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THE COMMUNITY AND ITS VALUES.
CONTEMPORARY SLOVAK DRAMA AND THEATRE
IN A POST-TRAUMATIC PERSPECTIVE
(PRELIMINARY STUDY)

WSPÓLNOTA I JEJ WARTOŚCI.
WSPÓŁCZESNY DRAMAT I TEATR SŁOWACKI
W PERSPEKTYWIE POSTTRAUMATYCZNEJ
(WSTĘP DO BADAŃ)

Abstract

The article focuses on the key contexts and stages in the development of Slovak drama and theater after 1989, and preliminarily identifies possible areas of research in the proposed perspective, taking into account, above all, the correlation between drama and theatre and transformations in cultural models. The change of a system is understood as a traumatic experience, leading to disorganisation and destabilisation of existing patterns, requiring strategies and actions to overcome the crisis. The results of these activities – reinterpretations of the past, development of new ways of understanding community and identity, greater sensitivity – can be associated with the process of post-traumatic growth, co-created and reflected by the texts of culture, among others – dramatic and theatrical works.

Streszczenie

W artykule poświęcono uwagę kluczowym kontekstom i etapom rozwoju dramatu i teatru słowackiego po 1989 roku oraz wstępnie wyznaczono możliwe obszary badań w przyjętej



perspektywie, uwzględniającej przede wszystkim związku dramatu i teatru ze zmieniającym się modelem kultury. Zmiana systemu rozumiana jest jako doświadczenie traumatyczne, prowadzące do dezorganizacji i destabilizacji dotychczasowych porządków, wymagające strategii i działań służących przezwyciężeniu kryzysu. Efekty tych działań – reinterpretacje przeszłości, wypracowanie nowych sposobów rozumienia wspólnoty i tożsamości, większa wrażliwość – wiązać można z procesem posttraumatycznego wzrostu, który współtworzą i odzwierciedlają teksty kultury, m.in. dzieła dramatyczne i teatralne.

Keywords: transformation after 1989, trauma, contemporary Slovak drama and theatre, identity, diversity

Słowa kluczowe: transformacja po 1989 roku, trauma, współczesny dramat i teatr słowacki, tożsamość, różnorodność

The presented article is a preliminary research proposal on selected issues of the development of Slovak drama and theatre after 1989. It is of an introductory nature and only outlines the following problems: the transformation in Slovakia in the 1990s and its traumatic and posttraumatic aspects, changes in Slovak drama and theatre after the fall of communism, selected trends in contemporary drama and theatre creativity in Slovakia in the context of undertaken reflection on community identity and its values.¹

The experience of rapid, radical and sudden changes described by Piotr Sztompka in his work *Trauma of the Great Change*² which simultaneously take place in various areas of social life, affecting them in an unexpected and violent way, undoubtedly concerned Slovakia in the period after the Velvet Revolution, as did the trauma resulting from them, leading to disorganization, destabilization and decomposition of social life. The traumatic aspects of the transformation were most easily noticeable in the economic sphere, but the consequences of the rapid change also affected culture and the sphere of values, including ways of understanding community identity and individual identities. The first decade of the Slovak transformation was characterised by the state of cultural discord, ambivalence and ambiguity. Relics of the officially rejected communist system were noticeable in various spheres of life because rejecting the legacy of functioning in a totalitarian regime for decades took time, as did developing significant categories of the formally adopted democratic system. In

¹ The text was created as a part of Agnieszka Matusiak's project *And the Prologue Again? Post-traumatic Drama and Theatre in Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe in the Light of Systemic Transformation (1989/1991–2020)*, carried out by the Laboratory of Transcultural Studies on Theatre and Drama of Post-Communist Europe.

