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Departamentul: Muzică – Teatru, Artele Spectacolului – Actorie (limba română
și limba germană)

Piața Libertății 1 RO-300077 Timișoara, Tel./Fax.: 0040-256-592654

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Editura Universității de Vest din Timișoara

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E-mail: editura@e-uvt.ro;

Tel.: +40 - 256 592 681

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1

ARTA TEATRULUI – STUDII TEORETICE



DIE KUNST DES THEATERS – THEORETISCHE STUDIEN



THE ART OF THEATRE – THEORETICAL STUDIES



L'héroïne tragique et ses mutations théâtrales et cinématographiques. Le cas d'Antigone

DIANA NECHIT, ANDREI C. ȘERBAN

(Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu)

Abstract

The article depicts, starting from the ancient pattern of the tragic female character *par excellence* embodied by Antigone, a short journey of Sophocles' heroine through literary and cinematic mutations throughout history. Our analysis thus aims to tackle the defining mythemes for understanding the essence of the protagonist Antigone, as well as how they are approached by some of the great creators of the twentieth and the twenty-first century.

Keywords:

Sophocles; Antigone; tragic heroine; myth; adaptation.

Rezumat

Articolul ilustrează, pornind de la tiparul antic al personajului feminin tragic incarnat prin excelență de Antigona, un scurt traseu al eroinei lui Sofocle prin mutațiile literare și cinematografice de-a lungul istoriei. Analiza noastră vizează, astfel, o parcurgere a *mitemelor* definitorii pentru înțelegerea esenței personajului Antigona, precum și modul în care acestea sunt apropiate de câțiva dintre marii creatori ai secolului al XX-lea și ai prezentului.

Cuvinte cheie:

Sofocle; Antigona; eroină tragică; mit; adaptare.

1. Le concept d'héroïne tragique dans l'Antiquité et le théâtre classique. Le mythe d'Antigone. En guise d'introduction

Dans l'Antiquité, les femmes n'avaient pas le droit de participer aux politiques de la cité, l'agora étant un espace interdit pour elles. D'ailleurs, le terme de *kratos* qui entre dans la composition du mot *démocratie* est investi par

les Grecs antiques avec des attributs exclusivement destinés à la représentation de la masculinité: le pouvoir, la force, la domination et même la violence. L'air sémantique de la féminité se trouve en dehors de ce *kratos*, les femmes étant de la sorte des êtres passifs, soumis à la volonté de l'homme. Plusieurs études récentes s'intéressent de cette dimension de la construction identitaire féminine dans l'Antiquité: les femmes détenaient un statut inférieur, centré sur la conservation de la tradition et de la culture; elles n'avaient pas le droit de s'échapper au chablon préétabli d'épouse et de mère. En même temps, les femmes étaient menées à jouer un rôle de mauvais augure dans la société (de bonne volonté ou inconsciemment, asservies à la fatalité), et cette tendance misogyne était extrêmement fréquente.

L'héroïsme féminin comporte, de ce point de vue, une dimension paradoxale, comme Mimi Still Dixon le signale, puisque ce que fait d'une femme un héros représente tout ce que nie l'idée d'héroïsme masculin¹. De même, « The female tragic hero engages in a struggle exactly as rigorous, exactly as dangerous, and exactly as futile as that of any of her masculine counterparts. That the space where her agon is staged is sometimes (but not always) domestic rather than public does not in any way diminish either its rigor or its social and political significance »². Cependant, la tendance des auteurs antiques d'illustrer la beauté tragique de l'homme vaincu par les dieux s'oppose au malheur de la femme qui, en tant que victime du destin, devient un conducteur du mal qui détruit (et autodétruit) tout autour d'elle. Tandis que les hommes illustrent parfaitement l'éloge de la chute au nom de la vertu exacerbée et fanatique, les femmes illustrent la déchéance par la sublimation de leurs faiblesses, de leurs émotions destructrices et autodestructrices: l'amour-passion, la haine, la jalousie, la vengeance. Sans le double tranchant de la lecture cathartique et purificatoire, la sensibilité moderne pourrait y voir chez les auteurs antiques un certain penchant vers une diabolisation de la femme, porteuse de tous les maux et les vices: Antigone semble une adolescente hystérique, Phèdre une femme délaissée et vengeresse, Médée une mère monstrueuse, etc. Comme Naomi Conn Liebler affirme, « A view of female protagonists as inevitably either demonized or victimized imputes [...] a disturbingly narrow and reductive ideology of social and political life to both the authors and their readers/audiences »³. Il faut, donc, laisser venir le classicisme et l'humanisme et les idées jansénistes afin de prévaloir les concepts de pitié

¹ Voir Mimi Still Dixon: „Not Know Me Yet? ”, in: Liebler, Naomi Conn (ed.), *The Female Tragic Hero in English Renaissance Drama*, Palgrave, New York, 2002, p. 84.

² Liebler, Naomi Conn: *Wonder Woman, or the Female Tragic Hero*, in: Naomi Conn Liebler (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 2.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 6.

chrétienne et de salut, ainsi que les exploits de la psychanalyse pour *sauver l'âme* de ces femmes déshéritées par la fortune et les dieux. En gardant l'opposition masculin-féminin dans la construction des personnages, on peut observer le fait que toute héroïne tragique se réclame sur une *déviance* envers les normes de la société antique, déviance qui vise surtout les rapports homme-femme: le défi des hiérarchies familiales (le désir de Phèdre de commettre l'adultère), le défi des hiérarchies politiques (la révolte d'Antigone devant Créon), le cas extrême de virilisation de la femme (Médée a le sang-froid, la bravoure et la violence d'un homme), etc.

Notre article, en se préservant de la prémisse unificatrice de *l'universalité* des mythes, se propose de saisir à travers quelques réécritures théâtrales et même cinématographiques, les constantes et les déviations de la figure d'Antigone, entre la *prêtresse* du droit divin de la famille et la militante révolutionnaire des sociétés modernes. Claude Lévi-Strauss saisit six mythèmes dans *l'Antigone* de Sophocle: « la discussion des deux sœurs qui se meurtrissent sans cesse de se chérir; la comparution d'Antigone devant Créon et sa solennelle profession de foi; la plaidoirie d'Hémon auprès du roi son père; les plaintes d'Antigone marchant vers la mort; la prophétie de Tirésias; les efforts inutiles de Créon pour conjurer le désastre qu'il a lui-même provoqué »⁴. En grandes lignes, la majorité des réécritures gardent dans leurs structures les mythèmes découverts par Lévi-Strauss, les quelques différences en étant parfaitement justifiées autant par le contexte historique, social et politique, que par le degré de *réalisme* envisagé par les auteurs. Dans les fragments qui suivent, on a essayé de surprendre les mutations esthétiques subies par le mythe d'Antigone à travers ses principales réécritures.

2. Adapter un texte, adapter un personnage

Les dramaturges auxquels on vient de prêter attention dans les lignes qui s'en suivent adoptent, chacun à sa manière, à partir des poétiques différentes et des formules dramaturgiques personnalisées, la tendance de s'approprier une référence mythique, de la raccorder aux exigences d'une culture spécifique. Derrière la figure de l'héroïne tragique des auteurs antiques *se cache* une typologie actuelle, facilement reconnaissable par le lecteur, mais sans y voir une tendance vers la caricature où, par contre, vers un discours trop attachant, trop empathique, voire mélodramatique. L'image d'Antigone peut coaguler par elle-même l'hypostasie des marginaux des banlieues, de la délinquance juvénile incapable de dépasser sa propre condition, l'idéaliste ratée ou bien celui dont ses aspirations religieuses

⁴ Lévi-Strauss, Claude: *Anthropologie structurale*, Plon, Paris, 1958, p. 243.

tendent vers la monstruosité et l'anarchisme ou encore le politicien démagogue à allure tyrannique. Comme Jean-Marie Thomasseau l'affirme: « D'autre part, le sens originel du mythe est à nouveau volontairement gauchi pour mieux répondre aux inquiétudes contemporaines. L'opposition entre un homme qui accepte de se salir les mains pour diriger les autres et une jeune fille insoumise qui refuse d'entrer dans le jeu des rapports de forces et des compromis instaure une manière de dialogue parallèle où chacun est voué à l'incompréhension de l'autre, marque suprême de la fatalité tragique aujourd'hui »⁵.

En ce qui suit, on se propose de mettre en évidence un bref *apparentage* artistique à partir de l'image littéraire antique d'Antigone, jusqu'à celle moderne, cinématographique y inclus, en insistant surtout sur les mutations souffertes par l'idée de conflit et de faute, tragique ou non, selon le cas. Dans ce sens-là, en se référant aux différences entre les antiques et les modernes quant à l'idée de faute tragique, Patrice Pavis a constaté dans la pièce de Sophocle que « le héros relève le défi tragique, accepte de se battre, prend sur lui la faute et ne cherche aucun compromis avec les dieux: il est prêt à mourir pour affirmer sa liberté, à fonder sa liberté tragique sur la reconnaissance de la nécessité »⁶. Dans les versions modernes, l'héroïne ne se soumet à aucun moment aux dictats du pouvoir et combat ouvertement pour défendre son idéal de vie et de bonheur: « les motivations d'Antigone sont surtout d'ordre personnel et psychologique, puisqu'elle commet son geste pour elle-même, par malaise de vivre, par pulsion suicidaire »⁷, souligne Olivier Got. Dans le même sillage, Jean-Marie Domenach relève que « l'auteur moderne en a fait une fille frénétique, une passionnée, pour qui la justice est une idée fixe; et cette obsédée de la pureté perd à nos yeux sa pureté en même temps que cette majesté et cette ampleur mythique qu'elle avait chez Sophocle: la vierge de justice et d'amour devient une maniaque de la résistance au pouvoir, une militante aigrie »⁸. Sophocle, dans *Antigone*, crée un théâtre plus dynamique et plus optimiste que celui d'Esquille, en faisant un éloge des figures héroïques aux prises avec le destin. L'élément de nouveauté qui apparaît dans le théâtre d'Esquille est l'admiration: « Nul œuvre ne présente une peinture aussi insistante, aussi cruelle, aussi insoutenable de la souffrance; aucune ne montre autant de héros mutilé, torturé par le mal, consumé par un deuil obsédant comme si souffrir était le fond même de la condition humaine, et l'aptitude à endurer la

⁵ Thomasseau, Jean-Marie: *Drame et tragédie*, Hachette, Paris, 1995, p. 166.

⁶ Pavis, Patrice: *Dictionnaire du théâtre*, Armand Colin, Paris, 2019, p. 614.

⁷ Got, Olivier: *Le mythe antique dans le théâtre du XXème siècle*, Ellipses, Paris, 1998, p. 65.

⁸ Domenach, Jean-Marie: *Le Retour du tragique*, Seuil, Paris, 1967, p. 36.

souffrance la seule pierre de touche de la grandeur de l'homme »⁹. Le héros de Sophocle, en général, et l'héroïne de la tragédie, en particulier, se remarquent par l'avènement du personnage indépendant de leur relation à l'histoire et aux autres personnages. Ainsi, « Si l'héroïsme sophocléen propose la plus haute image de la grandeur de l'homme, l'ironie souligne cruellement ses faiblesses, et les limites inhérentes à la condition humaine: victime de son ignorance et de son aveuglement, l'homme s'efforce d'agir au mieux, et son action le mène à sa perte »¹⁰. Sophocle mise sur un événement déclencheur critique de la vie du héros / de l'héroïne qui se construit en différence ou en opposition avec ses interlocuteurs. Il s'avère chez Sophocle que « les hautes exigences morales qui fondent la conduite des personnages de Sophocle et leur inébranlable volonté les rendent différents de ceux qui les entourent, qu'il s'agit de leurs proches moins intransigeants qu'eux, moins forts, portés à accepter la compromission, à pactiser avec ceux qui sont au pouvoir, mais plus humains aussi »¹¹. Dans la tragédie de Sophocle, le conflit s'établit entre l'ordre divin et l'ordre humain: les dieux, la loi divine et Antigone se trouvent du côté du divin; son devoir étant d'ensevelir Polynice, son frère aimé, et l'image de substitution traditionnelle du père. Pour Antigone, l'amour familial, le dévouement et la pitié filiale représentent les seules lois qu'elle connaisse. De l'autre côté, Créon représente l'ordre humain, le pouvoir et l'autorité de l'État étant ses seules raisons de vivre.

Les tragédies de Jean Racine montrent des personnages pitoyables soumis aux malheurs et à la mort qui se trouvent sous l'emprise des passions les plus déchaînées. Même s'ils n'arrivent pas à les maîtriser, ils réussissent, en parfait accord avec les règles imposées par la poétique classique, de maîtriser leur langage et leurs attitudes. La figure d'Antigone apparaît dans la tragédie racinienne *La Thébaine ou Les Frères ennemis*, en 1664, et s'éloigne beaucoup de son modèle antique : « Antigone a surtout pour rôle de fournir l'indispensable note d'émotion sentimental dans une tragédie où Racine a voulu éviter des sentiments amoureux aux protagonistes »¹². Ce qui compte dans la tragédie racinienne, c'est la parole des personnages perçue dans sa double dimension: la prise de parole ou la parole retenue. De cette oscillation est tissé l'acte tragique, car le héros racinien trouve sa perdition par le langage, en révélant ce qui doit être tu, pour éviter que

⁹ Demont, Paul; Lebeau, Anne: *Introduction au théâtre grecque antique*, Librairie Générale Française, Paris, 1996, p. 99.

¹⁰ Romilly, Jacqueline de: *La tragédie grecque*, PUF, Paris, 1975, p. 117.

¹¹ Demont, Paul; Lebeau, Anne: *op. cit.*, p. 112.

¹² Laffont-Bonpiani: *Dictionnaire des personnages. De tous les temps et de tous les pays*, Robert Laffont, Paris, 2002, p. 97.

l'inévitable se produit. « La pièce de Racine apparaît bien comme une *action*, c'est-à-dire comme un enchaînement de causes et d'effets et comme un espace donné au choix des personnages. Car même si, en fait, il n'y a pas de choix, puisque l'action doit aller inexorablement vers un dénouement qui lui préexiste, il faut donner l'illusion que tout est la conséquence des décisions, des erreurs, des passions, des personnages »¹³.

Le plus souvent, la figure d'Antigone a été perçue dans la grande galerie des révoltés de la littérature universelle; c'est surtout cette qualité qui a poussé les auteurs du XX^{ème} siècle de reprendre dans leurs textes la figure de l'héroïne antique. Margueritte Yourcenar, dans la série des proses lyriques intitulée *Feux*, nous présente une Antigone semblable à la tragédie grecque et son texte, *Antigone ou le choix*, surprend la Guerre Civile, la révolte de l'héroïne synonyme de la justice éprise contre l'autorité et l'injustice représentée par Créon. Le mythe d'Antigone jouit plus que jamais dans cette période artistique d'une connotation politique légitime: « La contradiction entre la conscience humaine individuelle, et le bien public, la raison d'état que présente les discours d'Antigone et de Créon trouvent, dans la montée du fascisme et l'explosion de la Seconde Guerre Mondiale, toute son acuité et sa violence »¹⁴, remarque Joël Schmidt. En même temps, « Par sa flexibilité, le mythe d'Antigone se prêtera ainsi aisément à dépeindre tous les types d'affrontement et toutes les dérives politiques. Le même texte peut alors être amené à servir des causes différentes [...]. Le double enfermement de la pensée dans l'argument d'un mythe connu et dans la facture d'une écriture classique permettaient de rendre l'évidence tragique d'une liberté compromise et la nécessité angoissante d'un choix métaphysique et politique »¹⁵. Ainsi, les auteurs du XX^{ème} siècle renouvellent la dimension sacrée du théâtre à travers le politique et redonnent une substance nouvelle aux mythes à l'idée de rituel et de masque par le biais des nouvelles hiérarchies du pouvoir, de l'autorité et de la démocratie. Jean Cocteau (*Antigone*, 1922) s'est imposé dans l'adaptation des mythes grecques à la réalité sociale de son époque, à sa vision du monde et à son esthétisme. L'*Antigone* de Cocteau a été présentée pour la première fois le 20 décembre 1922 au Théâtre de l'Atelier et la modernité de l'auteur s'esquisse dès le défi des règles, puisque le drame subit une contraction importante, s'achevant en moins d'une heure: « Mon adaptation ne montre du drame de Sophocle que les

¹³ Forestier, George: *La tragédie française. Règles classiques, passions tragiques*, Armand Colin, Paris, 2016, p. 185.

¹⁴ Schmidt, Joël: *Dictionnaire de la mythologie grecque et romaine*, Larousse-Bordas, Paris, 1998, p. 91.

¹⁵ Thomasseau, Jean-Marie: *op. cit.*, p. 167.

traits essentiels. C'est un dessin fait au musée. J'y transporte dans la littérature le droit des peintres, s'arrêtant devant n'importe quel chef-d'œuvre de la peinture et le copiant au crayon noir »¹⁶.

Jean Anouilh est l'auteur d'une autre *Antigone*, écrite en 1942, et présentée au public de Paris le 4 février 1944 au Théâtre de l'Atelier, dans la mise-en-scène d'André Barsacq. Anouilh transforme l'héroïne tragique dans une figure emblématique de la Résistance devant l'occupation allemande. Les mises-en-scène successives de l'*Antigone* d'Anouilh ont relevé à tour de rôle soit le conflit de générations qui opposait l'esprit jeune au pouvoir dominant, soit la soumission aux devoirs familiaux ou, par contre, la révolte, le déni de la nouvelle génération envers la loi du pouvoir parental, gouvernemental, institutionnel. Même si on parle de la réécriture du mythe, les dramaturges ont toujours ressorti la provenance tragique de l'héroïne, son appartenance à la grande famille maudite des Labdacides: comme toute héroïne tragique, Antigone ne veut ou ne peut pas échapper à la fatalité de son destin, elle est prête à aller jusqu'au bout dans l'accomplissement de son sort, de son idéal, refusant tout compromis et toute autre alternative qui l'aurait sauvée. Les avatars du mythe changent en effet sous les influences des valeurs, des goûts esthétiques et des idéologies différentes d'une époque historique et théâtrale à l'autre: il y a ainsi un décalage non seulement temporel, mais aussi éthique, esthétique entre l'Antigone de Sophocle, celle des classiques et celles des auteurs du drame moderne. Si l'Antigone de Sophocle défend les droits sacrés du sang, les liens de la parenté contre les lois de la cité, l'Antigone de Jean Anouilh ne cherche qu'à préserver sa pureté dans un monde où le règne du mal semble désormais éternel. Anouilh s'éloigne de l'idéal de la tragédie du XVII^e siècle, sans pourtant y abandonner son goût pour le genre tragique. Des héros antiques, ses personnages n'en gardent plus que les noms; ils sont vêtus à la manière des années 44 et les dialogues sont dans un registre familial, parfois vulgaire. Cet anachronisme est lié aussi à l'influence majeure de l'œuvre de Giraudoux. Le grand changement qu'Anouilh instaure par son texte, par rapport au modèle imposé par Sophocle, est le sens du sacré, Tirésias étant le seul personnage absent de la pièce d'Anouilh. Absents les lois aussi, les décrets et les dieux. Créon n'est pas puni pour ses faits, puisqu'il n'y a violé aucun principe religieux. Par ce procès de désacralisation, Anouilh réussit à conférer à Antigone une grandeur encore plus imposante, tandis que l'héroïne de Sophocle portait en elle le poids des morts et des dieux, des traditions et des rites. Le conflit s'établit au niveau des personnages: Antigone se révolte, refuse de vivre au lieu de devenir la complice de Créon et accepter un avenir méprisable,

¹⁶ *** , *Mémorial Jean Cocteau*, Les Belles-Lettres, Paris, 1969, p. 45.

synonyme à une capitulation. Le conflit qui oppose Créon à Antigone résume deux comportements humains: le premier est le comportement de celui qui accepte les conditions de la vie telles qu'elles sont, un adepte de la morale du oui; et la seconde est le comportement de celui qui refuse la réalité ignoble au nom d'une aspiration vers l'idéal, en devenant ainsi un adepte de la morale du non. « Moi, je n'ai pas dit *oui* ! Qu'est-ce que vous voulez que cela me fasse, à moi, votre politique, votre nécessité, vos pauvres histoires ? Moi, je peux dire *non* encore à tout ce que je n'aime pas et je suis seul juge »¹⁷. L'Antigone d'Anouilh est une adolescente pure et ingénue, quelque peu gâté et terrible qui aspire vers l'absolu, mais cet absolu est dépourvu de contenu. La tragédie met en scène des héros marqués par le malheur qui luttent contre les forces qui les dépassent, et la fatalité les précipitent vers la mort d'une manière inexorable. Jean Anouilh hypostase un tragique moderne qui se caractérise par quelques indices formels et structuraux. Un des plus importants serait la personnification du prologue – Jean Anouilh personnifie le texte de l'introduction sous la forme d'un personnage intermédiaire, entre le spectateur et les personnages de la pièce; son discours a une fonction purement informative et correspond à l'exposition des pièces classiques: « Voilà. Ces personnages vont vous jouer l'histoire d'Antigone. Antigone, c'est la petite maigre qui est assise là-bas, et qui ne dit rien. Elle regarde droit devant elle. Elle pense. Elle pense qu'elle va être Antigone tout à l'heure, qu'elle va surgir soudain de la maigre jeune fille noire et renfermée que personne ne prenait au sérieux dans la famille et se dresser seule en face du monde, seule en face de Créon, son oncle, qui est le roi »¹⁸. Par ce genre d'intervention scénique, on est conduit vers un autre indice qui consiste dans la rupture avec l'illusion théâtrale – le prologue s'adresse directement au spectateur, en présentant les acteurs qui vont jouer un rôle sur la scène. L'accent est mis non sur la destinée des personnages, leur mort étant annoncée et connue par tous, mais par la manière dont ceux-ci seront piégés. Enfin, le dernier indice, c'est la rupture du contexte antique, la familiarité des attitudes et les anachronismes qui confèrent une dimension contemporaine à la pièce: « C'est propre, la tragédie. C'est reposant, c'est sûr... Dans le drame, avec ces traîtres, avec ces méchants acharnés, cette innocence persécutée, ces vengeurs, ces terre-neuve, ces lueurs d'espoir, cela devient épouvantable de mourir, comme un accident. Dans la tragédie on est tranquille. D'abord, on est entre soi. On est tous innocents en somme ! [...] Dans le drame, on se débat parce qu'on espère en sortir. C'est ignoble, c'est utilitaire »¹⁹.

¹⁷ Anouilh, Jean: *Antigone*, La Table Ronde, Paris, 2008, p. 78.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 9.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 54-55.

En Allemagne, Bertolt Brecht a offert à la littérature dramatique une version d'*Antigone* en 1948. Sa pièce, comme celle d'Anouilh, connut un grand succès grâce au procès d'identification fait par le public avec les événements que les gens étaient en train de vivre. En effet, l'adaptation d'*Antigone* par Brecht est une allusion plus que directe à l'Allemagne nazie et à l'image d'Hitler installé au pouvoir, substitut moderne du roi Créon. Olivier Got signalait que « l'horreur de la grande guerre suscita, en même temps qu'un besoin de révolutionner les arts un retour au besoin des valeurs qui favorisa un nouvel humanisme. Or, l'utilisation des mythes et des formes antiques permettait de parler des problèmes de l'actualité de manière neuve et poétique, en en réinterprétant les données »²⁰. L'élément miraculeux est absent de l'adaptation de Brecht qui, en renonçant de la sorte à l'idée conventionnelle de destin tragique, a conçu son texte comme un drame profondément humain ou d'une tragédie politique. En fait, l'une des raisons qui a déterminé l'auteur allemand à s'approcher particulièrement de cette tragédie antique, c'est son degré de réalisme qui permette à Brecht de mieux adapter le noyau originaire au contexte contemporain.

3. Entre le canon classique et les mutations artistiques contemporaines.

Antigone – personnage de théâtre, personnage de film

Le sujet de notre article s'inscrit dans le sillage de quelques recherches récentes dans le spectacle vivant et la littérature dramatique et de spécialité qui surprennent le phénomène de la tragédie le long de son évolution. Tout comme J.-M. Domenach a surpris dans son étude *Le Retour du Tragique*²¹, une société sans tragique se suffoque. Même si la tragédie comme forme dramatique est disparue à l'orée de la modernité, son essence a trouvé des nouvelles modalités et formes d'expression: le théâtre de l'absurde, la farce tragique ou le drame contemporain²². Ces préoccupations constantes des créateurs de réécrire, réinterpréter et moderniser la matière antique, et non seulement, se sont manifestées aussi en dehors du théâtre, c'est-à-dire dans le cinéma ou la littérature. Des réalisateurs comme P.P. Pasolini, Lars von Trier ou, plus récemment, Denis Villeneuve ou Sophie Deraspe, des romanciers comme J. Giraudoux, Christa Wolf, Sorj Chalandon ou J.M. Coetzee ont fait preuve de leur intérêt constant pour le patrimoine antique imposé par les grands auteurs tragiques, en apportant de la sorte au seuil de leur actualité des problématiques adjacentes au noyau originaire. De même, les grands créateurs de théâtre comme Jan Fabre, Yukio Ninagawa, Pierre Jolly, Silviu Purcărete, Andrei

²⁰ Got, Olivier: *op. cit.*, p. 44.

²¹ Voir Jean-Marie Domenach: *op. cit.*

²² Voir Peter Szondi: *La Théorie du drame moderne*, Circé, Paris, 2006.

Șerban, Gabor Tompa ou Mihai Măniuțiu ont trouvé dans la tragédie une des plus provocatrices formules d'expérimenter à la marge des moyens d'expression artistique.

C'est ainsi qu'Antigone allait devenir d'une *gardienne* de la tradition une image de la jeune révolutionnaire. Quand un réalisateur s'approprie aujourd'hui un texte de tragédie, il est confronté à des degrés différents à cette double tradition philologique et philosophique qui mélange les interprétations conformes à la théorie d'Aristote de la catharsis aux approches conceptuelles du tragique comme vérité fondamentale de la condition humaine. La forme du tragique se caractérise par une structure dramaturgique – certains types de personnages engrenés dans un certain type de rapport aux autres personnages, captifs dans une action dont la structure répond à certaines constantes, dans un certain type d'espace et une certaine évolution chronologique. On y ajoute un certain dispositif d'adresse qui suppose que le texte soit prononcé par les acteurs / interprètes situés dans un espace scénique, confrontés aux spectateurs de l'espace public. En conséquence, le spectacle tragique peut être compris comme une forme-sens qui par sa structure même représente une vision de l'homme sur le monde, mais aussi comme une expérience qui éveille dans le spectateur un type singulier d'émotion qu'on pourrait désormais appeler *effet tragique*. La forme construite autour de l'action d'un protagoniste, et qui est adressée au spectateur d'un dispositif qui contient des dialogues, de la musique, de la danse et une structure de l'espace, la tragédie propose à ce niveau une représentation de l'individu et, en même temps, elle est génératrice d'émotion et de sensation. Le héros tragique doit parcourir un trajet qui le conduit le plus souvent vers la catastrophe et celle-ci produit un effet paradoxal dans la mesure dont le spectateur ressent des émotions violentes, voire désagréables, mais aussi une forme de plaisir qui peut être esthétique, morale, psychologique, en fonction des interprétations qu'on donne à l'effet tragique d'Aristote – la catharsis. Dans la tragédie, l'horreur de la catastrophe, la grandeur des enjeux évoqués et qui sont le plus souvent liés au pouvoir, à la connaissance ou à la quête identitaire, créent une tension propre à la tragédie, située à mi-chemin entre l'émotion pathétique (la pitié chez Aristote) et une émotion plus distante (la peur, l'horreur, la transgression). Si le tragique existe dans le spectacle contemporain, celui-ci se trouve dans l'articulation de cette émotion singulière et la trajectoire funeste d'un héros dans l'interprétation symbolique et philosophique et fondé sur la manière dont celle-ci s'inscrit dans l'ensemble du dispositif dramaturgique textuel, mais aussi scénique. Cette tension qui existe entre deux pôles contradictoires, salut et destruction, est facilement repérable dans la référence à la tragédie antique, lorsqu'il s'agit du héros tragique, génériquement parlant, de son ambivalence entre culpabilité et innocence, entre

connaissance et ignorance. De cette tension naît une crise du sens accompagnée d'une mise en question des normes. La représentation théâtrale a changé son prétexte conventionnel, en favorisant, lorsqu'il en est question de texte canonique, une certaine infidélité envers le noyau textuel d'origine. On se trouve, de la sorte, dans une époque de la relecture, des réinterprétations qui ont comme résultat la certitude de la continuité entre les époques, tout comme *la résistance* des textes canoniques face aux mutations esthétiques souffertes le long du temps.

En ce qui concerne les mutations théâtrales contemporaines d'Antigone, ce n'est pas par hasard que notre héroïne devient l'image de la révolutionnaire idéaliste qui favorise le respect de la tradition, les liens de sang, l'hérédité, les croyances anciennes, en dépit d'une modernité perfide. Cette attitude soutient, en effet, une tendance majoritaire à privilégier les personnages féminins, les anti-héroïnes qui luttent pour s'affirmer dans un monde assujéti au pouvoir masculin. Le principe féminin est perçu comme actif, à la différence de ce masculin, captif dans des idées préconçues, des préjugés, dans l'indifférence et un certain immobilisme. Voilà pourquoi les héroïnes modernes deviennent un moteur du changement social total, en étant préoccupées par l'évolution sensible de la société. Dans le texte du dramaturge belge Axel Cornil, *Si je crève, ce sera d'amour*²³, le lecteur fait la connaissance d'une Antigone qui assiste à la violente transition d'une société archaïque gouvernée par une pensée magique vers une modernité qui a tué ses anciens dieux. Même si le texte évite un déterminisme géographique et temporel, en gardant presque à cent pourcent de fidélité le contexte et les noms des personnages, il est presque impossible de ne pas faire des rapprochements avec les guerres civiles des pays pauvres de l'Afrique ou de l'Amérique Latine. Jean-Pierre Dopagne, dans le texte *Jeune première*²⁴, se propose, à travers les quelques aperçus au mythe d'Antigone, un prétexte pour un débat sur le rôle du théâtre dans la société contemporaine, ainsi que la force du théâtre comme facteur de dépassement des barrières sociales et ethniques. En nous rappelant de l'esthétique et la mise idéologique de quelques films américains, comme *Dangerous Minds* ou *Freedom Writers*, l'Antigone de Dopagne devient une professeure qui doit lutter à la fois contre son héritage paternel, mais aussi les préjugés d'un contexte social marginal. La dramaturge Marine Bachelot Nguyen se situe du côté d'un théâtre social et militant, bien ancré dans la réalité de la France contemporaine. Son Antigone²⁵ devient Akila, une jeune lycéenne d'origine algérienne, surprise entre deux drames tout aussi profonds: celui familial et celui spirituel dérivant

²³ Cornil, Axel: *Si je crève, ce sera d'amour*, Lansman Éditeur, Manage, 2015.

²⁴ Dopagne, Jean-Pierre: *Jeune première*, Lansman Éditeur, Manage, 2001.

²⁵ Bachelot Nguyen, Marine: *Akila, le tissu d'Antigone*, Lansman Éditeur, Manage, 2020.

du discours contestataire sur le port de la voile, tellement violent dans l'espace français. La réflexion sur la figure de cette Antigone des quartiers pauvres de la banlieue parisienne devient pour la dramaturge l'occasion parfaite pour y introduire à un second degré les allusions plus ou moins métaphoriques à l'histoire des conflits d'origine raciale et ethnique qui ont gouverné l'histoire commune de l'Europe, mais aussi un discours direct sur l'imminence des actes terroristes, tout cela dans une tonalité humaniste et dépourvue d'effet moralisateur. Ces débats parfois paradoxaux sur des sujets contemporains très sensibles (colonialisme, migration, multiculturalisme) se combinent dans un discours théâtral choral et dans le respect de la forme de la tragédie antique.

La réalisatrice canadienne Sophie Deraspe s'inspire généralement du texte d'Anouilh pour créer en 2019 une adaptation cinématographique contemporaine d'*Antigone*. Si dans les textes canoniques Antigone était plutôt perçue comme une *anomalie sociale*, une défenderesse de la tradition au détriment du modernisme, une marginale abandonnée qui met sa vie au service d'une idée, dans les adaptations modernes, Antigone devient un symbole de la résilience, du militantisme, une visionnaire qui représente la foule des opprimés. La version de Sophie Deraspe se développe sur le contexte sensible des migrants dans une société et un pays qui ne peut ou ne veut pas accepter en totalité leur culture, leurs traditions, leurs racines. Ainsi, Antigone change de statut et de rôle, en devenant, grâce au pouvoir du *social media*, une effigie de la révolutionnaire, dans la lignée de Jeanne d'Arc. Le film de Sophie Deraspe joue avec quelques oppositions qui articulent l'histoire initiale d'Antigone: tradition vs. spleen contemporain; religion vs. consumérisme; rituel vs. évolution; spécifique national vs. globalisation. Jeune fille d'une famille musulmane migrée au Canada, Antigone est une élève brillante qui habite en harmonie avec sa grand-mère, sa sœur et ses deux frères. Enfant, Antigone a été le témoin silencieux et apeuré de la mort de ses parents par le régime extrémiste d'Algérie et, à partir de ce moment-là, pour la petite fille et la jeune femme les liens de sang étaient devenues sacrées. Mais, lorsque Étéocle est tué accidentellement par la police, qui suspectait une affaire de drogues, et son deuxième frère, Polynice, est arrêté par la police, Antigone doit choisir entre le respect des lois de son pays de migration et le devoir envers ses liens. Le drame familial intime d'Antigone en devient un publique de la cité, car les *social medias* ont repris son histoire pour en créer une véritable *mythologie* urbaine. Dans ce contexte-là, les mythes proposés par Lévi-Strauss sont facilement reconnaissables, mais convertis d'après le moule de la société globaliste actuelle: les dieux ont été remplacés par les institutions publiques, le chœur par les *influencers*, tandis que les lois traditionnelles sont devenues des lois de la popularité médiatique. Antigone n'est plus une solitaire

défenderesse qui souffre dans son intimité, mais une figure publique dont la force est alimenté par la volonté des *followers*. C'est justement cette popularité qui va jouer un rôle décisif dans le choix final de ses actions, Antigone ne devenant qu'une autre figure qui anime les pages de journaux contenant des faits divers. La beauté tragique de son prototype est désacralisée, l'Antigone de Sophie Deraspe étant toutefois la privilégiée et la victime de son propre capital d'image.

Ces quelques aperçus dans l'héritage modernes d'Antigone dénotent aussi une intension didactique de notre part, en essayant par le choix des réécritures modernes d'éclaircir le passé, les formes canoniques pour les jeunes apprenants de l'art et l'histoire du théâtre. Ce type d'analyse peut s'appliquer tout aussi bien sur les autres héroïnes antiques, mais le cas d'Antigone en demeure un spécial d'un point de vue statistique, mais aussi par l'attachement que cette figure féminine a créé au sein de la sensibilité jeune.

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Intertextual Translation: Shakespearean Flavour in Tang Xianzu's *Peony Pavilion*

HUANG BIKANG

(School of Foreign Languages, Peking University)

Abstract

This article presents a new mode of translating Tang Xianzu's *Peony Pavilion*, the renown Chinese theatrical masterpiece, by referring to Shakespeare's poetic style. The author of this article compares the two playwrights in terms of their life-views, moral concerns and the view of the other worldliness by identifying some textual affinities. To further explain Tang Xianzu's humanistic view of life, his transcendental appraisal of intuitive feeling and heterogeneous love, some themes and textual features of *The Peony Pavilion* are elaborated which are evocative of those of Shakespeare. Based on some close reading of the text, the author is able to demonstrate how an "intertextual grafting" in translation can prove a better means to achieve better acceptability of Tang Xianzu's play by the English reader/audience.

Keywords:

intertextuality; *Peony Pavilion*; Tang Xianzu; Shakespeare; textual affinity; reader acceptability.

Rezumat

Acest articol prezintă un nou mod de traducere a *Pavilionului bujorului* de Tang Xianzu, capodoperă a teatrului chinezesc, prin referire la stilul poetic al lui Shakespeare. Autorul articolului compară viziunile despre viață ale celor doi dramaturgi, preocupările morale și concepția despre lume prin identificarea unor afinități textuale. Pentru a explica viziunea umanistă a vieții lui Tang Xianzu, aprecierea transcendentală a sentimentului intuitiv și a iubirii eterogene, sunt elaborate câteva teme și trăsături textuale ale *Pavilionului bujorului*, care le evocă și pe cele ale lui Shakespeare. Pe baza unei lecturi atente a textului, autorul poate demonstra cum o „grefare intertextuală” în traducere se poate dovedi un mijloc mai bun de a obține o mai bună acceptibilitate a piesei lui Tang Xianzu de către cititorul/publicul englez.

Cuvinte cheie:

intertextualitate; *Pavilionul bujorului*; Tang Xianzu; Shakespeare; afinitate textuală; acceptibilitatea cititorului.

In his early play *The Purple Flute*, Tang Xianzu (1550 –1616), the author of *The Peony Pavilion*, presents to his audience a sermon about the ten phases of human life. His character Venerable Sikong, a hundred-year-old Buddhist monk, preaches that one's life can be schematized into ten phases. The reverend monk declares that "an individual, in his lifetime, may experience a turning-point about every ten years"¹ and to his visitors, he is wont to describe these changes as they occur between being a teenager and a centenarian.

At first, a **teenager** with a tender face
 Like a blooming hibiscus bud of May,
 Playing games until the end of the day;
 Then a youngster in his early **twenties**,
 Talking about high things fantastical
 In a fancy carriage drawn by proud steeds;
 In his **thirties**, he's filled with ambition
 Which sits on his lips crying for success;
 When he reaches the age of **forty** and more,
 He becomes a magistrate of a high office,
 Or the chief lord at the imperial court;
 At **fifty** he's hailed by the royal flags,
 Clustered around by fair music and dances;
 At the age of **sixty**, he grows slender,
 But he cares more about his wealth and estate;
 Then the wrinkled age of his **seventies**
 In any mirror looks tasteless and joyless,
 So why bother to mock his image in a glass!
 The next stage belongs to a man of **eighty**
 Who hears not, sees not, remembers not,
 Having to give up his power in retirement.
 The ninth stage shows an old man of **ninety**,
 A withering body lacking clarity of mind,
 Babbling nonsense from his weakening heart,
 Seeing spectres from his past thro' his tearful eyes,
 And knowing no one, even his own grandsons.

¹ Tang, Xianzu: *The Purple Flute*, in: Shizhong, Huang; Xuyao, Chen (ed.): Bai Hua Zhou Art Press, Beijing, 2015, p. 300.

Into the **last** scene comes a centenarian
 With his benumbed tongue that tells no taste,
 His old, rheumy eyes jammed with thick gum
 And dull mouth slobbering in senselessness.²

Having heard this pattern of human life preordained by time, Du Huangshang, a sixty-year-old general who has just returned triumphantly from the battlefield, is suddenly enlightened as if in an epiphany. He begins to realize that all men are equal in experiencing their own lives, passing through nature to eternity, and his past glories and fame are but a “visionary dream of a mayfly.”³ He recognizes that to search for the worldly meaning of human life, under the shadow of death, is but an elusive undertaking; a long life without faith in the divinity is beyond any reasonable words of worldly wisdom. The general then converts to Buddhism to pursue a dreaming inner peace in meditation in pursuit of an everlasting spiritual life.

This dramatic enumeration of the phases of human life by Tang Xianzu’s Buddhist monk is reminiscent of Shakespeare’s famous presentation of the seven stages of man in *As You Like It*. But unlike Shakespeare’s melancholy Jacques, who regards the seven phases of man as a worldly drama acted out by all human beings as actors and actresses who experience their life in the medieval notion of seven phases, Tang Xianzu’s elderly general looks forward to his future centenarian years as a Buddhist philosopher. To him, the past, present and the future are all connected by a dream, a dream that passes from the busy worldly care, through a pious inner cultivation, to the spiritual existence in the other world. In this scenario, the world is not, as King Lear and Macbeth see it, a “great stage of fools” (*King Lear*, IV. iv) who live as players, and whose life is but a tale “told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing” (*Macbeth*, V. v). Instead, to Tang Xianzu’s general, life is an ever ongoing dream, a cyclical process of human consciousness and unconsciousness, propelled in motion within the Buddhist karma by the individual intuitive sensation and free will for the better, and the natural desire for unfettered passion and love.

This transcendental life-view is implicit in all Tang Xianzu’s extensive writings but it is most overtly expressed in his dramatic works. From his major plays known as “The Four Dreams in the White Camellia Hall”, the readers/audience are time

² *Ibidem*. As this episode is illuminating to a comparison between Tang Xianzu’s “ten phases of human life” and Shakespeare’s “seven stages of life” presented in *As You Like It*, I quote it here in full. [translated by the author of the article].

³ *Ibidem*.

and again informed of this message: all men were born with *qing*, which he defines as a myriad of feelings such as love, hate, fear, anger, sadness, joy and desire⁴; all human lives matter; the individual intuition of being in this world matters more; and one's spontaneous feeling for compassion and mutual endearment matter most, for it is the ultimate meaning that life can offer. People may die but *qing* continues through generations like a dreamy impulse in the collective consciousness. In Tang Xianzu's words, "such a powerful feeling of attachment" may arise "with no consideration for reason, prudence or knowledge". It "lasts long and goes deep, and makes a living person willingly die, and the dead return to life, yearning for love". It is this firm conviction that makes him argue that "romances in a dream-land are not necessarily unreal."⁵

The notion of the dream reality hence becomes essential in Tang Xianzu's dramatic world. For Tang Xianzu, a poet-scholar-dramatist imbibed with Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, a dream is not, as his Elizabethan counterpart empirically believes, "a bubbling of scum and the froth of fancy, which the day hath left undigested,"⁶ nor it is "just a shadow", nor "shadow's shadow" (*Hamlet*, II. ii). Rather, it is one's genuine thoughts and feelings about real life, identical to life itself, and it is even truer than life. He seems to say that the act of dreaming is an effective means to combat the fear of death, and, therefore, to attaining one's genuine feelings in life. In light of this statement, eternal life is made possible by the dream that allows the dreamer to shuffle between this world and the next. From a realistic point of view, dreaming is also a vehicle to express the central value of humanity in a time of tight social coercion, moral constraints and political repression imposed by the dominant ideology and the ruling power of the age. In this view, the boundary between reason and passion, reality and illusion, life and death, nature and the supernatural, collapses, both in the real world and the dream world. Such a deconstruction of these binary opposites, as defined by human reason, is to make way for the free-play of human will and passion which is subversive to the existing social degree and order.

⁴ Critics and scholars of Tang Xianzu have reached a consensus that Tang Xianzu's *qing* is homogeneous with the Confucian definition of innate human feeling (*ren qing*) indoctrinated in such classics as *The Book of Rites* and *The Doctrines of the Mean*. Such a notion of *qing* is also shared by most of the intellectuals in the late Ming Dynasty. See Hua Wei: *Be Intimate with Tang Xianzu*, Shanghai People's Press, 2015, p. 2.

⁵ Tang, Xianzu: "Author's Foreword" to Xianzu Tang's *Peony Pavilion*, in: Shuofang Xu; Xiaomei Yang (ed.), *People's Literature Press*, Beijing, 1958, p. 2. [translated by the author of the article].

⁶ Nash, Thomas: *The Terrors of the Night*, Penguin Classics, London, 2015.

The Peony Pavilion, the best of Tang Xianzu's theatrical works, is a superb dramatic expression of its author's notions of life, the free human will and passions in dreams. Here is a thrilling love story that does not end in the tragic death of the "ill-starred" lovers, as in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. Instead, it presents the pathetic death of the tragic heroine and then goes beyond Hamlet's "dread of something after death, the undiscovered country" (*Hamlet*, III. i) for her reincarnation and a happy marriage back in life with only memories of her infernal experiences. The play runs for about five Shakespearean plays in length. It tells how Du Liniang, a rich heiress of a noble family, not unlike Portia in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, becomes deeply despondent while walking with her serving-maid in the abandoned family garden because her free will as an individual is being repressed by the moral codes of her dominating father and culture. It is early spring and all the flowers are coming into bloom. Liniang is fascinated by the beautiful scenes in nature and, reflecting on her own beauty in a looking-glass, feels an overwhelming yearning for male companionship and love. Retiring to her room to take a nap, she dreams of a romantic encounter amongst the flowers with Liu Mengmei, a young, handsome and caring scholar. Awakening, she becomes deeply upset and bereft on finding that her desire for human sympathy and love can only be satisfied in a dream. Liniang soon dies of melancholy, longing for Liu's love as experienced in the dream. She is then buried beneath an ancient plum tree in the same garden. Due to the leniency of the demon judge down in the infernal realm of the dead, she is however, allowed to return to the land of the living as a ghost lover, haunting the dreams of Liu Mengmei who then falls in love with her, and begins searching for her in his own dreams. Their ghostly dream love then intensifies through the vicissitude of mortal life obstructed by the chaos of the dynastical wars and the social and moral imperatives. Many coincidences and setbacks set in. The two dream lovers eventually become reunited and happily married after Liu Mengmei opens the grave where Liniang has been buried, and the energy and warmth of his love revives her dead body to become his happy and beautiful wife. The happy ending, however, is first threatened, and then denied, ironically, by Liniang's noble father who claims himself to be a "born enemy of crafty mischief" and who, having secured the imperial position as the Prime Minister of the empire, cannot bring himself to believe in such "outright devil talk" wrought out by "the fair-faced devil", representing his dead daughter. (Scene 55) In its time, *The Peony Pavilion* achieved immediate success and became a bestseller across the country and a popular dramatic script for various stages. Throughout its history, the play has been idolized by generations of scholars, critics and theatregoers,

for its humanistic concerns, its glorification of human love and intuitive human sentiment, its wide spectrum of social satire, its dreamy blending of this world and the world beneath, and its beauty of poetic language, musicality and imagery. Tang Xianzu has accordingly been ranked as a laureate dramatist of genius unparalleled in the history of classical Chinese literature. Today the play has continued to be performed in different theatrical styles worldwide. In 2016, China and the UK joined hands to honour the 400th anniversary of the death of these two great poets/playwrights with seminars and performances at art centres and universities. To mark the anniversary, Shanghai *Kunqu* Opera Troupe gave a touring performance of *The Peony Pavilion* in some major cities of the world such as New York and Prague; The Royal Shakespeare Company came to visit China and staged Shakespeare's history plays at the National Grand Theatre in Beijing; other Chinese theatrical organizations also gave performances of Tang Xianzu's other plays in France, Germany, Belgium, and South Korea, etc. The publication of comparative research works also flourished in this celebratory year, the most impressive of which being *1616: Shakespeare and Tang Xianzu's China*, a collection of essays exploring the social and dramatic traditions of both Tudor England and Ming Dynasty China with Shakespeare and Tang Xianzu in the spotlight⁷.

