

1.4 Dataset

The dataset associated with the landmass and with the institutional theatre structure I have presented so far includes IbsenStage recordings up until 1947, filtered by country and language as the main criteria. The dataset points at:

- 1 playwright
- 6 languages
- 16 works
- 37 directors
- 511 actors
- 275 events

Additionally, I used 272 theatre reviews on Ibsen performances published prior to 1947, as well as revenue balance sheets, receipts and other archive materials as evidence to ascertain the reception to the plays. References to all these resources are registered in IbsenStage at the “Sources” field of each event of the dataset considered in this thesis.

1.5 Periodization and patterns revealed by the data

1.5.1 Periodization

The patterns guiding the further elaboration of my argument are interconnected with the periodization I have chosen. In this regard, the historical material was not enough to frame my research, and I relied on interrogation of the IbsenStage data to identify the time span and the research patterns to be investigated. Spatial, temporal and linguistic criteria guided the database searches and framed my hypotheses, while contributors and works lists confirmed and structured the information revealed by the archival material.

The periodization of this thesis is fluid concerning both the starting and finishing points in order to allow some flexibility in the analyses of performances, tours, and multiple seasons of single productions. Yet, given the impact of the historical facts upon the development of the Romanian theatre, my analysis of Henrik Ibsen's reception on the national stage takes 1947 as its final temporal edge. The time span is further governed by spatial and linguistic criteria. Although this thesis focuses on Ibsen performances in Romanian, the constant presence of foreign performances, within the fluid frame of the national territory, made it mandatory to consider their contribution to the development of local theatre productions of Ibsen's plays. Thus, the temporal frame is flexible, while not going beyond 1947.

To begin with, 1894 is the year when the National Theatre in Iași staged the very first Ibsen play in Romanian, *Doctorul Sâlceanu* (a local version of *An Enemy of the People*), marking the beginning of Ibsen's reception in Romanian. However, 1879 is both the year of the first performance in Hungarian within the actual Romanian territory, and also the very first Ibsen performance in Hungarian. The final year of the Hungarian frame considered in this thesis is 1945. 1884 is the year of the first Ibsen performance in German

registered within the actual Romanian territory, whereas the final year of this temporal frame is 1940. As far as other linguistic temporal frames are concerned, they are all integrated within the 1879–1947 period. For instance, the French Ibsen performances staged in Romania cover the 1894–1911 period, the Italian ones were staged between 1907–1910 and in 1940, whereas the Ibsen performances in Yiddish took place in 1923 and 1927.

Two main reasons emphasise 1947 as an endpoint of this thesis and as a turning point in the Romanian theatre history, which explains why my research on the early reception to Ibsen on the Romanian stage stops in this year. Firstly, 1947 marked the actual beginning of the communist era. In 1947–1948, the communist government began its activity in the social, cultural and political fields. In this sense, the transition years between 1945 and 1947 were, as Miruna Runcan states, a “*No Man’s Land*” (2003: 207). In the theatre field, Law no. 265 on the organisation of theatre, opera and philharmonic institutions (Lege pentru organizarea Teatrelor, Operelor și Filarmonicelor de Stat precum și pentru regimul spectacolelor publice 1947: 6198) adopted on July 18, 1947 marked the dissolution of the private theatre companies due to the nationalization of all cultural institutions. Secondly, the statistics based on the IbsenStage dataset for the period 1894–1947 support the historical argument and mark 1947 as the division line. The small number of Ibsen performances at the end of World War Two and the lack of Ibsen Romanian stagings for the six years between 1948 and 1956 during the early years of the communist regime also suggest that 1947 saw the end of an important chapter in Romanian theatre history, both aesthetically and institutionally, which was followed by a completely altered theatre world.

1.5.2 Patterns

According to the timeframe identified, four of the IbsenStage relational database fields were interrogated to produce the data patterns analysed in this thesis: Language, Country, Contributor, and Work.

A simple temporal inquiry of the IbsenStage events sorted by year and visualised in graphs reveal the frequency of the plays (Figure 4, Figure 5). The number of events sorted by year is quite even, with small differences from one year to another. Nevertheless, the average number of events is low. Another aspect revealed by these graphs is that there were only a few years in which Ibsen was not staged. Moreover, the frequency of events by year does not change radically when language criteria is added or subtracted from the inquiry. This points to a contradictory finding: while the low number of events per year seem to indicate a lack of interest in attending Ibsen performances, the even numbers and the presence of Ibsen on the Romanian stage almost every year points to a constant interest from spectators in his plays. The investigation of this contradiction is at the heart of the thesis.

An obvious pattern revealed through the mapping function of IbsenStage, which allows for searches by Language/Country (Figure 6, Figure 7), was the importance of the foreign influences crossing the Romanian reception to Ibsen. This makes the impact of external influences upon the Romanian theatre reception one of the main investigations of this thesis. Additional data interrogations led to the selection of Contributors – actors and directors – with a significant interest in promoting and presenting Ibsen on the Romanian stage. The selection of these contributors was based on the number of their as-

sociations to records in the IbsenStage dataset. Statistics of the plays performed on the Romanian stage guide the selection further. They are connected to the two patterns above because they provide further information about the most performed plays and the most relevant actors in Ibsen productions. The statistics on plays also reveal the most important venues and institutions where these performances took place, and bring us one step closer to other patterns hidden in the data. Additionally, IbsenStage highlights the most toured cities and the institutions that staged Ibsen most frequently.

IbsenStage is not the only collection of data that I have analysed from a quantitative perspective. The reception patterns revealed in the theatre critical discourse are also based on an initial quantitative sorting of the 272 theatre reviews that I have gathered in the course of this study. This dataset frames the analysis of the critical discourse on Ibsen performances. The financial data concerning the revenues from Ibsen performances also frame the reception approach used in this thesis, as these documents illustrate the commercial impact of the productions, and complete the picture of the contrasting, fluid reception to Ibsen on the Romanian stage. Finally, more detail on the data interrogation can be found in the technical appendix in Part Six of this thesis.