² P. Sztompka, *Trauma wielkiej zmiany. Społeczne koszty transformacji*, Warszawa, Instytut Studiów Politycznych Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 2000.

case of Slovakia, the process of stabilising the principles of a democratic state was significantly slowed down during so-called Meciarism (1992–1998) – that is the rule of Vladimír Mečiar, aimed at rebuilding the culture of monologue and referring to the mechanisms known from the previous regime. In political science works, Meciarism is sometimes referred to as an “unstable democracy” or “illiberal democracy”, in which “the majority, led by a charismatic leader, takes steps to weaken social control over the government’s actions and to limit freedom of individuals while formally maintaining democratic procedures”.³ Of course, this is not an authoritarian form of government, but rather authoritarian tendencies,⁴ or a model of post-communist “democraticism”,⁵ the consequences of which included international isolation of Slovakia, delay in the negotiations on accession to European structures, tensions in Slovak-Hungarian relations, and deep polarisation of the society. The situation began to change gradually after the elections in 1998.⁶ Mikuláš Dzurinda’s government took a clear pro-European course, which resulted in a change in Slovakia’s position in the international arena and its admission to NATO (2004, five years later than the other Visegrad Group countries) and the European Union (2004) and carried out a number of important reforms; from the perspective of respecting the rule of law, his first term, “especially in comparison with the previous period of terror of the [parliamentary – R.M.] majority, was almost exemplary”.⁷ However, reservations can be formulated, for example, in relation to the cultural policy of Dzurinda’s rule (1998–2002, 2002–2006). First of all, cultural institutions did not receive sufficient financial support, there were attempts to sell their assets, some important institutions were condemned to disappearance.

Despite the aforementioned difficulties, the development of Slovak culture has become significantly more dynamic since the beginning of the 21st century, with many new institutional initiatives and diverse artistic ventures. The open culture trend has gained increasing importance, emphasising the need for self-reflection

³ J. Marušiak, *Už nie Východ – ešte nie Západ? Slovenská politika po roku 1993 medzi tradíciou a súčasnosťou*, [in:] *20 rokov samostatnej Slovenskej republiky. Jedinečnosť a diskontinuita historického vývoja*, (Eds.) M. Londák, S. Michálek, Bratislava, VEDA, 2013, p. 367.

⁴ S. Szomolányi, *Cesta Slovenska k demokracii: od „devianta” k štandardnej novej demokracii*, [in:] *Slovensko: desať rokov samostatnosti a rok reforiem*, (Eds.) G. Mesežnikov, O. Gyárfášová, Bratislava, Inštitút pre verejné otázky, 2004, p. 10.

⁵ M. Zemko, *Moderný politický národ*, [in:] *Slovenská otázka dnes. Výber textov z časopisu OS 1997–2006*, (Ed.) L. Szigeti, Bratislava, Kalligram, 2007, p. 191.

⁶ See G. Mesežnikov, *Dosť (alebo málo) bolo demokracie na Slovensku?*, [in:] *Odkiaľ a kam. Dvadsať rokov samostatnosti*, (Eds.) M. Bútora, G. Mesežnikov, Z. Bútorová, M. Kollár, Bratislava, Inštitút pre verejné otázky, Kalligram, 2013, p. 118; J. Marušiak, *Už nie Východ...*, op.cit., p. 368.

⁷ J. Hrabko, *Právny štát a ústavnosť: úskalia a zákruty*, [in:] *Kde sme? Mentálne mapy Slovenska*, (Ed.) M. Bútora, M. Kollár, G. Mesežnikov, Z. Bútorová, Bratislava, Inštitút pre verejné otázky, Kalligram, 2010, p. 106.

and searching for new answers to questions about the shape of historical memory, self-identification and axiological foundations, subjectivity, and forms of actual application of democratic slogans to various social groups.