For readers who engage in some close reading of the play, *The Peony Pavilion* is at once a realistic love story, a magic vision in the demoniac inferno, and a resurrection of a roaming ghost consummated finally in a happy ending. These aspects of the play are dramatically connected by the dreams in which the extremes of individual passion and love meet for the actuation of a unified human life in the real world of humans.

At its realistic level, in terms of the dramatic action, the play explores individual free will, passion and love as the most precious human attributes, against the dominant ideology in the form of the feudal rationalism, social hierarchy and patriarchal moral codes of female asceticism which was beginning to be challenged in the late Ming Dynasty. Similar to Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*, Tang Xianzu puts an imaginary romance in a realistic dynastical war, achieving a broader socio-historical perspective for his social criticism which is often expressed in some of his mild social satires. Hence in the play, Du Liniang, a rich heiress of a noble house, like Portia in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, complains that her living will has been curbed by "the dead codes of empty womanhood" imposed on her by her obstinate and traditional father, and her love

⁷ See Tian Yuan, Tan; Edmondson, Paul; Shil-pe, Wang (ed.): *1616: Shakespeare and Tang Xianzu's China*, Arden Shakespeare, Bloomsbury, 2016.

of nature has been “mewed up in [her] chamber with stale books all around.” (Scene 10)⁸ She finds no way to obtain her love but in a dream, and her untimely death thus signifies a loud protestation against the social and moral imperatives of the time (Scene 20). Liu Mengmei, on the other hand, succeeds in his late-entry exam due to the sponsorship of Miao Shunbin, an incompetent chief courtier, a connoisseur of jewellery and treasures. Miao is appointed to administer the imperial exams and determine the laureate winner, but he has not a “damned word” staying in his head. Ironically he complains that the court is recruiting “a host of knuckleheads” who possess but “a little learning by rote”. (Scene 41) In another setting, Chen Zuiliang, a pedantic tutor, charlatan and perverter of all that is positive in traditional Chinese culture, serves, by a chance incident, the imperial army in the war and wins for himself the honour of a position as a courtier which he has been failing to obtain, through repeated failures of hierarchical official examinations, almost all his lifetime (Scene 45, 51). By contrast, Du Bao, the sentimental governor and commander-in-chief of “His Majesty”, prevails over his enemy not by heroic fights but by a humble appeal for peace and the astute employment of deception (Scene 46). The realism of the play is also crudely demonstrated by Sister Stone’s rather naturalistic presentation of sexuality and by other bawdy jokes in various dramatic settings throughout the play.

Parallel to the social-historical drama of the mortal world is the afterlife realm inhabited by a hierarchy of demons under the supreme King of Hell, where the souls of the dead are judged, tortured and dispatched for reincarnation or eternal damnation. The hell in *The Peony Pavilion*, however, appears not a dark abyss of devilish horror, full of fierce fires and painful groans, as depicted in the Dantesque inferno, nor it is anything like Oscar Wilde’s description of Hell as “the heavy fields of scentless asphodel” where “loveless lips (of men) kiss” in the “sunless day”⁹. By contrast, in the light of Tang Xianzu’s view of passionate life in the dream, the underworld where the soul of Du Liniang is placed, and judged, is presented as a distorted, but comic, reflection of real human society. Thus in the play, the dynastical wars between the Song and the Jin have caused the “institutions of the Infernal Realm to be realigned for better efficiency” (Scene 23), and down there in the shades, “they have a similar system of file management” so that “no lawless sprites could find a chance to stir up troubles

⁸ All the quotes from Tang, Xianzu: *The Peony Pavilion*, in: Shuofang, Xu; Xiaomei Yang (ed.): *The Peony Pavilion*, People’s Literature Press, Beijing: 2017. [translated by the author of the article].

⁹ Wilde, Oscar: “Phedre: To Sarah Bernhardt”, in: *The Collected Works of Oscar Wilde*, Thoemmes Press/Routledge, 1993, p. 176.

and escape punishment” (Scene 55). On the other hand, the inferno in *The Peony Pavilion* appears to be a picaresque landscape invested with human emotion and love. The dark realm is, as the resurrected Du Liniang tells her maid, “much the same as we find in this world” where she could travel “in the fragrant carriage / Along the road of incarnation,” and write “love poems on the red leaves / By the side of the stream that runs for love” (Scene 54). Such a description is evocative of Shakespeare’s pastoral Forest of Arden in *As You Like It*, or a semi-paradise on earth. Furthermore, the demons, though with fiendish and grotesque looks, are practically comic human figures with their own desires, emotions, compassion and sense of humour. They can also be lenient and sympathetic with the dead. Hence demon Judge Hu was fascinated by Du Liniang’s “beauty, such charm with creamed face and eely body” and his lascivious secretary jests with Judge Hu that he might “keep her for some time as Your Honour’s concubine.” (Scene 23) To help the dead maintain an emotional tie with their loved ones above, these “grim-visaged” demons even build a “Homesick Terrace” for them to come to watch their still-living relatives “across empty void of waters and vapour / Far into the distance their homesickness to ease.” (Scene 23) For the same purpose, the cruel punitive scene in the infernal realm is made suggestive of real socialhistorical circumstances. Thus the bloody torture and dismemberment of Qin Hui, the paramount traitor in Chinese history, is described by Du Liniang as a grave reminder to the audience that they must cherish the values of fealty and patriotism which are the important components of traditional Chinese culture. (Scene 55)

A third aspect of the dramatic world in *The Peony Pavilion* is that of dreams. Here are the very dynamics and charms of the play. As a renowned dramatist, Tang Xianzu holds that human reason is ever alien to artistic creation. “True poetry is made of human feelings and emotions”¹⁰ which is the essence of our life in this world. He believes that “it is the feelings and emotions that generate dreams, and it is these dreams that make the theatrical art possible.”¹¹ He tells his friend in a letter that “my plays are mostly made of words collected in dreams...”¹² A state of dreaming sensation in *The Peony Pavilion* not only provides a link between the realistic storyline and the magical version in the shade, but it also serves as an omnipresent dreaming aura that spreads, like witchery, over the whole play. Thus Liu Mengmei first meets Du Liniang in a “dimly realised dream” and changes his name to reinforce a prophecy. (Scene 2) This brief dream then induces Liniang

¹⁰ Tang, Xianzu: *The Complete Works of Tang Xianzu*, in: Shuofang Xu (ed.), Classic Works Press, Shanghai, 2001, p. 1110.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 1464.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 1395.

to meet Mengmei in her love dream in the garden that marks the climax of the whole dreaming romantic sequence. (Scene 10) It follows that in her lovesickness “as in a dream” (Scene 12), Liniang seeks her lost dream and paints her own selfportrait which casts a love spell on Mengmei who “wandered in an enchanted dream,” “Talking to himself in his dream with deep sighs.” (Scene 28) Then when death comes, it comes with sad dreams for home. Hence a dying Liniang tells her mother that “My soul in the coffin will feel lonely in dreams” (Scene 20), and when she is disinterred from her grave, she feels she is experiencing “a rude awakening from a bad dream.” (Scene 35) Back to life, she laments that she has wasted three years as “a pale sleeper with dreams not yet done”, and she yet celebrates her resurrection as a new “dream state.” (Scene 36) The dark realm of hell, on the other hand, is also a dream-world where “the inhabitants of the earth / Yet are all melted corpses like the breath in the air” and when the cock crows, it “breaks the spirits’ dark dreams”. When Liniang tells about her love dream and how she died for that dream, Judge Hu, though in disbelief, grants Liniang a special permit to “go, as air, wherever you will, in search of this man” and he instructs Liniang to “take good care of your chastity” until Liu Mengmei, “that gravedigger, ... that man in your dream, appears.” (Scene 23) This act of leniency from the demon judge then allows Liniang to wander back to the mortal world “as a dreamer still” who is “formless as in a dream.” (Scene 27) It makes the love between a ghost and a mortal man in a dreaming state possible. So the audience may feel entertained by the dramatic moment when a dumbfounded Mengmei, meeting the ghost of Liniang in the middle of the night, murmurs, “Are we in a dream world?” to which the ghost of Liniang responds “Leave out that word ‘dream’. We are in the real world.” (Scene 28) Indeed, in this real-world full of dreaming substances, even Du Bao, Liniang’s father, the very embodiment of reason and laws, is split, subconsciously, between his dreams of home and his “dream for a northern expedition.” (Scene 50) Finally, when the whole dreaming hurley-burley is concluded under the orchestration of the totalitarian power in reality, Liu Mengmei comes to announce sonorously to the audience: “In the time to come our dreamy love / Shall ever live in the Peony Pavilion.” (Scene 55) Liu Mengmei is certainly right, for *The Peony Pavilion* has ever lived for centuries in the minds of the people who love dreams expressed in the theatrical art as well as in their studies. After all, the world is much as how Shakespeare’s Prospero declares in *The Tempest*, that life is but a dream and “We are the stuff that dreams are made of; and our little life is rounded with a sleep.”. (*Tempest*, IV. i)

Based on the foregoing understanding of the affinities in themes and style between Tan Xianzu’s work and Shakespeare’s plays, I present a new translation of Tang Xianzu’s *The Peony Pavilion* with a Shakespearean flavour. I have composed lines,

mostly in blank verse (iambic pentameter with occasional variations), to translate the operatic arias, recitatives, tuneful soliloquies and lyrics which constitute the main theatrical style of Tang Xianzu's masterpiece. There are also, rhymed couplets, ballads and prose dialogues which are evocative of Shakespeare's plays and are deployed to transfer the songs, poetic tunes and dialogues in the original play into their English translation. What is more, wherever I find original expressions in *The Peony Pavilion* with close thematic and cultural affinities with Shakespearean lines, I quote, or paraphrase, these lines and put them in the text as part of the translation, so that the readers' familiarity with these utterances may facilitate them towards a better comprehension and entertainment. Take the prologue of the play for an example: when the curtain draws up, the chorus (the dramatist himself) comes upon the stage and begins, thus:

Tired of the busy, painted pomp of the court,
 Come I to live here as a retired lord.
Life is flat, weary, a span of **tedious time**
 But where to go for a **merry pastime!**
 Those pathetic poems I write during the day
 Show that love is unique and hard to say.
 Here sit I in this White Camellia Hall, alone,
 Watching starry light replaced by morning tone.
 The red candles at the door give me delight,
 And my verse is lit fair by the morning light.
Love is as thoughts and dreams and tears and sighs,
 But **in the tide of time**, it never fades and dies,
 When you shall come to Peony Pavilion brave
 To enjoy true love **beyond the edge of grave.**

Each cluster of words in bold highlights my attempt to establish close verbal and idiomatic parallels with, respectively, the beginning line in Shakespeare's *sonnet 66*, Duke Senior's pastoral mockery of the court in *As You Like It*, Hamlet's melancholy sighs in *Hamlet*, and Hermia's view of love in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The metrical patterns and rhyming scheme of this choral presentation may also remind the readers/audience of Shakespeare's poetic form used in some prologues, such as the one in *Romeo and Juliet*, and, in a way, *Henry V*. This translation strategy, or intertextual grafting, has been applied to this translation work throughout, with some twenty Shakespearean plays involved.

I appropriate Shakespeare into the translation of *The Peony Pavilion* with the following considerations.

In the first place, Tang Xianzu and Shakespeare wrote in the same historical period but within two very different and isolated cultures. Coincidentally they died in the same year (1616). Due largely to this contemporariness of the two dramatists, Tang Xianzu has long been praised as “China’s Shakespeare” mostly by Chinese scholars and critics¹³. It is true that in many ways Tang Xianzu’s profound humanism in an age of gigantic social transition, his panoramic portrayals of socio-cultural life of 16th and early 17th century China, and his penetrating insight into human nature, are comparable to those presented in Shakespeare’s works, nevertheless, the juxtaposition of the two great dramatists in a national literary context may be misleading, if the readers/audience of both languages and literary traditions are not informed of the cultural, thematic and artistic specifics and affinities evident in the dramatic texts produced by these two great dramatists. It is also insufficient to justify Tang Xianzu’s greatness within the world literature by the comparative studies on the socio-historical, moral, and ideological issues found in their dramatic works. I believe that to the English-speaking readers/audience brought up in a Shakespearean theatrical culture, Tang Xianzu will be more thoroughly understood and enjoyed in a translation that is vibrant with some Shakespearean verbalism and undertones. If that happens, Tang Xianzu the greatest dramatist of China will be more widely known and appreciated in the West and may thereby achieve a world fame comparable to that of Shakespeare.

Secondly, I believe it is the task of a translator not only to translate *reductively* Tang Xianzu’s poetic-dramatic works into an English text with grammatical accuracy and some degree of poetic quality as the translator himself sees them, but also to present to the English-speaking readers/audience a translation that fully expresses the original meanings, details and imageries, theatrical tradition and poetic musicality in a form that sounds familiar to their ears. For this purpose, I endeavoured, in this translation of *The Peony Pavilion*, not only to translate the literary meanings and the poetry of the original text into the English language to the best of my ability, but also to display to the English speaking readers/audience the rich cultural messages and poetic values that are embedded in Tang Xianzu’s exquisitely aesthetic language of the play. Here Shakespeare’s blank verse has

¹³ The allusion of Tang Xianzu to Shakespeare started in the 1930s. In one of his influential works on Chinese thoughts and dramas, Aoki Masaru, the distinguished Japanese sinologist and dramaturgic historian, praised Tang Xianzu as the great oriental dramatist comparable to Shakespeare. See Masaru, Aoki: *A History of Modern Chinese Opera*, trans. Gulu, Wang, China Publishing House, Beijing, 1954, p. 230. For decades thereafter, Chinese scholars and critics have conducted comparative studies on their works and some even suggested that Tang Xianzu is “China’s Shakespeare”, a generalization that invites discussion and criticism over the issues of its cultural and ideological connotations.

proved to be an effective vehicle for such an attempt. Freed from the constraint of the classical accentuation and the rhyming halts, the rhythmic flow of blank verse, with its enjambment and its cesura, *etc.* enables the characters in the play to describe, narrate and even interpret the cultural messages and poetic beauty hidden between the lines¹⁴.

What is more, blank verse has proved to be a convenient means by which to unfold the classical allusions and religious allegories which are pervasive in Tang Xianzu's play. These cultural sediments in a literal text are illuminating, but are very likely to be ignored, screened out, or at best pushed to the margin as the translator's notes. Take the following excerpt for example, in the nether court, Judge Hu is rejecting Flower Fairy's view that women seldom die for flowers, and he cites a list of classical allusions to back up his judgement:

How was prime youth by illusive hues deceived;
 What plagues were caused by flowery shows!
 A night-blooming lotus in the imperial pool
 Had the lecherous Emperor Ling of the Han
 And hundreds of his naked concubines doomed;
 The favourite concubine of Emperor Cheng of the Han
 Killed herself, saved not by her flowery skirt.
 The famed First Concubine Yang, who loved
 Crabapples, was buried by Emperor of the Tang,
 Leaving but a perfume bag in her grave.
 Again, Bu Feiyan, the graceful beauty of the Tang
 Whose daphne-scented letters to her lover
 Did but finally result in her bloody death.
 Yet you say women died from time to time,
 And worms have eaten them, but not for flowers!
 You, the flower fairy, never knows that your sins
 Are redoubled by the flowers gone with the wind!
 (from Scene 23)

In the original Chinese text, these classical allusions are merely implied by some loosely connected verbal images of the flower which, if translated directly, do not make much sense to an English-speaking reader. To satisfy the readers' curiosity in this case, the translator has to make a number of extensive notes telling stories of each of these famed women who were destroyed by their love

¹⁴ The translation of the song of the ten phases of human life shown at the beginning of this article serves as a good example here.

of flowers, but, unfortunately, note-reading inevitably distracts the readers and interrupts the flow of their dramatic experience. Now, as has been shown above, the translation of this excerpt in the form of blank verse excavates the hidden stories from the images so that the readers/audience are kept informed in their reading of the cultural events and their implications which are not fully phrased and stated in the original. Meanwhile, such a translation carries with it a brooding tone often found in Shakespearean soliloquies. In this excerpt, for instance, Judge Hu's enumerative thoughts on "How was prime youth by false flowers deceived" sounds very similar to those of Bassanio in *Merchant of Venice* when he claims that "The world is still deceiv'd with ornament" (III. ii. 74) and goes on to prove it with a list of evidences from various sources.

From the point of view of translation studies, the appropriation of Shakespeare to the translation of *The Peony Pavilion* is possible only when the translator is given greater autonomy in the act of translating. Ever since Walter Benjamin calls for "a new and higher justification" for the freedom in translation and assigns to the translator the vital role of ensuring the original an "afterlife" or "survival"¹⁵, the translator has no longer been regarded as a faithful servant trying to convert the metaphysical meaning in the original by decoding and encoding the languages involved in the translation. This is an act of liberation and a constructive subversion against what I term as the "tyranny of fidelity" in translation. Accordingly, translation is viewed as an indispensable part of the cultural reproduction and interdisciplinary communication. In the broader domain of cultural studies, translation is redefined as a rewriting of an original text informed of, and manipulated by, the poetics, ideology and power in a given society in a given way. This is a type of rewriting that "can introduce new concepts, new genres, new device, and the history of translation is the history also of literary innovation"¹⁶. To my understanding and experience, this translational innovation is particularly needed for the translation of classical Chinese plays which are culturally and theatrically expressive of its own literary tradition. A translator of this type is faced with a fourfold task: 1) to wrestle for full possession of meanings with original classical Chinese text which is laconic in form but intensive in its cultural messages and poetic sensitivity; 2) to express in detail in a target language which must be idiomatically, culturally and theatrically acceptable to the English-speaking readers and audiences; 3) to recreate the various dramatic characters by assigning to them dramatic utterances of varied styles to fit their

¹⁵ Benjamin, Walter: "The Translator's Task" (1923), in: Venuti, Lawrence (ed.) *The Translator Studies Reader*, Routledge, New York and London, 2012, pp. 76, 82.

¹⁶ Lefevere, Andre: "General Editor's Preface" cited after Bassnett, Susan: *Translation, History, Culture: A Sourcebook*, Routledge, London and New York, 1992, p. iv.

different roles, and 4) to maintain in the translation a dramatic cohesion, hence to create a dramatic aura for theatrical entertainment. Much as Douglas Robinson has demonstrated with his archaic rendition of a passage taken from the *Kalevala* the Finnish epic, into post-Chaucer Middle English, one in which the translator may rename the heroes, intervene, subvert, divert, and even entertain, using freely the rhetoric and poetic schemes of the target culture. He concludes that “the main thing for the archaizing metaleptic translator is not the kind of accuracy that a philologist could verify, but casting a spell”¹⁷, and I hope that, in such an intextual translation as has been proposed in this article, a poetical spell conjured from Shakespearean canon can be effectively cast on a classical Chinese masterpiece, making Tang Xianzu a more intimate playwright for readers and audiences who love Shakespeare.

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¹⁷ Robinson, Douglas: *The Translator's Turn*, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore and London, 1991, p. 189.

Stage Aurality

RADU TEAMPĂU

(Universitatea „Babeş-Bolyai“ Cluj-Napoca)

Abstract

The present paper puts into discussion the aspect of stage aurality from multiple perspectives. In this regard, stage aurality is treated in conjunction with the visual aspect of the performance. At the same time, the study focuses on the aural and semiological analysis of the dimension of stage speech. Considering the role of the director in creating the aural architecture of the performance, the study investigates also the narrative aspects of stage aurality. In conclusion, the analysis undertaken notices the way in which the aurality contributes to the unfolding of the scenic actions from the perspective of the spectator considered witness to the scenic events.

Keywords:

aurality; performance; visuality; speech; narration.

Rezumat

Lucrarea de față pune în discuție aspectul auralității scenice din multiple perspective. Auralitatea scenică este tratată în conjuncție cu aspectul vizualității spectacolului. Totodată, cercetarea se centrează pe o analiză din perspectivă aurală și semiologică a dimensiunii vorbirii scenice. Luând în considerare rolul regizorului în construcția arhitecturii aurale a spectacolului, studiul investighează aspectele narative ale auralității scenice. În concluzie, analiza întreprinsă observă modul în care auralitatea construiește desfășurarea acțiunilor scenice din perspectiva spectatorului socotit ca martor al evenimentelor scenice.

Cuvinte cheie:

auralitate; spectacol; vizualitate; vorbire; narațiune.

We ask ourselves the following question: Is there in today's theatre any noticeable tendency of opposing the visible to the audible? Instead of an answer other questions arise determining us to re-evaluate our intuitive thinking as regards the contemporary theatre performance. Does the image theatre exclude the stage speech? Is this an unwanted consequence of postdramatic conceptualization?

Is this an unintended result of the technological progress? The direct address to spectators as a witness, characteristic for theatre, seems to be fragmented, mediated by the interposition of modern means of communication. Thus, the directness, which can be seen as a unit of perceptions, once mediated through these communication channels, is lost and has as effect a perceptual separation.

If what is seen does not correspond to what is heard, the spectators' perceptions come into conflict. The loss of unity, of directness in unfolding the scenic actions appears as an inability of the theatre practitioners to adapt to the technical means provided by the technological progress. From the point of view of the spectator, witnessing the unfolding, this unity of directness is and remains to be the fundamental condition to be defined as spectator.

In this context, does the director actually offer the actor the opportunity to tell a story? In this respect, Peter Brook observes that the narrative subjectivation "demands a sense of continuity, of flow, like a stream passing over rocks, boulders, waterfalls, but always flowing to the sea"¹. Thus, as regards the performance, the most important aspect seems to be that of its *flow*. However, this flow does not involve exclusively the visual aspect, but also the aural aspect. The interweaving of the two inseparable aspects creates the perceptual experience of the spectator. The experiences of the contemporary theatre seem to correct the errors of appreciation resulted from a vision isolated in the conceptualization of desideratum thinking and to show us the opposite direction of research applicable to human existence: from perceptual to conceptual and not from conceptual to perceptual.

Derrida observes: "Visibility – a moment ago the theorem, here the theatre – is always that which, separating it from itself, breaches [*entame*] the living voice."². Visibility as *opsis* appears to us as a theorem which needs to be proved. The demonstration consists in *narrating the staging*. The theorem is tested during the creative process, so the *opsis* can be validated or invalidated. Derrida's vision takes into account only the *architecture in visibility*. But for the performance, it is imperative for the visual architecture to intertwine with the aural architecture.

In the ancient amphitheatre the sound was amplified by conceiving the performance in an acoustic-visual system consisting mainly of θέατρον (*teatron*), ὀρχήστρα (*orchestra*), πάροδος (*parodos*), σκηνή (*skene*), and by the use of masks. "It is amazing the attention the ancient Greek stage paid to the acoustic, sound and

¹ Brook, Peter: *Playing by Ear: Reflections on Sound and Music*, Theatre Communications Group, New York, 2020, p. 43.

² Derrida, Jacques: *Of Grammatology*, translated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore & London, 1997, p. 306.

aural condition of theatre experience”³ to which, at present, we tend to ascribe dimensions, with predilection, visual. At the same time, we should take into consideration the idea that: “Although the name *theatron* suggests an emphasis on sight, in reality actors and chorus would look rather small even from *seats only part-way up*, and from the top rows one would see mostly colors and patterns of movement rather than details of costuming or masks. The acoustics in this theater, however, are magnificent, and words spoken very softly in the orchestra can be heard in the top rows (as long as your neighbors are quiet).”⁴. Somehow similar and at the same time complementary to the principle according to which the space of the performance was organized, “[t]he mask is required both to disguise the natural voice of the performer and to suggest an extrahuman vocal identity; thus the mask functions doubly in aural perception as it does in the visual dimension”⁵. In classical European antiquity, the performance, comprising in a single space εἰκών (eikon) and αἰδεῖν (aeidein), appears in the spectator’s attention as an (*en*) *chanting image*. “Additionally, for at least the past decade neuroscientists have been probing the effects of music and brain activity, studies that might reveal much about how the ancient audience respond to the music and speech patterns of drama. For example, Robert Zattore has recently identified a close coupling of both auditory and motor channels in the brain while it processes meter and rhythm.”⁶. Thus, we can advance the idea that the performing space of European antiquity was a space that favoured the spectator’s experience centred on a *narrative shift from imaginary to sensory*. This theatrical experience probably aimed at a lucid negotiation between what could be felt, through the process of evocation in the spectator’s imagination, and what was immediately perceived through the senses.

As regards the connection between the aural architecture, the textual semantic field and the scenic image, we can also make reference to the Elizabethan theatrical space. But perhaps “[b]ecause aural architecture is not a recognized discipline, its concepts are not significant part of our cultural and intellectual mainstream”⁷, and

³ Popescu, Marian: “Reflection on Sound, Voice and Attention”, in: *Studia Dramatica*, Nr. LIV, 2, 2014, p. 11.

⁴ McManus, B. F.: “Structure of the Greek Theater”, 1999, http://www2.cnr.edu/home/bmcmanus/tragedy_theater.html [access: 04.19.2015].

⁵ Sheppard, Anthony W.: *Revealing Masks*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 2001, p. 32.

⁶ Meineck, Peter: “The embodied space: performance and visual cognition at the Theatre of Dionysos”, in: *New England Classical Journal*, Nr. 39.1, 2012, p. 10.

⁷ Blesser, Barry and Linda-Ruth Salter: *Spaces Speak, Are You Listening?: Experiencing Aural Architecture*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, 2007, p. 6.

because in relation to a visual contiguity, the aural contiguity seems fragmented, the stage space seems to be reduced to what is seen. However, the stage space includes also the aural space. Involving a temporal unfolding, the performance kept in use, albeit empirically, unconsciously, fundamental principles of aural architecture. How? Due to its temporal nature. Here is what Salter and Blesser state: “The duality between aural and visual architecture diverges still further when we consider that sound is actually more complex than light. Although both have a frequency spectrum and amplitude intensity, *time* is central to sound but mostly irrelevant for vision. Sound and light waves have dramatically different velocities: sound waves traverse a space with perceptible speed: light waves move instantaneously.”⁸. Therefore, the director’s vision cannot function by itself in the absence of the director’s conscious taking into consideration the dimension of *unfolding*.

Thus, the director has to consider at least three types of architecture: spatial architecture, moving architecture and aural architecture. These are his main narrative instruments. Each mainly involves a different accent: a semiotic, a stylistic and a morphological accent. But these accents are (or should be treated by the director) equally because they must form a unity of flow according to Brook’s metaphorical expression.

Jacques Derrida, in his *Of Grammatology*, (*The Theorem and the Theatre*), discusses Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s attitude towards the mask which he condemns. In fact, the *condemnation of writing* is a *condemnation of the mask*. Derrida, referring to an excerpt from Rousseau’s text from *Letter to M. d’Alembert*, in which he makes caustic comments about the content of a public festival, states: “this festival without object is also a festival without sacrifice, without expense, and without play. Above all without masks.”⁹. In Rousseau’s text, quoted by Derrida, is also the following phrase: “So that each sees and loves himself in the others.”¹⁰. In its initial context, this sentence is as follows: “Do better yet; let the spectators become an entertainment to themselves; make them actors themselves; do it so that each sees and loves himself in the others so that all will be better united.”¹¹. That being so, we notice that even in this case the image of what comes together to form a whole is referred to. However, our attention is

⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 16.

⁹ Derrida, Jacques: *op. cit.*, p. 307.

¹⁰ Rousseau, Jean-Jacques: *Letter to M. d’Alembert*, apud Jacques Derrida, *op. cit.*, p. 307.

¹¹ Rousseau, Jean-Jacques: *Politics and the Arts – Letter to M. d’Alembert on the Theatre*, translated with notes and introduction by Allan Bloom, Cornell University Press, Ithaca & New York, 1968, p. 126.

drawn by the possible difference between unity and homogeneity. It seems that Rousseau, actually, makes reference to homogeneity and not to unity. Therefore, the Derrida-Rousseau dispute, seen through the prism of the contemporary theatre performance, would prove useless. Isn't this actor-spectator or spectator-actor somehow disengaged from the narrative? And hence the revolt against the director in his capacity as guardian of the narrative? But if we were to characterize this spectator-actor, how would we characterize him? Is he an actor who misses the role? In Basarab Nicolescu's terms, it would sound like this: "A bad actor is like a puppet dependent on his own masks. For a good actor, the masks are only the way to reveal our own face."¹²

Another element that we can bring into discussion would indicate the area of search for a valid answer to the Derridian question: "Where should one search, in the city, for that lost unity of glance and speech?"¹³ Perhaps this loss should be sought in the fact that Rousseau was not only a philosopher, but composed dramatic works such as *Narcisse ou l'Amant de lui-même* (*Narcissus, Or the Lover of Himself: A Comedy*), *Le Devin du village* (*The Soothsayer*), *Pygmalion*, and a work of music theory, *Dissertation sur la musique moderne* (*Dissertation on Modern Music*). In his *Dissertation on Modern Music*, Rousseau notes: "I do not know why music is not a friend of reasoning."¹⁴ An idea developed also by Hegel: "what alone is fitted for expression in music is the object-free inner life, abstract subjectivity assuch"¹⁵. The answer to this possible problematic comes from Rousseau's musical practice. We can find the answer, for example, by simply listening to Colette's aria *J'ai perdu tout mon bonheur* (*I've lost all my happiness*) from *Le Devin du village* (*The Soothsayer*), first performed in 1752. What would be noticeable from a conceptual point of view? The fact that for the composer Rousseau music is extracted, as in the case of other composers, for example, Offenbach, from the sound architecture. In Colette's aria, the musicality is built on binary reasoning of cause and effect at the level of sound forms. The

¹² Nicolescu, Basarab: *Théorèmes poétiques / Teoreme poetice*, translated (in Romanian) L.M. Arcade, illustration by Mircia Dumitrescu, Curtea Veche, București, 2013, p. 251, "Un mauvais acteur est comme une marionnette entre les mains de ses propres masques. Pour un bon acteur, les masques ne sont que le chemin obligé pour faire surgir notre propre visage." [translation from French into English R.T.].

¹³ Derrida, Jacques: *op. cit.*, p. 304.

¹⁴ Rousseau, Jean-Jacques: "Dissertation sur la musique moderne", 2010, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5626542x/f10.image>, [access: 04.13.2021], "Je ne sais pourquoi la Musique n'est pas amie du raisonnement..." [translation from French into English R.T.].

¹⁵ Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich: *Aesthetics Lectures on Fine Art*, vol.II, translated by T.M.Knox, The Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1975, p. 891.

musicality of this musical style practiced by Rousseau ignores the distances in creating the musical notes. And this is because: “In order to be understood the sound is not appropriated by using primarily the rationality.”¹⁶ Understanding music or speech that involves sound strictly as a text through the filter of rationality leads to excessive fragmentation, loss of objectification.

Thus, what will later become the opera performance, assumes, through Rousseau, from a philosophical point of view, the fusion between rationalism and hedonism that leads us, paradoxically, to a kind of romantic naturalism, and from the point of view of the artistic expression to ignoring the temporal dimension in musicality. Therefore, losing this possible third dimension of sound architecture, music is expressed only in unrelated imagistic sequences. The non-diegetic sounds, for example, are removed from the body of the song.

Considering the above aspect, we propose to reflect on the diegetic versus nondiegetic aspect. The diegetic mode of a narrative is that of a consecutive unfolding. Indeed, this is the fundamental aspect of stage speech: one word unfolds consecutively to another word, one sentence to another sentence. In general, in ordinary speech, the communication in terms of complementary sentence, of describing a state or action, prevails. Probably, from a quantitative point of view, the consecutive sentences are much better represented numerically than the others. Stage speech is not limited to the utterance of a dramatic text. Stage speech can also be detected by relating the articulated sounds of speech to the universe of inarticulate sounds, noises. This emphasizes, in fact, the aspect of the scenic narrative as a diegesis. This is due to the fact that stage speech is mainly associated with a state or physical action. Thus, the spectator's attention on the narrative events is stimulated by the relation between the consecutive function and the function of the simultaneity of stage actions, on the one hand, and the stage utterance, on the other hand. However, we believe that this assumption establishes as functional an aspect that the direct observation of the performance sees as secondary. Namely: the director organizes, for the spectator, an experience. In this experience there is meaning but also lack of meaning, there is what is speakable and unspeakable, describable and indescribable. It is both a mediated and a direct experience. If it were only mediated, it would not be an experience in the fullness of the word, but only an empirical activity, if it were only unmediated, it would not be, also in this case, an experience in the fullness of the word, but only a conceptualization. Participating in an experience

¹⁶ Cozma, Diana: “Towards a Universal Language of Theatre”, in: *Theatrical Colloquia*, Nr. 11, issue 2, 2021, p. 41.

includes all the attributes that only an unrestricted experience, fully accessible to immersing and emerging, can provide. An experience that is not judged in terms of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, pleasure or displeasure, opacity or permeability, but possibility.

Thus, theatre directing defines itself as the opposite of conceptual art as inner experience. It is an experience that you, as spectator, should take part in, *playing* an active role, and not just *watching* an event. Directing should not be just an interpretation of a text, a story conveyed in dialogue and monologue. Directing covers the whole narrative. It manages to address the spectator in a concrete way.

The narrative of the text in phonetic transcription seems to be a strictly syntactic narrative. Consonantal notation which, in reality, emphasizes vocal inflection, aims to convince us that only vocalization is relative. Thus, acquiring an absolute belief in the fixed and immutable form of the consonant, we forget that, for example, in Romanian language the consonant “ț” is, in fact, most often, pronounced “tî”. The consonant writing is a mnemonic notation. The notation, the writing is in itself an approximation. Speech also seems to be an approximation of a contained idea, but the difference lies in the degree of approximation. Speech has a higher degree of physical objectification. Its role is to generate, through the process of recollection, through appealing to recognizable forms of information, new forms, which thus known, positioned in a balanced relation to previous or past forms, can be later recognized and function as memory.

Up to this level, we believe that the indispensability of morphology for syntax works. The new cannot exist, through a syntactic artifice, unless it rests on the past and memory. The morpho-syntactic war which continues today seems as devoid of horizon as the furious ancient dispute between iconodules and iconoclasts. With or without image, form can exist in sonority. Sophisticated constructions are thrown into play that start from the falsification of the statement: “loss of faith in the stability of the frame of reference. Hence the abandonment of the figurative paradigm. Not that it no longer has reality, only that it has become indeterminate and even for itself remains elusive, outside the influence of form”¹⁷.

¹⁷ Lenain, T., Van Wymeersch B., Lories D., Steinmetz R., Dekoninck R.: *De la critique nietzschéenne à l'aube du XXI^e siècle* in *Esthétique et philosophie de l'art: Repères historiques et thématiques*, De Boeck Université, Bruxelles, 2002, p. 192, „Ce qui les caractérise, d’une façon générale, est la perte de croyance dans la stabilité du référentiel. De là l’abandon du paradigme figuratif. Ce n’est pas qu’il n’y ait plus de réalité, mais bien que celle-ci soit devenue l’indétermine même pour qu’elle demeure insaisissable en dehors de l’emprise de la forme.” [translation from French into English R.T.]

Perhaps there was never a belief in the stability of the frame of reference, so it could not be lost. This reminds us of Lesches of Mytilene who, in his *Little Iliad*, vehemently tries to complete Homer and thus correct him, insisting that “Diomedes and Odysseus were on their way back from Troy at night after stealing the Palladion”¹⁸. But with or without the stolen Palladion, the Homeric Troy fell because the Trojans destroyed their own walls. Palladion is not the cause of the collapse of the city, nor is it the quality of the great Achaean warriors, their superiority or justification. And perhaps that is why the Homeric epic was parodied, to give Athens a chance to explain why no combatant could take part in this impossible self-devouring conflict: “O Father, never I will aid the Mice in any misery [...] Nor will I yield the Frogs’ wants my supplies, for their infirm minds that no confines keep”¹⁹.

The syntax operator, as a semiotic dimension, even if it does not comprehensively include morphology in semiotics, chooses to consider it absolutely integrated, without its relevant autonomy, in the syntax. But morphology is not a subspecies of syntax. The morphology has a validity identical to the syntax and an almost parallel unfolding, even if they are inseparable. Morphology is relevant for speech, first and foremost, while the syntax for the written text.

Hence the error of considering speech as a written text, and the text identical with speech. But, certainly, in this case, we are not dealing with the chicken or the egg causality dilemma. Writing is after speech in all cases, no matter what we consider to be writing. Speech precedes writing. The text cannot exist outside of writing, even in the case of mechanical copying by modern means of recording.

If we read the same text, as speakers of different languages, text written in a language other than the one we both know or speak as a second language, not as a mother tongue, we will be amazed at the sound difference. Beyond the semantic meaning we discover a morphological meaning. Of course, the meaning of a text can be seen as the prior understanding of a code that, by applying it to another text, can provide, at the end of the action, meaning. In the case of a text, the understanding must not be anterior, in its entirety, but posterior. In the case of speech, the *understanding* may be prior to the speech and, in a form appropriate or inappropriate to the intent, at the end of it.

¹⁸ Hesychius: *Lexicon in Greek Epic Fragments – From the Seventh to the Fifth Century B.C.*, edited and translated by Martin L. West, Harvard University Press, London & Cambridge (MA), 2003, p. 133.

¹⁹ Homer: *Batrachomyomachia, Hymns and Epigrams*, translated by George Chapman, introduction and notes by Richard Hooper, John Russell Smith, London, 1888, pp. 10-11.

However, in the case of uttering a word, for there is no prior understanding, it can be deduced from the context. But the context of speech is not just the other words. The context of speech is the movement of a speaking body in a reference space. That is why the text can benefit from a *clarity* which is unattainable in speech. The speech is, even in the case of its protocolization, more vague than clear. Speech, emphasizing the morphological dimension, to the detriment of the syntactic one, does not favour the meaning in the expression, but the intention of the speaker; either hiding or revealing the speaker's intention. We consider this a cause due to which we can understand what a speaker of a language totally unknown to us wants to communicate without understanding what he is saying. Or we can come to speak a totally foreign language, without learning it, by simply exposing ourselves to the environment in which it is spoken.

Not unexpectedly, we might be told that this is a modality inherent in the learning process. However, in the context of this demonstration, we are interested in the way in which this type of learning manifests itself. If an individual is exposed to a living language, the *understanding* apparently does not occur gradually and is not based on a mechanical or organic imitation of the language he hears. At the same time, it is not cumulative and gradual. It is like an explosion. At some point, after two weeks, after two years, suddenly everything seems to make sense and the individual *understands*. And not only does he understand, but he can make himself understood. The written text is not subject to this binomial. It is univocal. Understanding is the sole responsibility of the reader. The reader cannot make himself understood to the text, only the text to the reader. It is a barrier that speech does not know. In speech the individual understands and makes himself understood. From this distinction made above, we can draw the conclusion that the director's narrative is not limited to the syntactic aspect. The director's narrative is a morpho-syntactic narrative, from all points of view.

When we speak of the subject of an observation we must understand, as theories in quantum physics show us, that the observed cannot take place and form in contact with the observable. However, subjectivity always has two ends. It begins where it can be observed and ends where it is observed. We ask ourselves the question that even physicists have failed to answer: are the observing subject and the observed subject the same entity or not? Is this complicated connection of *quantum entanglement* similar to the process of subjectivation? And does it exist, objectively, between particles, in the absence of the subjectivity that observes it through technological mediation? Should the subject be the entity that manages to observe connections between other (at least two) entities? And then, in the absence of the subject, nothing keeps the entities connected to each

other? Is the subject a kind of adhesive of reality? But then does this not change the relationship between the individual and the collective? Should the subject be a form of existence that escaped psychological research far too preoccupied with the substantiations of the self, the conscious, the unconscious? The subject is not always the description of a substance. It is the description of a function present in a presence, without which nothing can be situated in the stage existence.

To sum up, in the relationship between the dimension of the aural narration of the performance and the text we can see that the playwright's text, once spoken and placed in the stage context, changes its form in terms of preserving the subject. The spectator is thus placed before two types of text: the dramatic text and the text of the performance (dramaturgy of actions). In this regard we refer to Keir Elam's observation: "The spectator will interpret this complex of message – speech, gesture, the scenic continuum, etc. – as an integrated text, according to the theatrical, dramatic and cultural codes at his disposal, and will *in turn* assume the role of transmitter of signals to the performers (laughter, applause, boos, etc.), along visual and acoustic channels, which both the performers and members of the audience themselves will interpret in terms of approval, hostility, and so on. This feedback process and the intercommunication between spectators is one of the major distinguishing features of live theatre, which can in this sense be seen as a *cybernetic machine* (Barthes)."²⁰

Thus, the performance text (dramaturgy of actions) is a text written until the end of rehearsals, unlike the already written text of the playwright, to which both the actor and the spectator contribute, practically indicating what he/she is willing to hear/see. However, from Elam's observation, we notice that he focuses on the ability of the spectators to intervene in the text of the performance only through active impulses, noises, laughter, applause. The direct experience we have with the way a performance is built, makes us notice, in our turn, that Elam excludes the silence from the ways the audience intervenes in the spectacular texture. Aural architecture does not refer strictly to acoustic excitation, but also to its manifest absence. However, the absence of the spectators' acoustic excitement does not automatically mean their disapproval, but at the same time it can mean their full approval. Peter Brook often refers to the quality of the audience's silence as a sign for the actors that they have managed to optimally structure the narrative they perform on stage.

What cannot be revealed, in full, even in the playwright's text, and is not part of the performance text, are the quality of silences and the capacity of the aural

²⁰ Elam, Keir: *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, Routledge, London & New York, 1987, p. 23.

architecture of focusing attention on stage, which are part of the aural narrative of the performance. But sometimes „focalization is often achieved by directing a spot-light on a character or place to draw attention to them *in close-up*. The close-up, [...] is not necessarily done with lighting. It may be produced through the way the actors look at another actor or an element of the stage, or through a *foregrounding effect*”²¹, and other times it is achieved, for example, by overlapping a sound background on the stage image, or precisely by eliminating, as much as possible, any acoustic impulse when an actor utters a line. The *foregrounding effect* that the director, through the manipulation of the aural narrative, can apply to the dramatic text is the way to draw attention to a stage element that he considers important. Thus the aural dimension of the performance becomes an instrument that mediates the materialization of the sensoriality of the performance text as the *cybernetic impulses* described by Barthes mediate the materialization of the text itself. “Actually, Barthes’ conception of theatre is best summarized in his description of theatre as a *cybernetic machine*, which as soon as the curtain rises, diffuses a variety of simultaneous messages – from setting, costume, and lighting to the actors’ positions, words and gestures – some of which remain constant for extended periods such as the setting, while others continuously change such as words and gesture. The significance of Barthes’ statement can be understood in two ways. On the one hand, it sums up the concept of theatre underlying the previously-mentioned approaches inasmuch as it foregrounds the polyfunctionality of theatrical sign. On the other hand, it calls into question another fundamental issue in theatrical communication, that of the role of the audience in receiving and interacting with these ‘cybernetic’ messages.”²²

And yet, beyond the multifunctionality of the theatrical sign and the role of the audience in interacting with the *cyber messages* of the stage, the aural narrative works as a means to accentuate the sensorial experience of the performance (and enrich it) without neglecting the textual-ideational experience. After all, the theatre performance should probably formulate ideas in an interrogative form that it can address the audience in a sensorial way.

We notice, here, the fact that the scenic-narrative means chosen by the director impose the unfolding of writing the performance in the *here and now*. It is a major change from the traditional way of conceiving the European performance.

²¹ Pavis, Patrice: *Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts and Analysis*, translated by Christine Shantz, preface by Marvin Carlson, University of Toronto Press, Toronto & Buffalo, 1998, p. 151.

²² Besbes, Khaled: *The Semiotics of Beckett’s Theatre: A Semiotic Study of the Complete Dramatic Works of Samuel Beckett*, Universal Publishers, Boca Raton, 2007, p. 17.

Nonetheless, this change has its roots in the history of European theatre, whether we refer to the Elizabethan period or the Italian popular theatre.

