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Repertoire Selection in Communist Romania – the who, the how and the what

In a historically multinational and plurilingual Europe, translation has always played an important part, not only in order to help the circulation of information and to enhance diplomatic relationships, but also to disseminate specific ideologies. The latter is the case of Romania, a country which, starting 1945 had to undergo a process of Sovietization. The new rulers (namely the Romanian Communist Party), with help from the Soviet Union, began implementing a series of decisions in the cultural milieu that followed strict ideological requisites. Initially, this meant introducing a high number of translations from Russian, because that ensured, among others, the transmission of socialist realism as the appropriate approach in literature. Later on, although the quantity of texts coming from Soviet Russia was reduced, the translation flux was still carefully ‘guided’ and monitored. This paper sets off to discuss the fluctuations identifiable at the level of drama translation, more specifically by looking at the dynamics established between the main institution of censorship (the General Directorate for Press and Publications) and the theatre agents in the country, in view of establishing to what extent the official directives were materialized at the level of the stage. This will be done essentially by analyzing the inner circulation bulletins and the censorship files, as well as by establishing the general composition of the theatre repertoire during Communism.