This trend is, in my opinion, connected with the processes of working through trauma, both transformational and past traumas. In the space of Slovak culture, we are dealing with a phenomenon similar to the one described by Agnieszka Matusiak in relation to the Ukrainian situation, namely the serial and palimpsest-intersectional nature of trauma, consisting in the accumulation, overlapping and simultaneity of the effects of historical and contemporary traumas.⁸ Many stages of the history of Slovakia – the time of intensified Magyarization after the establishment of Austria-Hungary, the clero-fascist state during World War II, communism, the process of difficult transformation – were full of events that can be described as “hurtful”, traumatogenic, requiring strategies and countermeasures that were usually not undertaken (for example, due to other, assessed as more urgent challenges) or were prevented and forbidden (usually for ideological reasons). Returning to events that have been passed over in silence or erased from memory, or at least to some of them, constitutes an important tendency in the contemporary space of Slovak culture.

These processes can be linked to the phenomenon of post-traumatic growth. In relation to the individual level, it is described, in accordance with the suggestion of Richard G. Tedeschi and Lawrence G. Calhoun, as changes in the human cognitive system that arise as a result of coping with the effects of traumatic experiences, undergoing a certain transformation and achieving a higher level of functioning than before the trauma; it is also associated with discovering layers of sensitivity and compassion for others, and deeper understanding of oneself and the world.⁹ In relation to the sphere of culture, post-traumatic growth can be understood as the creation of new ways of understanding identity issues, thanks to, among other things, including in the sphere of cultural memory elements that have been repressed from it and reinterpreting unacceptable, usually traumatic fragments of one’s own history, reflection on the community and its important values, critical analyses of contemporary forms of domination, authoritarian and nationalist tendencies, or practices of exclusion. All of this is related to the issues of knowledge, understanding and

⁸ A. Matusiak, *Wyjść z milczenia. Dekolonialne zmagania kultury i literatury ukraińskiej XXI wieku z traumą posttotalitarną*, Wojnowice– Wrocław, Kolegium Europy Wschodniej im. Jana Nowaka Jeziorańskiego we Wrocławiu, 2020, p. 34.

⁹ R.G. Tedeschi, L. Calhoun, *Post-traumatic Growth: A New Perspective on Traumatology*. Available at: <https://www.bu.edu/wheelock/files/2018/05/Article-Tedeschi-and-Lawrence-Calhoun-Post-traumatic-Growth-2014.pdf> [accessed: 20.01.2024]; N. Ogińska-Bulik, Z. Juczyński, *Konsekwencje doświadczanych negatywnych doświadczeń życiowych – objawy stresu pourazowego i posttraumatyczny wzrost*. Available at: <https://journals.viamedica.pl/psychiatria/article/view/29081/23846> [accessed: 20.01.2024].

sensitivity to the Other, which are the key to the functional social life in accordance with the values of freedom, equality and human rights.

Theatre holds a special place in the memory of the Velvet Revolution events. In November 1989, Slovak theatre troupes, similarly to the Czech ones, went on strike one after another, performances were cancelled, but theatres remained open to the public, becoming a forum for social dialogue. During the demonstrations, demands for democratic change were often made by theatre people, they were tribunes of change, engaged citizens.¹⁰ When the enthusiasm of the revolutionary carnival ended, the problems of a new, transformative reality became tangible. They also concerned the sphere of culture. The social position of theatre, similarly to the position of literature or film, was marginalised. Despite several new, important initiatives, among which one needs to mention Theatrical Nitra (Divadelná Nitra) festival established in 1991, which quickly gained the status of the most important international theatre review in Slovakia, three editions of the international puppet theatre biennial Minifest TOP (1994–1998), several annuals of the pantomime festival The Conjuror (Kaukliar, 1996–2002) or the establishment of the Academy of Arts in Banská Bystrica (1997), the second Slovak university educating in the field of theatre arts, in the overall balance the 1990s are remembered as a period of stagnation, lacking any important artistic ventures, an “era of instability in Slovak theatre life and a period of stifled creativity”.¹¹ The impression that it was more about survival than a “new beginning” or boosting the development for which the freedom gained, it might seem, created exceptionally favourable conditions, seems adequate. The new Slovak drama almost never appeared on larger theatre stages, Western plays or tried and tested titles from the past were preferred, or texts previously banned were staged. For economic reasons, part of the repertoire consisted of commercial performances (operettas, comedies, musicals). The situation was more favourable in independent centres; some of them existed before 1989 and successfully continued their activity after the political transformation.