In choosing the narrative theme of the performance, the director no longer limits himself to the narrative theme of a text. The emphasis shifts from semantics to narrative morphology. The director begins renouncing to address the audience as a whole and focuses on the spectator. Jerzy Grotowski is the one who, for the first time, operates a distinction between audience and spectator. His performances aim to address each spectator. Eugenio Barba goes further identifying in the *evocative dramaturgy* a *dramaturgy of spectator*. In *On Directing and Dramaturgy: Burning the House*, Barba asserts: "Work on the dramaturgy of the spectator for me meant operating on the different levels of his attention through the actions of the actors. [...] I justified every detail and action in the performance through the reactions of each of these spectators."²³ Therefore, we believe that there has been a necessity to organize both the conditions for a stage event to take place and the conceptual contexts in a narrative created with stage means.

At the same time Porter remarks: "Tied to the dominance of visual and aural sensation, audiences of stage and film must apprehend human interiors by inference, much as we do in the course of our lives."²⁴ Perhaps we could describe the experience of watching a performance as a detective experience. The spectator watches the performance *to detect* what is happening. He uses his senses to identify elements that initially may appear disparate to him but which, gradually, form a narrative.

If we consider that "Dialogue and discourse are the only actions in the play."²⁵ occurs the question: "The act of speaking, of uttering sentences, is what constitutes a performative action?"²⁶ And then another aspect: "All else is the means; dialogue is the end"²⁷? Isn't inner dialogue a monologue? After all, what gives us the difference between a monologue and a dialogue? But what if dialogue and monologue are one and the same thing? Is the difference between dialogue and monologue equivalent to the question and answer compartmentalization? Between

²³ Barba, Eugenio: *On Directing and Dramaturgy: Burning the House*, translated by Judy Barba, Routledge, London and New York, 2010, p. 184.

²⁴ Abbott, Porter H.: *The Cambridge Introduction to Narrative*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2002, p. 111.

²⁵ Pavis, Patrice: *op. cit.*, p. 97.

²⁶ *Ibidem*.

²⁷ Bahtin, Mikhail: *Problems of Dostoevski's Poetics*, edited and translated by Caryl Emerson, introduction by Wayne C. Booth, University of Minnesota Press, London & Minneapolis, 1999, p. 252.

enigma and elucidation? Do two juxtaposed monologues form a dialogue? In the absence of dialogue, can we really enter the question-answer relationship? Or in any relationship? The monologue can be considered, from a scenic point of view, the favourite realm for the manifestation of emotions. But the dialogue, on stage, goes beyond because it is a means to establish relationships based on the negotiation between similarities and differences. And that is because in a performance everything seems to be related to something.

In conclusion, stage speech supposes an act of *formulating*; a morphological formulation meant to use syntax as a vehicle and not as an objective in itself. The syntactic vehicle does not carry from one destination to another message or meaning, but a morphemic formulation. For the performance, communication is not only an address, but also a perceptual awareness. The characters address each other while the spectators witness the evolution of this relationship. The performance by formulating the morphological terms does not bring an extra understanding, meaning or solutions to problems, but develops the perceptual capacities of a single individual, namely the spectator.

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Dynamic Waiting in *Waiting for Godot*

ANDRA-MIRUNA PANTEA-RADU

(Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai“ Cluj-Napoca)

Abstract

The present article takes the simple action of simply waiting for something or someone and deals with it as if it were an active action and not a passive one, where one might think that nothing is happening. It also deals with the characters regarding where they are, their location to be precise, and what happens to them as they are waiting for Godot and how they provoke the audience to reflect on who he might be.

Keywords:

Beckett; waiting; relationship; static; dynamic; road; tree.

Rezumat

Articolul de față tratează simpla acțiune de a aștepta pe cineva ca fiind o acțiune activă și nu una pasivă care ne-ar face să credem că nimic nu se întâmplă în realitate. De asemenea, face referire la locul unde sunt personajele piesei, mai precis locul unde se află și ce se întâmplă în timp ce cei doi îl așteaptă pe Godot, în același timp provocând imaginația publicului cu privire la cine ar putea fi Godot.

Cuvinte cheie:

Beckett; așteptare; relație; static; dinamic; drum; copac.

The play *Waiting for Godot* opens with the author's captions that suggest the place and time of the action: "Country road with a tree. In the evening."¹ The road, suggested in the captions, refers to a static image. The characters wait, do not travel, as follows: "The road unites the symbolism of the line, the connection, the access with that of movement in time, with all the predictable or unpredictable events of a journey [...]. The road is the place of unforeseen encounters."². Pozzo

¹ Beckett, Samuel: *Waiting for Godot*, <http://www.samuel-beckett.net/#x4>, [access: October 29, 2020].

² Evseev, Ivan: *Dicționar de simboluri și arhetipuri culturale*, Editura Amarcord, Timișoara, 1994, p. 55. „Drumul unește simbolismul liniei, legăturii, accesului cu cel al mișcării în timp, cu toate întâmplările previzibile sau imprevizibile ale unei călătorii [...]. Drumul este locul întâlnirilor neprevăzute.” (translation M.R.P.).

and Lucky travel the road, they are the dynamic couple, and for Vladimir and Estragon, the road together with the tree makes up a landmark of the meeting. This meeting place is for Vladimir and Estragon, a more geographical than symbolic coordinate, because they have to meet Godot: "He said by the tree."³ The term "country" implies an unpaved road, perhaps made of gravel, mud or a path made by other hikers. The tree connects the three worlds: "So the tree links the three worlds: below, middle, and above. Symbolically, each tree is an image of the axis mundi, or cosmic axis, that connects the three worlds."⁴ There is a tradition in Europe that houses were built around trees, becoming revered. An example of this is an image with a fork in the road where a tree can be seen near a fountain: "Tree on a no-man's-land at a trifinium (a fork in the road) in the South Tyrol in Italy, with accompanying Christian shrine in the tradition of the European sacred landscape."⁵ It is possible that the described landscape creates a similar image: because Estragon and Vladimir call the tree a willow, they can be near a place where the water dried up. The willow is a tree that usually grows near water: "symbol of chastity [...] is compared to the Bible, the source of wisdom [...] symbol of death and cemeteries"⁶. The tree can also be interpreted as a symbol of life representing the cyclical rebirth of nature. The tree at one point in the text appears to be skeletal, but in the second act it blooms. The tree, through its flowering, represents the passage of time, highlighting that a long time has passed in human terms. For the characters, it seems that a long time has passed since they were waiting for Godot, although the second act happens the next day. Nature retains its cycles, and through this antithesis we are placed in front of the eternal and ephemeral balance of nature. This is confirmed when the characters find that the only one who lives is the tree: "Vladimir: Only the tree lives."⁷ The sequence from the cycle of a day chosen for the action at the opening of act I is that of the evening: "Vladimir:... It's worth the wait, isn't it? / Estragon: Not all night. / Vladimir: It's still day."⁸. The evening marks the end of the day and the beginning

³ Beckett, Samuel: *op. cit.*

⁴ Pennick, Nigel: *The Book of Primal Signs The High Magic of Symbols*, Destiny Books, Toronto, no date, p. 135. digital book, <https://www.scribd.com/read/351487368/The-Book-of-Primal-Signs-The-High-Magic-of-Symbols>, [access: January 24, 2020].

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 141.

⁶ Bidermann, Hans: *Dicționar de simboluri*, vol. II, translated by Petrache Dana, Editura Saeculum, București, 2002, p. 377. „[...] simbol al castității [...] este comparată cu Biblia, izvorul înțelepciunii [...] simbol al morții și al cimitirelor [...]” (translation M.R.P.).

⁷ Beckett, Samuel: *op. cit.*

⁸ *Ibidem*.

of the period of resting. Darkness causes discomfort because the human eye is not adapted to night vision. It is the moment when fantasies can appear, and the fear of danger is accentuated: “Estragon: You gave me a fright. / Vladimir: I thought it was him. / Estragon: Who? / Vladimir: Godot. / Estragon: Pah! The wind in the reeds. / Vladimir: I could have sworn I heard shouts.”⁹ When night falls, these two vagabonds become exposed to dangers because they have nowhere to hide. At the same time, the moment of the evening represents a time to analyse what happened during the day.

Vladimir and Estragon decide to wait for Godot every evening. Scenographically, the space is supposed to be in a place outside the historical time, in a place that, if we see it on stage, we cannot frame from a historical-chronological point of view (as belonging to an exact period). We cannot identify when and where the action takes place. Thus, it becomes a mythical space, as it is also described: “[T]he action is located in a non-space: an almost empty scene that is not reminiscent of any specific era”¹⁰. Murphy treats space from a Catholic point of view, stating that the characters are captives in a purgatory space: “Beckett reshapes purgatory into a negative space of spiritual and physical confinement from which escape remains as uncertain as redemption.”¹¹ Textually, landmarks of time that can be located are mentioned: “Vladimir: ... I had to think about this forever, around 1900... hand in hand, we would both have thrown ourselves from the top of the Eiffel Tower ...”¹². The landscape proposed by Beckett for the unfolding of the action becomes at some point, for Estragon, an image inspired by surrealism: “Estragon: Everything is dripping.”¹³ In the dream the notions are vague, the perception of time is different, the day-night sequence is possible in a second. Time is able to freeze in waiting, to have no present, no past and no future: “The time in which they live is a huge source of projecting confusion in consciousness.”¹⁴

⁹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁰ Allain, Paul; Harvie, Jen: *Ghidul Routledge de teatru și performance*, translated by Cristina Modreanu and Ilinca Tamara Todoru, Editura Nemira, București, 2006, pp. 178-179. „[A]cțiunea este localizată într-un non-spațiu: o scenă aproape goală care nu amintește de nicio epocă specifică”. (translation M.R.P.).

¹¹ Murphy, John: *Beckett, Joyce and the Art of the Negative*, 2016. <https://brill.com/abstract/book/edcoll/9789401201209/B9789401201209-s009.xml>, [access: October 29, 2020].

¹² Beckett, Samuel: *op. cit.*

¹³ *Ibidem*.

¹⁴ Munteanu, Romul: *Farsa tragică*, Editura Univers, București, 1989, p. 157. „Timpul în care ei trăiesc este o imensă sursă de proiectare a confuziei în conștiință” (translation M.R.P.).

The characters are confused; they do not know exactly the date or the day of the week scheduled for the meeting with Godot, nor what the day of the week it is. The lack of an orientation in a given time and a specific location can place the action anywhere and anytime, from a dramatic point of view. The spectators can understand the situation differently, depending on their imagination. The characters may be the sequence presented at the end of an era and they are among the few survivors of a past and perpetuated world so that the information they have about religion, places, is vague. Even the memories of the events of their lives, of people they know, are vague. They may be survivors of a war, and unclear memories may be the effect of post-traumatic stress. They can also be seen as people with memory problems, thus suffering from some mental disease. Their main concern is to survive the present with their implicit and immediate needs. It's not important who they are now, waiting for someone to change them is the motto of the play. The past and the future have no relevance for Vladimir and Estragon; there is only hope that tomorrow will be better, because Godot is coming.

The first line of the text indicates the theme of the play, that of the futility of the action: "Estragon (giving up again): Nothing to be done."¹⁵ The characters are waiting for Godot, and this expectation turns into an active boredom that increases the tension. They find all sorts of reasons to chat to pass the time faster; thus, Godot's absence becomes the reason for waiting and they find a reason to live, to keep moving on, to wait for him tomorrow. After Estragon manages to get the boot off his foot, the pressure of waiting is born. Esslin considers that the act of waiting for Godot is presented as fundamentally absurd.¹⁶ They are waiting for him, but they are not sure if the place is right and if he is even coming. Apparently, they asked Godot something: "Estragon: What exactly did we ask him for? / Vladimir: Were you not there? / Estragon: I can't have been listening / Vladimir: Oh... Nothing very definite. / Estragon: A kind of prayer. / Vladimir: Precisely. / Estragon: A vague supplication. / Vladimir: Exactly. / Estragon: And what did he reply? / Vladimir: That he'd see."¹⁷ It is uncertain what they asked him for and if it helps them. What is certain from this dialogue is that we can assume the two once met Godot, since they talked to him and asked him something. The characters may have a physical problem¹⁸, such as poor or blurred vision. There is

¹⁵ Beckett, Samuel: *op. cit.*

¹⁶ See Esslin, Martin, *Teatrul absurdului*, translated by Alina Nelega, Editura Unitext, București, 2009, p. 50.

¹⁷ Beckett, Samuel: *op. cit.*

¹⁸ Corrow, S. L., Dalrymple, K. A., & Barton, J. J.: *Prosopagnosia: current perspectives. Eye and brain*, 8, 2016, pp. 75-165. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5398751> [access: March 9, 2020]. Prosopagnosia is a disease in which people don't

a condition in which people do not remember the faces of the people they know, called *prosopagnosia*. They ask every person they meet if they are Godot.

Esslin considers that: "Language itself, in Beckett's plays, serves to express the crisis, the disintegration of language. Where there is no certainty, there can be no definite meanings – and the impossibility of ever attaining certainties is one of the main themes of Beckett's plays. Godot's promises are vague and uncertain."¹⁹ They hope to be saved and sleep in the heat with a full stomach. Godot's nature is unknown, he may be of divine origin because they hope to be redeemed, or human because he is expected to arrive riding on a horse. When Beckett was asked who Godot is, he said: "If I knew what Godot was, I would have said so."²⁰

The author has a stage direction where he mentions: "All four wear bowlers."²¹ We do not know the exact age of the characters. We can assume that the oldest character is Lucky: Pozzo says that for sixty years he has Lucky who is a Knuk. In the French version of the play *Waiting for Godot*, the word 'knuk' is present, while in the English version of the play the word is not mentioned in the text. Beckett's answer to what this word means is that he simplified the play in English, but it does not explain the meaning of the word that does not exist in the dictionary.²² A reference to this word could be found in Frank Baum's work, *The Life and Adventures of Santa Claus*, where knooks are mentioned as creatures that appeared together with fairies on Earth: "Next came the Knooks, whose duty it is to watch over the beasts of the world, both gentle and wild. The Knooks have a hard time of it, since many of the beasts are ungovernable and rebel against restraint. But they know how to manage them, after all, and you will find that certain laws of the Knooks are obeyed by even the most ferocious animals. Their anxieties make the Knooks look old and worn and crooked, and their natures are a bit rough from associating with wild creatures continually; yet they are most useful to humanity and to the world in general, as their laws are the only laws the forest beasts recognize except those of the Master Woodsman."²³

recognize human faces and they don't remember. A possible cause might be a head injury caused by the beat up of the characters.

¹⁹ Esslin, Martin: *op. cit.*, p. 78.

²⁰ Bennett, Michael, *Reassessing: The Absurd Camus, Beckett, Ionesco, Genet, and Pinter*, Editura Palgrave Macmillan, New-York, 2012, p. 28.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 37.

²² Cohen, Robert: *Pozzo's Knook, Beckett's Boys, and Santa Claus, Modern Drama, summer 2011* <http://www.robertcohendrama.com/other-writings/pozzos-knook-becketts-boys-and-santa-claus/> [access: February 18, 2019].

²³ Baum, Frank: *Life and Adventure of Santa Claus*. <https://www.scribd.com/document/6568180/The-Life-and-Adventures-of-Santa-Clause>, [access: February 18, 2020].

Lucky's monologue invokes Christian-religious themes²⁴, mentions a "personal God" with a "white beard" who lives beyond time. The personal God would be Jesus Christ, whom Christians are waiting for to be saved. Another interpretation of Lucky's monologue would be, "Lucky's 'think' is a parody of academic rhetoric and the blunt instrument of theological and philosophical inquiry."²⁵ When Beckett²⁶ directed *Waiting for Godot*, he began rehearsals by focusing on Lucky's monologue. He claimed that the essence of the play is found in this monologue: "an apathetic divinity, dwindling man, and indifferent nature."²⁷

The boy is the only certainty that confirms that the place and time where he is waiting for Godot is that of the predetermined meeting.

The characters cannot escape from the waiting circle. The irony of fate is that they cannot even commit suicide because they do not have a rope (they try to use the string from their pants, but it breaks), and for Pozzo and Lucky the very end of the rope shows who is leading the other's life. The relationship between Pozzo and Lucky depends on the rope, while Gogo and Didi need one to take their lives. Vladimir decides that if Godot does not come tomorrow either, they will hang themselves (we still do not know what with). Textually, the play ends with the idea of leaving, but the captions contradict: no one moves. The wait continues: "Vladimir: Well, shall we go? / Estragon: Yes, let's go. *They do not move.*"²⁸ The play ends with a line that involves movement, but the stage direction says that the two remain motionless. The same thing happens in both acts.

The structure of the piece is circular. The second Act repeats the action of the first: "instead of a progression of time within an identifiable setting, we have a repetition in the second act of the same things that we saw and heard in the first act."²⁹ Vladimir and Estragon meet again every morning by the tree, although Estragon spends the night elsewhere. We can assume that they have been waiting for Godot for a long time: "Estragon: ... last night I talked about some trifles.

²⁴ Umama, Shah: *Religious Study of Waiting for Godot*, published https://www.academia.edu/20114710/Religious_Study_of_Waiting_for_Godot [last access: February 25, 2019].

²⁵ McDonald, Ronan: *The Cambridge Introduction To Samuel Beckett*, Cambridge University Press, 2006, p. 35.

²⁶ Graver, Lawrence: *Samuel Beckett: Waiting for Godot*, second edition, University Press, Cambridge, 2004, p. 46.

²⁷ *Ibidem*.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 103.

²⁹ Roberts, James: *Waiting for Godot & Other Plays*, p. 43, https://www.academia.edu/25597801/Waiting_for_Godot [access: February 15, 2019].

We have been doing this for about fifty years.”³⁰ In both acts, both Pozzo, Lucky and the Boy (who communicates the same message to them in each appearance) materialize on the scene only once, not changing in any way the initial situation in which the two find themselves. The same characters are present in both acts. With small differences, the only evolution is “entropy”, giving up hope, material objects and even extended speech³¹ as the characters end up in the same situation. Even if suicide seems a possibility – in both acts they want to hang themselves from the tree – the irony of breaking the rope cancels the exit from the circle. So, Godot can be expected again tomorrow; waiting causes the symmetry to resume. We are dealing with a recursive time: “Beckett’s heroes are the modern descendants of Sisyphus [...] Godot is the new name for the rock they roll up the mountain during the day and see tumbling down again during the night, when they put off waiting *until tomorrow*.”³²

Starting from the title of the play, which represents a static action, the characters manage to define for the viewer the state of expectation. The characters do not know exactly why they are waiting for him, he did not give them a concrete reason. They are waiting for possible help, a vague request. The wait becomes stressful because Gogo and Didi focus only on the action of waiting in themselves and cannot enjoy anything else. They are impatient, bored, aggressive and looking for ways to make time pass faster precisely because they know nothing to do but wait for the moment. For them there is only the present, their future is Godot and they are willing to wait for him even if he does not come, and this waiting becomes a way to live (always anchored in waiting, in the present).

Suicide would be an alternative if Godot did not arrive, but the hope of tomorrow will always keep them alive; they cannot conceive that Godot never shows up, they can only understand that he did not appear today. They have nothing to lose if they wait for him but possibly something to gain if he ever turns up.

The hope of Godot’s arrival represents the need of all mankind to cling to something in order to move forward. The situation becomes ridiculous due to the uncertainty of waiting. They do not know if the place where they are waiting is right or the exact day and time of the meeting, they do not know what Godot

³⁰ Beckett, Samuel, *op. cit.*

³¹ See: Brown, Russell-John: *Istoria teatrului universal*, translated by Dana Ionescu, Adriana Voicu and Cristina Maria Crăciun, Editura Nemira, București, 2016, p. 454.

³² Köhler, Andrea: *Passing Time. An Essay on Waiting*, translated from German by Eskin Michael, Upper West Side Philosophers, New York, 2017, p. 40. <https://www.scribd.com/read/332699537/Passing-Time-An-Essay-on-Waiting#> [access: March 26, 2019].

looks like, if he will arrive or not, but they hope that their prayer will be granted. The Boy is the only one who has seen Godot and we find out from him that Godot has a white beard. We can assume that its origin is a divine one, because God is represented in iconography in this way. The name Godot can be an expansion of the English word God. So, Godot can be in this context God seen by Beckett. A God that the humans are waiting for in order to lead a better life. The boy appears to be an employee of Godot. He guards the goats and has a brother that guards the sheep. From the first appearance in the play, Vladimir asks the Boy if he wasn't there yesterday. From that we understand that waiting for Godot has been going on for some time. We cannot say for sure if the same boy comes in both acts or if they are different people. This state of forgetfulness, of confusion that the characters have reflects the state of humanity. The post-war context in which the futility of any action appeared represents the need of people to find the lost meaning of human existence. In the end, it does not matter if Godot comes or not; the *wait* is important, as this is where the hope of moving forward is born.

Estragon and Vladimir try their best to create a more pleasant stay by initiating discussions. The present for them becomes a torment, as in Buddhism where life is perceived as suffering. For them there is only hope that either through Godot or by suicide (they will not do that because that would mean they would act in some way, turning the play into a drama and moving it out of the tragic-comic pattern in which it was written) they will go beyond the condition of suffering. Thus, through the suffering produced by waiting, with hope the characters are purified and salvation comes either through Godot or through themselves. By waiting, Beckett gave a purpose to human existence. The writer projected in his work a literary anthropology of man as a "waiting-being."³³ Godot's expectation is also felt by the public: just as the two await him, the audience also becomes a waiting participant, thus sharing a collective expectation (the reason for the wait is as uncertain for the characters as it is for the audience). The wait generates the same state: "whether you are waiting for God or for a bus you are reduced to much the same state of suspension in any empty or unproductive interval, and this brings into play a special kind of attentiveness – on one hand, a scaling down of interim expectations and, on the other, a heightening of one's availability to interim reality."³⁴

³³ See: Balotă, Nicolae: *Lupta cu absurdul*, București, Editura Univers, 1971, p. 449.

³⁴ Kalb, Jonathan: *Beckett in Performance*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2012. <https://www.cambridge.org/ro/academic/subjects/arts-theatre-culture/european-theatre/beckett-performance?format=AR>, [access: March 9, 2020].

Estragon is addressed by Vladimir as “Gogo” when he speaks to him. Vladimir is called “Didi” by Estragon, and the Boy calls him “Albert”. We learn very little about their past from the play: “Vladimir: You should have been a poet. / Estragon: I was. (*Gestures towards his rags*) Isn’t that obvious?”³⁵ This may be a joke; we can’t say for sure when the characters are serious and when they are joking. Kalb³⁶ talks about a discussion between Beckett and Vivian Mercier, in which she asked for clarification on the differences in text between the French and English versions, stating that: “... Didi and Gogo sound as if they had earned PhD’s.”³⁷, Beckett answers, “How do you know they hadn’t?”³⁸. Kalb comments on Beckett’s response as another example of “... the characters use unexpected words to make us unsure about their history ...”³⁹ Estragon sees all of humanity in Pozzo, calling him Cain and Abel, and when Pozzo asks who they are, the answer is “we are men.”

The characters have various physical and mental illnesses. Estragon is injured by his boot and kicked in the shins by Lucky; he suffers from a form of amnesia, always being forgetful. During the play he continuously wants to leave, but every time, Vladimir reminds him that he has to stay because he is waiting for Godot. We learn that Estragon was beaten at the beginning of the second act. Vladimir is in pain because of his prostate when urinating. Lucky’s neck is injured due to the rope, his speech is meaningless, and in Act II he becomes mute. Pozzo claims that Lucky could dance. Pozzo always forgets where his things are, and in the second Act he is blind. It is possible that Lucky’s name signifies the irony of a master-slave relationship, Lucky being a lucky one, unlike the two vagabonds who are worried about the next day. Even though Pozzo has Lucky in a leash that wounds his neck in the first act, in the second act Pozzo becomes chained by Lucky. Their relationship is one of interdependence in which relationships are reversed, constantly presented at opposite poles. Alvin Epstein⁴⁰ interprets Lucky’s monologue as follows: “He’s ordered to think, not to speak, but clearly from Lucky’s utter compliance to Pozzo’s every order, he understands that his «thoughts» are to be spoken; he’s identified as a «thinker» who must communicate his thoughts (not someone else’s) through speech.”⁴¹ Beckett characterizes Pozzo

³⁵ Beckett, Samuel, *op. cit.*

³⁶ Kalb, Jonathan: *op. cit.*, p. 46.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 29.

³⁸ *Ibidem*.

³⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 186.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*.

as “a weak character who has to overcompensate.”⁴² Pozzo has a chair with him that is carried by Lucky. The theme of the chairs is often found in Beckett’s plays: “In most of Beckett’s plays, the stage action is organised around chairs which, in fact, are closely connected with the theme of movement and immobility.”⁴³ The name Godot might have been inspired by an experience Beckett had. Deirdre Bair tells the story of a cyclist participating in the Tour de France. People were waiting for him to pass (he was older than the rest of the participants), and his name was Godot, therefore everyone was waiting for Godot⁴⁴. Beckett claimed that Godot’s name was inspired by the idea of a boot. Footwear becomes part of the actor’s play: “In French slang, the word for boot is *godillot*, *godasse*”⁴⁵ which can also be translated as clodhopper. Since Beckett was an English speaker, the name Godot may also suggest “God-dot” or “go-dot”. In the context of the play, it can be posited that the two are waiting for God (continuously) or that it is about a cyclicity of waiting: we end and resume the process with each end, or, as Ionesco would say, “Beckett’s entire work is an agony, a long moan.”⁴⁶

Nick Mount recounts in a video⁴⁷ that when *Waiting for Godot* was played in a prison, the detainees watched with interest; they empathized with the characters in the sense that they had also learned how to wait. Another argument would be that the characters present themselves as they are: they do not wear a mask. Beckett says of the audience to the show staged in the San Quentin Prison⁴⁸: “[T]hey knew what is meant by waiting – and they knew if Godot finally came, he would only be a disappointment.”⁴⁹

This play tests the reaction of two humans and the psychological effect that the waiting can have on them. The waiting for Godot evolves in time that passed

⁴² *Ibidem*, p. 175.

⁴³ Guardamagna, Daniela; Sebellin, Rossana: *The Tragic Comedy of Samuel Beckett*, Laterza, Roma, 2009, p. 128, https://www.academia.edu/3375885/The_Tragic_Comedy_of_Samuel_Beckett, [access: February 25, 2020].

⁴⁴ Bair, Deirdre: *Samuel Beckett a Biography*, Simon&Schuster, New York, 1993, p. 382.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*.

⁴⁶ Ionesco, Eugène: *Antidoturi*, second edition, translated by Dimov Marina, Editura Humanitas, București, 2017, p. 188. „întreaga operă a lui Beckett este o agonie, un geamăt prelung.” (translation M.R.P.).

⁴⁷ Mount, Nick: Talking about *Waiting for Godot*. [Video on You Tube] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ddsl5nPfAc>, [access: October 29, 2020].

⁴⁸ Esslin, Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

⁴⁹ Ackerley, C.J.; Gontarskit S.E.: *The Groove Companion to Samuel Beckett, A Reader’s Guide to His Works, Life, and Thought*, Grove Press New York, 2004. https://www.scribd.com/doc/158853410/The-Grove-Companion-to-Beckett#r_search-menu_574129 [access: October 29, 2020].

from the beginning of the play, but never in action or tension, from this point of view the wait is linear, even if the play has a circular view as a symmetric begin and end. The only thing that changes from the beginning to the end of the play is the time that passed by. Waiting for no apparent reason becomes the equivalent of Godot. So this personification of waiting gives them strength for the never ending tomorrow of waiting. Godot is the absent presence, the absent character, around whom the pair act: “Godot becomes part of their obsession and their claustrophobia.”⁵⁰

In one form or another we all expect something, everyone has their Godot; if we lived our lives based only on this expectation, we would always be deceived with an eternal *tomorrow*. The struggle for humanity is to wait for life to pass by.

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⁵⁰ Mudford, Peter: *Making Theatre from Text to Performance*, The Athlone Press, 2000, p. 112, <https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/making-theatre-9780485121582/> [access: February 26, 2020].

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2

TEATRU ÎN DIALOG



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How Does Movement Sound Like?

A Choreological Perspective on the Nexus between Movement and Sound

ANDREA GAVRILIU

(Teatrul Național „Lucian Blaga“ Cluj-Napoca)

Abstract

The article speaks about the connection between sound and movement, two of the strands present in the dance medium, along with the body and the space. The choreological perspective from which the relationship is analyzed brings an objective point of view, destined to widen the horizons of the creators from the field of performative arts.

Keywords:

choreology; sound; movement; body, Laban; dance-theatre; *Musicophilia*.

Rezumat

Prezentul articol vorbește despre conexiunea dintre sunet și mișcare, două dintre straturile prezente în mediul dansului, alături de corp și de spațiu. Perspectiva coreologică din care este analizată această relație oferă un unghi de vedere obiectiv, menit să lărgască orizonturile creatorilor din sfera artelor performative.

Cuvinte cheie:

coreologie; sunet; mișcare; corp; Laban; teatru-dans; *Muzicofilia*.

Introduction

“What an odd thing it is to see an entire species – billions of people – playing with, listening to, meaningless tonal patterns, occupied and preoccupied much of their time by what they call *music*.”¹ That is how the neurologist Oliver Sacks’ book, *Musicophilia*, makes its debut – a work that explores the world of psychological and physiological disorders and their intriguing connection to

¹ Sacks, Oliver: *Musicophilia, Tales of Music and the Brain*, Preface, Picador Classic, London, 2018, p. xiv.

music. Besides the pathological aspects, Sacks examines the inherent ability of most human beings to perceive tones, timbre, intervals, melody, harmony, and, probably the most elementary of all, rhythm. It is known that people have always functioned under the guardianship of rhythms and it is a quite natural matter, since, anatomically, we are all designed to pulsate. Changes of rhythm inside our bodies represent the first clue which can give information regarding our physical and mental state. Breath, heartbeat, blood flow – they all act as percussion instruments that make people be in a constant state of movement, even when they sleep. If we were to make an absurd presumption that, in a bizarre way, all the music in the world would be erased and also the memory of it, people would probably reinvent it in a few days.

Sacks cites in his book *Darwin* when referring to music's purpose for humankind: "As neither the enjoyment nor the capacity of producing musical notes are faculties of the least use to man... they must be ranked among the most mysterious with which he is endowed."² This mystery lies in the powerful connection between music and the unconscious. The impact between these two produces reactions that are, most commonly, profoundly emotional. In this context, sensing music means intercepting it and emotion is the result of our response to that lived experience. However, sound has something entirely unique compared to other agents that stimulate our sensory channels. Sound does not have the quality to represent something that is material in a tangible way, but, on the other hand, it has the ability to emotionally incite us. In extension, music, the most abstract of all arts, is strongly tied to emotions and the clearest proof for that matter is our capacity to remember it. It does not require to have a certain meaning for us to be able to cast our minds back over it, to hum it – we can bring it back to life through imagination. Even more, music does not represent just an aural and emotional experience, but also a motoric one. People produce rhythms using their hands and feet since forever, no matter the culture they belong to. It is an involuntary reaction of mirroring what we hear through expression and posture – through "body attitude", as Rudolf Laban preferred to call it. Rudolf Laban³, "the artist-researcher", as he named himself, is the one who set the basis of Choreological Studies in the era of German Expressionism. Choreology, the analysis of movement, offers tools to those who are interested to distance themselves from their own art and examine it in a more objective manner, while a creator can evaluate the semiotic and communicational side of his/her own work.

² *Ibidem*, p. xv.

³ Rudolf Laban (1879-1958), Austro-Hungarian artist and theoretician, considered to be one of the pioneers of modern dance, the father of German Expressionism.

In *Musicophilia* the author debates in a detailed way the tight connection between music and its ability to make the body move. He often cites Nietzsche when he talks about music's propulsive capacity, in the sense in which it can conduct and organize movement. The German philosopher's opinion was that "we listen to music with our muscles"⁴ and that rhythm has the power to fuel and articulate series of body movements in the flux of our thoughts and emotions. In consequence, Nietzsche believed that the most organic form of expressing vitality and exuberance generated by rhythm is through dance. Of course, Sacks' mission in this context is to scientifically prove the cited philosophers' opinions by using the tools provided by medicine. Through various examples of neurological disorders influenced by music, the author accurately demonstrates the ways in which rhythm and melodic contours, through their intentionality, may produce this mysterious "will" of the body to synchronize itself with the vibrations produced by sound. Sacks associates an individual's engagement to rhythm with his/her tendency to perform repetitive every day moves. Therefore, this mechanism we are inclined to engage with draws a certain kind of anticipation, an awareness of rhythmic patterns. For this reason, a repetitive movement such as walking – locomotion – can turn into a complex sequence of steps which humans are capable of memorizing, by associating them with the rhythmic support after which they guide themselves. More precisely, the narrative – mnemonic – power of music makes possible organizing movement on its tempo and duration.

Just like dance, music is a language, an abstract means of communication. Through this article I wish to draw attention upon the organic quality of the tight relationship between sound and movement. The organic feeling of the satisfaction felt when the body is synchronized with music is of profound human nature, especially when it comes to social manifestations. "Rhythm turns listeners into participants, makes listening active and motoric and synchronizes the brains and the minds (and, since emotion is always intertwined with music, the *hearts*) of all who participate. It is very difficult to remain detached, to resist being drawn into the rhythm of chanting or dancing."⁵ The world of dance is profoundly marked by the presence of music and, most of the time, it subordinates it. Contemporary dance practices of the last century have tried to disembarass of "musical tyranny", so that movement can become the main strand of a work, the body can regain its independence and achieve its own voice. This matter is also a consequence of detachment from classical ballet, in which movement lays under the tutelage of music and, therefore, the body becomes muted. The discipline behind ballet

⁴ Sacks, Oliver: *op. cit.*, p. xvii.

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 245.

technique transforms the body's quietness among a convention agreed by all participants into an artistic event. The ways in which ballet dancers control their breath in order to repress its sound and execute movements of high virtuosity, without producing any sound through the impact of their steps and the floor, transform ballet into a language by itself. "To put it differently: when ballet dance establishes itself as speech, the body shuts its mouth."⁶ These words belong to the philosopher and theoretician Bojana Kunst, who, in her article, "The Voice of the Dancing Body", debates on the phenomenon of contemporary dance of the 20th century through the perspective of discovering "the voice" of the body, of opposing resistance to sound, as initiator of movement. Her opinion is that, by directing our listening in the interior of our body, we can discover a much more complex perspective on movement, of breath rhythm, of arrhythmic structures. This point of view on sonority is very different from the one of classical ballet, which transforms contemporary dance into a totally autonomous discipline, in both institutionalized artistic medium and academic field.

The central figure of my research, Rudolf Laban, had an even more radical perspective towards the relationship between dance and music: "Dance is – for me – its own art. (I must) create, determine entirely alone the laws of dance, an art which is often merely an accompaniment to music."⁷ It is important keeping in mind that such a strong opinion is related to a key moment in the history of modern dance. Practically, the pioneers of those times have rebelled against the traditional forms of dance, so that nowadays we are able to enjoy our creative freedom in our artistic practices. Despite the attitude of creators towards music, the sound, from a choreological point of view, is the aural strand of a work. Whether we refer to it as soundtrack, accompaniment or we wish to dismiss it in favor of silence, sound is just as omnipresent as space. Sound and space are completely dependent on each other and they influence each other in such complex ways, that creators have the opportunity to combine them in countless manners, in order to communicate messages through their art. Therefore, the nexuses between sound and the other three strands of the dance medium – the body, the movement mediated by it and space – are the ones that maintain the integrity of a work and assure its poly-semantic complexity. Through this article,

⁶ Kunst, Bojana: "The Voice of the Dancing Body", first published in *Frakcija*, Introduction, Zagreb, 2009, <https://kunstbody.wordpress.com/2009/03/20/the-voice-of-the-dancing-body/> [access: 20.09.2021].

⁷ Laban, Rudolf *apud*: Preston-Dunlop, Valerie; Sacher-Colberg, Anna: *Dance and the Performative. A Choreological Perspective*, Verve Publishing, London, 2010, 10. „Issues in Revivals and Re-creations: A Choreological Inquiry”, p. 213.

I will try to give a “look” on the sound, a crucially important “ingredient” of the dance medium. The following examples of seen and created dances constitute the practical side of my analysis, which is indispensable when it comes to referring to an art such difficult to put into words as dance.

The Use of Music by the Creator. Between Rationality and Feeling

Sensibility to music is inherent, but it also can be achieved during lifetime. An individual exposed to music from early childhood may develop his/her reactivity to it, learning to appreciate the formal structure of a composition. Meanwhile, he/she can be profoundly moved, emotionally, by what he/she is hearing. Creators who work with music may constantly have various inclinations: to abuse it, to reject it, to ironize it, to valorize it by respecting its every accent and so on. Motivated by the desire to detach from the classical ballet traditions, pioneers like Rudolf Laban and Mary Wigman started, at the beginning of the past century, a series of experiments in order to revitalize dance. First of all, this issue meant an alienation from the dominating metrical rhythm, which was found in most of the musical compositions that were used for dance in those times. The two artists have promoted in the world of dance the superiority of the mover in relationship with the musician. This way, for the very first time, the instrumentalist had to follow the movement of the dancer, to observe his/her non-metric rhythms, to mirror the human behavior based on the harmony between contrasts. Hence, “Der Freie Tanz” (“The Free Dance”), as Laban named it, was “free” in the sense of releasing itself from fixed rules, disengaged from music. He considered that dance means pleasure of movement, as an undated brochure promoting his studio of theatrical and choreographic arts states: “Dance is the pleasure of movement. It is the joy of beauty and the power of the moving body. A joy which we lose more and more, because beauty and power are fully expressed only in individual cases. The talent for movement harmony is present in every healthy body and for tender and weak bodies, harmonious movement improves health.”⁸ (Illustration 1).

Regardless of the type of relationship that choreographers have created in time with sound, through these decisions, they desired to transmit messages. Their reasons for choosing certain sonorities and the ways they are materializing them through their art represent clues on the degree of sensibility in their relationship with music. Musical choices in current performative practices represent a narrative

⁸ Rudolf Laban Studio of Dance and Theatrical Art, brochure, translated by Odette Pârvălescu, former consultant for the German State Theatre of Timisoara.

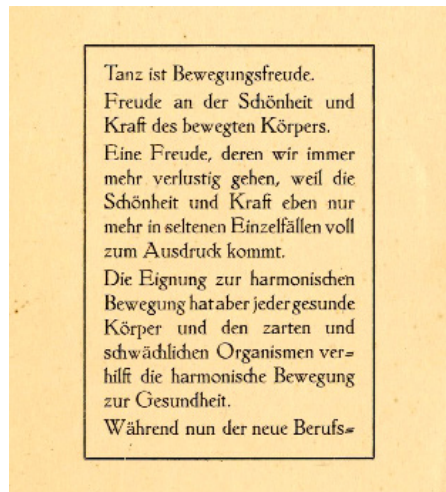


Illustration 1. Undated brochure which promoted Rudolf Laban's Studio of Dance and Theatrical Art. Source: <https://library.leeds.ac.uk/special-collections/view/902> [access: 23.09.2021]

layer which can communicate, with various degrees of explicitness, about the place where the creator sets him/herself in the world – in both space and time. More exactly, the soundtrack of a performance may suggest a certain culture, may induce a certain mood and may influence the way in which the spectator looks at the other three strands of the work: the body, the movement, the space. Music can have the power, through its density and decibels, to offer profoundness to a space and to modify the energy with which a movement is performed. Certainly, this aspect may be perceived, sometimes, as a trap for the creator, especially for those at the beginning of their careers: “Just because you like a piece of music as music does not mean it will suit your idea for a dance.”⁹ Valerie Preston-Dunlop’s¹⁰ remark – the voice of Laban from the present times – refers to the necessity of

⁹ Preston-Dunlop, Valerie; Sacher-Colberg, Anna: *Dance and the Performative. A Choreological Perspective*, „Movement Sound Nexus”, 28. „The Sound of Dance”, p. 160.

¹⁰ Dr. Valerie Preston-Dunlop is a consultant and Honorary Fellow of “Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance” of London. She has conducted extensive research in the life and work of Rudolf Laban, <https://www.valerieprestondunlop.com> [access: 23.09.2021].

a choreographer to find a balance between rationality and feeling when it comes to create a work. It takes a lucid perspective on the passionate tendencies that creators have and to withstand “the musical mirage”.



Illustration 2. Scene from *OST (Organic Sound Twist)*, a dance solo by/ with Andrea Gavrilu, “Lucian Blaga” National Theatre, Cluj-Napoca, 2017. Photography by Nicu Cherciu.

My solo work, *OST (Organic Sound Twist)*¹¹ (Illustration 2) is the expression of my profound sensibility to music and to sound, in general. The narrative layer of the performance is inspired by *Musicophilia*. Therefore, I speak about the mystery of “earworms” (“brainworm”)¹², about the mnemonic power of music, as an instrument of learning and transmitting information from ancient times. Repetition is the main characteristic of music that transforms sensibility into vulnerability through the fact that it makes us crave for that stimulus and listen to the same composition over and over again, in order to quench the desire, so it becomes a kind of reward. The phenomenon in which music “sticks” to

¹¹ *OST (Organic Sound Twist)*, created in 2017 at “Lucian Blaga” National Theatre of Cluj-Napoca, <http://www.teatrulnationalcluj.ro/piesa-691/ost-organic-sound-twist/> [access: 23.09.2021].

¹² “Brainworm”, the term comes from the German word “Ohrwurm” and it refers to the situation “when a certain fragment of music repeats itself incessantly, sometimes maddeningly for days on end.” See: Sacks, Oliver: *op. cit.*, “Brainworms, Sticky Music and Catchy Tunes”, pp. 44-45.

the brain and can turn it into an obsession is a matter which characterizes the modern world. The easiness of accessing music nowadays and the involuntary exposure to repetitive rhythms or “catchy” themes is one of the main topics of the performance. Therefore, the movement material mainly lies under the domination of sound, even if it cannot be always considered music: car alarms, famous advertising slogans, rhythmic and mechanical learning of capitals of countries or mathematical formulas. The body responds to these stimuli through movements which give hints about the impact of sound on the affective memory. The spectator empathizes with these stories about music and the brain if he/she recognizes them and identifies him/herself with them.

A choreographer may use a musical composition by respecting its rhythmic structure, its timing, timbre or phrasing, in order to create movement which embodies its narrative qualities. Nevertheless, he/she might bring innovation through the way he/she makes the content of music visible to the audience. An acute ear that detects discreet accents and tones can make them seem even more present in both the eyes and the ears of the receptor, through this procedure which is called in the choreological studies field “music visualization”¹³. This should not be mistaken for “Mickey Mousing”¹⁴, which requires total obedience to music and in explaining the use of movement. Music visualization does not target a redundant duplication of the sound using the body, but to build a relationship based on mutual empowerment. For this reason, music and movement may belong to different cultures. In such cases, a piece of music that creates the expectation of a certain kind of dancing is juxtaposed with a form of movement which is unpredictable for the spectator. Together, they raise questions, create tension and do not generate an automatic meaning. Thus the spectator is permitted to build his/her own meaning of the events he/she is being presented. Through music visualization the creator is allowed to exploit his/her instinctive pleasure for harmonizing with music, while consciously and rationally he/she experiments innovative forms of movement.

¹³ “music visualization” is a “method, codified and thorough, required that the dancer listen to the rhythm, the melodic line, the pitch, the timbre, the instrumentation, the tempo, the phrasing, and from that listening create movements which embodied, and made visible for the spectator, the music’s content.” See: Balanchine, George: *Dance and the Performative. A Choreological Perspective*, 3. “The Strands of the Dance Medium and Their Nexus”, 3.2 “The Nexus and Sub-strands”, p. 48.

¹⁴ “Mickey Mousing” is an expression which ironically refers to the kind of connection between sound and action that can be seen in cartoons. The movement demands total submission to music, its rhythm, accent by accent, phrase by phrase. See: Preston-Dunlop, Valerie: *Looking at Dances. A Choreological Perspective on Choreography*, Verve Publishing, London, 1998, “The Movement / Sound Nexus”, p. 167.

In order to create a better idea about this very often used method in contemporary dance practices, I intend to offer an example of a dance work, which I created in 2016 at “M-Studio” Theatre in Saint George: *The Rite of Spring*¹⁵ (Illustration 3). Igor Stravinsky’s masterpiece is famous for its irregular rhythms and for the difficulties that a layman of music theory might face when dealing with this composition. In addition to the precision with which I followed, through the movement material that I devised, the irregular metric of the musical composition, I created sequences in which the performers embody different musical instruments. For the introductory part of the work I draw the performers’ attention to every instrument that makes itself heard in the orchestra. I also distributed to each performer one instrument in order to express it using his own body. The physical representation was made of moves which had to create the sound produced by the instrument visible to the spectator. Furthermore, the scenography elements also contributed to the acoustic whole of my work. The blue sand that covered the entire space of the studio functioned as a musical instrument which the performers played live. It was meant to generate meaning not only through its visual impact, but also through the sound it produced in contact with the performers’ movements. Therefore, with each step, the sand was highlighting the music’s metric. This unusual and difficult to be controlled instrument modified – without “altering” it – Stravinsky’s work, through the ways in which it was handled by the performers.



Illustration 3. Scene from *The Rite of Spring* by Igor Stravinsky, created at the “M-Studio”, Saint George, 2016. Photography by Adi Bulboacă.

¹⁵ *The Rite of Spring* <https://www.m-studio.ro/en/igor-stravinsky-the-rite-of-spring.html> [access: 22.10.2021].

