridge-London, Harvard University Press, 2005, pp. 48-54.
6. Ede Szigligeti, *A dráma és válfajai*, Budapest, Kisfaludy Társaság, 1874, pp. 431-436.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 508-521.
8. I use the term in the meaning of Joep Leersen, *National Thought in Europe. A Cultural History*, Amsterdam, Amsterdam University Press, 2006, pp. 13-22.
9. Ferenc Erkel was the musical editor of the first folk dramas, this reveals the importance, from a theatrical and political viewpoint, of the genre at its very birth. See Katalin Szacsvai Kim, "Az Erkel-műhely kezdetei," in Kiss Gábor (dir.), *Zenatudományi Dolgozatok 2009*, Budapest, Zenatudományi Intézet, 2009, pp. 191-244.
10. Márta Zabán, *Salamon Ferenc szakmai életútja*, Cluj-Napoca, Cluj University Press, 2014, pp. 112-150.
11. The literature has already pointed out that during the last decades of the nineteenth century, folk dramas were a space where regional identities were formed and canonized. See Levente T. Szabó, *Mikszáth, a kételkedő modern. Történelmi és társadalmi reprezentációk Mikszáth Kálmán prózaapoétikájában*, Budapest, L'Harmattan, 2007, p. 17.
12. [Anon.], "Irodalom és művészet. Nemzeti színház," *Kelet*, no. 88, vol. VIII, 16 April 1878, p. 361.
13. [Anon.], "Falú rossza," *Magyar Polgár*, no. 245, vol. IX, 26 October 1875.
14. [Anon.], "A 'Tolonc'-ban," *Kelet*, no. 5, vol. VII, 9 January 1877, p. 19.
15. [Anon.], "Nemzeti színház," *Kelet*, no. 131, vol. VIII, 8 June 1878, p. 533.
16. [Anon.], "A kolozsvári színtársulat (A 'Nagyvárad szemüvegével nézve)," *Magyar Polgár*, no. 153, vol. X, 8 July 1876.
17. [Anon.], "A 'kintornás család'," *Magyar Polgár*, no. 113, vol. XI, 18 May 1877.
18. Otherwise, this norm was not exclusively applied to stage performances. There are certain hints in relation to the folk drama as drama in write stating that the successful folk drama impersonates a



familiar world for any reader of any epoch. Writing about the authorial qualities of one of the most important folk drama authors, Ede Tóth, in relation to his play, *Falu rossza* [Village Villain], a critic declares: "The world he opened to us was one of our own. We had recognized the landscape we had for so long admired in our mind's eye, with its simple but well-off farms, valleys and hills, meandering rivers and the sound of church-bells in the air." See Gyula Indali, "A 'Falu rossza' és a 'Kintornás család'," *Kelet*, no. 233-236, vol. V, 12-15 October 1875, p. 914.

19. [Anon.], "Helyi hírek. Színház," *Kelet*, no. 98, vol. 10, 30 April 1880, p. 390.

20. [Anon.], "Nemzeti színház, a bécsi vendégszereplők," *Kelet*, no. 99, vol. 10, 31 April 1880, p. 394.

21. Levente T. Szabó, "Erdélyiség-képzetek (és regionális történetek) a 19. század közepén," in Levente T. Szabó, *A tér képei: tér, irodalom, társadalom*, Cluj, Komp-Press, 2008, pp. 13-99.

22. Magdolna Kolta, *A Népszínház iratai*, Budapest, Magyar Színházi Intézet, 1986, pp. 105-108 (Színháztörténeti Könyvtár 16).