The situation of Slovak theatre in the 1990s was further complicated by new legal regulations concerning the management and financing of cultural institutions. In 1991, the Ministry of Culture decided to reduce the budget of professional theatres in order to find funding for newly established theatre centres. Although its aim was to democratise and equalise opportunities, this regulation, “without analysing

¹⁰ More: L. Krivá, *Dosky, ktoré znamenali revolúciu. Bratislavskí divadelníci a november 1989*, [in:] *Deti revolúcie*, (Ed.) K. Durčová, Bratislava, Divadelný ústav, 2010, pp. 12–39.

¹¹ E. Knopová, *Činoherná dramaturgia v nových podmienkach a súvislostiach*, [in:] *Súčasnité slovenské divadlo v dobe spoločenských premien. Pohľady na slovenské divadlo 1989–2015*, (Ed.) E. Knopová, Bratislava, VEDA, 2017, p. 75.

the consequences and trying to find an alternative solution”,¹² exerted a negative impact on the already poor economic situation of existing theatres. The reform that provoked numerous objections from theatre circles was the establishment of regional cultural centres in 1996, as a response to the requirement of decentralisation of power related to the preparations for the European Union accession. The aim was to concentrate all cultural institutions operating in a given region, including theatres, financed from the state budget. The managers of the regional centres were appointed by the Minister of Culture without competition, and they were responsible for personal and financial decisions concerning the entities subordinated to them, which were stripped of their legal personality. Under the slogan of decentralisation, paradoxically, an attempt was made to centralize and monopolize, primarily by appointing people politically close to the government to managerial positions, or by allocating subsidies to institutions according to ideological key. In response to the decisions of Mečiar’s cabinet and the chaotic transformation in the sphere of culture, the Open Forum “Let’s Save Culture” (Otvorené fórum Zachráňme kultúru) was established, created not only by theatre people, but also by filmmakers, writers, artists, and representatives of academic circles. Strikes were undertaken, demonstrations were held, and the Forum’s postulates were supported by the Confederation of Trade Unions of Slovakia. However, these actions, as well as attempts at talks with representatives of the ministry, did not bring an agreement.¹³ The comprehensive law on theatre activity, adopted in 1997 (Divadelný zákon), also stirred controversy. It is worth adding, however, that despite the allegations made against it, it remained in force with minor changes until 2014. The situation gradually began to change after the elections in 1998; from mid-1999, theatres once again had legal personality¹⁴ which was important for artistic autonomy.

The problem that did not find a satisfactory solution was underfunding of the cultural sector; an eloquent expression of the attitude to the needs of the theatre community was, for example, the attempts to privatise the new seat of the Slovak National Theatre (2004) which were abandoned only as a result of protests and the strong public support for the petition: *Voice for Culture* (Hlas pre kultúru).¹⁵ The circumstances mentioned in this summary, especially the conflicts of the 1990s between the Ministry of Culture and a significant part of the artistic community,

¹² M. Mistrík, A. Maťašík, *Divadlo, ľudia a inštitúcie v nových situáciách*, [in:] *Súčasný...*, op.cit., p. 48.

¹³ More: M. Porubjak, *Divadlo veľké i malé a štyri päťročnice*, [in:] *Kde sme? Mentálne mapy Slovenska*, op. cit., pp. 447–451; M. Mistrík, A. Maťašík, *Divadlo...*, op.cit., pp. 48–53.

¹⁴ D. Inštitorisová, *O divadle deväťdesiatych rokov 20. storočia*, [in:] D. Inštitorisová, P. Oravec, M. Ballay, *Tváre súčasného divadla*, Nitra, Univerzita Konštantína Filozofa v Nitre, 2006, p. 44.