From a performer's perspective moving rhythmically means feeling the pulse, the pace, the flow of music and to follow all of them. The pulse, actually, represents beats which we are able to count, thanks to their repetitiveness and the equal duration between them. There are individuals who lack the ability to precisely anticipate the succession of the beats. Usually, we refer to them as "non-rhythmical" people, which is not correct – from a choreological point of view – because rhythm arises from the annexation of any two dynamic elements. It would be more appropriate to say that those individuals lack the sense of metric rhythm. They simply have a more reduced capacity of coordinating their bodies to music's pulsation, to the intervals between the beats. On the other hand, for those inclined to easily be driven by the metric rhythm's flux, it is a phenomenon hard to understand. Sensing rhythm is an inherent human ability, but it can also be developed during lifetime. Contemporary dance practices sometimes seem to purposely detach from metric behavior in order to avoid the anticipation with which the spectator's eye may deduct the next move. By various means choreographers seek to surprise audiences, even if they use musical compositions of a metric that is familiar to them. Through synchronizing, syncopation, counterpoint or mixing all of these methods, both creators and performers can collaborate with music in ways that do not turn them into "dependent artists, second order artists"¹⁶.

"Metric movement rhythms use exactly the same ingredients and qualities as breath rhythms, organic and effort rhythms except that time has one more layer. It is measured, quantified, constrained by counts and beats."¹⁷ Valerie Preston-Dunlop draws attention in all of her writings on the dangers caused by the habit of working with music. She considers that both creators and performers may risk being unable to discover and develop their own creative identity if they continuously remain faithful to the restrictions of metric music. This does not mean abandoning music and embracing "silence". It is an obvious fact that the presence of music in a performative event provides extra meaning and emotion, especially if it is adequately set in the context. The aspect which the choreologist wishes to emphasize concerns the importance of finding own energy and duration, own effort and flow. There is nothing blamable in using music for its irrefutable power to propel both the mind and the body. On the other hand, it is essential to bring awareness and to be able to hear one's own music, the music of the body.

The nexus between movement and sound represent the "tableau vivant" ("living picture") perceived by the spectator. The "competition" between the choreographer and the music he/she has chosen is a matter which concerns dance practices of the last century. For this reason, there have been and still are famous partnerships

¹⁶ Preston-Dunlop, Valerie: *op. cit.*, 18. "Metric Rhythm", p. 111.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, 16, p. 110.

between choreographers and musicians which – through collaborations based on mutual democratic negotiations – have the purpose to achieve visual and aural effects, simultaneously.

Dance for the Music or Music for the Dance? Collaboration between Choreographer and Musician

The comparison of the nexus between movement and sound with a “living picture” has been induced to me by reading George Balanchine’s¹⁸ words about his collaboration with Igor Stravinsky: “I had to try to paint or design time with bodies in order to create a resemblance between the dance and what was going on in sound.”¹⁹ The choreographer, known as the father of American ballet, through his dances strongly integrated to sound, has surpassed the stage of music visualization. Judging from the integration process, which means that all four strands of the dance medium – the body, the movement, the sound and the space – should serve the same purpose of communication, to originate from the same aesthetic background or to fulfill a common function, Balanchine’s choreographies were considered to be “music illuminations”²⁰. Besides his musical education, his collaboration with famous painters, like Pablo Picasso or Henri Matisse, transformed him into one of the first artists interested in multidisciplinary.

In a similar direction as the one initiated by Balanchine, approximately four decades later, Merce Cunningham²¹ and John Cage²² have been creating works in which movement and sound coexisted. More exactly, the only connection between

¹⁸ George Balanchine (1904-1983), born as Georgiy Melitonovich Balanchivadze in Sankt Petersburg, was an American choreographer of Georgian origin who has co-founded “New York City Ballet”. He was famous for his inclination to musicality by intensively collaborating with the most appreciated composers of those times: Maurice Ravel, Erik Satie, Sergei Prokofiev, Igor Stravinsky.

¹⁹ Balanchine, George: *op. cit.*, “The Nexus and Sub-strands”, p. 50.

²⁰ “music illuminations” – expression used by Valerie Preston-Dunlop to describe the nexus between movement and sound which Balanchine and Stravinsky have offered to the world of dance under the shape of a dance language and of an innovative aesthetic of those times.

²¹ Merce Cunningham (1919-2009), American dancer and choreographer, known for his collaborations with artists from other disciplines, such as John Cage, Brian Eno, Andy Warhol and many others.

²² John Cage (1912-1992), American composer, theoretician of music and philosopher, he is one of the pioneers of post-belic artistic avant-garde, one of the most influential figures of the 20th century music scene.

the two strands was that they were sharing the same space and the same time. The two artists' inclination for "chance methods"²³ has driven them to conceive the movement and the music independently. Therefore, the dancers were hearing the music for the first time on the night of the premiere, just like the spectators. In this way the creators generated material individually, limited only by the space and the time they had at their disposal. The performers embodied the movement material, trained not to take account of sound while the spectators followed the coexistence between the strands, the same way as they look at mundane activities. "Mr. Cunningham's works are sometimes perceived as hermetic, removed from reality. The paradox is that he and John Cage, his musical adviser, have long insisted that art can incorporate the sights, sounds and processes found in the real world."²⁴ The artistic mission of the Cunningham-Cage partnership was that of provoking the receptors to build their own reality in the moment of watching their works.



Illustration 4. Scene from *RamDam* by Maguy Marin, 1995.
Source: <https://compagnie-maguy-marin.fr/creations/ramdam>
[access: 25.09.2021].

²³ "chance methods" refer to the accidental content of a work which may be intended by the creator or not. See: Preston-Dunlop, Valerie: *op. cit.*, "Ideas and Medium, Content and Form", p. 16.

²⁴ Teck, Katherine: *Ear Training for the Body. A Dancer's Guide to Music*, Princeton Book Company, Hightstown, NJ, 1994, Anna Kisselgoff for the "New York Times" magazine, Part Two, 12. "Texture", "Sound as Collage and Effects", p. 195.

By continuing on the chronological path through which I gave examples of collaborations between choreographers and composers, I wish to analyze a work by French choreographer Maguy Marin²⁵ that approaches extremely fascinating relationships between movement and sound: *RamDam*²⁶. (Illustration 4). The *RamDam* diptych, a work for twelve voices and instruments, is just one of the many Maguy Marin – Denis Mariotte²⁷ collaborations. The two artists are on an equal footing when it comes to their inputs in creating a work. Their artistic compatibility manifests itself through exploiting the “complex and close link between dance and other performing arts, means of expression, supports of emotions, true informational polyphony that forms gesture, speech, music, a thickness of signs whose essence consists of moments of precariousness that is sometimes difficult to capture and that we try to shape by meticulous interpretation work”²⁸.

In *Ram*, the whole soundtrack is provided exclusively by the dancers, whose voices are amplified by headsets. They use isolated words or whole phrases, interjections and sounds from various fields of intentions, recognizable by the spectator for their affiliation to the mundane world. All of these elements are orchestrated in a very detailed manner by the creators through rhythmical structures based especially on repetition, but also on counterpoint and syncope. The tonalities of the feminine and masculine voices offer a playful coloration to the sonority and the result is a full of life soundtrack – literally – which has the potential to engage the receptor in its contagious energy. Besides the dancers’ voices, their bodies contribute to the acoustic richness through the sound of their steps, claps and even of the sound of the dance partners kissing. Episodes of

²⁵ Maguy Marin – one of the most important choreographers of the “French New Wave” (“Nouvelle danse française” or “Jeune danse française”, of the 1980-1990’s), known for her work *May B*, created in 1981 at Théâtre Municipal d’Angers”, <https://compagnie-maguy-marin.fr/compagnie/maguy-marin> [access: 25.09.2021].

²⁶ *RamDam* – diptych created in 1995 for Cannes Dance Festival and The National Dance Biennale of Val-de-Marne. Inspired from the novel *How it is* by Samuel Beckett, the performance is based on voices and spoken language, <https://www.numeridanse.tv/en/dance-videotheque/ramdam> [access: 25.09.2021].

²⁷ Denis Mariotte – French performer and musician, he has intensely collaborated with Maguy Marin for over two decades. Besides music for performances, he has a very diverse activity in the performative arts field, including various performative installations, in which “movement, directing and music are intimately connected”, <http://www.denismariotte.com> [access: 25.09.2021].

²⁸ Marin, Maguy; Mariotte, Denis: <https://compagnie-maguy-marin.fr/creations/ramdam> [access: 25.09.2021].

simultaneity in movement are impeccable, each dancer strictly respects both durations and the form itself of the dance material. Marin and Mariotte have succeeded to encourage their dancers to associate the art of movement with that of music, in order to communicate their artistic intention to the spectators: criticizing and ironizing social agreements, which have become an automatism for individuals. Through attitude, posture, costume, verbal and gestural clichés, the performers embody the absurdity of mundane human behavior. The precision through which sound and movement are connected is impressive and denotes an admirable collaboration between the choreographer and the musician.

Dam, the second part of the work, in addition to a gloomier general atmosphere, anguished here and there, sets the dancers in an even more complex hypostasis: of instrumentalists. The sequences are created in such a way, that those who are not dancing are playing an instrument and vice-versa. The instruments – the majority being of percussion and only a few with strings – are handled with great precision by the dancers, making it obvious that Mariotte managed to exploit their well-trained rhythmical sense. *Dam* represents the “dark side” of the mechanical human behavior, the tempos are more alert, the tonality of the voices slide into minor scales, the movement denotes restlessness with neurotic accents. A relevant example is the sequence where two performers alternatively repeat the words “million” and “milliard” in a very fast tempo and with the precision close to that of a metronome. The choreographic material is in accordance with the sound and it is composed of repetitive, mechanical moves that remind us of the individual obsessed about material aspects of life, which dehumanize him/her. The speed and precision of the execution are impressive and it demonstrates that behind the performance there lays an extremely rigorous, mathematical work process. The Marin – Mariotte collaboration transformed the dancers into complex performers, gifted not only with remarkable physical abilities, but also vocal, instrumental and acting skills.

In the context of long and fruitful collaborations between a choreographer and a composer, such as all the examples given until this point, both artistic entities develop their own language through the prism of their creative partner. Aesthetic compatibility plays a crucial role in such a relationship. It is to take into account that mutual trust in each other’s ability to make the most of the work is achieved in time, after multiple common experiences. Therefore, now speaking from a creator’s perspective, after seventeen performances created together, my collaboration with the musician Mihai Dobre²⁹ has enriched considerably.

²⁹ Mihai Dobre – musician, composer of music for theatre and film, vocalist and founding member of the Romanian electronic band, Șuie Paparude, <https://suiepaparude.com> [access: 25.09.2021].

If for the first performances created together in 2015 – *Hotel PM*³⁰ and *Dezorient Express*³¹ – I have offered him explicit musical references, from the need of having control on the sound strand of the works, for our latest physical theatre work, *Viva la vulva!*³², his freedom to compose was nearly total. Under the aspect of the sound strand, the first two works reveal a similar course of events. Their modular structure in which the sequences are put together turn the soundtracks into a compilation of tracks, which have in common the electronic nature of music, influenced by oriental culture. Our mutual fascination for minor tonalities, specific to oriental music, even pushed us to use a fragment of the Quran for the final sequence of *Hotel PM* (Illustration 5). The fragment was suddenly intervening on the electronic musical support that had a powerful bass and which comes from a totally opposed culture of that of reciting the Quran. The result of the juxtaposition was dynamic, emotionally touching and had the potential to provide a heightening feeling to the listener. The movement material performed by the six actors was mostly guided by the musical composition, even though, from a narrative point of view, the choreography had to express the resolution of the story, which had absolutely nothing in common with the Muslim religion. More exactly, the Quran fragment was there from purely aesthetic reasons, for the sake of the impact of its sonority on our ears. The same way as movement can be presented as a phenomenon filled with meanings, or it may just exist for itself, for its own sake, also music can contribute as means of communicating meanings or to insert it as a strand of the dance medium just because we find it beautiful. Of course, looking back, I consider that such an artistic decision might seem inconsistent and it risks to mislead the spectator. Even if Romanian audiences did not question the relevance of the voice reciting from the Quran, this fact has put me in a situation of giving explanations to a Palestinian spectator, who felt offended, by interpreting the idea as an insult to the Muslim religion. It was quite difficult to justify the fact that such an intention was far from me and that the fragment was there simply because I found it... beautiful.

With this example I wished to emphasize the difficulty of resisting the seductive power of music. At the same time, as Oliver Sacks states in *Musicophilia*, “music

³⁰ *Hotel PM* – created in 2015 at the German State Theatre Timisoara, <https://www.teatrulgerman.ro/en/spectacole/hotel-pm/> [access: 25.09.2021].

³¹ *Dezorient Express* - created in 2015 in “Ioan Slavici” Classical Theatre of Arad, <https://teatrulclasic.ro/events/dezorient-express-regia-si-conceptul-scenic-andrea-gavriliu/> [access: 25.09.2021].

³² *Viva la vulva!* – created in 2021 at “Marin Sorescu” National Theatre of Craiova, <https://tncms.ro/spectacole/viva-la-vulva/>

calls both parts of our nature – it is essentially emotional and it is essentially intellectual.”³³ This fact implies, especially for an artist that uses music constantly in his/her practices, a detachment of some sort, through which he/she can question matters properly before enthusiastically letting him/herself to be caught up by some aural passion: “Do I wish to use this song only because it stimulates me on an affective level? What does it bring in addition to my work? Doesn’t it actually deviate from my initial intention?” The same way as any physical body, sound, in a performative event, communicates ideas, intentions, meanings.



Illustration 5. Scene from *Hotel PM*, created at the German State Theatre Timisoara in 2015. Photography by Adi Bulboacă.

In this sense, choreological studies take notice of its crucial importance, especially for dance. It carries powerful messages, it creates an atmosphere, it suggests a culture and – a fact of which the creators should constantly be aware of – it influences the way spectators see the movement. Naturally, there exists also a type of rebellion in many artists, which manifests itself by the desire to shock, to pull out the spectator from his/her comfort zone. From the sound’s perspective, it can manifest itself through excessive volume, through unusual long durations, through distressing tonalities. These three qualities – volume, duration and tonality – along with timbre, represent the fundamental elements of sound, which help establishing a common language between the choreographer and the composer. It is important keeping in mind that the way people from the world of dance listen to music is different from that of musicians. The choreographer’s preoccupation

³³ Sacks, Oliver: *op. cit.*, pp. 289-290.

is the manner in which movement and music interact. Musicians who have not previously had any contact with dance may find it quite difficult to understand the necessities of those who move, in terms of tempo or setting certain cues. Furthermore, in terms of duration, three minutes – for example – in music, have a totally different connotation than three minutes in dance. For this reason, it may often occur such a situation in which the choreographer demands the composer to shorten or extend a music piece, which can sometimes revolt him/her. The reason for such a reaction is due to the loss of meaning in the absence of a complete structure. In the world of opera, such a request may be considered a blasphemy. Director Andrei Șerban demanded conductor Vladimir Conta to repeat certain passages in *The Merry Widow*, which raised many controversies amongst music people from the National Opera Bucharest and that of Jassy. Being unfamiliar with such rules of the opera, I kindly requested the same conductor to reduce the tempo of the can-can, because the ballerinas could not manage to keep the pace. Creating the movement material during rehearsals on the tempo set by the assistant music master, the one desired by the conductor was almost impossible to follow. My request was accepted, for everyone's surprise, but the reduction was discreet.

Artist's natural affinities must be observed and appreciated, because they represent their personal touch that distinguishes them from the rest of the creators. No matter how drawn he/she is by a certain aesthetic direction – in this case, musically – through his/her practices, he/she materializes in a certain way his/her attitude towards the world. He/she makes it repeatedly, driven by a sensibility which has the force to regenerate itself each time. “[...] a man's sole creation it's strengthened in its successive and multiple aspects: his works. One after another, they complement one another, correct or overtake one another, contradict one another too.”³⁴ This “sisyphic” perspective on the creator's estate is present in my work processes, especially in those in which music has a great contribution and the “bodies” I am working with do not have such welltrained ears. For the choreographer, such an experience means drawing the performer's attention to the sound by constantly emphasizing the elements that need to be heard. It is already considered to be a cliché when a choreographer – during rehearsals – synchronizes his/her way of speaking with the tempo and the duration of the music piece he/she is working with, in order to stress out the relationship between sound and movement. An even more obvious cliché is when the choreographer is counting in a mechanical way, loudly, trying to cover the music with his/her

³⁴ Camus, Albert: *The Myth of Sisyphus*, translated from French by Justin O'Brien, Vintage International, New York, 2018, “Absurd Creation”, “Ephemeral Creation”, p. 120.

voice. In an interview I gave for “Iqads”.³⁵ I have unveiled my attitude towards the absurd condition of the repetitiveness that is part of a choreographer’s job: “[...] there are moments when I start saying 5, 6, 7, 8! and I feel like Sisyphus seeing the big rock, again, at the bottom of the hill. ...and I feel like laughing. ...and I really do laugh.”³⁶ For this matter, Katherine Teck has formulated “the ten commandments for all teachers of dance”, from which, the second one advises: “Thou shalt never say *four for nothing*; after all if it is for *nothing* then why bother; you, of course, really mean *four to prepare* or *four for tempo*, etc.”³⁷ “Four for nothing” means “1, 2, 3, and!” or “5, 6, 7, 8!”, or any other verbalized way that has the purpose to give the start for the bodies to synchronize with the rhythm and the tempo of the music. Teck’s commandment also has a motivational side to it, besides its logical and rational aspect – focusing the attention on what the body has to do next. Time is precious and those few seconds before starting to move must be used for focusing. “Bothering” yourself for this profession means finding the necessary resources for existing “here and now”, even in those two, or three, or four counts before the representation itself. Those counts are not “for nothing”, they are destined to collectively start “the engines”.

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³⁶ *Ibidem*.

³⁷ Teck, Katherine: *Ear Training for the Body. A Dancer’s Guide to Music*, Part Two: “Fundamentals of Music”, “Conclusion. Onstage With Something New!”, “The Ten Commandments for all Teachers of Dance”, p. 244.

No Country Makes You [No]mad. The Untouchable A Journal Regarding *Gypsies. Roma in Europe* and the Impact of Social Theatre

FLAVIUS RETEA

(Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara)

Abstract

The current situation of the Roma community in Europe is more eclectic and complicated than ever. Majority attitudes have not changed decisively in recent decades, becoming a less important issue in contrast to the crises of immigration from Africa and the Middle East. The *werkgruppe2* company from Hannover, together with the State Theatre of Braunschweig, the Théâtre de la Manufacture in Nancy and the “Mihai Eminescu” National Theatre in Timisoara, proposes an incursion into the current world of the Roma community through a social theatre performance. This article is a cold analysis of the experience of this project and a moral inventory of its impact.

Keywords:

Roma; inclusion; social-theatre; racism; documentary.

Rezumat

Situația actuală a comunității rome din Europa este mai eclectică și complicată ca niciodată. Atitudinea majorității nu s-a schimbat decisiv în ultimele decenii, devenind un subiect mai puțin important în contrast cu crizele imigranților din Africa și Orientul Mijlociu. Compania *werkgruppe2* din Hanovra, împreună cu Teatrul de Stat din Braunschweig, Théâtre de la Manufacture din Nancy și Teatrul Național „Mihai Eminescu” din Timișoara, propune o incursiune în universul actual al comunității rome prin intermediul unui spectacol de teatru social. Acest articol reprezintă o analiză la rece a experienței acestui proiect și un inventar moral asupra impactului pe care acest proiect l-a avut.

Cuvinte cheie:

Roma; incluziune; teatru social; rasism; documentare.

How much confidence do we have in the barometer of our own prejudice? How aware are we of its existence? What kind of experience breaks down the walls of moral comfort and challenges us to recalibrate our internal stance

towards those different from us? Can theatre still influence and shape new socio-political opinions in the current context where a debate on human rights is often irrelevant because the parties involved are inclined towards an extremist view, and where creeds are carved in stone? How relevant is this kind of theatre, and does the public still want this kind of cold shower at a time when it is alienated from all global events anyway?

Whether we are aware of it or not, in the process of creating a role, fictional or based on real people, we tend to judge the character through the lens of our own prejudices and inevitably position ourselves by justifying or blaming through the lens of our own morality. Ideally, we should fight against this feeling of moral or intellectual superiority, actor versus character and paraphrasing the stage director Andrei Șerban: “Never think that the character you play is dumber than you.” But it is in our nature to compare, to find familiar correspondents for what is unfamiliar to us. Moreover, as actors we often encounter characters in exceptional situations, in exceptional moments, far from personal experience, and then, we use these homologous trails and analyses to be able to gravitate these abstract beings towards us. And here we find ourselves in a moral paradox in which we filter through our own moral, intellectual and emotional sieve, the atoms of an entity whose essence, creed, motivation, etc., are unique and justified by other existential coordinates, without altering them with imminent subjectivity.



Photo 1: Musician Dejan Jovanovic / Actress Ursula Hobmeier / Actor Flavius Retea / Musician Dejan Jovanovic, during the performance of *Gypsies. Roma in Europe*,
© Volker Beinhorn / Isabel Winarsch

Social theatre tends to amplify these conflicting feelings, especially when the topics are highly controversial but have different meanings in different societies. The whole exposition at the beginning of this article represents a set of personal questions and fears I had in the summer of 2016 when, together with the team of *werkgruppe2* members (Julia Roesler and Silke Merzhauser), of the Braunschweig State Theatre (Charlotte Pistorius – scenography / video, Christine Besier – dramaturgy), actors Gina Călinoiu, Simone Bourgade, Ursula Hobmaier and musicians Dejan Jovanovic (Violin) and Dejan Jovanovic (Accordion), we were starting the documentation phase of the international project *Gypsies. Roma in Europe*. With the current situation of the Roma in the Balkans and Germany as the main theme, the aim of this project was to produce an x-ray type performance, through which each of us could assess the state of our own prejudices.

The situation of the Roma community in Europe has followed a dramatic and controversial path over time, from slavery to genocide, exile and labelling them as outcasts of society, and the trends of integrating this community through various programmes or projects often seem to have short-term and superficial effects. It is precisely for this reason that both sides resist, and meet these social projects with a serious dose of skepticism and even aggression. Unfortunately, we have to assume that art has made exclusive use of arch-known stereotypes as catalysts for narratives, whether we are talking about the villain, the victim or magical elements, etc. Is it therefore possible in this context to have a social debate on such a volatile subject within the perimeter of art? We cannot ignore the howl of prejudice of some of those reading this article and of most of us living in the Balkan area. – What Roma? Call them gypsies! They choose to call themselves that. They all steal, lie, have no education, don't send their children to school. They choose to live in misery and in a medieval culture, based on superstition and customs that are not compatible with the 21st century. They are aggressive and have a caste attitude, unwilling to be truly integrated into society. They lie, they can't help but cheat, they make a fool of us in Europe. It's their fault for being poor, for being ugly, for being uneducated. They deal in black magic. They are gypsies. I'm not racist, but that's their way. – These are attitudes and stereotypes that you hear most of the time when you open the subject of actual Roma inclusion in communities.

Some of these thoughts were circling around my own thoughts causing me a great fear, a fear that when I have to weigh a certain situation, my own prejudices will obstruct my objectivity. I want to believe that there is no such thing as absolute evil and this ignorant attitude comes from a lack of knowledge. With this in mind, I will dwell only on the term 'gypsy'. Many of us use it because it has become part

of our everyday vocabulary, and terms such as ‘gypsy muscle’, ‘gypsy music’, ‘gypsyade’, etc. are used innocently, but I think few of us really know what the notion actually means. According to the UNICEF website: the term ‘gypsy’ does not exist in the Romanes language. It comes from the Greek *athinganoi* that means “untouchable, unwashed, and in the period of slavery it referred to a social category of slave/servant”¹. Knowing this, I think no man deserves to be labelled “untouchable”.



Photo 2: Actor Flavius Retea photographed by Charlotte Pistorius along a blonde Roma family

It is impossible for me to put into words many of the experiences I had during this project. The image, sound and thoughts of the characters were now vivid, embodied, and the actor’s responsibility to the role became more evident and poignant. Contemporary art cannot be indifferent and can no longer position itself neutrally in relation to the function it inevitably has on the socio-political spectrum. Social sciences and human rights creeds have become dogmatic, segregating communities, and represent a significant, if not the majority, of our concerns as a society. But I must admit that I was not prepared for the antagonistic tide of feeling that was about to hit me in the depths of my being. What made it possible, however, to connect with the socio-political, economic and cultural

¹ See <https://www.unicef.org> [access: 21.11.2021].

pulse of the Roma community, was the research part of the project that I was fortunate enough to take part in.

With Roma activist Hamze Bytyci as our guide, we set off on a truly initiatory journey to various Roma communities in the Banat² area, rural and urban areas, from different social strata, to collect stories and fragments of the lives of people who were different from us, but who would teach us so much about ourselves. From the start the general feeling was that we were going to take something from people from whom we had systematically taken so much for generations, and that we would use what we took to fulfil our personal purpose. Since this was also highly debated among us, what was the real purpose of each team member being part of this project? Theatre asks you *in extremis* to dive into the depths of your own personal self and surface a little piece of yourself that you will have to leave to all those with whom you want to share the artistic act. In the case of social theatre that piece of yourself is much more substantial and much harder to bring out. Everything is personal, everything is relevant, everything costs, you can't wander off on adjacent paths, because you always have to be precise in what you want to say.



Photo 3: Dejan Jovanovic / Gina Călinoiu / Ursula Hobmeier / Simone Bourgade /
Dejan Jovanovici during the performance *Gypsies. Roma in Europe*,
© Volker Beinhorn / Isabel Winarsch

² Banat is an “ethnically mixed historic region of Eastern Europe; [...] After 1920 Banat was divided among the states of Romania, Yugoslavia, and Hungary.” <https://www.britannica.com>. [access: 21.11.2021].

This usurper feeling was like a heavy, unnecessary smoke that didn't seem to go away anytime soon. We were there in their homes, in their lives taking their pictures, filming them, assuming their identities, and you couldn't help but feel that you had once again created a context in which you were superior to them, and ascribed to yourself the role of rescuer of people who refuse light and knowledge. With every second, with every story that we greedily and tacitly relished the scenic and theatrical properties and the force it would bring to the performance, but we were dissolving into ourselves because the tragedy was no longer the gossip of a playwright who lived hundreds of years ago. The actors' cynicism and humility, the moral ambivalence that gripped you at every moment of this research stage, would remain poignant as a sense of guilt throughout the project.

The plan on paper was simple and concrete. We capture as authentically as possible the stories of the people in front of us, using all possible technological elements, and then recreate the people, situations and contexts encountered on stage, altering everything minimally in this transition just to adapt certain elements to the theatrical environment. The reality on the ground turned out to be quite different. We always sought to reduce all interviews to the most human interactions possible, without forcing the extraction of that information to feed the dramatic need, but most of the time the artificiality of the encounters was too apparent. We were dangling on a fragile thread, and I ended up leaving these interviews with an overwhelming sense of failure. Most of the interviewees didn't understand exactly why we were there and why we were asking these questions. Some hoped that we were there to help them with money or with their concrete problems such as lack of running water, electricity, minimal sanitary conditions, inability to get their children to school, minimal things that one knew would not change with this project, and the feelings of helplessness and shame were amplified. The only reference point I could rely on was the Kosovan Roma activist Hamze Bytyci, who always assured himself and us, that everything we did intruded as little as possible into the lives of those we were going to immortalise through our performance, that we respected what we didn't understand and that we wouldn't be driven by the greed and selfishness of the artist.

Over the course of two weeks, we visited many communities in Timisoara, Checea, Cheveres, interviewed hundreds of people and collected hundreds of hours of audio and video material. I cried, I felt anger at people's helplessness, I felt anger when I was lied to and my first instinct was to refuel my prejudices, I laughed a lot with people who didn't forget to enjoy life, most of the time I was confused and I was always trying to recalibrate myself in front of a world I didn't know. It's not easy to realize that you live in a vacuum, disconnected from other

equally valid realities of people whose only fault was being born into a certain context. As I said, I was not ready for this reality check, and paradoxically, I felt even less able to complete this project even though I had some indicators from which I could build a scenic universe closer to reality. I probably needed to tear down as much of the walls of prejudice and inevitably parts of myself as possible in order to build a new structure.

I especially want to share the story of a woman who marked the very moment when something changed in me forever. I was in a community outside of Timisoara. It was a dry summer day and we found ourselves arriving in a place you would have thought was far removed from your everyday reality. A village cut off from the world thanks to the capitalist enthusiasm of privatisation, where the only factory and the only source of income for many families had long since become a memory. Away from the main road, without any means of transport, train or bus, to connect these people to the rest of the world, this village might as well have been an island in the middle of an ocean for many. Most of the houses had no running water, no electricity, not even windows or doors, looking more like ruins of the shame of a system that had completely forgotten its people. A mayor who, under the shelter of a generous salary and a position in a historic party, exclaims: "He who wants it, gets it! We Romanians don't really get along with gypsies. Don't go to that part of the village, I'm not responsible for your safety!" And indeed the welcome was not warm, but can you blame these people, when to enter your own house you had to fight a mountain of mud. Many were shouting at us to repair their main road, others wanted money, others told us they couldn't send their children to school because they didn't even have anything to wear. It was obvious that our presence was not wanted and we felt all the more powerless and ashamed when we had to say the words: "It's for a show. A play." Among those who sat with us talking was a woman, nearly my age, with a baby in her arms. She lived in one of the houses that had windows and even electricity, which powered two light bulbs and an antique TV. She had two children, who were both in school, and a husband who was lucky enough to be able to work by the hour in a neighbouring village thanks to an old scooter he could get around on. Like the other interviews, I tried as much as possible to keep the feeling of a friendly chat rather than an interrogation, but inevitably we ended up discussing her life. She had grown up until the age of twelve with her twin brother in an orphanage, and their lives could change dramatically when a couple in Denmark decided to adopt them. Filing the adoption papers, during the endless bureaucracy, an uncle from the biological family also decided he wanted to adopt the two siblings, and thanks to biological precedence he succeeded. After a hard

life in an orphanage, the real ordeal began for the twin brothers who discovered that the reason for their uncle's adoption was that meagre welfare payment. The children had been mistreated and neglected, and it all culminated when the brother was beaten to death by his uncle and the girl was sexually abused. The girl went back to the orphanage. All the while I don't know what to do with my own breath. The words coming out of the woman's mouth make no sense, because such cruelty makes no sense. And perhaps what made the least sense was the way this tragedy unfolded in front of me. The woman was dignified, she didn't victimize, she didn't cry, on the contrary, everything had such an unnatural normalcy and familiarity. It was becoming unbearable. I try to change the subject. I find out that at the orphanage she meets her husband, that they love each other very much and he doesn't treat her badly in any way. They are both very proud of their two children and that he works hard for little money, but they manage to give them the minimum they can hope for a better future for them. I breathe a sigh of relief because I feel I have escaped from a nightmare into the light. And I ask naively and offhandedly: "What's your favorite movie?" Suddenly everything comes full circle, the woman's face seems frozen, but her eyes are flooded with tears and confusion. "But why do you ask?" the woman answers in shame. I can't say anything, and my silence seems to put her under even more pressure. With great awkwardness and heaviness, she tells me: "I think Indian films, they remind me of me and my man, how it's hard at first but then in the end it all ends well." Then it hit me like an axe to the head. How far away is this universe that I with artistic pride thought I could bring to the stage for others who have no idea. How ignorant I was to think I could truly understand a value, cultural and empathetic mechanism. Tragedy and grief were part of that woman's life, they were not at all foreign, normal concepts, hope on the other hand was something much more unusual. Who knows when was the last time anyone was curious to know her not in terms of her poverty, ethnicity or the past she carries, and here I am feeding a false interest for my own salvation. I felt like a coward, I felt like a hypocrite, an "untouchable" man.

January 2017, rehearsals begin at the State Theatre in Braunschweig Germany, under the title *Gypsies. Roma in Europe*. Starting from the title itself, I had a hard time figuring out whether the decision to choose that word was to stir up controversy and interest from the start or to highlight the ignorance and prejudices that we, the creators of this show, have ourselves. From the beginning of the research until the start of rehearsals I study the rest of the material gathered from Germany and France, where colleagues from the corresponding countries had participated. I notice the same pattern of ignorance, but in the case of Germany

it is disguised in the clothes of generosity. The apparent hospitality with which immigrants from Arab countries have been received has turned the Roma political asylum seekers from the former Yugoslav countries into dispensable weight. Families who had built new lives without ties to their old homelands are now forced to leave Germany against their promises, stateless souls whose social contracts and proof of existence have been destroyed by war.



Photo 4: Gina Călinoiu / Dejan Jovanovic during the performance of *Gypsies. Roma in Europe*, © Volker Beinhorn / Isabel Winarsch

We are for the first time, the whole team in the same room and we can take the general pulse of the research experience and the rest of the accumulated material. The cast of the show consists of Gina Călinoiu, actress at the “Marin Sorescu” National Theatre in Craiova, Ursula Hobmaier, actress at the State Theatre in Braunschweig, Simone Bourgade, freelance actor from Paris, Dejan Jovanovic and Dejan Jovanovic, two phenomenal Roma artists of Serbian origin, who together opened a music school in Berlin dedicated to Roma children. We are all overwhelmed by the amount of audio and video material we have to go through, but especially by the responsibility we had towards these people. Each of the actors has a cathartic story from this research burned into their retinas and imprinted on their ear drums, a moment that will fuel and catalyze the entire rehearsal period. The first three days all we do is download impressions and debate the whole assimilation process that had taken place between the documentation experience

and the first day of rehearsals. Together with director Julia Roesler we make the decision from the beginning that we will not change the words of the people interviewed in any way. The testimonies will be presented as they were given to us, without correcting grammatical mistakes or logical threads, reinterpreting or intuiting anything other than what we can hear on the recordings. The performance will be composed of a complex linguistic spectrum with all the languages of those selected by playwright Silke Merzhauser: German, English, Romanian, French, Serbian and Romani. This lexicological maze was not intended to alienate or confuse the audience, but to emulate the feeling of fear and the unknown that Roma people have when they are forced by circumstances into a foreign place, but also the same feeling that we have had at times when being in some communities we found ourselves in situations where we did not feel safe. Another important decision was not to try to hide through various theatrical conventions the obvious: we are four white actors portraying Roma people.



Photo 5: The cast of *Gypsies. Roma in Europe* during the performance, © Volker Beinhorn / Isabel Winarsch

The structure of the show was built on several simple premises. The first was that in most scenes we would switch between the roles of interviewer and interviewee to recreate moments from the documentary. We also tried, together with the playwright, to group the stories in a certain way geographically, in order to install a certain atmosphere specific to the areas visited. The *mise en scène* was very closely linked to the scenographic element. At the beginning of the

performance the stage was empty, and during the performance, like nomads with extremely rudimentary tools and materials we would build a large projection screen that would serve the images that made up the context, place or climate of each moment. The sound of the tools, the almost improvised nature of the set, the almost random rustling of the actors uninvolved in the dialogue lifting the wooden and material structure, all contributed to that feeling of lack of consolidation. The costumes were designed to contain all the elements necessary for each character from the beginning of the play. Each of us had several layers of clothing that we removed as we progressed through the story. The symbolism of this “stripping” was also doubled by the contrast between the load of colour and complexity that the costume had at the beginning, compared to the final moment when we all looked light in white steamy suits.

In my view the most important and powerful element of the show was the interactivity with the audience. The transitions between moments were marked by different challenges that we directly launched to the audience, putting them face to face with the stereotypes that are so familiar especially to foreign audiences. Scattered through the audience we would go around begging for money, guessing their futures, trying to sell them all sorts of junk, even stealing their clothes from their wardrobe. These moments were largely improvised, fuelled by the audience’s momentary reaction, but they had a pre-planned direction and often ended up being extremely sensitive.



Photo 6: Musicians Dejan Jovanovic and Dejan Jovanovic with actress Ursula Hobmaier, during the performance of *Gypsies. Roma in Europe*,
© Volker Beinhorn / Isabel Winarsch

The music created by the two Roma artists was the element of cohesion and clarity in all the madness and confusion created on stage. Without words, the musicians shattered every stereotype by melting the walls between cultured symphonic music and traditional Roma music. Prejudices against lute music, or labelling it as *manele*³, no longer stood up while watching these two virtuosos of instruments and were often used in antithesis to what was happening on stage. The work on the show was hard. But we were lucky to have a fantastic team and a vital mutual trust that helped us through the tough times to keep going. At the end of each rehearsal we saved time to discuss the theatrical constructions we had discovered that day, and often invited Roma activists or other people specialising in the fields of inclusion and discrimination. Not infrequently we were demolished by them and the same personal prejudices we thought we had got rid of were revealed. We assimilated, shook off the negative thoughts and moved on, because none of us had forgotten why we were there.

The premiere takes place on 23.02. 2017 at the State Theatre in Braunschweig and has an incredible emotional charge. People react more and more strongly, especially to the moments of interaction. There are moments of actual dialogue with the audience in the middle of the scripted scenes and the general feeling is that we managed to spark a debate. One of the interviewees, whose story seems almost unreal is in the audience and I see him in tears. The final moment of the show is the story of *Stefan*, who under the threat of war arrives with his family without papers in Germany. After consultations with lawyers and social workers from the German state advisors and at their direction, he enlarges his family with children born on German soil in order to gain the security of this citizenship. This does not happen and Stefan now finds himself having to provide for five children and a wife who under the stress of deportation tries to commit suicide by taking a handful of drugs. It all culminates when the wife and three of the children are deported back to Macedonia, with no relatives, a home or minimum security there, and Stefan is not deported along with them and having no money to go to Macedonia and being with the other two children, stays in Germany. This story is told by all the actors, interspersing fragments and taking energy from each other.

I consider myself an extremely cerebral actor, control and technique are part of my religion on stage. I enjoy the most moments of improvisation and spontaneity,

³ manele – is a mixture of “oriental” Romanian folk and contemporary pop music with bases on Balkan influences. Originating from Turkish music from the beginning of the 19th century, this kind of music remained acclaimed due to the popularity in the community of fiddlers. Manele are part of a pan-Balkan musical current, present in Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Serbia and Turkey. <https://www.definitions.net> [access: 21.11.2021].

but I always try to place them in the context of the constructed situations and stage language. I don't let myself forget that I'm on stage, that I've chosen to tell the story in a certain way for maximum effect. During this final monologue I have a bit where I try to talk to my deported wife on the phone, she faints and I hear my kids alone and crying over the phone because their mother is down. The feeling of helplessness is excessive. A shiver runs from my spine to my head and floods my eyes. I lose control and Flavius the man starts crying hysterically on stage. As an actor I'm not proud that I failed to master the charge of the moment, but looking back I'm glad that this profession where there is often the mechanization of feelings and human reactions has not turned me into a cynical man who sees theatrical opportunities in every second especially in these situations where these stories are true, and the atrocities we utter are not Shakespearean masterpieces. You can judge me, dear fellow actors, I understand and perhaps I would do the same, but I will always be grateful for that moment.



Photo 7: Actor Flavius Retea, final monologue scene during the performance of *Gypsies. Roma in Europe*, © Volker Beinhorn / Isabel Winarsch

The show has performed in Braunschweig, Göttingen, Hannover, Berlin, Nancy and Timisoara. Each one had a special charge, and we evolved with each performance and were constantly kept in the grip of the ever-changing energy of the audiences in the different geographical locations. Each performance was followed by a discussion with the audience, where we could in a less structured

and formal setting confront the impact of our message. Some people were excited, confused and introspective, a sign that we had challenged their own prejudices, others were aggressive and suspicious of our true intentions. One lady from Nancy who seemed quite well off accused us of being part of the “gypsies’ plan” to take all the wealth of the French. The reactions were always conflicting. We had the pleasure of performing this show in Berlin on the International Roma Day, 8th April 2017, at the famous Heimathafen Neukölln Theatre, and the theatre was on fire. We were applauded and booed, those in the audience laughed like nowhere else and cried like nowhere else. It was a truly special moment and I knew from the discussion at the end of the show that our work was on the right track. In antithesis I would also like to share a moment from the performances in France. During the “begging” moment in the audience my usual tactic was to ask for a tiny amount of money and then negotiate it upwards until I reached a totally uncomfortable amount for the audience member. The director’s instructions were very clear, that at no point should we take our attitude towards that stereotype of the beggar, but rather ask for money as if we were asking a friend. I am looking in public at a well-dressed gentleman whom I go to ask for a euro. Very curtly and aggressively I get the answer: “I’ve already paid for the ticket!” I insist but I am met with even more aggression: “Get away from me! I don’t want to be part of this circus!” I feel I have reached my limit and move on. Fast-forward in the show, we get to the moment when for a few seconds we leave the stage, and covered by the musical moment of the two Dejans, we steal the jackets of the audience from the wardrobe. Upon returning to the stage you can obviously hear the murmur of people recognising their own coat. The scene unfolds entirely in the borrowed costumes, and at the end the central character exclaims: *YES, WE STOLE!* and then all the actors return the clothes to their owners. Only this time my colleague Simon can’t find the owner of the coat he took. No one admits that the jacket is his. Searching his pockets he discovers a wallet exploding of cash and the keys to a very expensive car. The audience reacts with great surprise. The gentleman from earlier stands up and vocally covers the audience reaction: “Yes! I’m rich. What’s the problem?” He reclaims his coat and steps into the hall.

It is impossible to quantify the effect this show has had. Was it worth the investment of all the resources to build an experience aimed at a predominantly white middle-class audience and up, whose comfort has atrophied their empathy? If we had gone to that village without water and electricity and used that money to change those people’s lives, would it have mattered more? Hard to say. But personally this feeling of guilt hasn’t left me, because I’m now left with some fantastic experiences, I’ve grown as a person and an actor, I’ve made friends,

I've travelled extensively because of this project and I've gained enormously. But what have the people I did this show for gained? Did I leave behind a better world? Did I change some opinions? Have we cured society of racism? Obviously far from what we'd want in an ideal universe, but this was and always will be the crux of social theatre. In the hope that these lines have put your own prejudices a little into perspective, I'll leave you with the last lines from the show *Gypsies*.

“Stefan: Maybe you laugh at me now, but that's true. When I am in Macedonia President, do you know what I'm doing? I take all these shit citizenship [shit] off the people and then I make [them] all stateless. (*Claps*) Yes. Why can a man not live where he wants? Why is a person not free and do what he wants?

Black.”⁴

⁴ *Gypsies. Roma in Europe*, werkgruppe2, Hannover, typescript, 2017.

3

**INCURSIUNI ÎN LABORATORUL
ARTELOR SPECTACOLULUI**

**EINBLICKE INS LABORATORIUM
DER DARSTELLENDEN KÜNSTE**

**VIEW IN THE LABORATORY
OF PERFORMING ARTS**

Alles was ich nicht vergessen kann ... und mehr! Erinnerungssplitter aus dem Zibaldone Notizheft

NIKY WOLCZ

(Columbia University, New York)

Abstract

The essay represents first of all an homage to my master, mister David Esrig, who initiated me into the mysteries of acting and directing. Then it brings into memory actors and productions.

Keywords:

David Esrig; theatre; drama school; acting; directing; Gheorghe Dinică; Albert Kitzl; Marin Moraru; Ursula Wolcz.

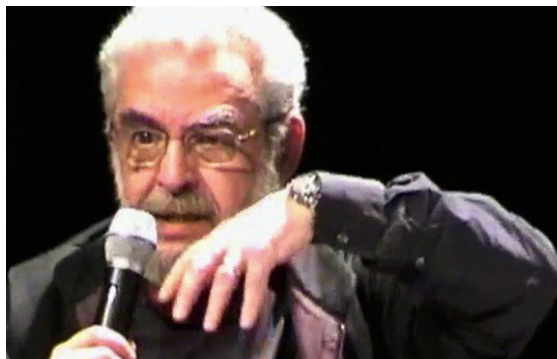
Rezumat

Eseul reprezintă în primul rând un omagiu adus maestrului meu, domnul David Esrig, care m-a inițiat în tainele actoriei și regiei. Totodată readuce în memorie actori și producții.

Cuvinte cheie:

David Esrig; teatru; școală de actorie; actorie; regie; Gheorghe Dinică; Albert Kitzl; Marin Moraru; Ursula Wolcz.

„Vergesst nicht den Geist der Anfänge.“ (Zeami)



MEISTER DAVID ESRIG

... wenn das rechte Auge des Meisters durchdringend und wie nach innen gerichtet blickte und das linke mit viel Humor den Geist des Zuhörers, des Schauspielers konspirativ verlockend miteinbezog, wusste man, dass es sich auf den Kern der Sache bezieht und man Verantwortung übernehmen muss.

Alles was ich nicht vergessen hab'

Bukarest / Bulandra Theater: Ein Morgen wie jeder andere.

Bewegungstraining für Schauspieler vor der Probe.

Herr Esrig: Nikyşor¹, wie war das Training?

Nikyşor: ... Gut ...

Herr E.: Waren alle da?

N.: Nicht sehr...

Herr E.: Warum?

N.: ?!

Nach vielen Vorstellungen, bei denen ich in *Rameaus Neffe* an den Spiegeln arbeiten durfte, hatten endlich die langersehnten Proben zu Samuel Becketts *Warten auf Godot* begonnen, übersetzt vom Dichter Gelu Naum, der auch den Diderot Text szenisch bearbeitet hatte. Diesmal durfte ich bei der so wichtigen Vorbereitungsphase dabei sein, und zum ersten Mal hatte ich eine gründliche Arbeit an einem Text und seinen Analogien erlebt, erfahren und „erlitten“. Die Arbeit hatte mit unzähligen Leseproben begonnen, und der ganze Reichtum der latenten Inhalte, die uns Herr Esrig während der Lektüre aus Becketts Stück enthüllte, schien kein Ende zu nehmen und sich gleichzeitig als eine unlösbare Aufgabe vor den Schauspielern aufzutürmen.

Es war ja klar, dass Gheorghe Dinică und Marin Moraru Didi und Gogo spielen würden und Grigore Gonța den Lucky, dazu kam als Überraschung Herr Sandu Sticlaru als Pozzo und Nikyşor als der Junge / Garçon. Zusätzlich hat mich Herr Esrig als „Einwärmer“ – „rechauffeur“ – mit einem täglichen Bewegungstraining für unsere Schauspieler beauftragt. Für *Rameaus Neffen* hatten sie mit Madame Sybille täglich das „épaulement“ trainiert.

Das war alles eineinhalb Jahre nachdem ich mit zweiundzwanzig die Schauspielerschule beendet hatte. Natürlich hatte ich, wie auch alle anderen Kollegen meiner Generation, während der Studienzeit alle Esrig-Vorstellungen im „Teatrul de Comedie“ gesehen, und das nicht nur einmal. Die Inszenierungen von *Troilus*

¹ Nikyşor – Kosenamen für Niky Wolcz [Anm. der Redaktion].

und *Cressida* und *Der Schatten* mit dem wunderbaren Schauspieler Gheorghe Dinică. Und *Capul de Rățoi* (*Der Entenkopf*), ein surrealistisches pataphysisches Ereignis, in dem auch die Ikone der rumänischen avantgardistischen Dada-Absurdisten und Surrealisten-Bewegung als Figur „Cirivis-Urmuz“ vorkam.

Rameaus Neffe war die totale Überraschung, eine Steigerung alles bisherigen. Ein brillanter Text, in einer Spiegelwelt visionär inszeniert, gedoppelt von einer überwältigenden schauspielerischen Leistung von Gheorghe Dinică und Marin Moraru als Rameau und Diderot. Diese Vorstellung haben die meisten Schauspieler so oft wie möglich gesehen und gehört. Da ich die Arbeit an den Spiegeln übernehmen durfte, konnte ich das Spiel auch von „innen“, von der Hinterbühne her, erleben.

Die schon erwähnten Leseproben zu *Godot* entsprachen genau dem, was Stanislawski mit „Krug Vnimanije“ beschreibt – einem Kreis der Aufmerksamkeit, der Konzentration. Die Intensität, mit der es dem Regisseur gelingt, alle um den Tisch Sitzenden nur auf das Eine, Wichtige zu fokussieren und die Energie aller für den Subtext einzusetzen, öffnet der Imagination und der Kreativität die Schleusen.

Herr Esrig, selbst ein hervorragender Schauspieler, sprang unerwartet auf die Spielfläche und skizzierte scharf und mit klaren Gesten die Konturen des jeweiligen zu inszenierenden Abschnitts konkret und auch aus der Perspektive der Figuren, um dann wieder zum Tisch zurückzukehren.

In meinem Notizbuch steht: *Ex uno lapide!*

Bei allen Inszenierungen, die ich in Rumänien, in Deutschland oder in der Schweiz mit dem Meister gemacht hatte, war dies ein immer wiederkehrender Vorgang, der die unmittelbar praktischen Lösungsvorschläge mit der Reflektion, der Stille und der philosophischen Tiefe der Inhalte durch die Figuren begleitete.

Meyerholds Schauspieler erwähnten oft sein „POKAZ“ – das Zeigen. Es war kein Vor-Zeigen, vielmehr die magische Fähigkeit, Mittel und Lösungen zu suggerieren, in die Figur und in die Situation einzutauchen und den Schlüssel zur Überschreitung einer schwierigeren, schauspielerischen Schwelle zu finden. Bei den Proben mit Herrn Esrig war dies immer der Fall, in einer Wechselwirkung von Andeutungen, skizzierten Gesten oder Chiffren, und nach dem Erreichen einer gewissen Temperatur, auch ohne Worte. Es war geleitet von „der Autorität der Sache“, wie es der Regisseur gerne sagte. In den glücklichen Momenten war dieser Vorgang absolut konzentriert und hundertprozentig frei. Ein kabbalistischer Spruch besagt: „Wenn man während des Gebets an Geschäfte denken kann, kann man auch beten, während man Geschäfte macht!“

Nie hatte ich zu Hause Text „gelernt“ – nach so vielen intensiven Leseproben war er ganz einfach da. DA! *All' Improvviso* haben wir nicht nur bei den *Commedia*-Stücken gespielt, sondern es wurde uns ständig abverlangt. Ich würde behaupten: in allem gab es kein „methodisches“, aber ein rigoros systematisches Vorgehen, das immer vielseitig verwurzelt, rhizomatisch war, um den „zeitlosen“ Themen und den immerwährenden Prinzipien gerecht zu werden. Mit einem aufgestülpten „Konzept“ ahnt oder berührt man nie die verborgene Seite des Mondes. Mit einer Vision immer! Und die war gegeben! Während der *Godot* Proben fragte mich Herr Esrig, ob ich nicht als Assistent an seiner Regiekasse mitarbeiten möchte. Das war eine immense Bereicherung, vor allem weil ich ab diesem Zeitpunkt eine viel grössere Nähe und Verantwortung für die kommenden Projekte hatte, sowohl in der „Schule“ als auch an der Vorarbeit von Shakespeares *Sturm* und den *Venezianischen Drillingen*.

Die didaktische Arbeit war sehr verschieden von der Probenarbeit im Theater. Hier gab es stets Referenzen und praktische Beispiele aus den verschiedenen wichtigen Schauspielschulen – wie die des Patron vom „Vieux Colombiere“, aus der russischen Schule eines Wachtangow, Meyerhold und natürlich von Stanislawski, aber auch die Tradition der *Commedia dell'Arte* spielte eine Rolle. Seit dieser Zeit habe ich während der letzten fünfzig Jahren ständig neben der Theaterarbeit den Kontakt zu den Schauspielschulen intensiv gepflegt.

Das *Godot*-Projekt konnte leider aus den bekannten Gründen², nicht zu Ende geführt werden, aber alles, was ich bei den Proben gelernt hatte, auch von den Schauspielern, war nicht wegzunehmen. Persönlich als „Le Garçon“ hatte ich wenige, aber aufregende Proben. Es war der direkte, unendliche Augenkontakt während des zeitlos scheinenden Schweigens ... der Blick des ewig suchenden und wartenden Pilgers Didi / Gheorghe Dinică. Gegen Ende der zweiten Szene fragte Didi (Wladimir) den Boten (Junge):

„WLADIMIR: Trägt er eine Bart, Herr Godot?

JUNGE: Ja.

WLADIMIR: Blond oder ... *er zögert...* schwarz... oder rot?

JUNGE *zögernd*: Ich glaube, er ist weiß.

Schweigen.

[Bereits vorher hatte Lucky von der „Existenz eines persönlichen Gottes kwakwakwakwa mit weißem Bart kwakwa ...“ gesprochen]

² Verbot mancher Produktionen im kommunistischen Rumänien wegen der damaligen Machtpolitik. [Anm. der Redaktion].

WLADIMIR: Miséricorde... Barmherzigkeit! *Schweigen.*

JUNGE: Was soll ich Herrn Godot sagen?

WLADIMIR: Tu lui diras. / Du sagst ihm... *er stockt...* du sagst ihm, daß du mich gesehen hast und daß... *er überlegt....* daß du mich gesehen hast. *Pause. Wladimir geht vor, der Junge bleibt zurück. Wladimir bleibt stehen, der Junge bleibt auch stehen.* Sag mal, du bist doch sicher, mich gesehen zu haben, du wirst mir morgen nicht sagen, daß du mich nie gesehen hast? *Schweigen. Wladimir springt plötzlich vor, der Junge rennt blitzschnell weg. Schweigen. Die Sonne geht unter, der Mond geht auf.*³

Wir wurden ständig angehalten, die „SILENCE“, das Schweigen zu respektieren und die Dynamik, die dadurch in der Imagination der Darsteller und Zuschauer ausgelöst wurde, passiv zu begleiten. Eine unendliche Reise ins Unbekannte. Enigmatisch im Vor-Text von Didi's Augen, ein Tremendum.

Nach dem Eintauchen in Becketts Welt folgte Shakespeares *Sturm*. Für die Übersetzung, die Herr Esrig mit Herrn Nicolau neu angefertigt hatte, sollte ich Teile der deutschen Schlegel / Tieck-Fassung (1831) „mot à mot“ aus meinem Reclam-Büchlein niederschreiben. Es ging hauptsächlich um den utopischen Soliloque Gonsalos und die Hochzeits-Masque, die in unserer Aufführung von der Arielgruppe als Iris, Cerse und Juno gestaltet werden sollte. Das Hauptaugenmerk von Herrn Esrig war, soweit ich es verstanden hatte, auf die Bilder, die aus den Worten sichtbar wurden, gerichtet. Hierzu hatte er verschiedene Übersetzungen verglichen und das kritische Essay von Colin Still *A Study of the Tempest* verwendet.

Die Proben hatten wie üblich mit intensiven analytischen Leseproben begonnen, die von Anfang an und wie immer von praktischen Bühnenlösungen begleitet waren. In der Aufbau-Dekoration sollte das Oben und das Unten aufgehoben und relativiert werden. Es sollte ein Raum sein, in dem die luftigen Ariel-Geister, unterirdische Calibans und irdische Höflinge, aber auch der Magier Prospero sich treffen konnten. Ein „Abraxas“-Raum wie in den Sphären von Basilides. Die Besetzung schloss die wertvollsten Schauspieler der Bukarester Szene ein: Gheorghe Dinică als Prospero, George Constantin als Gonsalo, Marin Moraru als Caliban, Ovidiu Schumacher als Adrian, Ovidiu Iuliu Moldovan als Antonio etc.. Was ich neben vielen anderen Notizen, die ich in meinem Zibaldone-Heftchen, oft schwer leserlich, aufgezeichnet hatte, war: „Trennung von Wort und Handlung“ in

³ Beckett, Samuel: *Warten auf Godot*, Deutsche Übertragung von Elmar Tophoven, Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt am Main, 1971, S. 227.

Parallele, in Opposition oder in der Folge ... ein Delsarte-Prinzip, in das wir vom Meister eingeführt wurden. Die Ariels als Einzelne, aber auch als Gruppengestalt, als „ein Körper“, oder zerteilt, als Harpyie, die den Festtisch besudelt oder als Göttinnen – Iris, Ceres, Juno – während der initiatorischen Hochzeits-Masque des Brautpaares Miranda und Ferdinand in „Hieros Gamos“.

Die „Einweihung“, die mit Prospero: „No tongue, all Eyes BE SILENT“ beginnt... in disziplinierter Stille geimpft für immer!

Stimmen und akustische Resonanzräume sollten durch grosse Parabolspiegel aus der „Luftabwehr“ des Zweiten Weltkrieges unterstützt werden – konkave Spiegel, die den Fokus ausserhalb der Spiegelfläche hatten und dem Sound, der Stimme eine überdimensionierte Intensität erlaubten, auch im Flüstern. Die Suche nach diesen Spiegeln, nach Details für das Basisgerüst, all dies war Teil eines Experiments. Es war eine Suche, die dann in der Arbeit am Text in der Suche nach technisch neuen Mitteln für das schauspielerische Alphabet implodierte.

Der Sturm wurde auch ein Opfer der Zensur, er wurde, wie auch *Godot*, nicht ausdrücklich verboten, aber unendlich verschoben, mit Einwänden zum Text und zur Übersetzung, in der Hoffnung, dass das Theater schließlich das Projekt aufgibt oder „verschiebt“.

Die Etappen des Eindringens in die Themen erfolgten letztendlich durch die „Geheimtüre“, durch die *Kerkaporta*, deren Schlüssel oder Sperrhaken für kurze Augenblicke sämtliche Türen öffnete. Es bedurfte einer gründlichen und vielfältigen (methodischen) Analyse, wobei die „Methode“ undogmatisch eingesetzt wurde als eine Art Zwischenargument für die nächste Stufe, nämlich die der spirituellen Einsicht, wenn für den Schauspieler das „Nichtbewusste“ seinen Platz im Spiel einnahm. Sherlock Holmes' „Fall gelöst“ galt immer nur für den Moment, immer nur für die jeweilige Probe oder Vorstellung. Nicht Worte, sondern Worthandlungen werden gespielt und die damit verbundenen Bilder und Bildvorstellungen. Es waren „Sprechakte“, die die andere, nicht nur verbal formulierte, sondern auch „geheime“ Welt der Themenkreise errahnen lässt – die „verborgene Seite“ des Mondes. Herr Esrig hatte immer auf die verschiedenen Ebenen hingewiesen, auf die ästhetische, ethische oder sakral-spirituelle Zone und deren gemeinsame Schnittmengen. Die Fähigkeit des Schauspielers bei der Suche nach der Quelle, nach dem Ausgangspunkt für das Verständnis seiner Figur, kann man nicht methodisch „festnageln“. So faszinierend auch die Argumente, die Verbindungen und Analogien sowohl zum philosophischen Hintergrund, als auch zu den Theatertraditionen und Bedingungen aufgefächert wurden, immer ging es darum, den Treibstoff und Auslöser für das psychische und physische Verhalten des Schauspielers in der Rolle zu suchen. Keine fade Rollenanalyse

wurde angestrebt, sondern immer das „Greifbare“ für die richtigen Handlungen der Figur, die zum Gefühl, zu einem Zustand führt, und für die Gestaltung vital sind. Gefragt war der Tritt über die jeweiligen „schauspielerischen Schwellen“, kein Erlebnis wurde als Selbstzweck gesehen. Ein Interesse lügt nicht! Denken und Tun, Fühlen und Tun, geleitet von der Vorstellungskraft, übertragen auf den Rolleninhalt. Man wurde immer auf eine innere, nicht ungefährliche Reise mitgenommen, die von einem spirituellen Mentor angeführt wurde.

„Give the man a MASK, and he will tell you the truth.“ (Oskar Wilde)

Von den sieben Rollen, die ich beim Meister spielen durfte, waren fünf Rollen mit Maske: Ariel, Pulcinella, Argante, Mephisto, Touchstone. Mit den *Venezianischen Drillingen*, deren Vorbereitung schon während der gefährdeten *Sturm*-Proben lief, haben wir uns die *Commedia dell'Arte*, die Maske und das *All'Improviso* über den Lazzo nähergebracht. Wichtige Informationen hierzu waren die Dokumentationen von Aleksej Djivelegov und Konstantin Miklashevsky und natürlich Duchartre, sowie die Erfahrungen, die Molière, Gordon Craig, Max Reinhardt, Copeau und andere mit der Tradition der *Commedia* gemacht hatten, Buster Keaton und der Stummfilm, sowie die Vaudeville Tradition mit einbezogen. In der Theaterwerkstatt des Nationaltheaters Bukarest wurde ein Maskenatelier improvisiert, wo wir unter der Leitung eines Maskenbauers viele Entwürfe, Abdrücke und Formen erstellten. Unbehelligt durch die Zensur konnten wir eine Serie von wunderbaren Vorstellungen starten: mit Marin Moraru, der die drei Zanettos interpretierte, Gheorghe Dinică den Arlecchino, Johnny Georgescu den Geronte, Ovidiu Schumacher den Capitano. Ich selbst durfte den Pulcinella spielen und für die Bewegung und Lazzi verantwortlich zeichnen. Die Vorstellung wurde auch in Belgrad beim BITEF Festival gespielt, wo Herr Esrig zusammen mit Jerzy Grotowski 1967 den Regiepreis für *Troilus und Cressida* gewann.

Eine ebenfalls sehr wichtige Arbeit, die Herr Esrig mit dem Bukarester Filmstudio erarbeitete, war das Szenarium und die Produktion für *DE CE? (Warum?)* nach Skizzen von Ion Luca Caragiale, mit Gheorghe Dinică in der Hauptrolle des Anghelache, der seinem eigenen Begräbnis beiwohnt. Die Nähe zum Surrealismus, zu Dada und zu den Absurden war ganz in der stilistischen Vision des Meisters. Leider auch verschoben und verboten...

Der Abstand zwischen Gesicht und Maske

Schon vor dem endgültigen Entschluss, das Land zu verlassen, hatte Herr Esrig bereits öfter auch in Paris, München und Bonn inszeniert. Am Stadttheater Essen, wo ich nach meiner Aussiedlung als Spielleiter und Schauspieler

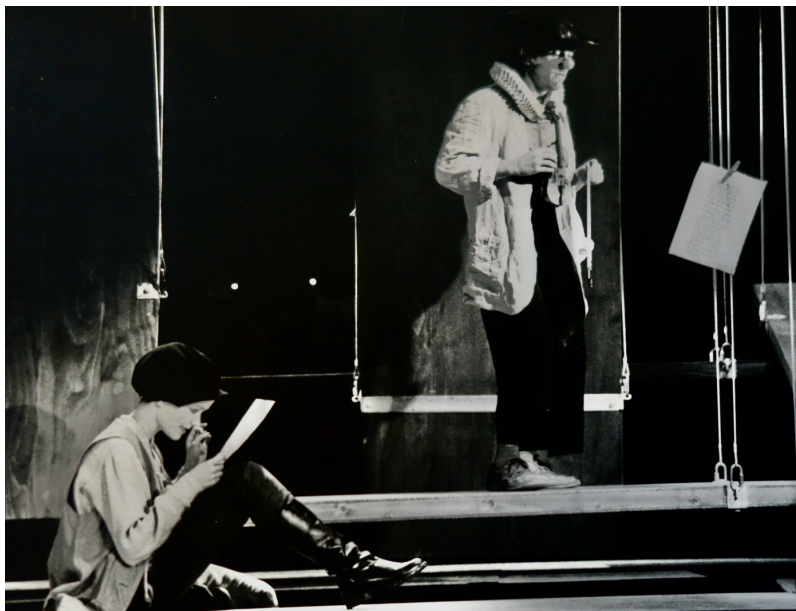
arbeitete, hatten wir dann endlich wieder zusammengefunden. Diesmal mit einer „Commedia’ alla Francese“ und zwar *Die Streiche von Scapin* von Molière. Mehrere Schauspieler aus Rumänien, die ebenfalls ausgewandert waren, wie Albert Kitzl, Ursula Wolcz, Oswald Geyer und ich, wurden vom Meister revitalisiert und in einer stilistisch anspruchsvollen und auch beim Publikum sehr erfolgreichen Vorstellung gezeigt. Diese hatten wir dann im Herbst 1979 im Stadttheater Bern mit dem neuen Schauspielleiter David Esrig wiederaufgenommen. Es folgten die Inszenierungen von Gorkis *Nachtsyl* in einem ehemaligen Schlachthof, Shakespeares *Wie es Euch gefällt* im Stadttheater und *Die tragische Histoire von Doktor Faustus* von Marlowe in der Französischen Kirche. Alle diese Vorstellungen wurden durch zwei Spielzeiten mit grossem Publikum und Erfolg bei der Kritik regelmässig gezeigt.



Molière: *Die Streiche des Scapin*, Stadttheater Essen und Bern /mit Ursula Wolcz, Albert Kitzl und Niky Wolcz (Privatarchiv: Niky Wolcz)



Maxim Gorki: *Nachtsyl*, Stadttheater Bern, Regie David Esrig / mit Ursula und Niky Wolcz (Privatarchiv: Niky Wolcz)



William Shakespeare: *Wie es Euch gefällt*, Stadttheater Bern, Regie David Esrig / mit Ursula und Niky Wolcz (Privatarchiv: Niky Wolcz)



Die Unterschiede der Welten, der Stilistik und der zu bewältigenden inszenatorischen und schauspielerischen Herausforderungen waren gewaltig und erforderten ein Höchstmass an Flexibilität, Konzentration und Entdeckungslust, die uns der Meister abforderte, aber durch die er uns auch brillant hindurchführte.

Während wir weiter die Tipi Fissi der *Commedia* spielten, mussten wir auch den naturalistisch-realistischen Anforderungen der Figuren im *Nachtasyl* Genüge tun, im esoterischen „Arduenna silva – Ardenner Wald“ aus Shakespeares *Wie es Euch gefällt* und in Marlowes *Faust*, den der Meister in der Tradition eines Mysterienspiels in einer Kirche in Bern inszenierte.

Welche FALLHÖHE!

Von Cantors Mengenlehre, Gottes Aleph, der Alchemie, Hegel, Carl Gustav Jung, Giovanni (John) Florio, bis zu theologischen Schriften von Agrippa über

Trithemius bis Calvin wurden Referenzen und Analogien für das Entschlüsseln und Erläutern dieser Welten herbeigezogen und mit unterschiedlicher darstellerischer Technik und inszenatorischer Vision auf einen gemeinsamen Nenner gebracht. Der ehemalige Erzengel, der das Antlitz Gottes gesehen, sagt als ein jetziger Mephisto: „Das ist die Hölle, das VERMISSEN“... Und für Faust gibt es nur die Hoffnung, dass die Schale der Gnade in sein Herz gegossen wird.

In der Bukarester Regie-Meisterklasse wurde oft über die verschiedenen Theatertraditionen aus einem inszenatorischen oder schauspielerischen Gesichtspunkt heraus debattiert. Die Arbeiten und Überlegungen eines Artaud, eines Stanislawski, Wachtangow, Grotowski oder des *Living Theatre* waren die Referenzpunkte der neuen Regie- und Schauspielergeneration in Bukarest / Rumänien. Diese Glut hat schon immer den Backofen der Alchemisten, den „Athanor“, wachgehalten. Der Meister hatte immer darauf geachtet, dass man Imagination nicht mit Phantasie, modische Konzepte nicht mit klarer Vision verwechselt und Willkür nicht als künstlerische Freiheit missversteht.

Anstatt Schlußgedanken:

Meyerholds Saturnismus war wohlbekannt. Er war oft unbarmherzig und verschlang oder exkulierte seine Regie-Schüler, wenn er den Eindruck hatte, dass sie ihn kopieren oder gar übertreffen wollten. Eisenstein hat es so zusammengefasst: „Assistent bei Meyerhold zu sein, war die Hölle, aber der Herausschmiss war wie die Vertreibung aus dem Paradies.“ Aus seinem mexikanischen Exil schrieb er 1946: „Ich habe nie jemanden mehr geliebt, vergöttert, angebetet, als meinen Meister, den unvergleichlichen Wsewolod Emiljewitsch Meyerhold.“

„Xaíromai pou gnórisa énan mystiriódi daskalo. Efharistó Soi“, sagt der Lehrling des Hephaistos: „Ich bin dankbar, dass ich einem unbegreiflichen Meister begegnet bin.“

Strategies for Developing Young Actors' Creativity

OFELIA POPII

(Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu)

Abstract

The acting strategies are tools by which to efficiently combine and chronologically organize all the means and methods we select in order to reach the stage goals. The professor / director / adviser can resort to these combined acting strategies according to the needs of every student actor on the team. Absolutely all of the strategies employed must have as a final point the creative capitalization of the potential of each artist and the skill to consolidate the rehearsed interior and exterior paths. During the experimentation phase, when various techniques are tried out, many interesting directions are discovered, some of which will not be used, however, in the final version of the performance. Nonetheless, this experimental work is essential in order to construct the character's ambience or background, his "life", therefore they must not be completely erased from the performance, because they constitute his invisible world, and "the character lives". If during university studies, the student is guided by his professors and his attention and curiosity are constantly triggered by various new challenges catalysed by the professor, after graduation, the actor needs to do this on his own, because attention and curiosity strengthen the will and perseverance, both of which are necessary for new discoveries, and thus for a creative working mode. The student actor needs, therefore, to be taught to be his own teacher for the rest of his artistic life.

Keywords:

actor; student; creativity; strategy; methods.

Rezumat

Strategiile actricești reprezintă moduri prin care sunt combinate eficient și sunt organizate cronologic metodele și mijloacele selectate pentru atingerea obiectivelor scenice. Strategiile sunt combinate și profesorul / regizorul / îndrumătorul poate apela la ele în funcție de necesitățile fiecărui student-actor din echipă. Absolut toate strategiile folosite trebuie să aibă ca punct final valorificarea creativă a potențialului fiecărui artist și deprinderea de a fixa traseele interioare și exterioare repetate. În faza încercărilor, în care se experimentează, se descoperă multe direcții interesante, dar unele nu vor fi folosite

în spectacolul final. Totuși această muncă este esențială pentru a construi atmosfera personajului, „viața lui”, direcțiile nu trebuie șterse total din interpretare, căci constituie lumea invizibilă a acestuia, iar „personajul trăiește”. Dacă în timpul facultății, studentul este ghidat de profesor și atenția, curiozitatea sa este mereu stârnită de noi și noi provocări lansate de profesor, după terminarea facultății, actorul trebuie să facă singur acest lucru, căci atenția și curiozitatea sunt în sprijinul voinței, perseverenței, necesare pentru noi descoperiri, deci pentru un demers creativ în lucru. Așadar, studentul actor trebuie învățat cum să fie propriul său pedagog pentru tot restul vieții sale artistice.

Cuvinte cheie:

actor; student; creativitate; strategie; metode.

Argument

The present topic was selected on grounds of the existing need for educating and developing creativity in young acting students, in order to offer them the necessary pathways for the creative act within the craft they will later on perform. The present article is part of an ample study, which aims to reach an applicable result regarding any theatre project which is centred on a novel, original approach, interesting discoveries on the level of acting and projects, a series of strategies which inspire creativity and creative liberty, based on traditional methods and artistic means, but reinterpreted in a contemporary context. Thus, having taken part in various drama projects, even short-term ones, whenever the director / coordinator lacks the time to lead the artistic team to a creative area, which presupposes new working approaches, the actor will be in command of the means and tools by which to discover independently, to evolve, not to fall into the trap of repetition, to avoid blocks, to use positively and creatively any fears which might arise during the work process.

One can trace within a performance various interesting and important pathways, which make one think: increasing creativity in an unfriendly environment and orientating this environment towards a productive outcome, creativity as an issue directly tied to the social dimension, but also its connection with the psychological and intellectual aspect, unleashing creativity in moments of individual crisis and when all external and internal barriers are broken down, in other words, using moments of crisis in order to discover new artistic meanings.

Students and young actors seek inspiration, firstly, in works of psychology, movies, but also in real life, personal experience or the experiences of people who have been through similar things. Although students are carefully coached,

it might prove beneficial for them to be challenged to choose their own personal working method, at a certain point, which should then be tested, with the sole scope of increasing their maximum creativity.

Creativity and strategies

Creativity as a mode of envisioning any artistic act, seems to be a self-evident truth. And still, even though it might seem strange, not all actors are creative, and not all performances are the result of a creative quest. Even though creativity has always been associated with art, thus also with theatre, even though actors seem to be always ready for play, still, far too often, the option is to walk down well-trodden roads, and already “tested” recipes, thereby evading novelty and creative discovery. The human mind works on creating systems and functional structures. Fear leads one to safe territories. Fear limits one to what one already knows. Thus, one of the strategies which have as their scope increasing creativity, is a strategy of counteracting fear and using it for increasing creativity.

To risk failure, in one’s quest for novelty, is not something a young emerging actor can afford to do. Not even an actor already on the heights of his artistic achievement desires uncertainty and lack of success. Therefore, the question which has haunted us, from the very start of our career in teaching acting skills, was: how might we tackle a creative working strategy which should offer safety to the students, a strategy which should employ methods and means to which they might resort individually in their later quests, which should be a prop for their creative searches? And how might we accomplish this without constructing myself a new entrapment, which should later on become a recipe, which in turn would lead to that sort of “lifeless theatre” that Peter Brook mentions in his masterpiece *Empty Space*¹? These questions have led us towards a strategy of increasing confidence and balancing self-esteem in the young actor.

Strategies are tools by which to efficiently combine and chronologically organize all the means and methods we select in order to reach certain goals. Strategies are combined and the professor / director / adviser can resort to them according to the needs of every student actor on the team.

Among the most important strategies used in class, we would like to mention some strategies employed in various domains and adapted for teaching acting skills, such as inductive strategies (going from the particular to the general),

¹ Brook, Peter: *Spațiul gol*, translated into Romanian by Marian Popescu, Unitext, București, 1997.

deductive strategies (opposed to inductive ones, going from general to the specific), analogical strategies (employing models), transductive strategies (explanations are delivered by means of metaphors), heuristic strategies (using problematization, discovery, heuristic dialogue, investigation, brainstorming, with the scope of stimulating creativity and acquiring new knowledge by means of a personal thinking effort on part of the student), but also strategies for combatting fear, avoiding blockages, relaxing, etc, characteristic of the actor's craft.

Absolutely all of the strategies employed must have as a final point, apart from acquiring skills which can later on be used during one's acting career, also the skill of establishing patterns of internal and external trajectories. During the experimentation phase, when various techniques are tried out, many interesting directions are discovered, which however will not be used in the final version of the performance. Still, this work is essential in order to construct the character's atmosphere, his "life", thus they must not be completely erased from the performance, because even though they might not be physically visible, they can be felt. It is said that the character is "alive". Moreover, there will be discoveries which we might have to return to, when constructing the performance, the actor needs to remember everything he did, to reconstitute the moment from the experimental phase. All of these skills will be essential in the future for the young actor's career.

We live in a society that places increased accent on creativity, in absolutely any domain, drawing on the idea of lifelong learning. In the field of acting, tackling any project in this manner is vital. Basically, one learns from every project, one evolves and discovers, as creativity in acting is essential. In order to learn how to relate to this craft, beyond the concrete information offered to students, beyond the creation of a proper environment for the student to make his own discoveries related to his artistic personality, beyond the development of self-confidence, acting trainers offers an example by means of his own relation to the actor's craft. The trainer's passion is transmitted to the student and the same happens regarding respect for colleagues, appreciating others' creations, all of these being personal observations we have gathered from direct work in this domain.

Without being impolite, without negatively impacting other artists' creativity, the creative actor, artist, is not a mere performer of directorial suggestions, but an explorer, an artist who continually discovers himself by means of roles, a "rebellious" actor, as George Banu affectionately calls him, in his book *Beyond the role, or the rebellious actor*², that actor who "seems to reveal himself

² Banu, George: *Dincolo de rol sau actorul nesupus*, Nemira, București, 2008.

apparently through intrusion, because the role remains his primordial mission, assumed uninterruptedly and still constantly overcome”³.

Modern man seeks to express his creativity in every single one of his actions, with a creative existence seemingly being a pathway towards happiness. But can one, in fact, learn creativity? We can increase the student’s levels of creativity, by educating him in the creative spirit, so we can create an environment where the student feels stimulated to manifest himself creatively, to learn and to then create opportunities for himself, where he can manifest himself, thus, to adopt an open attitude towards novelty, to evince the desire to experiment and to try new methods and pathways, to try to stage interesting ideas, to take risks and listen to his “inner voice” which prompts him to search further. Basically, one can encourage students to take the path of putting their creative potential to full use. This presupposes offering a certain informational groundwork, means to overcome fear, mechanisms and exercises to deal with blockages, all of these being sworn enemies of creativity. Furthermore, any orientation towards the outside, and subsequent abandonment of concentrating on the artistic theme studied, such as thoughts about future success, competition with other colleagues, thoughts about recognition by means of awards, are stumbling blocks which the student needs to identify as such and to banish.

Everyone is born with artistic potential, but for it to become a creative force in a domain, for example the artistic one, for actors to become creative in the theatre or movie world, they need to have knowledge and skills in the domain of the art of acting, to have the capacity of creatively thinking as an actor, to work creatively and to have the interior motivation to get lost completely in the artistic act. We said internal motivation, even if sometimes external stimuli are also of great, even if short-term, importance.

The acting craft pedagogue must keep in mind these vital factors, he must conduct a creative educational act himself, during his encounters with students, to have vision and passion in his work with students. His vision entails a future image of the student, the image of the artist this student might become, by means of a maximum furthering of his creative potential. Pedagogical instruction must bear this important aspect in mind. Our personal view is that a working strategy must be devised for each individual acting student, in order to help him become the best artistic and human version of himself, as the two, in theatre, are inseparable.

If during university studies, the student is guided by his professors and his attention and curiosity are constantly triggered by novel issues, after graduation,

³ *Ibidem*, p. 41. [translation O.P.].

the actor needs to do this on his own, because attention and curiosity aid the will and perseverance, both of which are necessary for new discoveries, and thus for a creative working mode. Thus, the student actor needs to be taught to be his own teacher for the rest of his life.

It is vital that the actor is able to plan his creativity. It might sound strange, but we shall explain what we refer to. We are referring primarily to managing time. The actor must decide, according to the time frame and the complexity of the project, what level of creativity to search on, in order not to endanger the project and to become a burden on his colleagues. These are constraints which we must keep in mind no matter what project we are talking about. Moreover, constraints must be looked upon in a positive manner, as they offer a direction to the creative act (from an organizational, but also from an artistic point of view), thus they inspire more than they inhibit.

Creativity must not be mistaken for talent or intelligence, even if it is influenced by them. Creativity is the result of a process: “The term creativity does not describe a person; it describes ideas, behaviours and original and fitting products”⁴. The creative process is the same, even if it follows a path established by the director and author, and it is up to each and every one of us to make it useful for the performance.

The first step consists in “presenting the problem”⁵, thus it coincides with the moment of attributing tasks; the student needs to be coached in different directions, he must acquire skills, but he must also be advised in a complex manner in order for him to know in the future where to acquire new knowledge, which is the “groundwork” of all talent, education and subsequent experience in the artistic domain of acting.

What follows is the gathering of information, that is to say the preparation stage; here too, the student has to be coached through diverse work methods, in order to know what resources he might resort in the future, when he will work on his role by himself. He must be instructed on how to read a text in such a manner as to extract important information for his character, but to still get informed regarding any direction suggested by the text. Furthermore, he must read about the author and his work, about past performances based on this text, about movies, or any other artistic act.

⁴ Amabile, Teresa M.: *Creativitatea ca mod de viață*, Știință și Tehnică, București, 1997. [translation O.P.].

⁵ See: Getzels, J.W.: *The creative vision: A longitudinal study of problem finding in art*, Wiley-Interscience, New York, 1976.

The third stage consists in stage work and practical attempts. Usually, in theatre, there is no hiatus between the second and the third stage, in order for incubation to come about, so incubation occurs directly during the third stage. The incubational stage is vital for the discovery of new ideas, new perspectives on already tackled themes, that is why it is necessary for some topics to be abandoned, in order to be taken up later, after they have passed through the incubational stage. During this stage one tries by means of various methods and acting techniques to create the most complex type of role, in the wider context of the performance. This is the “visible” stage of work, this is when “versions” of the character emerge, or scenic possibilities.

The fourth stage, the one of validation, when different possibilities are being tried out, is the stage when the performance proper is being constructed, when what is useful to the project is being selected, what will be seen and what will remain invisible, the impalpable material inserted into the actor’s craft.

The acting student must learn what a creative working style means, which, until the result materialized in an interesting role, is marked by various important factors. Thus, the student will be guided during his endeavours and his desire of creating an interesting and complex role, of dedicating himself entirely to this study, by concentrating his efforts and attention on the project for a long period of time (the student will learn not to get tired, will practise his attention span, his concentration, during his schooling, thereby gaining resistance over time, and the instructor plays a significant role in developing this ability over time); the student will learn how to abandon unproductive ideas, not to get attached to results that the director decides are not useful for the performance, without getting discouraged, to temporarily abandon problematic moments, in order to return to them later on (the student must be always ready to try, to be open towards new perspectives and options, not to get attached to a certain form, or a certain result), to have tenacity in solving difficulties which may arise as a part of stage work, and to perpetually harbour a desire to work, a desire for perseverance, even in cases when frustration comes into play because of failures, and to manifest passion towards the role and the performance. In this manner, the student will learn how to sustain a creative activity in a stable manner and his chances of success in discovering new things increase.

The instructor must develop in the student that certain pride connected to his discoveries, which will offer him moral sustenance in the most difficult of moments. This is done by means of encouragement and appreciating the student’s work, an appreciation done with measure. Praise is beneficial as a stimulant, but to a limited extent, the student must not be motivated by the instructor’s

recognition, dependence on this type of recognition coming about very quickly, and unfortunately leading to later disappointment, when the student will enter the job market. Moreover, praise and other external incentives may deter attention and even inhibit the creative process.

Of course, working discipline is required, an organizing of the quest, of research, which later on will become self-discipline as a part of individual work. It is recommended to record experiences, at the end of the day, we recommend keeping a working journal, which should contain not only the description of exercises and technical conclusions, but also questions, unclear aspects, things which require further experimentation, sensations, feelings related to that certain experiment, connections to real events, etc.

There are various components which are largely innate, such as intrinsic motivation, a sign of the fact that the student is really suited for the actor's profession. We are referring here to that inner flame which keeps curiosity alive, which incites, to passion taken to the borderline of obsession, the very engine of creative searching. This motivation grants one the courage to take up risks, to seek out novelty for the pure thrill of doing so. But if one knows how to ask the right questions, one can awaken inner motivation, even within a project that does not seem too attractive on a first reading. And this is a thing that can be taught. The young actor will not always come across roles which will incite him on first glance and, sometimes, directors (the ones who transmit their passion for the text to the actor) lack enthusiasm or are incapable of making the actors feel their emotions. In such cases, the actor will teach himself to love the role, by identifying inciting aspects, which can then stimulate him to work creatively.

Working creatively leads to the creation of the so-called personal touch regarding the role, it produces fascination among the spectators. Thus, in the vision of Edward Wilson serious art, independent of it being expressed in sheet music, a screenplay or an image, lures you in from the very beginning. Then it captivates your attention and distracts you for enough time to take you on a journey through its contents, maybe in order to fully understand the sense, maybe in order to revisit a fragment out of sheer pleasure. The overall impression left on us by a creative work (let us call it the signature) may appear at first or in the end, and sometimes after the experience has ended and is stored in one's long-term memory, turning into the first thought that occurs to us consciously when we remember it.⁶

⁶ See: Wilson, Edward O.: *Originile creativității umane*, Humanitas, București, 2019, p. 42.

There are modes of thought through which one can reach a creative way of working, and as pedagogues we try to invent exercises through which one can tackle scenes differently. Thus, students can learn in the future to construct their own helpful exercises which can aid them in giving up old patterns according to which they or other actors have constructed roles. They will be open and will attempt to find new working methods, both during rehearsals, and individually in their spare time. They will try to establish relations between various ideas, and this can generate new nuances for the character, they will take up a playful attitude.

When he is creative, the actor knows that acting is a mode of life, that his creativity affects all aspects of his existence, because “all of the components and manifestations of the personality are affected, from memory to will to the most concrete behaviours”.⁷ Inspiration cannot come at certain hours when one is at the theatre and rehearses, while during the remaining time one puts on the cloak of conformism, one cannot be creative during certain rehearsals, and during others mechanically execute instructions. Creativity is up to a certain point also an act of rebellion, of discontent, wanting to change something does not occur against a backdrop of spiritual tranquillity. And people, generally, do not want to be taken off the path they are accustomed to. Not even in the world of theatre, where creativity is more acclaimed than in other domains. Students must be instructed in what this aspect is concerned to face hostile attitudes regarding new ways of tackling things, to know when to insist on their viewpoint and when not to, how to come up with suggestions without triggering negative reactions, which are undesirable in a working environment. Playfulness is beneficial as long as all participants feel at ease and speak about play in the sense that only in the realm of play, can the adult or the individual child be creative and use its entire personality and only by being creative can the individual discover the “Self”.⁸ Therefore, the young actor must observe his colleagues’ state of mind, he must be powerfully anchored in reality, in order to advance creative games on a fertile ground, otherwise those games will not be beneficial, and will even trigger negative, violent reactions. People fear the unknown and desire to remain in stable situations, changes throw them off balance, cause them anxiety, and bring about emotional blockages. And, as strange as it might sound, beyond the willingness of admitting the option of failure (let us commit to mind that most attempts will not be fruitful), in order for

⁷ Onuț, Gheorghe: *Dezvoltarea creativității și tehnici de ideeție voluntară*, Tipografia Universității „Transilvania”, Brașov, 2000, p. 3. [translation O.P.].

⁸ See: Winnicott, Donald W.: *Joc și realitate*, translated into Romanian by Nicoleta Dascălu, Editura Trei, București, 2006, p. 84.

an experience to become creative, the artist must enable the encounter between the anxiety of search, triggered by discontent, and creative tranquillity.

Consequently, in order for creativity to manifest, the creative potential, imagination, and native talent mix with the psychological factor, with personality traits, intelligence, habits, the cultural and intellectual level, with the level of empathy, personal experience, and inner motivation, resulting in a creation on part of the actor, standing on the foothold of novelty.

As an instructor, director or actress, we have always attempted to approach any text or role from a different angle. We have used strategies which helped us increase creativity, whenever we guided the actors' work, as a director, but also as an actress, by using methods and techniques which we have adapted to the unique structures of students, or actors, inspired by situations in the text or in real life, taken over from great theatre and film producers, or invented by us, during the work on various performances.

The main goals of any activity of creation of a performance are, among others: developing the analytical and self-reflexive spirit, developing one's investigative spirit, one's cognitive and meta-cognitive competences, developing the process of instruction and self-instruction, creating social interaction, learning to solve conflicts between participants in the project, developing communication skills, active participation in rehearsals skills, sharing personal experiences, information and knowledge, developing one's capacity of confronting ideas, voicing opinions, sustaining them verbally and non-verbally, reformulating ideas when they are not in concordance with the advanced theme for debate, with the objective nature of the study, developing critical and self-critical thinking, assimilating artistic models, developing individual responsibility towards the creative act, assuming roles inside the team, developing tolerance and appreciation for values, appreciating discovery, developing a positive attitude towards the process of permanent studying, strengthening self-trust, developing confidence in intellectual and artistic capacities, developing a self-motivational system in the process of self-instruction, developing a system for battling fear and emotional blocks.

Methods of formation are: learning by cooperating with colleagues, the artistic and technical team, case studies, methods of written and mental screenplays, heuristic conversation, debate, brainstorming, mosaics, etc.

As means of formation one can employ, among other things: games for developing imagination, creativity in the visual area, creative actions, etc., games for developing concentration during rehearsals, for developing focus, distributive attention, active attention, for developing self-trust, role plays, verbal expression

exercises, vocal exercises, body mobility exercises and acrobatics, the technique of the interview (personally, then interpreting a role, in order to test the level of understanding, and of assimilation of the character), metamorphosing into animals, humanizing animals, gestures taken over from animal behaviour, exercises meant to establish the power relations between characters, role-juggling (interpreting a colleague's role), individual and group improvisations on given topics or topics suggested by the text, with a personal text or the author's text, breaking a scene up into smaller scenes, stages, documenting case studies, personalizing the character, techniques of dramatic writing, requisite, television, video projector, phones, internet, drawings, elements of scenery, character costumes, movement costumes, character accessories, the character's defining object, identifying automatisms, interpretation through contrast, power games, seduction games, changing the character's goals, non-verbal performance of the scene, identifying psychological gestures, automatisms, specificities of walking, talking, etc. Moreover, one can alternate construction by means of techniques of improvisation with relaxing exercises or exercises on a given theme, metamorphosis exercises, practicing exercises and extra text improvisations, textual or non-verbal improvisations, group or individual improvisation, improvisations which start out from the text or extrapolate, rewriting textual passages by using the technique of mobile screenplays, reaching the final form of the character by using real or literary models, cinematography, etc., with the possibility of filming the process and subjecting it to individual or group analysis.

Basically, always focused on the students' development, the instructor will employ working methods adapted to their individual capacities, part of creative working strategies, thereby proving himself creativity in selecting exercises, inventing or adapting them.

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Theatre Games, Inventiveness and Creative Spontaneity. Blockage and Inhibition – Barriers in the Formation of Artistic Individuality

CAMELIA CURUȚIU-ZOICAȘ

(Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai“ Cluj-Napoca)

Abstract

Game is a “complex anthropological phenomenon”¹, with a “meaningful”² function which, even if it seems to be only a simple action subject to chance and fiction, it has a very clear purpose. Theatre games are basic tools used in the techniques and methods of the art of acting and stage improvisation that reveal and develop individual creative skills, specific to the performing arts. In the theatre context, through the game, the actor manages to give deep meanings, full of dynamism and expressiveness, combines and transforms fictions into realities, trains his imaginative functions, constantly shapes and structures his creative personality. In the creative process, the actor / acting student must create conditions suitable for the theatre phenomenon where attention to his own work, concentration, empathy, fantasy, imagination and memory contribute to the triggering, intelligent and efficient use of artistic creativity. In this case, the game becomes the primary mechanism in preventing, avoiding and especially in removing obstacles and physical, emotional, communicative and imaginative blockages.

Key words:

emotion; communication; interaction; blockage; resistance; focus; active attention; game; creative spontaneity; artistic individuality.

Rezumat

Jocul este un „fenomen antropologic complex”³, cu o funcție „plină cu tâlc”⁴ care, deși pare o acțiune simplă supusă hazardului și ficționalității are o menire și un scop foarte

¹ Diaconu, Mihai: *Educația și dezvoltarea copilului*, Editura ASE, București, p. 143.