¹⁵ M. Mistrík, A. Maťašík, *Divadlo...*, op.cit., p. 55.

including the theatre community, the lack of readiness to create a platform for dialogue and radical ideological divisions, made it difficult to conduct an in-depth and multi-aspect reflection on the possible involvement of art in the discussion on the shape of the community, its heritage, values and current challenges.

Since the beginning of the 21st century, as I mentioned above, in the individual spheres of Slovak culture, we can observe much greater dynamics. In the field of drama and theatre, representatives of a new generation are appearing, and the voices of older generation, “initially disappointed with the post-revolutionary direction of changes”,¹⁶ are also clear. After the experiences of the first decade of transformation, creators were able to navigate better the area of systemic conditions, issues of management and financing, or promotion of their activities. Institutional support was important for the development of drama and theatre, especially in the organisational and conceptual scope. The initiatives of the Theatre Institute in Bratislava are worth noting, including the “Drama” competition organised since 2000, the establishment in 2005 of the “New Drama” festival (“Nová dráma”), thematic projects addressed to the authors of dramas (among the topics that have been suggested so far there are: the period of transformation, participation in the European community, ecological issues). However, the most important factor was the creative activation and the appearance, both in independent and state theatres, of new Slovak plays that gained recognition among the audience, which contradicted the belief expressed in the 1990s that viewers were not interested in domestic drama. The last two decades brought a multitude of artistic proposals, new organizational forms, initiatives serving to reflect on the place of drama and theatre in the social sphere. This was also a period when the issue of identity, including community identity, was taken up more intensively, elements of the national imaginarium were subjected to a critical review, attempts at certain revaluations, deconstructive practices, etc. appeared. In my opinion, this can be connected with the process of working through the trauma of the great change, as well as on earlier traumas. The readiness to undertake reflection related to both the past and the new order, and to conduct the discussion on existential and axiological landmarks in the perspective of the challenges of the present day, is more pronounced, with the potential for post-traumatic growth. Below I will try to indicate the thematic areas that are particularly important for this tendency. The description presented here is merely an outline of the issues; each of the designated areas is marked by a specific dynamic and has various, interconnected, and also entering into relations with the socio-cultural order, problem layers. A more detailed description of them, within which, due to the adopted research perspective, reception

¹⁶ D. Inštitutorisová, *O divadle...*, op.cit., p. 45.

issues should also occupy an important place, will be proposed only after conducting in-depth research. The described tendencies and phenomena are illustrated by sample texts and stage productions; their selection, which is intended to indicate the diversity of perspectives and artistic problematisation of specific issues, was based on the previous findings of Slovak knowledge about theatre and my own analyses.

The first important area is marked by new ways of looking at phenomena and canonical figures related to the processes of creating Slovak national identity in the 19th century. The stagings were mainly based on the texts and biographies of figures such as the “father of the nation” Ľudovít Štúr and other romantics. This trend is represented, among others, by the project of a director Dodo Gombár and dramaturge Petr Mankovecký *Štúrovci (the Concert Cancelled)* (Štúrovci [koncert zrušený]), realised in Martin in 2006, in which classical texts were presented in the form of musical pieces, the so-called theatrical sitcoms from 2012–2015, prepared by the same creators under the title www.nationalcemetery.sk (www.narodnycintorin.sk), often confronting the past and the present in a humorous way, while at the same time asking questions about national tradition and its current function, plays by Karol Horák, including *Prophet Štúr and His Shadows, or The Revelation, Sacrifice and Ascension of Prophet Štúr and His Disciples* (Prorok Štúr a jeho tiene alebo Zjavenie, obeťovanie a nanebovstúpenie proroka Ľudovíta a jeho učeníkov, staged by the Slovak National Theatre, 2015, directed by Roman Polák). It is worth adding that Horák’s texts, originally using Slovak classics, were also presented in the first decade of the transformation, including at the Theatre of the Slovak National Uprising in Martin, directed by Roman Polák, the plays *Strange Janko (Apocalypse According to Janko [Kráľ])* [Divný Janko (Apokalypsa podľa Janka [Kráľa])] (1994) and *...Thy Kingdom Come... (about the life of Ľudovít [Štúr]) [...príd’ kráľovstvo Tvoje... (o živote Ľudovíta [Štúra])]* (1996) were performed. Older traditions were also used, for example, important for Slovaks and to a large extent mythologised history of the Great Moravia; this thread was taken up by Viliam Klimáček in the play *Mojmír II or the Twilight of the Reich* (Mojmír II. or Súmрак ríše, staged: Slovak National Theatre, 2015, dir. Rastislav Ballek).¹⁷ The plays and theatre projects within this trend aimed, in my opinion, on the one hand to preserve native elements in cultural memory, emphasising the identity of the community, which was important in the conditions of instability and advancing globalisation, and on the other – to inspire discussion on the forms of remembering and ways of understanding canonical elements together with the axiological system they projected, part of which was, for example, the absolute primacy of community values over individual values, which is problematic from today’s point of view.