² See: Huizinga, Johan: *Homo Ludens, Încercare de determinare a elementului ludic al culturii*, translated into Romanian by H.R. Radian, Humanitas, București, 1977, p. 33.

³ Diaconu, Mihai: *op. cit.*, p. 143.

⁴ Huizinga, Johan: *op. cit.*, p. 33.

clar. Jocurile teatrale sunt instrumente de bază folosite în tehnicile și metodele de artă a actorului și improvizație scenică care relevă și dezvoltă aptitudinile individuale creatoare, specifice artei scenice. În contextul teatral, prin intermediul jocului, actorul reușește să dea semnificații profunde, pline de dinamism și expresivitate, combină și transformă ficțiuni în realități concrete, își antrenează funcțiile imaginative, își modelează și structurează neîncetat personalitatea creatoare. În procesul de creație, actorul/studentul trebuie să-și creeze condiții prielnice fenomenului teatral în care atenția la propria lucrare, concentrarea, empatia, fantezia, imaginația și memoria să contribuie la declanșarea și la folosirea inteligentă și eficientă a creativității artistice. Jocul devine în acest caz, mecanismul primordial în preîntâmpinarea, în evitarea și mai ales în înlăturarea obstacolelor și blocajelor corporale, emoționale, comunicaționale și imaginative.

Cuvinte cheie:

emoție; comunicare; interacțiune; blocaj; rezistență; punctul de concentrare; atenție activă; joc; spontaneitate creatoare; individualitate artistică.

The emotion of the present, the real communication, the connection and the physical interaction between the actor and the spectator, the action that is committed here and now, in the bodies of the actors, in front of other people⁵ are part of the defining elements of the art of actor, of the theatre itself. But this present can bring with it a kind of “mute terror” that dominates everyone – actors, directors, team – when hearing the command: Let’s start! It is as if a piece of life is running out of everybody and everyone feels inhibited. Mike Nicholas confesses that he has always been concerned with feeding the flow of life as much as possible and with finding things that the actor can focus on so that the inhibition is overcome or forgotten⁶.

“School is the most beautiful theatre in the world”⁷ observes Tonitza-Iordache, a place where the student makes his way to “self-discovery”⁸, a place of artistic quests, of acting performances, of the development of great individual personalities. In the creative process, the inner organization of each artist / actor,

⁵ See: Grotowski, Jerzy: *Spre un teatru sărac*, translated into Romanian by George Banu and Mirella Nedelcu-Patureau, Unitext, București, 1998, p. 54.

⁶ Nicholas, Mike *apud* Cohen, Robert: *Puterea interpretării scenice, introducere în arta actorului*, translation into Romanian by Eugen Wohl and Anca Măniuțiu, Casa Cărții de Știință, București, 2007, p. 20.

⁷ Tonitza-Iordache, Michaela; Banu, George: *Arta Teatrului*, Nemira, București, 2004, p. 486.

⁸ *Ibidem*.

of the psychic processes permanently engaged in this complex journey, must be carefully discovered, followed and directed. The actor must create favourable conditions in his creative space, auspicious to the theatrical phenomenon where attention to his own work, concentration, empathy, fantasy, imagination and memory can contribute to the triggering and to the intelligent and efficient use of the artistic creativity. But, not rarely, this process risks to be disturbed, even vitiated by something that leads to a state of psycho-physical paralysis, to an interruption of thought and energy, to a psychological communication barrier, and inevitably to an inherent BLOCKAGE.

Blockages are those external or internal obstacles that pull back the natural course of the creative imagination during the artistic process and they can be cultural, aesthetic, phenomenological, methodological and also cognitive, imaginative and emotional. Walton⁹ talks about the existence of at least four types of resistance, including the aesthetic, phenomenological, imaginative and fictional one. He argues that the elements of resistance appear not only in the normative, moral, aesthetic concepts – one can have an imaginative resistance because it seems to him / her that a certain action, fact, situation is immoral – but also in the attribution of certain mental states, to believe that a certain thing is true in a story results from the person's inability to engage imaginatively in a game that involves dissimulation, or make-believe. Blockages can be those obstacles that appear for various reasons such as the desire of the individual / artist / actor to identify himself with a certain type of conformity in thinking and acting, his habit of operating only with rigid logical reasons and summary reasoning, the habit of applying in the given problem solving of a certain type of algorithm, a kind of functional fixity that leads to the use of objects or actions with a single function or functionality, understanding and solving situations from a single and unique perspective, unilateral and limited connections and approaches.

In theatrical / vocational arts education, the creative process can be diverted by blockages that can occur due to multiple causes, from the lack of familiarity with theatrical expression, theatrical techniques and methods to lack of familiarity with the text, the lack of proper communication with the stage mates, with the director / coordinator, or the need, in the case of an overwhelming majority, to correspond. The most common blockages in the Art of the Actor are those of affective, emotional origin and refer to those above and to other specific inhibitions, such as the fear of not making mistakes, of exposure, of ridicule, of not being mocked, which prevents the artist / actor from expressing freely and without constraints

⁹ Walton, Kendall: „Fearing Fictions”, in: *The Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 75, nr. 1, 1978, pp. 5-27.

his artistic personality and creativeness. Elimination of the attitude of approval or disapproval, removing the fear of being rejected, of competition, and last but not the least, the acquisition and development of personal freedom in experimentation becomes the main objectives in the process of creation.

The theatre teacher is given a great responsibility. Peter Brooks remarks that the theatre show does not mean sets, costumes, lights and sounds, it does not mean stages full of spectacular staging¹⁰ but it is a universe that actors build and it is based, in fact, on a true relationship, on the exchange of energy, intention and action between them. The role of the master, his mission is to create a specific framework for creative work, to open up possible worlds, to guide the work of each creator, to form artistic individualities, to guide creators in building an imaginary universe. Which means “Sacred Theatre, Theatre of the Invisible - Made Visible”.¹¹

The actor needs time and relaxation to be able to unleash his imagination, emotions, intuition, subconscious or visions, he must be protected, in a safe environment, with clear, precise rules, in a relaxing atmosphere, proper for creative spontaneity.

Viola Spolin¹² is the one who in theatre pedagogy developed a whole system based on trainings and exercises of the actor / student based on the idea of game: games for children or collectively fun for adults. She develops a methodology based on the teaching system, using the structure of the game as a training base for the student actor. But why the game and the action of playing? The word game has multiple meanings and significations in almost all language dictionaries, being a complex phenomenon that goes beyond the realm of prejudices because it is not just an activity meant for the pleasure and fun of children, as the word is described in the Romanian language dictionary (game – the action of playing; fun party for children), but it is a phenomenon of culture and civilization that has been approached and highlighted from numberless perspectives.

The theatre game is the one that permanently keeps the reality alive, because it is the one that triggers the creative spontaneity, spontaneity that is born intuitively only when all the constraints and blockages are eliminated: the game ensures total involvement, openness and inventiveness and by directing the action of the player towards a clear goal, causes the spontaneity of the actor. Playful

¹⁰ See: Brook, Peter: *Spațiul gol*, translated into Romanian by Marian Popescu, Unitext, București, 1997, p. 24.

¹¹ *Ibidem*.

¹² Spolin, Viola: *Improvizație pentru teatru, Manual de tehnici pedagogice și regizorale*, translation into Romanian by Mihaela Balan-Betiu, U.N.A.T.C. PRESS, București, 2008.

creativity is a “compulsory constant of the cultural becoming of the individual and of the society”¹³ and the game is even older than the culture and constantly confirms our supralogical existence in the cosmos, following Huizinga.¹⁴ From birth, man imagines his own life by projecting his own image and that of those around him in different imagined circumstances, thus creating his own story, as in a continuous game. He assumes and identifies himself with different roles and situations, involuntarily training, what we might call his imaginative ability and his belief in fiction. From the beginning of life, man is in a continuous serious game that alternates fiction with objective reality, absorbing the player to the limit of the plausible, as any game can completely absorb the player at any time. The game seriousness opposition is always suspended. The inferiority of the game has its limit in the superiority of seriousness. The game changes into sobriety and sobriety changes into game. The game can rise to the heights of beauty and holiness where it leaves seriousness behind.¹⁵

The game can also be “a symbol of struggle, of the struggle with death (funeral games), with the elements (agrarian games), with opposing forces (war games), with oneself (with one’s own fear, weakness, doubt, etc.)”¹⁶ or it may refer, paraphrasing Callois¹⁷, to all the figures, symbols or tools necessary for that activity or the functioning of a complex assembly, such as competition games (billiards, chess, video games, fighting, racing, interactive games), games that allow us to make projections, to imagine, to dream and to let ourselves be guided by intuition and chance (gambling, lottery, roulette, dice, cards), games that allow the player to experience new identities, to know and release their own personality (carnival, disguise, exchange of identity and role play, theatre), or games that allow us to discover unknown sides of the personality through the trance (acrobatics, carnival).

If Spencer’s¹⁸ theory of recreation or energy surplus, gives the game a new value of disconnection (where the player disconnects, consuming the accumulated

¹³ Evseev, Ivan: *Jocurile tradiționale de copii. Rădăcini mitico-rurale*, Excelsior, Timișoara, 1994, p. 11.

¹⁴ See: Huizinga, Johan: *op. cit.*, 1977.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 46

¹⁶ Chevalier, Jean, Alain Gheerbrant: *Dicționar de simboluri, mituri, vise obicești, gesturi, forme, figuri, culori, numere* Vol. I-III, Vol. II, E-O, Artemis, București, 1995, p. 179.

¹⁷ Caillois, Roger: *Les jeux et les hommes: le masque et le vertige*, Gallimard, Paris, 1991, pp. 87-264.

¹⁸ Spencer, Herbert *apud* Evseev, Ivan: *op. cit.*, p. 11.

energy surplus), that of Stanley Hall's atavism¹⁹ proposes the idea that the game is both a tool for preparing and practicing skills (with the aim of maturing the individual) and also a creative tool. Karl Gross divides game types relating them to instincts (fighting games, hunting games, racing games, erotic games, etc.) and considers the game as a preparatory exercise for serious life²⁰. For him, the game becomes both a stimulus for the development of the nervous system (because it stimulates the nerve centres) and a stimulus for muscle improvement, not only has the role of maintaining the new things learned, of repeating and of refreshing (thus reaching improvement and greater power of action), but also a cathartic, purifying role (because during the game the participant frees himself from antisocial instincts, by discharging negative impulses).

Koward Lange²¹ presents the theory of complementary exercises, under the name of *Ergänzungstheorie*, that is, the theory of reunification where the game is given the role of stimulator, thus becoming a substitute for reality. The game offers the individual opportunities that reality cannot offer, having a compensatory role, because it fills gaps that everyday reality cannot cover, conferring and restoring the player's mental balance: he creates his own imaginary world where he can act and the game is the one that helps him to fulfil his desires by achieving the goals set.

Nowadays, there are many virtual environments that use avatars and projections of the imaginary, fictional games giving the player unlimited possibilities to change, customize and assume countless identities. Thus, the user releases all his fantasies, he becomes a multiple, complex being, migrating from one space to another, from one fantasy to another, from one identity to another, alternating the multitude of worlds, perspectives and personalities, the reality being thus more and more projected in the imaginary. Virtual reality is a simulated world where the inhabitants live, act and interact through avatars. Virtual space is often very similar to real space, with rules such as topography, architecture, movement, action, and communication, is the simulated reality of a three-dimensional environment where the user can visualize, act and manipulate everything in this world. The strong immersion of this simulacrum can cause the cyberspace occupant to identify himself so powerfully with the virtual world that he assumes

¹⁹ Hall, G. Stanley: *Adolescence: Its psychology and relations to physiology, anthropology, sociology, sex, crime, religion, and education*, New York, 1904, p. 202.

²⁰ Gross, Karl *apud* Claparede, Edouard: *Psihologia Copilului și pedagogie experimentală*, translation into Romanian by V. G. Petrescu and E. Balmus, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică, București, 1975, p. 61.

²¹ Lange, Koward *apud* Claparede, Edouard: *op. cit.*, p. 61.

it as a concrete reality. Virtual reality is the creation of an artificial version of the perceptible reality, which goes beyond what is observable through the senses, a new, reduplicated universe, an electronic projection of the earth and life, where the experimentation and assumption of imaginary roles and identities is infinite. A world built, rebuilt and redefined, a game of the imaginary projected in the virtual world. In virtual spaces, individuals can constantly change the spaces and relationships with which they interact, thus composing a variety of new types of online interactions, the characters invasively occupy the body of the others to become immortal, or take on another face to deceive the perceptions of the others.

The virtual space creates the possibility for playing, just as theatrical space has the ability to metamorphose the one who steps inside it. It goes beyond everyday space, where the identity can be renegotiated, being given new forms of life. Everything is a game of imagination. The two spaces offer the possibility of endless trials, thus developing the player's creativity, imagination and flexibility. Nowadays, technology has advanced so much that you can create a body with which to identify in virtual space, which involves a real game of imagination, of the assumption and construction of a new life, amplifying the psychological effect called by specialists introspection, a method through which a consciousness observes itself.

The virtual world and the game give birth to a real creative laboratory similar to the theatrical laboratory, where each element leads to the completion of the show. Technology and technical tools can become an external receptacle of the imaginary, helping it to develop and generate new imaginary structures, autonomous from those given by nature, and to develop abstract capacities of the intellect.

Of course, the magic of theatre, its essence, is not in this virtual world, not even in the narration of an event, nor in the discussion of a hypothesis with the audience, nor in the representation of everyday life, not even in vision.²² Grotowski considers that it is an act that is committed here and now, in the bodies of the actors, in front of other people in contact with the others.²³ Although in social life the game is a necessity whether it is a part of the real or of the imaginary, whether it is a real game or one of the imagination, in the case of the actor, the game becomes a basic, primordial activity that acquires an essential dimension in achieving its aesthetic purpose.

²² See: Grotowski, Jerzy: *op. cit.*, p. 54.

²³ *Ibidem*.

In the theatrical context, through the game, the actor manages to give deep meanings, full of dynamism and expressiveness, manages to take over, to combine, to ingeniously transform all the information and actions coming from outside, making fiction a reality to which he will constantly refer. The game becomes a veiled truth where fiction tends to become reality, and where the actor creates with his faith truths, authentic realities, the nothingness²⁴. When playing, the actor translates himself into different images and imagined situations, puts into action the possibilities that come from the stage situations, translates into deeds the virtual potencies that appear successively, assimilates them, develops them, combines and complicates them, coordinates, creates. The game leads to the training of the imaginative and psychic functions of the actor and therefore has a key role in self-knowledge, in the assumption of personal techniques and in the artistic development of the actor.

The actor plays and acts constantly, he becomes at the same time an actor and a director, transmitter and receiver, spectator of the events of the others or the subject of the drama by assuming the whole fictional script, by taming, accepting and finally identifying himself with it. Moreover, it is not only the fictional setting where one can discover, experiment and practice all the projections he has about the role, but, through his stimulating and relaxing functions, the game has the extraordinary power of eliminating blockages. The game introduces the actor to a world of the imaginary built and invented by the very creator of the game, it trains his creativity, his imagination, and develops his own operating system, but it can also help him to overcome the blockages and inhibitions. From a physiological and mental point of view, through the game and within the game, the actor becomes free, because he manages through his playful abilities to present himself as an individual personality, to break the inhibitions and to become an active tool in the creative process. Therefore, it has a very important role in the development of the artistic individuality, being a means by which psychic processes and functions are in a continuous training, it influences the perception, observation, memory, motivation, imagination of the actor, modeling and structuring constantly his creative personality. The game becomes for the actor, not only a tool for representing and reproducing his own world, but also a trigger for spontaneity and playful spirit. Thus, for the actor, the game becomes a constant means of communication with his own thoughts and feelings, of organic self-awareness, of introspection. It becomes not only a stimulus in the

²⁴ See: Stanislavski, Konstantin S.: *Munca actorului cu sine însuși*, translation into Romanian by Lucia Demetrius and Sonia Filip, Editura de Stat pentru Literatură și Artă, București, 1955, p. 181.

development of the actor's imagination, an artificial exercise of energies which, in the absence of their natural exercise, becomes to such an extent free to be expended, that they find their outlet in the form of simulated actions, instead of real ones²⁵, an external receptacle of his imaginary contributing to the generation of new imagological structures, developing the abstract capacities of the intellect and creative imagination but above all, a method of eliminating negative feelings and complexes, of developing and reactivating all mental and physical processes, of experiencing the state of active attention. This psychological state of the actor, of conscious self-delusion or self-deception (because the goals he is aiming for are fictional in nature), of maximum focus on the individual approach, of discovery and knowledge of one's own instrument and specific personality and expressiveness, can only be achieved through a sense of belonging, of peace and delight, of trust and mastery. This complex state can also be sustained by breathing, calm, natural, which can induce a state of extreme relaxation, peace. For this, the actor just should "not think about breathing. He should be in a state of relaxation similar to drowsiness."²⁶

The game is a way through which the actor manages to satisfy any desire related to what he is going to build in his role, no matter how unobjective that desire may be in reality, it gives the actor the opportunity to try, to verify, to change tactics, choices and manifestations in order to achieve the proposed goal without feeling restricted. The game becomes the setting for organic, vivid and authentic experiments, trials and experiences, the unlimited space for regaining vital energy, expressiveness and psycho-corporeal plasticity and triggering creative spontaneity.

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²⁵ Spencer, Herbert *apud* Evseev, Ivan: *op. cit.*, p. 11.

²⁶ Similar, Anca: "Breathing techniques in the Paris singing treatise", in: *Studia UBB Musica*, LXVI, 2, 2021, Cluj, p. 245.

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Voice as a Theatre Instrument

ANCA SIMILAR

(Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai“ Cluj-Napoca)

Abstract

We might assume that the history of voice is the history of theatre, but we cannot distinguish between voice and drama because we have no historical evidence. The voice is the *théâtrophone* that can semantically contain an entire show, listening to the theatre without looking at it clearly shows that, hearing, we see. The voice of the actor as an instrument and as the art of interpreting and communicating emotions.

Keywords:

voice as an instrument; affective voice; ancient theatre; *théâtrophone*.

Rezumat

Am putea presupune că istoria vocii este istoria teatrului, dar nu putem face o distincție între voce și dramă, deoarece nu avem dovezi istorice. Vocea este *teatrofonul* care poate conține semantic un întreg spectacol, ascultarea teatrului fără să ne uităm la el arată clar că, auzind, vedem. Vocea actorului ca instrument și vocea ca artă de a interpreta și comunica emoții.

Cuvinte cheie:

vocea instrument; vocea afectivă; teatru antic; *teatrofonul*.

In 1881, Clément Ader developed an ingenious and innovative device called the *théâtrophone*, which allowed Parisians to listen, from home or in a public place (café, exhibition hall) to a theatrical performance that took place simultaneously in a theatre in Paris. This ingenious invention, which makes us smile today, has had an ephemeral life: the listening conditions were probably not optimal, fading into the magma noises both from the room and from the stage. So we are talking about one of the first attempts to transmit exclusively audio, through sound, a theatre show, with the voices of the actors, its music, the stage environment, the space of the performance, the text, the plot, the characters, etc.

When we talk about sound, there is always someone to remind us that we must not forget the other senses, while if we talk about the visual, no one will come to tell us that we must not forget to listen. Despite all these remarks that tend to make us abandon the history of sound and voice to return to a more general history of the performance, we will persevere in defining the voice as an instrument and as a womb for emotions and feelings, because we realized that listening theatre without looking at it clearly shows that, hearing, we see.

We could assume that the history of the voice is, in fact, the history of the theatre, as noted by the theatre historian Allardyce Nicoll, who estimates the date of 490 BC as the beginning of Western theatre, with the first existing drama by Aeschylus, the *Suppliant Women* (490 BC)¹. But the historian omits the opportunity to distinguish between voice and drama so in this respect there is no other consistent evidence to formulate an alternative perspective. He fails to distinguish the voice from the dramatic textual context in which it appears and, as such, prevents the voice from being “perceived” separately. In similar descriptions of the origins of Greek drama, we delve deeper into the individual constitutive qualities of the material voice or how the voices of the actors and the stage music might have sounded. It is possible to accept the view that Greek actors had well-trained voices, but we can never know for sure, and it is too rudimentary to make any assumptions about this. The mean in which voice sounded at the time remains largely unknown, and any conclusion based on the aesthetics of the “well-trained” voice is loaded with cultural and social connotations and will remain problematic. It is likely, however, that the factors related to practical and sustainable vocalization helped to determine the vocal stylistics of the current moment. In this case, the voice as an instrument is the one that comes to the forefront and not as an aesthetic result in drama. Because there is no real proof of the sound of the voice in the history of Greek theatre and all the hypotheses that can be invoked are just presumptions, the voice tends to remain stuck in its “home” in the dramatic text. Chuck Jones notes that “In these roughly carved theatres, thousands watched the great plays of the classical period of Greece. Because subtle gestures and facial expressions were lost in the vastness of the arenas, Greek actors therefore paid much attention to developing an expressive, well-trained voice.”².

The strong analogies felt by the Greeks between the poetic word and rhetoric, on the one hand, music on the other hand and again between the recited voice and the sung voice, between the vocal sound and the instrumental sound, are the basis

¹ Nicoll, Allardyce: *The development of the theatre*, Harrap, London, 1949, p.85.

² Jones, Chuck: *Make Your Voice Heard: An Actor's Guide to Increased Dramatic Range through Vocal Training*, Back Stage Books, New York, 1996, p. 73.

of the fundamental importance attributed by ancient treatises to the knowledge of music for the orator. The statements of Aristotle, Theophrastus, and Aristarchus confirm this. Dionysius of Halicarnassus described oratory as a kind of musical art, starting from the common theme of vocality, while Quintilian noted that a speaker, if he wants to be successful, must master the melody and rhythm of speech using the same methods as a singer, and he makes a reference to an actor who was accompanied by a flutist, to set the tone according to his speech.

Many ancient investigations related to the premises of the voice are parallel with the study of the quality and power of musical sounds and the mechanics of instruments, beginning with the voice which results from the vibration of the vocal cords and its emission powered by the breath, that is considered the same as the sound produced by the strings of a pound or a flute. For the ancient world, voice and speech as tools used by actors and speakers were so important that historian Anne Karpf notes: “So obsessed were the Athenians with the improvement of the voice that they employed three different classes of teachers for the purpose: the *vociferarii* to strengthen the voice, the *phonasci* to make it more sonorous, and the *vocales*, the finishing masters, in charge of intonation and inflection.”³

But, historically speaking, acting is no longer a ceremony of repeating someone else’s character, but an “essential event” that triggers the actor as a creator of forms, the actor who produces his space, establishes it, seeks it, and makes it visible. And it is here that the voice acquires a decisive value: it acquires its own capacity to produce meaning, cured and separated from the linguistic code to which it refers; it is ready to exalt even in relationship to connotations, the phonetic body of the word. The wrecked actor, at the whim of the text, begins to build his own raft; he becomes master of ceremonies, and the theatre becomes the actor’s realm again. The same Greek theatre from origins or the epic poetry, used the word shaking the boundary between speech and song, recognizing to the voice an autonomous value, regardless of the rules of speech.

Even *Commedia dell’Arte*, distancing itself from the postulates of the time, shatters the chain of natural language, especially by introducing interruptions in linear discourse (the Lazzi mask), removing the voice from that “bringing to the ears of the people the concept that the word expresses”⁴ to obtain highlights and richness in its tones. The same could be pointed out with the rise of *recitar-cantando*, in which the structure of the spoken word acquires strong musical connotations, making the word explode not by imitating the semantic level, but

³ Karpf, Anne: *The Human Voice: The Story of a Remarkable Talent*, Bloomsbury Publishing, London, 2007, p. 190.

⁴ Pagnini, Marcello: *Lingua e musica*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1974, p. 68.

rather by articulating the signifier as “a kind of accompaniment to the meaning of the text”⁵. Or, in the twentieth century, Meyerhold challenged the fact that the actor must identify with the character: walking through the folds of the character, distancing himself from it, and to do so by using a gestural and vocal structure that is modulated beyond linguistic conventions.

According to Meyerhold, the actor must abandon everything that “smells of psychology” in order to turn to music instead; only with this attitude will he be able to make the characters stand out not as “unique types”, but as social masks. In this sense, it is important for him to turn the actor’s diction into a “melody” that provokes associations in the audience with the use of unnatural “detachments”, interruptions of the declamatory rhythm with justified tonal variations but not “psychologically” motivated. Consequently, we identify the musical dimension of language; by “decoupling” the declamatory dimension from everyday speech, in favor of creating a “verbally” organized “musical plot”. It is no longer, therefore, the act of offering the voice by privileging the “conceptual references” of language, but the word understood as a “sound body”, as Meyerhold states: “My dream is a show repeated with background music, but then performed without music. Without music, but with music, because the rhythms of the show will be organized according to the musical laws and each performer will carry the music in himself.”⁶

We identify here the following hypothesis: if the rhythm and the tonic or musical accent are those ingredients that create the representation of the character, this means that the voice (or voices) of the text will be released by the actor who hears it with the inner ear and he will give it audibility as someone else’s voice in his own voice. Through vocal, vocality, the performance itself will be made present, so that at the origin of the theatrical performance there is first an appeal for the voice. But there is also a specific word in theatre, the one that belongs to the author, the poet. It does not absorb the voice, on the contrary, it is the exposed voice that makes this word present. And the word is heard due to a voice that, being a medium for the author, for the poet, transports it to the audience and legitimizes it. “It is undeniable that ancient audiences valued and prized good voices in their actors. Indeed, a performer’s voice must have mattered a good deal more in the ancient theatre than it does on a modern stage, since Greek drama is in many respects comparable to our opera rather than to pieces whose text is spoken. Musical skill and expressiveness must therefore have been of very great

⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 91.

⁶ Meyerhold, Vsevolod; *On Theatre* (Performance Books), Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, London, 1st edition, 1978, p. 98.

importance and an eminent actor's voice must have attracted attention to itself no matter what mask or costume he was wearing.”⁷

In her book, *The Voice of Modern Theatre*, historian Jacqueline Martin points out that it is possible that some of the way texts were interpreted in ancient times may have been influenced by the rules and practice of rhetoric. Her premise is that rhetoric, “a practical art based on concrete advice and rules, along with a general theory of what really happens in the speech process and how people generally react to different means of expression, intellectual, aesthetic and emotionally”⁸, is only a small part of the way the voice could have been modeled, because, from J. Martin's perspective, music, rhythm, even architecture could have influenced the vocal *modus operandi* of the time.

At the same time, she explains: “Rhetoric's influence and the well-made voice were seen in many aspects of acting in ancient Greece, partly because of the enormity of the open-air theatre and the critical nature of the audiences and partly because of the poetic and operatic nature of the Greek tragedies, which demanded that the actor be able to recite as well as sing. The basic elements of rhetoric were present in the way the chorus used gesture and moved from place to place, and in the beauty of tone and adaptability to the personality or mood of the character presented... Actors did not attempt to reproduce the attributes of age or sex so much as to project the appropriate emotional tone.”⁹ This means, that the actors were judged above all for the beauty of the vocal tone and the ability to adapt the way of speaking to the state of mind and the personality of the character, rather than to the concrete rendering of the attributes related to the age of the characters. But as these details are difficult to prove historically, some assumptions remain. The act of talking by using the voice, we recall a double original scene: the voice makes it possible to say “I”, and thus makes it possible for you to present yourself as a speaking subject. The subject is created in the language: *I say, therefore I am*. But the act of saying, at the same time, presents the theatrical performance through speech as possible, due to the voice. It is this juxtaposition of the linguistic apparatus with the subject that Émile Benveniste¹⁰ emphasizes, showing how the first name that allows everyone to express themselves is at the same time subject to language. It is the voice that modulates this obedience while presenting it as the

⁷ Pavlovskis, Zoja: “The voice of the actor in Greek tragedy”, *Classical World: A Quarterly Journal on Antiquity*, 71 (2):113, 1977, p. 115.

⁸ Martin, Jacqueline: *The voice of modern theatre*, Routledge, London 1991, p. 43.

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 43.

¹⁰ Benveniste, Émile: “De la subjectivité dans la langue”, in: *Problèmes de linguistique générale*, Gallimard, Paris, 1966, pp. 260-270.

representation of an “I”. The voice exposed on stage will always show the origin of the performance, beyond the narcissistic mirror, and the voice can make the character present while performing the show.

For Giorgio Agamben, the voice is the repression of speech while making it possible, by this assumption, we can say that the basis of language is death¹¹. The act of speaking, of a performed speech made efficient by the voice, produces a present that is at the same time real, symbolic, and imaginary. But in doing so, the voice that carries this word must first be legitimized by a framework or a symbolic pact, as is the case with the celebration of a rite, the ritual, which then gives rise to the theatre. Thus, the voice, which comes from the repression of speech, must be heard in the theatre as a “supreme court” that provokes speech and therefore comes from elsewhere. What we discover here is the exposure of a triple vocal relationship at the same time, namely to the text, the language, and the body of the actor. The human voice can convey very clear characteristics about the speaker, from physical aspects (age, appearance, height, weight, health, race, sex, sexual orientation, etc.) to psychological ones (skills, emotional state, mood, personality, etc.) and social (education, occupation, origin, social status, etc.). The human voice is also a sign for the social relations that the speaker has, for his personal identity, mood or motivation.¹²

We could say that the human voice, not only when used by an actor, expresses any kind of emotion, in almost any kind of environment imaginable. As it results from the existing information regarding the ancient theatre, we can deduce two other important characteristics attributed to the voice on stage, adjacent to the voice-text, voice-language and voice-body relations and even voice-poet paradigm presented in this article. The first feature would be the functional capacity of the actor’s voice in the performance, such as audibility, intensity, the pose, but more importantly, the voice seen as an instrument where the performer is able to produce multiple notes, similar to any musical instrument. The second feature refers to the art of acting (as an actor) and the act of communicating emotions, and in this dimension, the unique voice of each performer, transcends each character and the dramatic text and becomes the auditory embodiment of all the affective characteristics of the actor transposed into the character. For Chuck Jones, regarding the use of voice in the twentieth century¹³ and the bias between

¹¹ Agamben, Giorgio: *Le Langage et la mort. Un séminaire sur le lieu de la négativité* [*Il linguaggio e la morte*, Turin, 1986], Bourgois, Paris, 1997, p. 89.

¹² See: Curuțiu-Zoicaș, Camelia: “Neutralitatea sau liniștea dinaintea acțiunii”, in: *Colocvii teatrale*, Volume 11, No. 2, Iași, 2021, p. 64.

¹³ Jones, Chuck: *Make Your Voice Heard: An Actor’s Guide to Increased Dramatic Range through Vocal Training*, Back Stage Books, New York, 1996, p. 29.

these two characteristics of the voice mentioned above, there is a stronger tendency towards the idea of voice as the embodiment of the individual (actor) than towards of voice seen as an instrument. However, both characteristics of the voice are present in his opinion because the voice is inseparable from the actor, but it is also worth training to acquire a flexibility of the emotional response. The author further develops an extension of the idea that the voice is an instrument, not only of sound features, but also of psychological ones: “An actor’s voice, then, should never stand out as a separate part of the actor’s performance. The purpose of training is to make the voice an expressive instrument.”¹⁴

The voice can be defined as an essential tool of ordinary human communication, as well as an essential part of the theatre show; a major part of the actor’s work is the effective use of several identifiable and adjustable components of the voice and working with the material realities of the voice, as an instrument and as a revealer of moods. But this was historically, theoretically and practically possible, long after the ancient theatres no longer received an audience, only after the vocal apparatus was identified and studied from a medical point of view and questions and mechanisms could be established regarding its functioning and its role in phonation and singing.

With the discovery of muscle structure and the connection between breathing and speaking or singing, with the discovery of vocal cords and later, the theories of voice formation and propagation, it was possible to separate and identify anatomical parts that may or must be engaged, or systematically prepared for obtaining certain vocal effects, even instrumental, both in the sung voice and in the spoken one (at a professional level). At the same time, this permits obtaining and developing important affective connotations for the voice, coding and at the same time decoding the dramatic text, containing staminal and *in corpore* the theatrical performance, when it is intended exclusively for hearing.

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¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 38.

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How We Maintained the Audience of the National Theatre of Bucharest in 2020

ANCA ROXANA CONSTANTIN VAN DER ZEE

(Teatrul Național București)

Abstract

If before 2020, the digital environment was used by theatres mainly for promotion and communication, the suspension of the performances in halls, imposed by the Covid pandemic, has forced the relocation of shows and artists in the online space. Few of our theatres had among their activities or priorities the filming of shows or their online transmission. While countries with a stronger cultural marketing tradition were using for a long time the online environment as another marketplace for theatre performances, in Romania, the year 2020 marked a moment of awareness that connecting with the public is essential for the activity of artists and if the audience cannot come to the theatre, it must find and use new ways to reach the audience. Most likely, the year 2020 meant a unique experience for any artist. How the “I.L. Caragiale” National Theatre in Bucharest kept in touch with its audience during 2020 and how it conquered a new online audience, we find out in the present article.

Keywords:

theatre pandemic; 2020; NTB; National Theatre of Bucharest; Youtube; TNB-TV; NTB-TV.

Rezumat

Dacă înainte de 2020, mediul digital era folosit de teatre în principal pentru promovare și comunicare, suspendarea spectacolelor în săli, impusă de pandemia de Covid, a forțat relocarea spectacolelor și artiștilor în spațiul online. Puține dintre teatrele noastre au avut printre activitățile sau prioritățile lor filmarea spectacolelor sau transmiterea lor online. În timp ce țările cu o tradiție mai lungă în marketing cultural foloseau de multă vreme mediul online ca pe o altă piață pentru spectacole de teatru, în România, anul 2020 a marcat momentul de conștientizare a faptului că esențială pentru activitatea artiștilor este comunicarea cu publicul și dacă publicul nu poate veni la teatru, acesta trebuie să găsească și să folosească noi modalități de a ajunge la public. Cel mai probabil, anul 2020

a însemnat o experiență unică pentru orice artist. Cum a ținut legătura Teatrul Național "I.L.Caragiale" din București cu publicul său, pe parcursul anului 2020, și cum și-a cucerit o nouă audiență online, aflăm din articolul care urmează.

Cuvinte cheie:

teatru; pandemie; 2020; Teatrul Național din București; TNB-TV; Youtube; NTB-TV.

The end of 2020 was the end of an atypical theatre season, marked by an unprecedented challenge in the history of the theatre, dominated by a pandemic with unpredictable manifestations and by the measures imposed by the situation.

From the many premieres planned by the National Theatre of Bucharest for the year 2020, only two were traditionally held at the Work-Shop Hall (Sala Atelier): *Matilda and the Gravediggers* by Stela Giurgeanu, directed by Mircea Rusu and, a few days before the suspension of theatre activity, was released *Beginners* by Tim Crouch, directed by Bobi Pricop.

During summer, the National Theatre of Bucharest Amphitheatre had the chance to have the only stage in Romania built in open air and located on the top of the theatre, thus two premieres took place there.

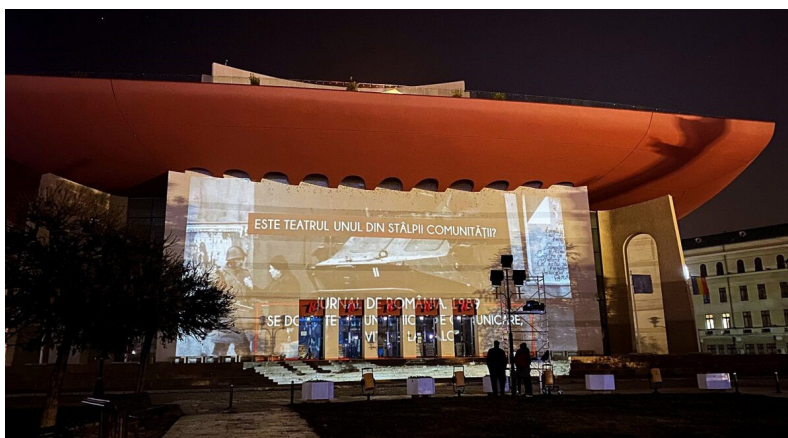


Photo 1: copyright NTB, author Florin Ghioca

First, *Journal of Romania. 1989*, a multimedia documentary show, directed by Carmen Lidia Vidu and *M from Murphy* – a production within the program “9G at TNB”, a choreographic show signed by Andrea Gavriliu.

From June 15 to September 27, during the summer season, under the title “Summer Nights, Up on the Theatre”, 78 shows from the NTB¹ repertoire were performed, being adapted to this open-air stage. The turbulent reality imposed by the pandemic made the summer season at the Amphitheatre to have the meaning – both concretely and symbolically – of the great return of the artists on stage and of the spectators in the theatre chairs.

Between March 23 and June 21 2020, a number of 69 conferences of the already popular serie “The conferences at the NTB” were broadcast online, as well as 9 recorded theatre shows from the repertoire of the theatre, starting from April 24 (3 days of the weekend every show was broadcast three times, so a total of 27 online broadcasts). All the theatre plays were chosen from the current repertoire of NTB, titles that would be represented in the theatre halls, as soon as the situation will allowe (*The Tempest*, *Allegro, ma non troppo*, *Lottery Tickets*, *God Dresses from the Thrift*, *Premiere Light*, *at the End of the Tunnel*), as well as older shows from the archive (*Scourge*, *The Last Hour*, *Take, Ianke and Cadâr*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*).

We were glad to notice that there is no risk for losing interest for the live performances, watching the recorded one, on the contrary, many spectators declared they could not wait to see the shows live, and asked when would the theatre reopen! Along with viewers in Romania, NTB's online broadcasts were also watched by viewers from various other countries, according to youtube statistics.

NTB CONTINUES ACTIVITY ONLY ONLINE

From March 16, when the State of Emergency was declared on the entire Romanian territory and the activities of the theatres were suspended, the National Theatre of Bucharest continued its activity, exclusively online.

TNB YOUTUBE CHANNEL BECOMES TNB-TV

Broadcasts of conferences and shows broadcast on the NTB's Youtube channel between March 23 and June 21 made: 182,875 views; 49,200 watch time hours. In addition to the 2500 existing subscribers to the youtube channel, another 9000 (subscribers) were instantly gained.

The success of online broadcasts has led to another idea – TNB-TV (NTB-TV).

¹ NTB – short form for National Theatre of Bucharest.

Starting from July 20, 2020, the National Theatre “I.L. Caragiale” from Bucharest initiated a series of live broadcasts on the occasion of the theatre premieres and other artistic events, talk-shows about projects and programs organized by the theatre team and its collaborators. The live broadcasts, made by the NTB Media Studio team, hosted actors, directors and various other guest artists involved in the projects of the National Theatre. The charm of these live broadcasts consisted, among other things, in the fact that the spectators were able to send questions and messages during the broadcasts, and hear the answer during the show, from the protagonists. These broadcasts, hosted by the NTB Youtube channel, under the name TNB-TV, were managed by the National Theatre’s communication-promotion team, which initiated this project, following the success of the streaming transmissions made between March and June 2020.

The TV season was made in order to create an online alternative for spectators interested in theatre, stage, the life of artists and the artistic activities that take place around theatre performances. We aimed to keep this communication channel dedicated only to theatrical life, avoiding any interference with other topics that populate media channels, nowadays. We proposed, therefore, to our future spectators, that during these live-streaming rounds we all respect the rule of the game, avoiding any deviation from this cultural direction.

TNB-TV wished to be an oasis of clean information, a place where to be able to communicate with artists, on topics strictly related to their artistic activity, their projects, dreams and professional desires. Therefore, the slogan under which TNB-TV was open was *In an overly hectic world, artists bring balance!*

Because the NTB website was the most convenient interface for communicating with our audience, TNB-TV broadcasts could be access from this page (www.tnb.ro).

The program of live broadcasts was announced through the online media (NTB facebook account, www.tnb.ro, NTB Twitter) and other media channels: Radio France International România, Radio România Cultural (Romanian Broadcasting Corporation), Romanian National Television, Radio Romantic.

On September 21, TNB-TV had collected 13 live broadcasts under the title “Stories from NTB”. Starting with October 6, 2020, after the halls were opened again for the public, the National Theatre “I. L. Caragiale” from Bucharest launched the new season of TNB-TV broadcasts, under the title “Three Good Hours”. Every Tuesday, starting at 7:00 pm, a new series of dialogues within NTB with artists, technicians, designers. The public had the occasion to watch interviews made during rehearsals, unique images from the NTB archive, documentaries about

the biographies of the great actors of the Romanian theatre, fresh news about the activities, exhibitions and projects that were coming to life in the largest theatre in Romania were presented on-line.

We noticed, again, the various age groups that watched NTB's online broadcasts, the share being balanced between the minimum age of 25 years and the maximum age of 65+. NTB is thus approaching the goal of attracting young audiences both through the plays program and through digital media, also being followed by loyal viewers in the age category 35-64 years, approaching the purpose that the slogan of the theatre is declaring – "A new theatre for a new audience".

ONLINE TRANSMISSIONS. NTB MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTION STUDIO

NTB's media studio was at the forefront in 2020, carrying out various video production activities to support online activities that kept the audience in constant communication with the artists, apart of suspending the activity of shows for successive periods, throughout this year.

NTB's media studio provides, currently, year after year, the filming, post-production and archiving performances from NTB's repertoire, NTB conferences and other theatre events. The NTB photographer takes thousands of photos every year from the theatre performances, for the foto archive and promotional theatre notebooks. The constant promotion of the shows is made in partnership with television and radio stations and trailers of all the new shows are prepared to be constantly and continuously presented for the public on digital displays, in the theatre foyers. The online promotion is ensured every year by the same Media Studio (over 20 filmed productions, the average monthly trailer production is approximately 10 video trailers / month, to be used internally on displays or sent to the partner television stations).

For the NTB-TV online shows, biographical video documentaries were made about master actors, interviews with the actors from the current shows, promotional trailers, presentation films for the theatre interiors, news reports from the events and exhibitions held in the foayers, etc.

NTB's media studio is the main engine that supports the digitization of the theatre's photo and video archive, an important cultural heritage for the memory of the Romanian theatre. The NTB video library has professionally filmed and archived, up to date, the shows from the repertoire of the last ten years.

The NTB website has also a media page for journalists and researchers that provides, based on online accreditation, print resolution photos and videos from the shows to illustrate articles and other press articles or TV presentations. <https://media.tnb.ro>



Photo 2: copyright NTB, author Florin Ghioca

PRESS RELEASES AND ADVERTISING

In 2020, the promotion activity continued at the same pace, even though no shows could be played. The promotion team together with the media studio worked at the same speed as before the halls were closed to use the promotional time on radio and TV and the space in printed press that were available for NTB.

Press releases were published in magazines announcing online broadcasts, advertising designs were created especially for that purpose for print media partners, video trailers for the television stations and radio commercials for broadcast partners. During the summer, were promoted also the performances held on the roof of the NTB, at the outdoor stage “NTB Amphitheatre”.

In 2020, the Bucharest National Theatre registered a Reach of 19,295,992 readers, through published articles and mock-ups, according to the Mediastat monitoring company.

The press partners of NTB during 2020 were: *România Liberă*, *Bursa*, “*Days & Nights*” Magazine, *Cațavencii*, *Cotidianul*.

NTB's press releases consistently went to about 200 journalists in local and national publications, via email and email marketing. The advertising equivalency value ²was 1,078,443 EUR, according to Mediastat monitoring reports.

SOCIAL-MEDIA PROMOTION

In 2020, the number of followers of NTB's socializing page reached 49,227, organically, thanks to posts dedicated to the promotion of online activities and summer shows. Maximum views for a post were 6480. The maximum impact reached in 2020 was 93,285 organic visitors, without spending any advertising budget.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

In December 2020, another unique project started, a project realized in partnership with the Romanian National Art Museum. The RNAM³ easel painting restoration laboratory and some of the NTB actors participated in the project.



Photo 3: Video wall on NTB youtube channel, cut from the poster of the project “The Paintings’ Revolution”, a partnership between NTB and RNAM

² Equivalent advertising value (EAV) is generally used by the Public Relations Industry as a device to measure the advantage to a client from media coverage of a PR campaign. AVEs are calculated by measuring the column inches (in the case of print), or seconds (in the case of broadcast media) and multiplying these figures by the respective medium's advertising rates (per inch or per second) – The Institute for Public Relations, Commission of PR Measurement and Evaluation, University of Florida.

³ RNAM – short form for Romanian National Art Museum.

The two cultural institutions have publicly released a series of 11 videos in which TNB actors were talking about as many paintings from the RNAM Modern Romanian Art collection, which were severely damaged during the events of December 1989. The project was inspired by the temporary exhibition “Laboratory II – 1989 - restoration of the shot paintings”.

NTB actors tell to the public the stories of the painting works shot in December 1989 and they present also a few happy cases of some paintings that were saved and put back in the exhibition circuit.

The videos are made available to the public through the communication platforms of RNAM and TNB, respectively the YouTube accounts and the Facebook pages of the institutions, in an attempt to make these unique stories as accessible as possible to the general public.

JOURNAL OF A REVOLUTION.1989 – TV DOCUMENTARY

Another online and TV interesting premiere of NTB in 2020 was the documentary “The Journal of a Revolution ”, a video extension based on the theatre show *Journal of Romania. 1989* , both directed by Carmen Lidia Vidu.



Photo 4: Video wall, youtube channel NTB, from the poster of the performance *Journal of Romania. 1989*, copyright TNB

The online premiere was on December 16 on TNB-TV, the film being later taken over and broadcast in full by the national television stations Digi 24 (on December 19) and TVR3 (on December 22), significantly marking the commemoration of the 31st anniversary of the Romanian Anticomunist Revolution of 1989.