¹⁷ More detailed information about this trend: E. Knopová, *Činoherná...*, op.cit., pp. 138–141.

The most important projects from the perspective of working through historical traumas were those concerning the history of the 20th century and the memory of two totalitarianisms. Contemporary texts devoted to the period of the clero-fascist Slovak state and the times of communist dictatorship can be understood as an expression of opposition to the practice of forgetting, erasing and keeping silent, which contributes to the continuation of trauma. Dramas and performances that address the issue of the extermination of Jews and Slovaks participation in it seem particularly important. The issue of responsibility is of key importance here, both for people holding state functions during the war (Rastislav Ballek's monodrama *Tiso* from 2005, staged at the Arena Theatre in Bratislava), and for those who exploited the situation, for example by taking part in the Aryanisation processes or taking the position of passive bystanders. This range of issues includes, for example, the project *Endlösung* at the Slovak National Theatre (2012–13) that presented, among others, Anna Gruskova's play *Rabinka* (Rabínka, dir. Viktorie Čermáková). An important and much-discussed performance dealing with the issue of the Holocaust was based on Klimáček's play *Holocaust. A Story That Slovakia Would Rather Forget* (Holokaust. Príbeh, na ktorý by Slovensko najradšej zabudlo, staged: Arena Theatre, 2012, directed by R. Ballek) as part of a series of performances under the significant name of *The Citizen Cycle* (the aforementioned monodrama *Tiso* was also created within this series).¹⁸ Ethical issues were also an important problem in plays dealing with the influence of communist totalitarianism on an individual, family and social life; these issues were addressed, among others, in: performances directed by Martin Čičvák at the Arena Theatre based on Klimáček's texts *Dr. Gustáv Husák – Prisoner of Presidents, President of Prisoners* (Dr. Gustáv Husák – väzeň prezidentov, prezident väzňov, 2006), *Communism* (Komunizmus, 2008), or the adaptation of Ján Rozner's novel *Seven Days to the Funeral* (Sedem dní do pohrebu, Slovak Chamber Theatre in Martin, 2012, dir. Lubomír Vajdička). The strategies of re-remembering that are present in projects within this thematic field are as important as the pursuit of exemplary memory, i.e. one that, without erasing the identity of tragic events, should teach us to react to the first signs of activation of mechanisms leading to exclusion and potential violence.¹⁹

Themes of the contemporary history – the course of transformation processes and their existentially painful for a significant part of the society effects, new forms of exclusion, persistence of certain post-totalitarian elements in the sphere of social consciousness and practice, confrontation of post-revolutionary expectations and

¹⁸ See, among others: J. Hanzelová, *Téma: holokaust*, „Slovenské divadlo” 2016, no. 2, pp. 165–179; L. Mihálová, *Divadelné reflexie Slovenskej republiky 1939–1945 v 21. storočí*, „Slovenské divadlo” 2018, no. 2, pp. 176–194.