NTB BLOG

NTB blog is the NTB's online magazine, where everybody can read unique articles, interviews and details about NTB artists, theatre projects and guests, our collaborators, our partners. On NTB's blog, authors of the articles are the employees of the theatre's communication and promotion team, which are the communication interface between artists and the audience.

The blog can be visited at the adress: www.blogtnb.com

In 2020, the blog has been enriched with the dedicated TNB-TV page, where NTB programs can be access online.

VOLUNTEERING IN 2020

Between November 2020 and February 2021, several actors from the National Theatre in Bucharest participated as volunteers of the Public Health Directorate (DSP) call center initiated by the Geeks for Democracy Association, within an initiative of the Communication Department of NTB. Thus, the actors had the mission to answer people's calls to the Public Health Directorate on issues related to the pandemic with the new coronavirus. After being trained by experienced volunteers and being seconded by them for a while, TNB actors answered the phones and helped the people of Bucharest with the requested information.(Foto).

RADIO PROMOTION

Regarding the promotion on radio stations, NTB had as media partners, in 2020, stations as Radio Romania Actualități (Romanian Broadcasting Corporation), Bucharest FM, Radio Romania Cultural, Radio France Internationale Romania and Radio Romantic.

TNB's total radio appearances in 2020 were 127, represented by advertising of the show and interviews of the artists. (according to Mediatrust monitoring company).

4

INTERFERENȚE



INTERFERENZEN



INTERFERENCES



Teatrum Quantum.

Trial of an Analogy between a Phenomenon of Quantum Physics and the Theatrical Phenomenon

ATTILA BALÁZS

(Teatrul Maghiar de Stat „Csiky Gergely” Timișoara)

Abstract

The present study describes the course of an experiment in the area of the microcosm. Explanations including both phenomena in the field of physics and phenomena in the world of the theatre will be postulated. The experiment itself can be considered a functional model, on the basis of which several analogies can be made. It should be noticed from the very start that this experiment is a theatrical game on a theoretical level.

Keywords:

quantum physics; theatrical phenomenon; microsystem; macrocosm; experiment.

Rezumat

Studiul prezent descrie parcursul unui experiment din zona microcosmosului. Se vor da explicații care cuprind atât fenomene din zona fizicii cât și fenomene din lumea teatrului. Experimentul în sine poate fi considerat un model funcțional, pe baza căruia pot fi realizate câteva analogii. Trebuie subliniat de la bunul început că acest experiment este un joc cu teatrul la nivel teoretic.

Cuvinte cheie:

fizică cuantică; fenomen teatral; microsistem; macrocosmos; experiment.

Our material existence can be defined by the fundamental laws of physics (for example, Newton's laws), which allow us to construct models that can describe the dynamics or the situations of our functional world. If these laws are general, they must be valid and theoretically applicable to any model. And any theory is valid until it is disproved. The question is whether this can be applied to theatre and, if so, how does it work?. If it does not work, then it's against logic. What exists can be proven, theoretically and practically. We formulate hypotheses to prove or disprove them. In conclusion, an analogy between theatrical phenomena

and physical models is worth a try, at least in theory, eventually, in order to model certain situations, phenomena or processes. Let's take a few premises, associate them in a logical fashion as to reach some conclusions. The path can be either empirical or theoretical, an attempt to find idealism in the exact sciences.

The laws of physics shape situations, states and phenomena. When we stage a situation, a story, we also present a model. Space, time and dramatic events are compressed as to highlight them as strongly as possible. Everything happens in the macro-world that expands from molecules to galaxies. This is the coverage area to which we have measurable knowledge that is measurable with our senses and specific measuring instruments. Therefore our poetic, dramatic and generally artistic instruments will only extend to these limits. But the feelings, the emotions with which one operates in art, in particular, we will try to explain scientifically through physiology, chemistry or psychology.

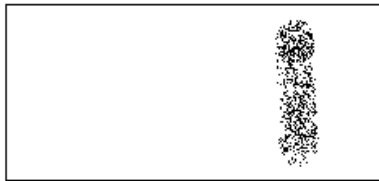
What if we looked for an analogy in the micro world? The microcosm extends from molecules to the smallest particle of matter. But if we try to apply our daily or physical logic or laws to this field, our minds will fail. Even Democritus¹, who first used the concept “atom”, stated that the existing world is made up of an infinite multiplicity of tiny particles, namely atoms, therefore it is not perceptible. He considers color to be a convention, hardness and bitterness too. Thus the only accepted realities are made of atoms and space. At this moment, we have descended into the realm of elementary particles, where we can easily get lost. The elementary particle has material and wave characteristics. It is dependant on certain physical factors that come out of these two characteristics. The smaller the mass of a particle, the more its wave nature will manifest. The best illustration of this is the two-slit experiment.

Now we would like to describe a simple physics experiment that incites a lot of curiosity. This experiment can be done at home with a flashlight or a candle and a few pieces of paper. In order to be more “scientific” we need a source of light (in this case a light source that emits photons, i.e. elementary particles), a screen and a detector (in this case a sheet of paper). The particles are launched in the direction of a screen through a slit. Small dots appear where the particles collide. Thus the following image can be seen on the screen:



¹ Democritus (460-370 BC), ancient Greek pre-Socratic philosopher; formulated an atomic theory of the universe.

Then we close this slit and open another one. In this way, particles passing through the slit and touching the screen will outline the following image: In fact there is nothing special about it. But what happens if we open both slits? Logically, we would expect the following image:



But, contrary to our expectations, an image of interference is formed that looks something like this:



A third band appears in the middle, where there should logically be no particles. In actual fact, inexplicable. What kind of conclusions can we draw from this experiment and what analogies can we infer? A concrete explanation: the particle becomes a wave, passes through both slits, interferes with itself and then becomes again a material particle before reaching the screen.



Philosophical conclusion: we do not perceive the world around us, but only the light that is reflected in it. Even when we touch objects, we only perceive their effects on us (mass, shape etc.) From this perspective, Plato's parallel world is the / a reality, and we ourselves are the imaginary world. Therefore, classical physics failed.

Quantum explanation: the microsystem is neither a wave nor a particle. It is neither “a particle behaving like a wave”, nor “a wave behaving like a particle”. We just can’t define what it is. Is it “Body wave”? Or “Wave body”? This confusion is the price we pay when we apply the concepts of classical physics in a field where they do not fit. However, let us not forget that the macroscopic world is made up of microsystems. Nevertheless, what we can understand from the microsystem is just a projection of this world.

Human deduction: the great whole is made up of smaller parts, and if you get to the bottom of it, you get to the “inexplicable”. We try to explain this inexplicable through art, particularly through theatre.

Theatrical explanation: the creator, endowed with the nature of the wave, and the performer, otherwise known as the material nature, are compiled at the moment of observation. In order to materialize creation requires an observer, i.e. a receiver. Most works of art are made with the intention of being exhibited, shown. During the rehearsals of a theatrical performance, everything is pliable: words, gestures etc. Consequently the final fixation takes place in the concept of the receiver, i.e. the spectator.

At the beginning of a creative process, it is necessary to ask oneself fundamental questions and establish how to apply it in a viable system. As a next step, we need to accept our experiment as a functional model and look at some analogies based on it. Thus we have to emphasize: this is a theatrical performance on a theoretical level.

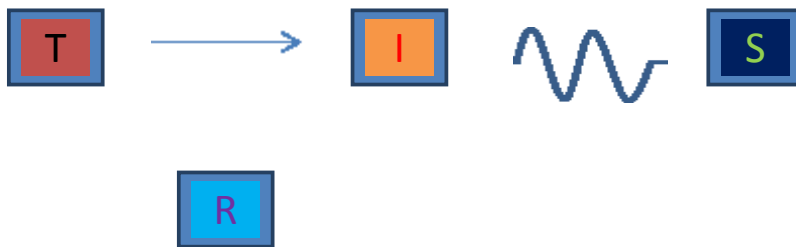
The possibilities are limited within the configured system, but they allow a wide variety. Let’s take this situation: We need a source, a screen and a filter in fixed positions and a detector in a variable position. In these positions the applied variables are: text, performer, spectator and director. These are the basic factors that constitute the *sine qua non* of a production (in physical terms: a microsystem). Other factors, such as the setting, costumes, music, projection, sound, light etc. are constants that improve the mechanism of the effect. Mathematically, 24 permutations of this configuration are possible. But the detector can be placed in front or behind the filter. This doubles the number of permutations, which results in a combination of 5 elements in 4 places. A total of 48 cases are shown in the following chart:

	SOURCE	DETECTOR	FILTER	DETECTOR	SCREEN
P1a	Text		Performer	Director	Spectator
P1b	Text	Director	Performer		Spectator
P2a	Text		Performer	Spectator	Director
P2b	Text	Spectator	Performer		Director
P3a	Text		Director	Performer	Spectator
P3b	Text	Performer	Director		Spectator
P4a	Text		Director	Spectator	Performer
P4b	Text	Spectator	Director		Performer
P5a	Text		Spectator	Director	Performer
P5b	Text	Director	Spectator		Performer
P6a	Text		Spectator	Performer	Director
P6b	Text	Performer	Spectator		Director
P7a	Performer		Text	Director	Spectator
P7b	Performer	Director	Text		Spectator
P8a	Performer		Text	Spectator	Director
P8b	Performer	Spectator	Text		Director
P9a	Performer		Director	Spectator	Text
P9b	Performer	Spectator	Director		Text
P10a	Performer		Director	Text	Spectator
P10b	Performer	Text	Director		Spectator
P11a	Performer		Spectator	Text	Director
P11b	Performer	Text	Spectator		Director
P12a	Performer		Spectator	Director	Text
P12b	Performer	Director	Spectator		Text

P13a	Director		Text	Spectator	Performer
P13b	Director	Spectator	Text		Performer
P14a	Director		Text	Performer	Spectator
P14b	Director	Performer	Text		Spectator
P15a	Director		Performer	Spectator	Text
P15b	Director	Spectator	Performer		Text
P16a	Director		Performer	Text	Spectator
P16b	Director	Text	Performer		Spectator
P17a	Director		Spectator	Text	Performer
P17b	Director	Text	Spectator		Performer
P18a	Director		Spectator	Performer	Text
P18b	Director	Performer	Spectator		Text
P19	Spectator		Text	Performer	Director
P19	Spectator	Performer	Text		Director
P20a	Spectator		Text	Director	Performer
P20b	Spectator	Director	Text		Performer
P21a	Spectator		Performer	Text	Director
P21b	Spectator	Text	Performer		Director
P22a	Spectator		Performer	Director	Text
P22b	Spectator	Director	Performer		Text
P23a	Spectator		Director	Text	Performer
P23b	Spectator	Text	Director		Performer
P24a	Spectator		Director	Performer	Text
P24b	Spectator	Performer	Director		Text

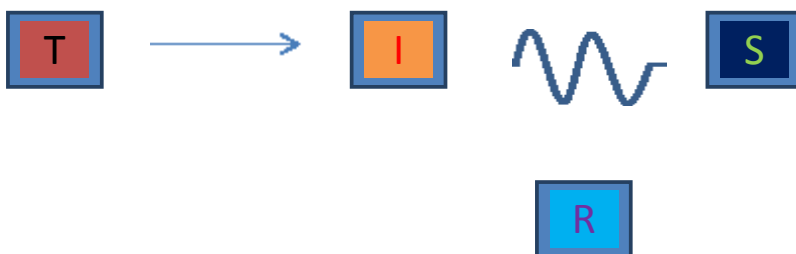
Let us have now a look at some concrete illustrations of how the model can work in practice:

P1a:



It is a typical, common sense case, in which the dramatic text is the starting point, and the message is transmitted to the audience through the performer's / actor's filter. For centuries, the presence of the director has been ignored or not even considered to be necessary in this process, which is inconceivable today. If we include the director as a text-to-performer-detector, the situation changes completely. In this case, through his conception, the dramatic text reaches the performer and it is transmitted to the recipient on the airwaves. And the transformation happens in the filter. This is the typical and most widely used form of theatre today. In this manner, the individuality of the director and may be the creativity of the performer is best manifested. This is a solid structure, consolidated over time.

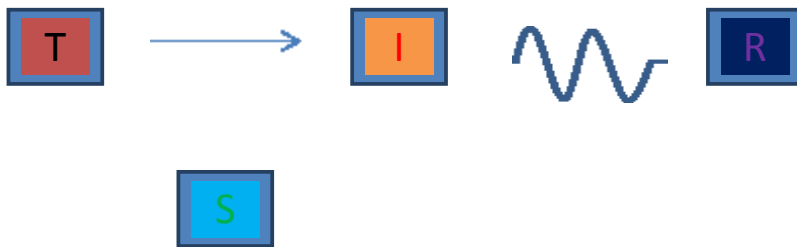
P1b:



The same classic shape, except that the position of the director in the detector position makes the situation more interesting. If the director focuses on the message he wants to convey to the audience, he can create what we call a "director's show" today, an image performance may come out, where the text

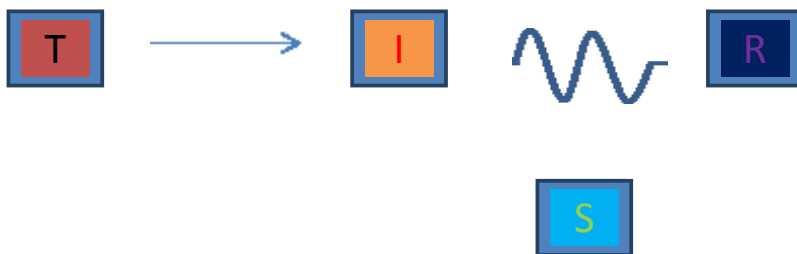
plays a secondary role. With only a small shifting in focus, the importance given to the actor depends only on the goodwill of the director. Consequently the result can be extraordinary, but at the same time mediocre, if the accents are wrong. Ideally, the director has the mobility to use his “detector” on both sides of the creative process. This is definitely revealed in the final result.

P2a:



We are faced with a particularly sensitive case when “text particles” are trapped in the viewer’s net in raw form. But let us not scare the play reading lovers, even if the audience is largely made up of professionals. In terms of finality, the director may be left out of the game if he is not careful, although the interference rests with him.

P2b:



The model of the theatre where there must be a close alliance between the actors with a well-established and overall developed script – is the case – of the director in an exclusive managerial role, so the public is certainly offered several alternatives to choose from to enjoy the opera. If the wave cumulation state of the performance reaches everyone equally, it is advisable to show it at various festivals, in the hope of a resounding success, which is to be expected. As an

example, we provided a small sample of 6% of cases. The rest is to be processed. For me, personally, this simplified framework expresses exactly the origin and the most essential feature of theatre: the fact that illusion exists. It has the right to exist. It means that the “inexistent” exists. Literature, music and the visual arts (which are complementary to theatre) also operate with the concept of illusion, they entail imagination, but theatrical performance creates illusion by combining them all. And where is the illusion in its purest form? It exists in the elementary particles that lie at the basis of matter.

From a mathematical point of view we can describe, we can formulate laws, but we cannot imagine the micro-world. This is totally different from our macroscopic vision. The final decision is that the particle is neither a corpuscle nor a wave. To paraphrase Niels Bohr², a physicist is not a sculptor, he does not have to model the electron, but to describe it. To know the micro-world, he considers that the individual should be just as small. But the model is always a model and should be taken into consideration as belonging to a system.

The fundamental questions must be asked every time a system is created. Where do we come from? Where are we going? Where are we at the moment? Can we define the things around us? How do we relate to the environment? How do we respond to external stimuli? How do we react to internal stimuli? What makes us different? What makes us unique? What makes what happens on a stage come alive? What makes it dead? What makes us neutral? Where is the midpoint? How far can we go in extremes? How much do we know about our environment (wider and narrower system)? Where is the boundary between reality and illusion within the system? How rational should we be? How instinctive are we? Is there a line between reality and illusion? How far should logic be followed? How much influence does subjectivity have in this regard? Can subjectivity itself be measured or calculated? And the series of questions could go on and on.

As a conclusion we can notice that the most common way for a person to get to know something is to dissect and label what he wants to know. He formulates concepts that he keeps strictly from one another. But they can be different facets of the same entity. The attempt is to bring these separate concepts together, to unite these labels into a Common Entity.

Translation into English: Eleonora Ringler-Pascu

² Niels Bohr (1885-1969), Danish physicist, author of the atomic model, contributed to understand the atomic structure and the quantic mechanics; Nobel Prize for Physics 1922.

Standup Comedy: The Passionate Detachment Paradox – A Laugh of Ice and Fire

PATRICIA NEDELEA

(Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai“, Central European University)

Abstract:

This article reveals a paradoxical perspective on Standup Comedy, proposing its writing and acting as an interesting career option for any student of Theatre and Drama, but also for any passionate theatre amateurs. The paper shows that the Standup Comedian is the most detached and cold type of actor, on one hand, but also the most involved and sincere one, on the other hand. And these two opposite features are happening simultaneously.

Keywords:

Standup Comedy; acting; detachment; humour.

Rezumat:

Acest articol oferă o perspectivă paradoxală asupra *standup comedy*, propunând scrierea și performarea ca o perspectivă interesantă pentru orice student la teatru și dramă, dar și pentru actorii amatori pasionați. Actorul de *standup comedy* e prezentat ca fiind cel mai rațional și mai detașat tip de actor, pe de o parte, dar și cel mai implicat și mai sincer, pe de altă parte. Iar aceste caracteristici opuse au loc simultan.

Cuvinte cheie:

standup comedy; actorie; detașare; umor.

1. Intro: Seven Reasons to do Standup

Personally I believe that Standup Comedy is the most accessible and genuine form of comedic expression. It has been defined as “the cheapest form of entertainment to produce, all you need is a comic, a microphone, and a few tables and chairs,”¹ and as “the purest public comic communication”². Oliver Double

¹ Leno, Jay: *apud* William Knoedelseder: *I'm Dying Up Here*, Public Affairs, New York, 2018, 215.

² Mintz, Lawrence E.: “Standup Comedy as Social and Cultural Mediation”, in: *American Quarterly*, Vol. 37, No.1, Special Issue: *American Humour*, The John Hopkins University Press, Spring 1985, 71.

(academic and former standupper) proposes an even more simple definition: “a performer speaks to an audience in order to make it laugh”³.

The comedian Judy Carter dedicates her *Comedy Bible* to “all the comedians who have triumphed over their personal fears to reveal their authentic selves onstage, transforming their personal problems into punchlines”⁴. These words describe perfectly, in my opinion, what the standupper actually does on stage: she or he reveals her/his authentic self (the “Fire” I refer to in the title of this article) and rationally transforms it into comedy (the “Ice” part of the process).

Before exposing seven reasons why doing Standup Comedy might be a valuable option for a Theatre student, but also for an amateur actor, let me specify that this article is written from a multiple perspective: the one of a Standup comedian,⁵ the one of an academic⁶, and, obviously, the one of a fan.

The reasons why Standup might be an excellent choice and maybe even a future career path for a Theatre student are multiple and very diverse. Firstly, you can be an actor, a director and a dramatist - all in one. You will be the one who decides what and how you are going to perform, you need no other person to validate your act (only the audience will do that part for you). In other words, you are going to be a One Man Orchestra and you will develop multiple skills simultaneously.

Secondly, you can start doing Standup at any level of studies, and at any moment of your life, there is no age limit, all you need is the desire to do comedy. There are lots of written materials that might help you and teach you how to do it, and tons of visual materials available – especially on Netflix – can offer you various models and types of Standup humour, so that you can detect what sort of humour you resonate with.

³ Double, Oliver: *Getting the Joke, the Inner Workings of Standup Comedy*, Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, London, 2014, 10.

⁴ Carter, Judy: *The New Comedy Bible - The Ultimate Guide to Writing and Performing Stand-up Comedy*, Indie Books International, Oceanside, 2020.

⁵ I used to be a Standupper (2004-2010), on the stage of National Theatre from Cluj-Napoca and I also performed for the TV show *Standup Caffee* (HBO Romania). Recently I have published the first Romanian Standup Comedy Dramatic Texts, containing both old and new Standup comedy materials: see Patricia Nedelea, *Bărbații sunt precum pantofii – Texte Dramatice de Standup*, Cluj-Napoca: Eikon and Școala Ardeleană, 2020.

⁶ Nedelea, Patricia: “Standup Comedy as Homorous Detachment – Enlightenment Roots from Diderot and Sade”, *Colocvii Teatrale*, volume 30, 2020. I was invited to do Standup Comedy Workshops for Theatre students at Faculty of Theatre and Film, UBB Cluj Napoca – on October 23rd 2020 – and for Theatre Students at Faculty of Music and Theatre, UVT Timișoara – on December 17th 2020.

Thinking about time and place, new reasons show up, because, thirdly, right now is a very good timing because we are living in the best moment for comedy. In our post-postmodern times, comedy is needed more than ever. Today the expression “public communication” has globally received other meanings, radically different from those from the past. Nowadays humour, in general, and the special quality of being therapeutic of Standup Comedy, in particular, is more relevant and needed than it ever was: the world needs a good laugh right now, we all do.

Fourthly, Romania in particular might be the best place for comedy, considering our quite pessimistic literary tradition, as well as our contemporary cultural environment. We are in a chronic need for comedy. And it is easy to do it because, fifthly, Standup Comedy can easily be performed almost anywhere, no special stage conditions being required: it is, without a doubt, the most adaptable and also the cheapest production form of entertainment.

When aiming to become a comedian, a positive self-transformation will occur – and this one is reason number six, and a crucial reason as well. As the famous comedian Milton Berle used to say, “laughter is the best medicine in the world”⁷. As a Standup Comedian to be, you will be always looking for humour, in any situation and, because of this paradigm of thinking, you will be able to see the comic vein pulsating even in the most difficult moments of your life. When anyone would cry and complain, the comedian will find something funny about the most intimate disasters – and later will make the audience see it this way as well. Standup Comedy is not just the personal hell, the Fire, but it is reason and humour, it is Ice as well, it is Ice and Fire mixed together. It means, without any doubt, continuous and intense therapy, for both the entertainer and the audience.⁸ Being a standupper can heal your wounds and resolve your deepest traumas and, on top of all these, it makes you a funnier person. I will insist more specifically on this aspect in the fourth part of my text – called *A Jungian Song of Fire*.

I left for the last what might actually be the most important reason, from a more pragmatic perspective. Seventhly, doing Standup Comedy will prepare you for a multitude of comedy-related future jobs – you will be ready to work as copywriter, blogger, comic book writer, social media content writer, write funny t-shirts, write

⁷ Berle, Milton: *Milton Berle's Private Joke File: Over 10,000 of His Best Gags, Anecdotes, and One-Liners*, Crown, New York, 1992.

⁸ For more details on this subject see Ian Morisson Macrury, “Humour as ‘social dreaming’: Stand-up comedy as therapeutic performance”, in: *Psychoanalysis Culture & Society*, April 2012; see also Maria Kempinska, *The Acquisition of Comedic Skills as a Component of Growth and Individuation: Post- Jungian and Psychoanalytic Perspectives*, Centre for Psychoanalytic Studies, University of Essex, March 2016.

funny greeting cards, write comedy movies, write comedy scripts, sitcom writer, instagram influencer, twitter influencer, youtube personality, vlogger, blogger, podcaster, tv show producer, cartoonist, motivational speaker, commercial actor, voice over actor and, of course, comedy actor.⁹

2. General Features of Standup Comedy

The roots and influences of Standup Comedy are ancient and numerous: “the shaman, jesters, *Commedia dell’Arte*, Shakespearean clowns like Richard Tarleton, English pantomime clowns like Joseph Grimaldi, circus clowns, British music hall comedians, American vaudeville entertainers, the stump speeches of American minstrelsy, nineteenth century humorous lecturers like Mark Twain and medicine shows.”¹⁰ The historiography of Standup starts with pioneering historical books on it as a theatrical genre (Steve Allen’s books from 1956,¹¹ 1981¹², 1982¹³; Phil Berger’s, 1975¹⁴; Joe Franklin’s, 1972¹⁵) and, after many documentary films about the history of Standup comedians and Comedy,¹⁶ the historiography continues with a lot of comedians auto-biographies and biographies, but also spectacular visual materials such as Wayne Federman’s podcast *The History of Standup*.¹⁷ The recurrent characteristic of Standup Comedy reflected in the academic and historical works on it is the paradoxical combination of detachment and involvement: comedy attracts and repels at the same time,¹⁸ the audience separates itself through laughter from both the comedian,¹⁹ and from the context of the joke,²⁰ but meantime the spectators recognize the absurd situations they have been through as well.

⁹ For an even longer enumeration of possible jobs for funny people see Judy Carter, xv.

¹⁰ Double, Oliver: *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.

¹¹ Allen, Steve: *Funny Men*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1956.

¹² Allen, Steve: *Funny People*, New Stein and Day, New York, 1981.

¹³ Allen, Steve: *More Funny People*, Stein and Day, New York, 1982.

¹⁴ Berger, Phil: *The Last Laugh*, Morrow, New York, 1975.

¹⁵ Franklin, Joe: *Encyclopaedia of Comedians*, Secaucus, Citadel Press, New Jersey, 1972.

¹⁶ I will give just a few very relevant examples: *All jokes aside* (2000), *Comedian* (2002), *History of the Joke* (2008), *The Last Laugh* (2016).

¹⁷ Federman, Wayne: *The History of Standup*, <https://www.thehistoryofstandup.com>, [access: October 30th 2020].

¹⁸ Woodroff, Paul: “The Paradox of Comedy,” in: *Philosophical Topics*, vol. 25, no. 1, 1997, pp. 319–335.

¹⁹ Rutter, Jason: *Stand-Up as Interaction: Performance and Audience in Comedy Venues*, Doctoral Thesis, University of Salford, Institute for Social Research, September 1997.

²⁰ Schwartz, Janine: *Linguistic Aspects of Verbal Humour in stand-up comedy*, University Saarland, doctoral thesis, 2010.

There is no fixed and rigid way of doing Standup Comedy, but an infinite variety of ways. The act of Standup can be done by just one person, but also by more people at the same time (rare cases, such as The Lucas Brothers). The stage can be a small bar, a club, but also a great theatre stage, even a stadium (the greatest performance of this kind was done in 2008 in Germany, on a stadium; there were 67.000 people present for Mario Barth's show); Adam Sandler even did a piece of performance incognito, in a metro station (as part of his *100% Fresh* show from 2019). A screen can be incorporated (either showing the close-ups of the comedian or illustrating particular moments the show is about (as in Adam Sandler's *100% Fresh*). The stage can be empty, the comedian performing in front of the traditional red curtains, or there can be a whole scenography involved - transforming the stage into a bar (Al Murray), a steam-punk construction (Ross Noble), London street (Jim Jefferies), a house (Robin Williams). Music can be involved as well, a lot of comedians incorporating it into their act (Zach Galifianakis, Adam Sandler, Bo Burnham, Jimmy Fallon, Stephen Lynch). Not just direct, but also mediated dialogue with the audience can function as well (Jimmy Carr traditionally offers the audience the chance to contact him vis sms texts during the show and, after the break, he comes back with funny answers and comments to the texts people have sent him). Some comedians use talking behind the curtains and pretending they do not know the microphone is on as part of their gig (Stewart Lee, Louis CK).

The only common and, apparently, mandatory – feature of all the Standup performances, no matter their formal differences, is humour, and of course the standuppper's unique personality: the personal capacity to dig for the Fire (that is, the self-biographic major wounds and deceptions) and then to put the Ice (of humour and rationality) on it.

The subject of humour and comedy has been discussed a long time ago by Aristotle, in his *Poetics*: Aristotle believed that, while tragedy presents the man at his best, comedy shows “the worst” parts of humanity. Still, Aristotle believed that humour separates humanity from animals. Indeed, the comedian shows to the audience his or her own defects and fears, his or her comic and exaggerate self - or, as Aristotle puts it, “his worst”. The comedian passes over fears and dares to show his comic personality, his or her Standup personality, if you will.

3. Acting method(s): Ice and Fire, Two in One

Here comes the main question: is the Standup comedian disengaged or is he or she deeply involved? I will shortly refer to the two opposite methods of acting, the Method acting and the Brechtian acting, to see how they function

in relation to Standup Comedy. The standupper seems to be very close to the Brechtian model of detached acting, having nothing to do with the Method acting – but the last part of this statement is debatable. Obviously the comedian does not play a part, he or she is not involved in a Stanislavskian manner. Strictly from the Method perspective, one might deduce that there is no ‘Fire’ in Standup, no self-involvement; but such thing is not true, for two main reasons.

The first reason is formal, and it is regarding the lack of the fourth wall. The Standup comedian is by nature involved, the fourth wall convention does not exist in this very special type of show. The Standupper addresses the audience directly, in an unmediated manner and the audience instantly reacts (while in the traditional theatrical performance the convention is rarely broken, and only for a short time). The Standup comedian cannot pretend that there is a fourth wall, she or he *has* to react instantly to anything, otherwise the audience will notice and will interpret the lack of reaction as a weakness. And, for being able to react, the comedian has to be present here and now and let himself caught in the moment. The reactions coming from the audience are spontaneous and unpredictable, people laugh when they feel like, not when the comedian imagined they will, meaning that the comedian *has* to be involved, even if it is a very special and rational kind of involvement.

The second reason why the Standup comedian is involved is his or her personal self-biographic contribution, which is the heart of the text and the show itself. On the other hand, while the standupper is looking straight in the eyes of the audience, he or she is already very much over the traumas and personal stories exposed. In conclusion, the Standup comedian might be defined as the most rational and detached kind of actor and, at the same time, the most involved one. It is a unique mix of Ice and Fire that could challenge – and heal – any actor who dares to go for it, as we shall see in the following.

The visible symbol of Standup Comedy is the microphone. As Jim Jefferies shows in one of his shows²¹ (the story about being invited to Mariah Carey’s place to perform for her boyfriend’s anniversary as a surprise gift), the only thing that visually makes him a standupper, the only visible difference between himself and a crazy person who accidentally comes by and starts shouting nasty things to a gathering of people is that microphone. The microphone is the sign of reason and detachment, which allows the actor to be the master of the audience. Indeed, it is a hierarchic sign: the one who holds it has the power. The microphone is a constant visual reminder of the fact that the audience came by choice to a Standup

²¹ Jefferies, Jim: *This is me now*, Netflix, 2018.

comedy show, possibly a politically incorrect performance: this is the convention, this is the deal. For this reason, the audience should not feel offended by the jokes. Since they came there, the common sense rules can be dropped as long as the performance is happening; every member of the audience chose to be present to this kind of performance and even paid for a ticket.

There is a strong personal involvement in the text, which the comedian wrote herself / himself. For an outsider, Standup Comedy seems to be the easiest performance to do, and also, financially speaking, it is the cheapest entertainment genre to produce. It is an unrepeatable performance, and its value is calculated in the amount of laughter it generates. The essential elements of Standup Comedy are three: the comic character, or more likely a funny version of the comedian's true self, the direct communication with the audience and the presence and reaction to whatever unforeseen accident might happen during the show (a technical accident, a glass falling to the floor, a phone ringing, a spectator leaving, a heckler screaming some unpleasant remark and so on).

Because there is no character in Standup, no role to be played,²² there is no excuse such as "the play was bad, but he was good": there is no "play". Standup Comedy is about showing onstage your true personality, in an exaggerated and funny manner. The act of Standup has to be conversational, sincere and alive: as Bill Cosby used to say, it is like you talk to friends over dinner. The audience should naturally like the comedian (who should not make an effort in order to be liked), or at least to admire her or him and, because of that admiration, to get over the feeling of disliking him or her (Jimmy Carr's case). How can one "naturally" make the audience like / admire him?

The voice, the attitude, the posture are a few visual elements the audience might like or not. The comedian's outfit is rarely a costume (while the actor always wears a stage costume) – but there are some notable exceptions, such as the British beloved comic Eddie Izzard, who always wore dresses on his Standup shows (*Dress to Kill*, *Stripped*, *Definite Article* and others) – not as theatre costumes, but as means for revealing his true transvestite self (as he confesses in his book *Believe me*²³). There can be visual elements the standuppers wear as "their signature" – such as Jerry Seinfeld's white snickers (when the snickers were not in fashion as they are now), George Carlin's sudden hippie outfit, or Jim Jefferies' old leather jackets. But, beyond the visual elements, the most important element, the essence of the Standup show is, obviously, the text.

²² Oliver Double (among many others), pp.10-100.

²³ Izzard, Eddie: *Believe me*, Penguin Random House, Great Britain, 2017.

As already stated, in the case of this specific theatrical genre, the text always is written by the standupper and, to some extent, it is based on real facts – or at least it seems credible, possible or probable for the audience to believe so. Eddie Izzard's famous routine about affirming about a funny named character that "he is dead", followed by denying the death "it's not true", and then denying the denying and so on – is an example about how important is for the audience that the story told was "true": they left themselves fooled at least 12 times in a row. There are endless famous examples of comedians who use a huge amount of their real life in their Standup materials, such as Louis CK, Adam Sandler, Ricky Gervais, Jim Jefferies, but the example that still stands up is Woody Allen, who had to pay for this: his first wife divorced him and even sued him (in 1962) for making terrible jokes about her in public (Allen used to call her Quasimodo in his act).

Are there any recipes for writing a funny text? There are many rhetorical features and mechanisms of the Standup jokes that can be detected, such as the contrast, the list of three, puzzle and solution, position taking, the pursuit,²⁴ but also the pauses,²⁵ the enumeration, the repetition of a statement, and the list could easily go on (there are books about writing comedy in general and Standup Comedy in particular). Being aware of such features can be helpful for finalizing a text, but the most important part is the personal vision, the unique way of seeing things of every single comedian (or, comedian-to-be). I dare say that the decision to do comedy, the act of opening your mind for humorous aspects and starting to take notes about these ideas, writing down on your phone every idea, subject or statement that might be or become funny already is a life changer and a mind opener.

The act of writing the Standup text is intimate and therapeutic: to put in words your former traumas and laugh about them with an audience (meaning, with people that might have very similar traumas, but unlike you, they did not have the courage to put them forefront this way, at least not yet) is a great act of bravery and an incredibly efficient self-therapy. A bonus feature is that, while putting such traumas in a humorous light, the actor does not have to re-live them again, unlike in psychodrama.²⁶

²⁴ Rutter, Jason: *Standup as Interaction: Performance and Audience in Comedy Venues*, Doctoral Thesis, University of Salford, Institute for Social Research, September 1997.

²⁵ See Seinfeld, Jerry: *Is This Anything*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 2020. In Jerry Seinfeld's Standup texts book the pauses the comedian makes between the lines are also visual.

²⁶ This is a personal opinion, based on my life and stage experience; other researchers might not share my view, but I am open for an academic debate on this subject.

4. A Jungian Song of Fire

There are some academic studies about Standup Comedy seen as a psychoanalytic process, and these works mostly apply Jung's psychoanalytic theory to it,²⁷ for an obvious reason: Jung's theory on comedy sees it as a transformational process, while Freud used to connect humour with less positive aspects, such as sexual impulses and aggression.

Standup Comedy can be seen as using Jungian archetypal and symbolic processes in the following way: at a symbolic level, the audience becomes the "good mother", a mother that resonates with the comedian, who complains about a symbolic castrating father (this "father" consisting in the sum of facts and people the comedian brings into his story, while pretending to "denounce" in a humorous way). Thus comedy can be a transformative process for both the entertainer and the audience (the comedian manages to convince the audience and it give food for thought), and while this happens, the Standup Comedy stage becomes a sacred transformational space.

Going further, Standup Comedy can be seen as no less than an alchemic process that transforms the joke into a Supra joke, through a supra-individualization process; it is a double act of psychotherapy – for the comedian as well as for the audience – both of them going through the four Jungian processes of confession, elucidation, education and transformation.²⁸ The comedian can affect the society, having the chance of being even prophetic, although this is risky, because during this intensive therapy act neither the comedian, not the audience are in complete control of the situation (anything can happen, anything can be said, but on the other hand, the audience's reactions to the jokes are also unpredictable). From a Jungian perspective, Standup Comedy is the most powerful artistic medium for social and personal change.

Conclusion

The Standup comedian is, simultaneously, the most involved and sincere type of actor and the most rational and detached one: this is what I call the Passionate Detachment Paradox. Standup Comedy is a game of Ice and Fire, a challenge and a promise, for at least seven reasons. This is the perfect time and place for anyone to start thinking from a humorous perspective and change

²⁷ The works are already quoted at footnote 8.

²⁸ Kempinska, Maria: *The Aquisition of Comedic Skills as a Component of Growth and Individuation: Post- Jungian and Psychoanalitic Perspectives*, Centre for Psychoanalytic Studies, University of Essex, March 2016.

not just his life, but also the whole society's mentalities and perspectives. The Laughter of Ice and Fire is cathartic, risky and empowering, because in Standup Comedy humour has no limits.

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Education as a Cause of Failure in Strindberg's Play *Miss Julie*¹

MARIA LECA

(Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara)

Abstract

The essay aims at interpreting the behaviour of Miss Julie – August Strindberg's character from the well-known homonymous play – from the point of view of her educational background.

Keywords:

August Strindberg; *Miss Julie*; character; education; theatre; values.

Rezumat

Esul are în vedere interpretarea comportamentului personajului Domnișoara Iulia, din bine-cunoscuta piesă omonimă de August Strindberg, prin prisma educației pe care a primit-o.

Cuvinte cheie:

August Strindberg; *Domnișoara Iulia*; personaj; educație; teatru; valori.

Values are the basis of a child's education. They guide us in the decisions we make in life about our relationships, about our desires and dreams, about what we bring to life, what makes us happy, what we fulfill and about what we intend to become. From an early age we take a set of values from our parents and our close environment in which we grow up. Through the classical system of reward and punishment or through examples and explanations we learn what kind of things are encouraged, what is good to do and what is not accepted. So we can say that many grownups already have a set of pre-programmed values and no longer ask questions concerning the basis of the decisions they make. However, over time – growing up and becoming aware of certain errors in the mentioned system of values – it is possible to influence consciously the “compass” after which we

¹ The present article has been coordinated by Alina Mazilu.

guide ourselves. Thus a conscious decision is possible to be done in this direction. For a person with a weak set of values or with contradictory values, life itself is a torment. That's because without a clear direction every decision requires a lot of energy. Moreover: Whatever the decision of the person in question is, in the background of consciousness there will always remain doubt and the regret of not choosing something else. If you don't know which way to go, then think about all the other possible ways: You will never reach a finality in what you set out to do.

August Strindberg's famous character Miss Julie from the homonymous play is someone who lacks a "compass". She grew up in two totally different, diametrically opposed backgrounds, with two sets of values that do not coincide. Her mother and her father were part of two different social classes. Her mother was a simple woman, who supported the idea of emancipated women and equality between the two sexes. Julie was an unwanted child by her mother – she, who never wanted to get married. Her mother raised her in the spirit of nature and freedom, she made her work hard in the fields, went hunting, took care of the horses, believing that a woman can do the same things as men. Julie's first years of life were spent in an environment in which the conventional attributions of women were reversed with those of men. Hatred for men is also part of the teachings Julie received from her mother. Because of her there were feelings of love and hate in Julie's soul concerning her own father. Imagine the confusion in a child's mind when it comes to a parent trying to alienate the other one. This is for sure a form of emotional abuse.

All took another turn when Julie's father realized what was happening. He decided to restore a normal dynamic to the way things were. Unfortunately, this decision confused Julie, because it changed her system of values and the way in which she related to the world and to herself. She even says that her father raised her to hate her own sex, to feel like half a woman – half a man and that there is nothing of her own left. She learned all the lessons from her father, but kept her mother's passions. In her discourse we can notice the class discrepancies, the altered ways of seeing the world and Julie's role in the two different environments.

Her mother's teachings are the cause of the shocking behaviours that Julie has in her relationship with her ex-fiancé. She urged her daughter never to be led by a man, but to transform men in her slaves. That's exactly what Julie tries to do with her training number, in which she makes the judge jump over the whip. With Jean she has a similar show, making him kiss her feet. It is clear that the young woman lacks a consistent behaviour when it comes to social norms. Indecision is a constant trait of her character: On the one hand, she is willing to do anything,

no matter what the world says, but on the other hand the opinion of the people is the only reason she hesitates to take a radical decision, such as running away with Jean.

The night the action of the play takes place is exactly the midsummer: A time proper to unleash the instincts and to overshadow judgment. However, what worries Julie the most are some hypothetical actions, which remain at the level of discussion, but which create such a great contradiction between her desires, tired of the responsibility of making decisions, she gives in, passes the responsibility over to Jean and prays for her death. At this point she even wants Jean to be able to make decisions about her life, as she has no more autonomy on her own choices. The process of choosing makes her feel confused, scared and desperate. The lack of sleep is a factor that contributes to all the delirious departure plans, a resumption of a life independent of everything she knew prior to this and, I think, a search for an authentic self.

The action takes place rather on an internal level, with sudden changes in status and opinions. Everything is intense, passionate, apocalyptic. It is easy to move from love to hate, from a position of power to one of submission, from blind courage to fear and anxiety, from intense joy to desperation. All these contradictions Julie experienced during her childhood. She ended up creating similar oscillations on her own in order to feel in her element and to feel that she is alive. Let us take for example all the agitation during the midsummer night: It is artificially created by the two characters, Jean and Julie. Their thoughts become for Julie reality. Sometimes she shows rational thinking, but those episodes pass quickly and then she returns again to a carousel of overwhelming feelings and emotions.

In her relationship with Jean, Julie doesn't even know what she really wants. She doesn't know if she wants entertainment, to be killed or loved by him, or if it is only that she needs someone to talk about her most intimate thoughts. In my opinion, she's unconsciously looking for someone with whom she could have a relationship as she had with her parents. She needs someone to tell her which path to take, what to do, what to decide, as all of these are mental exercises which she can't put into practice: She can't take a decision without thinking about all other possibilities. This is a really exhausting mental process. Both parents had a strong influence on her, and most likely out of a desire to be accepted and loved by them, she formed two different facades to please them both. In cases in which the day by day existence is far too difficult for a person to cope with reality, there are several ways to try to escape. In case of Miss Julie, the night spent with Jean can be seen as such a solution. Escape plans, moments begging Jean to kill her, alcohol abuse, extravagant dancing are just ways in which Julie tries her best to

break free from the torturous reality in which she finds herself and which she is programmed from an early age to endure.

The past conflicts between Julie's parents are present over and over in her mind. Her lack of self-respect becomes even clearer when she descends in front of Jean as low as possible, until any trace of dignity disappears. By opening her heart she allows him to judge her, her ancestors and the whole social class she belongs to. In a way, this inclination towards the choice of a partner from a lower social class is inherited from her father. It seems to me that, unconsciously, Julie followed her father's example of choosing a partner from a lower class – maybe due to their need for superiority.

People need a direction in life, and this direction has roots in their childhood. Julie's childhood was troubled, as she received two different educational models. It was spent in two different environments, with opposite visions, manners and rules. This produced in her mind a permanent, unsolvable conflict. Julie faces every day a problem by choosing what she wants, what makes her happy and what she loves – in one word, who she really is. Existence in itself is overwhelming and this fact urges her to choose to escape from reality with the help of Jean. The only valid option to put an end to the torture is death.

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INTERVIURI



INTERVIEWS



INTERVIEWS



„Drei Nationen in einem Haus“. Interview mit dem Regisseur Alexander de Montléart

MIHAI MOLDOVEANU

(Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara)

Abstract

The interview was made as part of the project “The life history of the German State Theatre Timisoara”.

Keywords:

German State Theatre Timisoara; theatre; oral history; director; Alexander de Montléart.

Rezumat

Interviul a fost realizat în cadrul proiectului „Istoria trăită a Teatrului German de Stat Timișoara”.

Cuvinte cheie:

Teatrul German de Stat Timișoara; teatru; istorie trăită; regizor; Alexander de Montléart.

Mihai Moldoveanu: Herr Alexander de Montléart, Sie waren öfters in Temeswar als Spielleiter, soweit bekannt, drei Mal. Wie kam es zu Ihrer ersten Reise nach Temeswar?