¹⁹ Todorov T., *Nadužycia pamięci*, pt. 1, „Znak” 2011, no. 9, pp. 82–89.

capitalist reality, the impact of new living conditions and cultural phenomena on interpersonal relations, including family relations – also found their reflection in drama and on theatre stages. The mosaic of individual perspectives, different forms of remembering the events of 1989 and the assessment of their consequences was presented by Michal Ditte in the play *Velvet* (Nežná, staged by the Slovak Chamber Theatre in Martin, directed by Iveta Ditte Jurčová). The new reality was critically examined, among others, by Horák, Klimáček, Roman Olekšák and its interpretations appeared on large theatre stages as well as in independent centres (GUnaGU, Stoka, SkRAT). The Theatre Institute's project *Odes or Farces (European Union through the Lens of Drama)* (Ódy či frašky [Európska únia očami drámy], 2015) brought interesting results: nineteen dramatic texts were presented from multi-aspect and different generational perspectives, showing the impact of a specific political decision on an individual and social life, or the understanding of the category of freedom.

A new phenomenon that shows a gradual increase in sensitivity towards diversity, understood as an inalienable value of the community, are attempts to express forms and aspects of identity other than national or cultural. According to the proposal of Nadežda Lindovská, two trends can be distinguished in this area: gender sensitivity theatre and theatre of the excluded (disfavoured) for social and/or health reasons.²⁰ Initiatives representing them are associated with the process of gaining voice by previously marginalised groups which undoubtedly constitute a part of the community, and enable the presentation of a perspective that was passed over in silence and obscured by a universalising discourse in earlier stages of cultural development, resulting from a specific life, social and cultural experience. The trend that problematises gender issues includes feminist theatre and drama, the beginnings of which can be traced in the late 1990s, represented, among others, by Jana Juráňová, Iveta Škripková, Jana Bodnárová,²¹ as well as queer theatre and dramas focused on LGBT+ issues, which have been more visible since the second decade of the 21st century, presented mainly in the NoMantinel theatre, but also appearing in the works of authors not associated with this scene.²² There are several examples of initiatives that fit into the trend of theatre of excluded (disadvantaged) social groups, including the Theatre from the Passage in Banská Bystrica, founded by Viera Dubačová and performed by people with disabilities,²³ or the Homeless Theatre, run by Uršula Kovalyk and

²⁰ N. Lindovská, *Divadlo v hľadani staro/nových identít*, [in:] *Súčasný...*, op.cit., p. 204 and proceeding.

²¹ See I. Škripková, *Feministické divadlo a jeho slovenská cesta*, Bratislava, Divadelný ústav, 2022.

²² See M. Mašlárová, *Queer v slovenskom divadle*, [in:] *Témy na okraji záujmu? Zborník vedeckých príspevkov z teatrologického sympózia*, (Ed.) K. Mišovic, Bratislava, VEDA, Ústav divadelnej a filmovej vedy Centra vied o umení SAV, pp. 93–109

²³ See E. Knopová, *Divadlo z pasáže – (umelecké) hodnoty a (spoločenský) zisk*, „Slovenské divadlo“ 2012, no. 4, pp. 391–407.

Patrik Krebs, where people in the crisis of homelessness undertake artistic work.²⁴ The therapeutic aspect and issues related to integration, raising public awareness, and breaking stereotypes are core objectives of such institutions.

The above-presented outline of research proposal on the topic will undoubtedly be subject to specific extensions and corrections. Only after conducting in-depth analyses and interpretations of the indicated phenomena will it be possible to verify the theses put forward and provide more precise answers to questions about the ways in which Slovak drama and theatre participate in contemporary processes of working on trauma/traumas and what role they play in reflection on the community and its identity foundations, cultural choices, the sphere of values or the category of freedom.

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²⁴ Zob. N. Lindovská, *Divadlo...*, op.cit., pp. 248–251.

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