Alexander de Montléart: Ich war in den frühen achtziger Jahren auf Vermittlung des Goethe-Instituts München in Temeswar und habe dort in der Zeit von Ceaușescu Goethes *Iphigenie* inszeniert. An diese Zeit erinnere ich mich sehr, sehr gerne, insbesondere weil Ida Gaza (sie spielte die Iphigenie) eine ganz hervorragende Schauspielerin ist. Ich schätze sie noch heute, weil ich sie für hochbegabt halte. Die Zusammenarbeit zwischen uns war sehr fruchtbar. Sie war das, was man sich als Regisseur wünscht, weil wir auf gleicher Augenhöhe

zusammen gearbeitet haben. Die Zeit damals war sehr schwierig. Der damalige Intendant Hans Linder und ich konnten uns über Dinge, die mit der Inszenierung oder mit wirtschaftlichen und organisatorischen Fragen zusammenhingen, nicht in seinem Büro unterhalten, sondern mussten auf das Dach steigen, wo wir abhörsicher waren. Mich hat diese Tatsache sehr erschüttert, weil ich auch nicht wusste, wie sicher mein Leben hier war. Ich erinnere mich auch an das Hotel Timișoara. Als ich dort ankam steckte mir jemand einen Zettel zu. Ich war völlig verblüfft, denn auf dem Zettel stand: „Bitte kein Telefonat aus dem Zimmer führen.“ Wer mir den Zettel zugesteckt hat, weiß ich nicht mehr. Die Schauspielgruppe damals war wie eine Familie. Ich denke so gerne an diese Zeit zurück, weil es uns wirklich um unsere Arbeit ging und nicht um irgendwelche politischen Flausen. Wesentlichen Anteil daran hatte auch der Dramaturg Johann Lippert, der uns in schwierigen Situationen oft hilfreich beistand. Er verstand, dass es uns um eine für die damalige Zeit verständliche Aussage des Stückes ging. Die Zeit unter Ceaușescu war frustrierend, lähmend. Ich war mir nie sicher, wer wen bespitzelte. Gerne erinnere ich mich an unseren sogenannten „Magendienst“. Jemand aus der Truppe wusste immer, wo es Milch gab, Brot, Butter oder Schmalz. Und dann hat sich Eine oder Einer aus dem Ensemble bereit erklärt, sich dort anzustellen. Oft waren das ein bis zwei Stunden. Das kann man sich heute kaum noch vorstellen. Wir haben die Lebensmittel aufgeteilt, gekocht und gemeinsam gegessen. Das war unheimlich schön und hat uns auch zusammengeführt. Diese familiäre Atmosphäre war für mich neu. So etwas hatte ich bisher noch nicht erlebt. Eine solche Zusammenarbeit war anregend; immer wieder kamen neue Ideen und Vorschläge. Johann Lippert musste uns oft daran erinnern, den Premierentermin nicht aus den Augen zu verlieren. Insofern denke ich, wie gesagt, gerne an Ida Gaza – sowieso –, aber auch an Matthias Pelger, Victor Lache, Peter Schuch und Heidemarie Botradi, so gern zurück.

M. M.: Wussten Sie von der „Securitate“ bevor Sie nach Rumänien gekommen sind?

A. d. M.: Nein, ich habe mich damals mit anderen Themen beschäftigt. Als Kind hatte ich von der Gestapo gehört und alles, was damit zusammenhing, verdrängt. Wahrscheinlich war ich auch, bedingt durch mein Elternhaus, zu naiv. Ich hatte mich politisch eher zurückgehalten und mich mit dem Theater, der Literatur und Kunst auseinandergesetzt. Die Politik in den 68er Jahren reizte mich nicht sonderlich, zumal ich längere Zeit in Italien lebte. Es war ein ziemlicher Schock für mich, als ich bei der Generalprobe vor den Vorhang kommen musste, um mich der Kritik einiger Herren im Zuschauerraum zu stellen. Ihnen gefiel das

Kostüm des Diktators Kreon nicht. Auch musste ich einige Sätze bei ihm ändern, aber hauptsächlich störte das Kostüm, das war in meinen Augen nur ein nichtiger Vorwand.

M. M.: Wie haben Sie von der „Securitate“ erfahren? Hat Ihnen jemand etwas dazu gesagt?

A. d. M.: Nein, es kam Intendant Linder und sagte, ich möchte bitte vor den Vorhang kommen. Es seien einige Herren da, die hätten etwas mit mir zu besprechen. Und da bin ich völlig verunsichert vor den Vorhang getreten, konnte aber niemand im Zuschauerraum erkennen.

M. M.: Aha, die hat man gar nicht gesehen, die Leute?

A. d. M.: Nein, man hat mich aus dem Dunkeln heraus befragt. Ich stand im Scheinwerferlicht und habe sehr verunsichert meine Inszenierung verteidigt, aber man bestand nachdrücklich auf den Änderungen. Man hat gesagt: „Die Premiere findet nur statt, wenn das geändert ist.“ Ich sah mich schon im Knast und habe zwei oder drei Sätze zurückgenommen. Viel wichtiger war Iphigenien’s Haltung. Wenn man die Geschichte kennt, weiß man, dass ihre Weigerung dem Befehl Kreons zu folgen von ausschlaggebender Bedeutung ist. Wir haben dann die verbotenen Sätze durch einen Trick ersetzt, indem Iphigenie auf eine große Tafel das Wort „NEIN“ geschrieben hat. Auf diese Weise haben wir nicht nur das Stück, sondern auch unsere Arbeit gerettet.

M. M.: Wie war diese Erfahrung für Sie? Vor der Generalprobe kommen Leute, die sagen Sie müssen das und jenes ändern.

A. d. M.: Ich war sehr überrascht und verunsichert. Schließlich hatte ich in der Zwischenzeit so einiges gehört. Ich war überzeugt, dass Johann Lippert uns bestimmt rechtzeitig kritisiert hätte, wenn unsere Arbeit politisch in eine falsche Richtung gerannt wäre. Ich hatte auch keine Ahnung, dass da Leute im Zuschauerraum sitzen. Ich saß ahnungslos vorne in der dritten Reihe und habe mich auf die Inszenierung konzentriert.

M. M.: War das auch bei der zweiten Inszenierung so?

A. d. M.: Nein, das war ja auch in einer anderen Zeit. Die damalige Intendantin – Ildiko Zamfirescu – saß hinten im Zuschauerraum, um unsere Arbeit zu

verfolgen, das wusste ich. Und habe mich nach den Proben mit ihr über unsere Arbeit ausgetauscht. Es war nur in der ersten Inszenierung so nervenaufreibend.

M. M.: Wie war das für Sie? Sie haben am Deutschen Staatstheater in drei historischen Zeiten gearbeitet. Welche Unterschiede gab es da?

A. d. M.: In den beiden ersten Inszenierungen, sowohl in *Der Hose*, als auch in der *Iphigenie*, da ging es uns wirklich ums Theater, um die Kunst, um Inhalte. In der *Hose* war es so, dass eigentlich die Gruppe der Schauspieler, das Ensemble, in dieser geschlossenen Form nicht mehr vorhanden war. Man war schon ein bisschen individueller. Ich erinnere mich noch immer gerne an die zahlreichen Gespräche mit Matthias Pelger, den ich noch aus der *Iphigenie* kannte. Aber dieser Zusammenhalt von damals, der war in *Der Hose* nicht mehr so vorhanden. Und in der letzten Inszenierung, in *Creeps*, da gab es diese Gruppe überhaupt nicht mehr. Da waren alle Schauspieler mehr oder weniger auf ihren persönlichen Vorteil bedacht. Die geschlossene Ensemblearbeit, diese Verbundenheit von damals war vorbei.

M. M.: Haben Sie oder hatten Sie Vorurteile gegenüber Rumänien?

A. d. M.: Nein, überhaupt nicht. Meine Mutter war während des Krieges mit einem rumänischen Offizier befreundet, dem sie auch nach Kriegsende noch Pakete geschickt hat. Ich weiß sogar noch seinen Namen. Von ihm hat sie immer sehr nett gesprochen. Insofern waren mir die Rumänen immer sympathisch, einfach durch meine Mutter bedingt, sonst hätte ich auch den Namen des Mannes nicht mehr im Kopf. Aus jener Zeit hängt sogar noch eine antike Landkarte Rumäniens in meiner Küche.

M. M.: Inwieweit waren das deutsche Theater in Rumänien und das deutsche Theater in Deutschland verschieden? Welche Unterschiede gibt es?

A. d. M.: Soweit ich mich erinnere, war es für mich eine große Überraschung, dass es in Temeswar ein deutsches Theater gab. Ich hatte vorher keine Ahnung. Auch von der Dreiteilung wusste ich nichts. Man muss sich ja das Theater mit den Ungarn und Rumänen teilen, das war für mich Neuland. Drei Nationen in einem Haus. Dieser Austausch ist bestimmt spannend. Leider hatte ich nicht die Gelegenheit mir in einem der Theater eine Produktion anzusehen. Eine Reputation

nach Außen kannte ich damals nicht. Das ist jetzt anders geworden, da gibt es ja die Partnerschaft mit der Landesbühne Bruchsal.

M. M.: Aber auch technisch gesehen, gibt es Unterschiede? Zum Beispiel bei der Arbeit an einer Produktion, gibt es da Unterschiede zu Theatern in Deutschland?

A. d. M.: Eigentlich nicht. Man arbeitet sehr eng mit dem Dramaturgen, dem Bühnen- und Kostümbildner zusammen, hat intensive Lese- und Konzeptionsproben. In meinem Fall waren das oft sehr lange Proben, denn ich wollte den Schauspielern Zeit lassen, sich in den Rollen zu finden. Ich habe jedem die Möglichkeit gelassen, seine eigenen Vorstellungen von der Rolle darzulegen und zu diskutieren. Wir haben so gearbeitet, wie man in Deutschland arbeitet. Nach den Stellproben kamen die Stückproben, dann die Beleuchtungsproben, bis es halt so richtig läuft.

M. M.: Gibt es bestimmte Erlebnisse, die Sie in der Zeit hatten?

A. d. M.: In Erinnerung geblieben ist mir die festliche Premierenfeier zu *Die Hose*, weil Mitglieder der Deutschen Botschaft gekommen waren. Ich fühlte mich sehr geehrt, vermisste aber bei diesem Ereignis den Intendanten Hans Linder, von dem ich später hörte, dass er nicht mehr in Rumänien sei.

M. M.: Würden Sie nach Rumänien zurückkommen, um zu inszenieren?

A. d. M.: Wenn ich ein Stück mit Ida Gaza machen könnte, sofort! Die Ida ist wirklich eine große Schauspielerin. Die heutigen Kolleginnen und Kollegen sind alle neu. Mit Ida würde ich sofort wieder zusammen arbeiten. Ich denke gerne an die *Iphigenie* zurück und vor allen Dingen auch an das damalige Ensemble. Aber auch *Die Hose* hat mir viel Freude gemacht. Mit *Iphigenie* verbinden sich die Schlagworte: „tolle Arbeit“, aber auch „Securitate“. Nicht so gerne denke ich an *Creeps* zurück.

M. M.: Wer hat das Stück *Creeps* vorgeschlagen?

A.d.M.: Das war ein Vorschlag des Theaters. Ida Gaza, die inzwischen Intendantin war, wollte etwas für das junge Publikum tun. Lutz Hübner ist ein hervorragender

Autor, den ich sehr schätze. Ich habe *Creeps* erst in Temeswar kennengelernt und war sofort begeistert. Späterhin hätte ich mir diese Begeisterung auch bei den Schauspielern gewünscht. Die Zeiten hatten sich geändert, der Ensemblegeist war in der mir bekannten Form verdrängt und mehr auf die Persönlichkeit des Einzelnen bezogen, auf seine individuellen Bedürfnisse. Vielleicht fehlte es auch an entsprechender Erfahrung, für Jugendliche einen Text, eine Aussage zu verdeutlichen. In *Creeps* konkurrieren drei Mädchen unterschiedlicher Herkunft um die Position einer Fernsehmoderatorin. Sie werden von dem Sender gegeneinander ausgespielt, bis sie die Intrige durchschauen, sich verbünden und als Siegerinnen den Sender verlassen. Eine aktuelle und kritische Thematik. Ich selber arbeite sehr viel mit Kindern und Jugendlichen in Lesezirkeln und Spielgruppen. Gerne würde ich in Temeswar wieder ein Stück für die Jugend inszenieren.

„Ein Leben in zwei Kulturen“.

Interview mit dem Schauspieler

Gerhard Brössner

ELEONORA RINGLER-PASCU

(Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara)

Abstract

The interview was made as part of the project “The life history of the German State Theatre Timisoara”.

Keywords:

German State Theatre Timisoara; theatre; oral history; actor; Gerhard Brössner.

Rezumat

Interviul a fost realizat în cadrul proiectului „Istoria trăită a Teatrului German de Stat Timișoara“.

Cuvinte cheie:

Teatrul German de Stat Timișoara; teatru; oral history; actor; Gerhard Brössner.

Eleonora Ringler-Pascu: Herr Brössner, versuchen wir ein Gespräch zur erlebten Geschichte des Deutschen Staatstheaters Temeswar zu führen. Beginnen wir mit Ihrem Studium in Bukarest.

Gerhard Brössner: Ich erzähle Ihnen gerne von meinem Studium, muss aber etwas vorausschicken. Ich hatte, bevor ich nach Bukarest ging, fünf Jahre als Eleve gearbeitet, am Deutschen Theater in Temeswar. Zuerst hatte ich im Lenau-Lyzeum ein Stück gespielt, und zwar die Hauptrolle im *Flachsmann als Erzieher* von Otto Ernst. Dann kamen Leute vom Theater dazu, die hatten sich das angesehen. Franz Keller hatte es damals bei uns inszeniert. Nachdem die Serie von acht oder zehn Vorstellungen vorbei war, kam der damalige Dramaturg, Franz Liebhard, und fragte, ob ich denn nicht daran gedacht hätte, zum Theater zu gehen. Ich sagte: „Nein, nein, nein, das ist nicht mein Berufswunsch.“

Ich wollte Architekt werden. Die Verhältnisse waren aber damals so, dass es mir wahrscheinlich angenehmer war, dass ich nicht auf die Hochschule gehen sollte – es waren politische Missverständnisse unterwegs – und dann hatte ich dieses Angebot gerne angenommen. Ich musste ja gar nicht mehr vorsprechen. Im Juni/Juli hatte ich Matura und Anfang September war ich bereits Mitglied des Deutschen Staatstheaters Temeswar. So fing es an. Es kam dann eine wunderschöne Zeit und ich hatte Rollen gespielt, von denen ich wirklich nicht geträumt hätte und ich wusste auch gar nicht, dass ich ein guter Schauspieler werden könnte. Und dann kam eine schöne Rolle nach der anderen.

E.R.P.: Welche Rollen sind Ihnen besonders in Erinnerung geblieben? Gab es auch Lieblingsrollen?

G.B.: Das waren eigentlich alles Lieblingsrollen, weil sie mich so überrascht hatten, dass sie mir ein Leben lang in Erinnerung bleiben. Die allererste Rolle war La Fleche (Cleantes Diener) im *Geizigen* von Molière, in der Inszenierung von Ottmar Strasser. Es war eine kleine, aber sehr nette Rolle. Als nächstes kam *Glück auf dem Weg*. Das war ein russisches Stück, ein sehr hübsches Stück von Victor Rosow. In diesem Stück hatte ich die Hauptrolle gespielt und das war eigentlich für mich die große Überraschung. Es war so bombig angekommen, dass ich mir gedacht hatte, das könnte doch ein Beruf werden. War aber noch nicht ganz sicher. Und da hatte ich dann sogar – was mich am meisten überraschte – die Frau Margot Göttlinger, eine herrliche Schauspielerin und eine wunderbare Kollegin, am Theater kennengelernt. Sie hatte ja damals Goethes *Iphigenie* inszeniert und später dann *Ein toller Tag* von Beaumarche und da hatte sie mir – ich war damals zwanzig – die Rolle des Figaro übertragen. Und der Figaro kam wieder aus dem Bauch. Ich war ja kein Schauspieler, ich hatte das nicht gelernt. Und das kam wieder so gut an, wo ich heute glücklich bin, dass ich das sagen kann, dass mir dann der Berufswunsch eindeutig im Kopf war, ich müsste diesen Beruf von der Pike auf erlernen. So, dann ging ich nach Bukarest. Da waren 2000 Anwärter auf 50 Plätze, und ich dachte mir wieder einmal „deine Chancen sind äußerst gering“. Zum Glück hatten die damals eine deutsche Abteilung gegründet und ich wurde aufgenommen. Nach vier Semestern war es dann soweit. Dann kam – nach dem wir schon davor eingereicht hatten, die Ausreise nach Österreich – die Hälfte meiner Familie war österreichischstämmig, väterlicherseits. Dann hatten wir 1964 Anfang Juni die Papiere bekommen und dann bin ich nach Österreich ausgewandert und so bin ich jetzt hier.

E.R.P.: Können Sie sich vielleicht noch an einige Kollegen von der deutschen Abteilung aus der Studienzeit erinnern?

G.B.: Dann will ich mit meinem besten Freund, den ich damals hatte, den ich leider durch die Umstände ein bisschen aus dem Blickfeld verloren habe, beginnen, nämlich Niky Wolcz. Dieser wunderbare Mensch, den ich sehr geliebt habe. Wir hatten uns gut verstanden, wir waren wirklich enge Freunde. Er hatte mir sehr viel beigebracht. Ich kann mich ganz gut erinnern: Ich war zufällig wieder mal auf Besuch in Temeswar, genau an dem Tag, wo er den letzten Tag in Temeswar verbracht hatte. Am nächsten Morgen ist er nach Deutschland ausgewandert. Also hatten wir uns noch gerade die Hand geben können, bevor er dann in den Westen ging. Das war der eine. Dann war da die Ildikó Jarczek, eine starke Persönlichkeit, im Ausdruck eine sehr starke Schauspielerin, für die ich mich im nachhinein sehr gefreut habe, dass sie die Leitung des Hauses übernommen und das sehr gut geführt hat, über die schwierigen Jahre der Zeit. Der Christian Maurer, ich weiß nicht, was aus dem geworden ist. Und an diesen wunderbaren Lehrer, der Ion Olteanu, der ja selbst vor dem Krieg in Berlin studiert hatte und der uns auch wirklich sehr viel vermittelt hatte, was das deutsche Theater anbelangt. Es war ja nicht so einfach jemanden zu finden, in der Zeit, der das deutsche Theater kannte. Er hatte bei Hagemann vor dem Krieg Regie studiert oder war da Assistent und hatte uns sehr viel beigebracht in der Richtung.

E.R.P.: In der Zeit, in der Sie am Theater gearbeitet hatten, bis 1964, waren einige Probleme von der politischen Situation in Rumänien zu spüren?

G.B.: Also was das anbelangt, ich hatte mit der Securitate nie Kontakt, bis auf den Umstand, dass mein Vater „deținut politic“ [politischer Gefangener] war. Das wissen auch viele und das ist auch nicht zu verheimlichen. Das ist auch vorbei. Was mich persönlich gestört hat – und da kann ich auch im Namen vieler meiner damaligen Kollegen sprechen – waren diese lästigen, jeweils an einem Tag in der Woche um 8:00 Uhr stattfindenden politischen Instruktionen oder wie man das nennen wollte. Und wehe es wäre einer nicht erschienen, da wurde Buch geführt und die Gefahr dahinter, die man nicht empfunden aber vermutet hatte, war, dass diese Listen wahrscheinlich weitergegeben werden. Und wenn man da nicht anwesend war, dann hätte es Folgen geben können und das war das störendste an der Sache, aber sonst habe ich eigentlich nichts gemerkt, das muss ich ganz deutlich sagen.

E.R.P.: In der relativ kurzen Zeit, in der Sie am Deutschen Staatstheater tätig gewesen sind, waren Sie Kollege mit Margot Göttinger, Ottmar Strasser unter der Intendanz von Johann Sekler. Können Sie uns etwas über diese besonderen Menschen, die für viele praktisch nur aus den Archivmaterialien bekannt sind, erzählen?

G.B.: Was Johann Sekler betrifft, er war ein ganz ausgezeichneteter Direktor. Er war vielleicht – was das Theater anbelangt nicht so beschlagen, weil er, glaube ich, aus einem anderen Beruf in diese Position gehieft wurde – aber er hatte ein feines Gespür und hatte sich in diese Funktion sehr gut eingebracht. Und er war sehr originell in seinen Bemerkungen. Er konnte keine fachliche Bemerkung machen, weil er ja nicht vom Fach war. Aber ich kann mich erinnern, z. B. in der Rolle des Andrei in *Glück auf dem Weg*. Sekler schaute sich die Generalprobe an – Dan Radu Ionescu hatte die Inszenierung gemacht. Nachher kam er zu mir und sagte: „Na bitte schön. Jetzt spielt er eine Hauptrolle und weiß nicht, was er mit den Händen und mit den Füßen anfangen soll“. Das war nur ein Beispiel. Aber es waren immer wieder solche Bemerkungen, die einen auf den Boden heruntergebrachten. Ein sehr schönes Erlebnis hatte ich mit Mauritius Sekler, vom jiddischen Theater in Bukarest, der damals für uns so die einzige Öffnung zum großen Welttheater war, denn er hatte immerhin vor dem Krieg sehr viel gespielt, im österreichischen Theater. Er hatte etwas mitgebracht, das uns fehlte. Er war ein sehr klarer Regisseur, der ganz genau wusste, was er wollte, der nie in ein Regiebuch geschaut hatte. Und wir hatten große Achtung vor ihm, denn er hatte eine starke Persönlichkeit. Und damals inszenierte er bei uns *Mutter Courage*. Und in diesem Stück hatte ich den Einäugigen gespielt, das ist eine Winzigrolle. Es hatte auch Helmut Stürmer mitgespielt, eine kleine Rolle, ich glaube er war einer von den Arbeitslosen. Jedenfalls kamen auf die Bühne Helmut Stürmer, Peter Paulhofer und ich. Wir drei waren so ziemlich die jüngsten. Da hörten wir von unten: „Also der Herr Brösl, der Herr Stürmer und der andere Herr, die sollen auf die Seite gehen, sie stören.“ Und das ist eine Redewendung im Theater geblieben. Alle, die noch da waren, an die erinnere ich mich gerne. Der Josef Jochum, Hans Kehrer oder Emmerich Schäffer, das war so der junge, aufstrebende.

Margot Göttlinger war natürlich die „Grand Dame“ des Hauses, von Anfang an. Die hatte man hochrespektiert, vor allem hatte sie eine wunderschöne Sprache. An der hatte sich das ganze Ensemble orientiert. Auch Rudolf Schati natürlich und noch einige anderen Kollegen. Es waren außer mir noch Hadamuth Becker, Hannelore Waldeck, die waren ja alle da, die haben ja auch keine Schule gehabt in dem Sinne, sondern sie haben ihren Beruf erlernt. Und da brauchte man eben Vorbilder. Ich kann mich noch mit großer Freude und mit viel Liebe an die wunderbare Frau Willmann-Müller erinnern, die uns Sprechunterricht gegeben hatte. Das war natürlich schon sehr wichtig. Sie hatte vor dem Krieg in Leipzig am Gewandhaus-Orchester irgendeine Funktion und auch an der Oper. Ihr kann ich das verdanken, als ich aus Rumänien nach Österreich ausgewandert war, eine

Sprache sprach, eine Bühnensprache, die hier akzeptiert wurde. Es waren auch einige nette Dinge, die uns da auf Tournee passiert sind.

E.R.P.: Zu Margot Göttlinger – für die junge Generation eher nur als Name bekannt bzw. als „die Göttliche“. Können Sie uns noch einiges über sie berichten?

G.B.: Ich kam ans Theater in der Zeit als sie *Iphigenie auf Tauris* inszeniert hatte. Da war der Otto Grassl, der mitgespielt hatte, sie selbst die Iphigenie, Emmerich Schäffer war dabei, Peter Schuh. Aber die Göttlinger hatte eine ganz eigene Art der Darstellung. Ich habe sie bewundert –sie war erhaben, und das hatte einen aufgebaut als junger Schauspieler. Man hatte natürlich auch, wie schon erwähnt, Vorbilder gebraucht und da war sie das beste Beispiel dafür. Erstens eine ausgezeichnete Sprechkultur, die auf jeder deutschsprachigen Bühne bestanden hätte, natürlich, und dann auch in ihrer Überlegungsart, die war sehr klar und sie konnte es auch spielen, das heißt, es war das eine vom anderen nicht zu trennen. Es war immer eine Einheit und man hatte an dieser Darstellung gemerkt, wie klug der Mensch dahinter ist und das ist immer schön. Ich mag das gerne am Theater, wenn eine gewisse geistige Vorbereitung sich im Spiel darstellt und das ist eigentlich bei allen großen Schauspielern so, besonders, die ich erlebt habe. Ja, sie hatte dann sicherlich einiges inszeniert wie *Das Hollunderwäldchen*, da habe ich mit ihr zusammen auf der Bühne gespielt, das war auch ein russisches Stück. Wir mussten damals, glaube ich, die Hälfte der Stücke aus dem russischen Repertoire spielen.

E.R.P.: Es gab also Rezepte, was man spielen sollte?

G.B.: Ganz richtig. Ganz wenig modernes deutsches Theater, denn das wurde teuer abgegolten und dafür war kein Geld da. Also war das eher nur aus der DDR und da haben wir zum Beispiel *Laternenfest* von Pfeifer gespielt. Ich habe neulich zufällig das Tagesbuch der Irene Mokka gelesen und die erwähnt das auch, dass sie die Aufführung gesehen hätte und ich finde es ganz witzig, wenn man so nach vielen Jahren plötzlich Rückmeldungen erhält. Mit Franz Binder war sie verheiratet, dem ausgezeichneten Bühnenbildner der damaligen Zeit. Er war einer der besten Bühnenbildner Rumäniens, kann man sagen, und wir hatten auch das große Glück, ihn zu haben.

E.R.P.: Was bedeuten für Sie der Schauspielerberuf und das Theater?

G.B.: Für mich und wahrscheinlich nicht nur für mich, ist er der schönste Beruf der Welt. Da gibt's ja nichts drüber. Wer hat denn schon die Möglichkeit,

manchmal aus den Wirrnissen des Alltags in eine andere Welt zu flüchten? Aber das ist sicher noch nicht alles. Es kommen dann die anderen Charaktere, die man selber gerne wäre und nicht ist, oder die man anderen vorführen will, wie sie sein könnten. Das Publikum ist ja aufnahmefähig und wenn man ihm das bietet, was sein geheimsten Wünsche und Träume sind, dann ist das doch ein wunderschöner Beruf. Das klingt ja fast märchenhaft, was ich da erzähle, aber es ist eigentlich genau betrachtet mit Sicherheit einer der schönsten Berufe. Man vergisst dabei, wenn man das jetzt so ausspricht, man vergisst natürlich die dunklen Seiten, die es auch gibt, weiß Gott, und man hat auch manchmal mit den Regisseuren Schwierigkeiten oder mit der Eitelkeit, die eine Pest im Theater ist. Ich hasse nichts mehr, wie wenn ich einen Schauspieler auf der Bühne sehe, wo die Eitelkeit rauskommt und die gibt's auch nicht zu oft, Gott sei Dank. Schauspieler sein ist einer der schönsten Berufe. Das kann man laut und deutlich sagen.

E.R.P.: Sie kennen Rumänien, Sie kennen Österreich, die Welt des Theaters in Rumänien, die Welt des Theaters in Österreich – was empfinden Sie noch für Rumänien? Was empfinden Sie für Österreich?

G.B.: Ich sage das immer wieder gerne, jeder kann sich glücklich schätzen, wenn er zwei Heimatländer hat. Für mich ist Rumänien meine Wiege. Ich bin da aufgewachsen, ich habe die schönsten Jahre dort erlebt, ich bin ja mit vierundzwanzig weg. Die ersten tiefen Eindrücke, die ersten tiefen Gefühle. Bei mir kommt noch dazu, dass die Berufswahl auch stimmig war, dass das alles eine Einheit war, an die man gerne zurückdenkt und daneben vielleicht noch sehr viele Dinge vergisst, oder verdrängt, die vielleicht weniger schön waren, aber die fallen nicht ins Gewicht. Für mich ist Rumänien immer noch meine Schule, nicht nur im eigentlichen Sinn, sondern das, was ich für mich ins Leben mitgenommen habe. Und ich lese heute noch rumänische Literatur, ich mache Lesungen rumänischer Lyrik in deutscher Sprache, natürlich. Aber ich bin sehr bemüht, dieses Land immer noch da auch zu vertreten, in meiner neuen Heimat, wenn man es so will, in meiner anderen Heimat. Ich habe eine Sendung im ORF gestaltet, vor Jahren, ein Hörbild über Rumänien mit rumänischer Musik, mit Beispielen aus der Literatur, mit Landschaftsbeschreibungen, mit vielen Dingen, die gut angekommen sind. Also für mich ist es ehrlich gesagt – und ich übertreibe jetzt nicht – eine Bereicherung in zwei Kulturen gelebt zu haben und zu leben. Österreich hat eine immense Theaterkultur im Speziellen, aber insgesamt auch historisch gesehen ist es ein hochinteressantes Land in Europa und das jetzt zusammenzubringen ist eigentlich ein Glücksfall.

E.R.P.: Wie war der Übergang von Rumänien nach Österreich, gleich nach der Auswanderung?

G.B.: Ich bin heute noch nicht ganz darüber hinweg. Ich komme aus einem Land, das war ja damals noch hinter dem Eisernen Vorhang, zu dem man im Westen kaum Kontakte hatte. Man hatte nie was gehört von diesem Land. Und das hatte man auch so empfunden, man war isoliert. Ich kann mich erinnern, wir sind in Bukarest in die Fremdsprachenbibliothek gewandert, damit wir dort eventuell deutsche Zeitungen oder österreichische Zeitungen lesen. Nun kommt man aus diesem Land in ein zentrales Kulturland Europas und da war ich der Meinung, weil ich da eher immer ein bisschen untertreibe, ich würde dort nie in diesem Beruf bestehen können, weil da sind alle viel besser. Das war ein Irrtum. Ich bin am 13. Juni in Österreich angekommen und am 13. Juli habe ich meinen ersten Vertrag unterschrieben und Verträge waren auch damals zu der Zeit sehr schwierig zu bekommen, das habe ich im Nachhinein erst erfahren. Ich war anfangs drei Jahre in Baden bei Wien als Schauspieler tätig. Danach bin ich gleich nahtlos an das viel größere Haus nach Linz gekommen und bin da ewig geblieben. Hier habe ich einiges verwirklichen können, das mich außer der Bühnenpräsenz noch interessiert hat. Ich habe in Linz am Theater die Abteilung Jugend und Theater gegründet, sie fast 20 Jahre geleitet.

E.R.P.: Sie haben in Linz und Umgebung mit verschiedenen Sommertheatern Pionierarbeit geleistet. Können Sie uns dazu einiges mitteilen?

G.B.: Interessanterweise, nachdem ich ja nur Schauspieler war und nicht auch Regisseur, so gab es immer die große Verführung selbst etwas zu gestalten, ohne, dass mir da jemand etwas vorschreibt. Ich habe noch in Wien mit Kollegen ein Sommertheater gegründet, in Laxenburg. Das erste Stück, das dort aufgeführt wurde, war *Mirandolina* von Carlo Goldoni und dazu muss ich noch sagen, das haben wir auch in Temeswar gespielt. Da habe ich auch das Bühnenbild gemacht und danach eine Rolle in *Marquiese de Forlinpopoli* gespielt und das war ein Vergnügen. Im Urlaub habe ich dann immer mein eigenes Theater in Linz am Schloss gemacht, in Tillisburg, in der Nähe von Linz und am Pöstlingberg im Rosengarten, in einem eigenen Theaterzelt.

E.R.P.: Ihre Paraderolle ist eigentlich Patrick Süskinds Monolog *Der Kontrabass*.

G.B.: Das ist richtig. Patrick Süskind hat ja kaum Stücke geschrieben. Das ist eigentlich sein einziges Stück und das kam 1981 in München heraus und war da ein Riesenerfolg. 1982 im Frühjahr haben wir in Linz die österreichische

Erstaufführung gebracht und ich habe damals den Kontrabassisten gespielt. Es ist eine herrliche Rolle. Ich habe ihn drei Jahre durchwegs gespielt und dann wurde es abgesetzt. Viele Jahre später kam der Intendant auf mich zu und sagte: „Möchtest du das nicht wieder spielen?“ Ich sagte: „Sofort wieder“ und da habe ich es von 2004 bis 2006 wieder gespielt. Also es ist ein Stück, das man nicht ablegen kann. Auch Radu Beligan hat's in Bukarest gespielt. Und der hat's auch lang gespielt. War auch am Deutschen Theater Temeswar, da hieß es, glaube ich, *Die Bassgeige*.

E.R.P.: Sie hatten im Gespräch Hans Kehrer erwähnt. Können Sie uns etwas über ihn sagen?

G.B.: Ich habe mit Hans Kehrer in all den vierzig Jahren, wo ich in Österreich bin, immer einen ganz losen Kontakt gehabt, der immer von ihm gesucht wurde, was mich besonders freut. Stefan Heinz, sein eigentlicher Name, war mein Lehrer in der Grundschule. Ich kann mich noch genau erinnern an den Tag, wo er sich von uns in der Schule verabschiedet hatte, das war 1954, weil er als Schauspieler zum Deutschen Theater Temeswar geht. Wir sind in Tränen ausgebrochen. Die Burschen vielleicht weniger, aber die Mädchen alle, weil dieser herrliche Lehrer uns verlässt. Natürlich hat man ihn dann weiter verfolgt als Schauspieler, da und dort und ich kann mich noch an viele Sachen erinnern, die er gespielt hat. Aber zumindest hatte ich in der Zeit nie gedacht, dass ich dahin komme und sein Kollege werde. Wir hatten immer – kein ausgesprochen freundschaftliches, aber ein sehr gutes kollegiales Klima und es war eine gute Verbindung. Ich bin dann nach Österreich gekommen und der Stefi hatte immer wieder Reisen in den Westen gehabt und blieb immer in Linz stehen. 2008 spielte ich im *Sonnenuntergang* von Hauptmann und ich traute meinen Augen nicht, der Stefi Heinz war da. Er kam immer überraschend, saß immer ziemlich weit vorne und beim Applaus stand er immer auf. Dadurch hatte ich ihn gesehen. Die anderen Leute standen auch alle auf, weil sie meinten, das wäre wichtig. Er war menschlich ein sehr Interessanter und in seinem Buch erwähnte er mich auch einige Male. Das hatte er auch noch zum Schluss als Rückblick auf seine Tätigkeit in Rumänien geschrieben.

E.R.P.: Zum Deutschen Staatstheater Temeswar – gibt es noch einige Bezüge dazu? Wissen Sie noch was sich dort heutzutage abspielt?

G.B.: Ich verfolge das im Internet, wo ich mir die Monatspläne anschau, was gespielt wird und freue mich immer wieder, dass eigentlich ein paar bekannte Namen immer noch auftauchen. Und da habe ich mich besonders über Ildikó und

ihre Schwester gefreut, die bis vor kurzem immer noch sehr rege im Spielplan aufgetreten sind. Was mir jetzt aufgefallen ist, da gibt's eine Tatjana Sessler und mit der Mutter hatte ich noch viel gespielt und das war eine schöne Zeit. Wir hatten damals noch die Anfänge erlebt. Praktisch bin ich ja drei Jahre nach Gründung des Hauses eingetreten, also kenne ich die Anfänge, die Krankheiten der ersten Jahre. Man hat ja nicht alles mitgekriegt, aber es gab auch Schwierigkeiten. Und das hat man dann in Kleinigkeiten, wenn man auf Abstechern oder so war, gemerkt. Es waren einfache Dinge. Man war jung und man hatte das weggesteckt, das war kein Problem.

E.R.P.: Mit den ehemaligen Kollegen, Schauspielern und Regisseuren, die in Deutschland leben – haben Sie Verbindungen zu ihnen?

G.B.: Leider nicht. Ich muss sagen leider, denn manchmal würde ich ganz gerne zum Beispiel mit dem Niky Wolcz nochmal zusammenkommen und ein bisschen plaudern. Der hat ja eine Riesenkarriere gemacht und das gönne ich ihm. Und er hat es auch verdient, denn er ist ein sehr guter Theatermensch. Den Kitzl habe ich mal zufällig in Österreich spielen gesehen, der war auf Gastspiel.

E.R.P.: Würden Sie sich auch freuen, nach Temeswar eingeladen zu werden? Zu Lesungen für das Deutsche Staatstheater oder das Deutsche Kulturzentrum?

G.B.: Ja, jederzeit. Das würde ich besonders gerne. Ich würde mich sehr sehr freuen.

6

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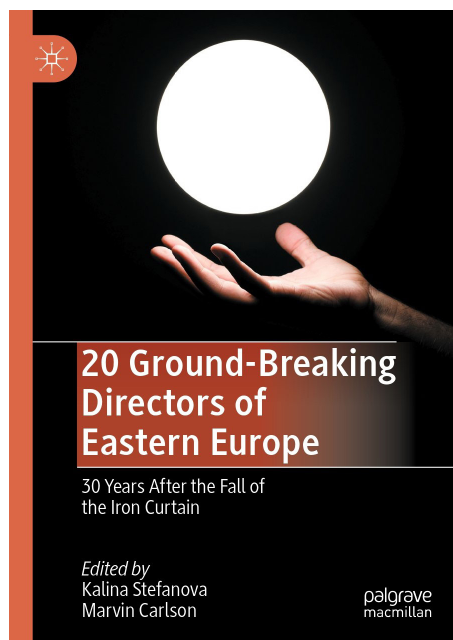


Neue Wirklichkeit im Osteuropäischen Theater

ELEONORA RINGLER-PASCU

(Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara)

20 Ground-Breaking Directors of Eastern Europe. 30 Years After the Fall of the Iron Curtain, Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), palgrave macmillan, 2021, ISBN 978-3-030-52934-5, ISBN 978-3-030-52935-2 (e-book), 335 Seiten.



Abstract

The review presents the recent publication concerned with the theatrical landscape in Eastern Europe, concentrated on a period of 30 years, the one after the fall of the Iron Curtain. The portrait of twenty stage directors is offered by scholars, theatre critics and journalists, with the attempt to describe the varied theatrical visions and styles. It is a page of recent theatre history that settles the diversity of aesthetic directions in the context of a new reality.

Keywords:

theatre; Eastern Europe; stage directors; innovation; theatrical creativity; theatre vision.

Rezumat

Recenzia prezintă recenta publicație cu referiri la peisajul teatral din Europa de Est, cuprinzând perioada de 30 de ani de după căderea Cortinei de Fier. Portretele a douăzeci de regizori sunt oferite de cercetători, critici de teatru și jurnaliști, în încercarea de a descrie viziunile și stilurile teatrale variate. Este o pagină de istorie recentă a teatrului care cuprinde diversitatea direcțiilor estetice în contextul unei noi realități.

Cuvinte cheie:

teatru; Europa de Est; regizori de teatru; inovație; creativitate teatrală; viziune teatrală.

20 Ground-Breaking Directors of Eastern Europe. 30 Years After the Fall of the Iron Curtain (Zwanzig bahnbrechende Regisseure aus Osteuropa. Dreißig Jahre nach dem Fall des Eisernen Vorhangs), eine äußerst informative Publikation, herausgegeben von Kalina Stefanova und Marvin Carlson, widmet sich zwanzig Regisseuren, deren Porträts, verfasst von Forschern, Theaterkritikern und Journalisten, sich als Ziel setzen, ihr künstlerisches Schaffen ins Rampenlicht zu rücken.

Kalina Stefanova äußert im Vorwort ihre Bewunderung den Produktionen der osteuropäischen Regisseure gegenüber, bringt überzeugende Argumente für ihre Position und erklärt zugleich welche Auswahlkriterien ausschlaggebend gewesen sind: „Die hier vorgestellten Regisseure waren in den letzten drei Jahrzehnten wichtige Katalysatoren für einen Wandel des osteuropäischen Theaters.“¹. Dank ihrer bahnbrechenden Produktionen, gelang es diesen Künstlern sich zu behaupten, das Publikum weit über die lokalen Grenzen anzusprechen und sämtliche Theaterpreise zu erlangen, unter anderen den Europäischen Preis für neue Theaterwirklichkeiten / European Prize New Theatrical Realities.

Marvin Carlson bemerkt seinerseits: „Innovation ist hier der Schlüsselbegriff, denn eng verbunden mit dem Konzept des modernen Regisseurs ist, vor allem in Europa, die Idee der Innovation bzw. die Theaterkunst in oft überraschend neue Richtungen zu führen.“². Dementsprechend unterstreicht der renommierte

¹ Stefanova, Kalina: „The Life-Changing Theatre of Eastern Europe“, in: *20 Ground-Breaking Directors of Eastern Europe. 30 Years After the Fall of the Iron Curtain*, Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), palgrave macmillan, 2021, S. xviii.

² Carlson, Marvin: „The Directors of Eastern Europe“, in: *20 Ground-Breaking Directors of Eastern Europe. 30 Years After the Fall of the Iron Curtain*, S. xxii.

Theaterwissenschaftler den Prozeß des Wandels und der Innovation der osteuropäischen Theaterproduktionen, die es verdienen in der gesamten Theater-Weltlandschaft bekannt zu werden.

Die Publikation *20 Ground-Breaking Directors of Eastern Europe* kann als eine Art Reflexion zur Rezeption der kreativen Persönlichkeiten im Laufe der Zeit betrachtet werden, ausgehend von ihren Anfängen, ihrer Entwicklung im Kontext der letzten drei Jahrzehnte, bis zu ihrem Erfolg auf den europäischen Bühnen. In den jeweiligen Artikeln, in Kapiteln gegliedert, werden seitens der Autoren die Markenzeichen der osteuropäischen Regisseure hervorgehoben, deren Profil sie entwickeln, Details über ihren spezifischen Stil und ihre Theater Vision anbieten.

Dementsprechend verwebt Grzegorz Bral „archetypische Universalität mit formalen Experimenten“³, Gianna Cărbunariu betrachtet als ihre Aufgabe die „Umgestaltung des rumänischen Theaters durch eine neue Art des Schreibens und Nutzung der Bühne, um Kommenare zu übermitteln und sich gegen den Staat und die Gesellschaft zu stellen“⁴, indem eine beeindruckende Balance zwischen Ethik und Ästhetik erreicht wird. Oliver Frlić, ein politisch stark involvierter Künstler, wird als ein „stets innovativer und Barrieren brechender Regisseur“⁵ betrachtet. Alvis Hermanis ist ein Theaterschaffender, für den „Schönheit als Ziel und Rechtfertigung der Kunst“⁶ zählt und dessen Anti-Theaterexperimente sich in ein Theater der Poesie verwandeln. Die Theaterkritiker und Forscher nennen das Theater von Grzegorz Jarzyna ein „postdramatisches Theater der Freude und Anerkennung“⁷, während das öffentliche Bild von Jan Klata, das eines Außenseiters und einer Oppositionsfigur ist, der über seine Produktionen soziales und politisches Engagement zeigt⁸. Das Theater von Oskaras Koršunovas besteht aus zwei Ebenen – eine symbolische, die aus der Ästhetik der jeweiligen Produktion hervorgeht, und eine realistische Ebene, die sich auf die Identifizierung der Realität

³ Wiśniewski, Tomasz: „Cosmopolitan Experiments in Theatre“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 1.

⁴ Zănescu, Maria: „My Name is Gianina Cărbunariu: I’m a Lioness“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), S. 17.

⁵ Cuculić, Kim: „Oliver Frlić or the Theatre of Provocation“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 41.

⁶ Tišheizere, Edite: „Alvis Hermanis: «To Be Everything and Nothing at All»“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 45.

⁷ Duda, Artur: „Grzegorz Jarzyna’s Theatre of Post-Dramatic Joy and Recognition“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 57.

⁸ Kręglewska, Katarzyna: „Jan Klata: The Social Identity DJ of the Polish Theatre“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 72-73.

konzentriert, wobei der Subtext stets eine politische Komponente aufweist⁹. Jernej Lorenci konzentriert sein Theater auf „das Menschliche, das einzige, das bleibt, und hinter dem es nichts mehr gibt“¹⁰. Ein eher weniger politischer Regisseur ist Krystian Lupa, dessen innovatives Theater einen hohen Beliebtheitsgrad erlebt¹¹. In Jan Mikulášek „düsteren Bühnenvisionen erklingen existentielle Ängste über den gegenwärtigen Zustand der Welt, begleitet von Ironie, Abstand und Humor“¹². Alexander Morfov glaubt seinerseits an die kollektive Kreativität des Ensembles, das stets den „Geist und die Seele“¹³ des anderen provoziert. Eines der sichtbarsten Merkmale der Liminalität des Theaters bei Eimuntas Nekrošius besteht im Übergang von der Vergangenheit zur Gegenwart, vom Physischen zum Metaphysischen oder von der Realität zur Welt der Träume¹⁴, welche die Objekte, die dramatischen Figuren und die Bühne als solches prägt. In seinem metaphysischen Theater wird der kreative Impuls durch das Bild des einsamen und verletzlichen Menschen beeinflusst. Im Falle von Béla Pintér kann man über einen Theater-Autor *par excellence*¹⁵ sprechen, ein Begriff, der sich auf seine vielseitige Tätigkeit als Dramatiker, Regisseur und Schauspieler in seinen eigenen Produktionen bezieht. Silviu Purcărete ist der Meister des visuellen, poetischen Theaters, denn „die Fülle an Bildern, entgegen der Notwendigkeit von Worten, ist Ausdruck seiner Ästhetik“¹⁶. Zwei Dimensionen treten in seinen Produktionen auf: einerseits der Sinn für kulturelle Besonderheiten und andererseits der Stil, der jede geographische Identität überwindet und dementsprechend eine universelle Komponente aufweist. Árpád Schilling, bekannt als subversiver Theatermacher, setzt sich für politischen Aktivismus und Erziehung durch das

⁹ Vasinauskaitė, Rasa: „«What Is Hecuba for Him or He to Hecuba?» or the Theatre of Oskaras Koršunovas“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 88.

¹⁰ Lukan, Blaž: „Jernej Lorenci: «People Are the Key»“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 100.

¹¹ Waligóra, Katarzyna: „Krystian Lupa: The Maestro They (Criticise) Love“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 120.

¹² Černá, Kamila: „Dark Visions of Jan Mikulášek“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 133.

¹³ Stefanova, Kalina: „Alexander Morfov, the Game-Changer, and His Collective Theatre“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 140.

¹⁴ Vasinauskaitė, Rasa: „Eimuntas Nekrošius: The Poetics of Paradise and Hell“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 150.

¹⁵ Herczog, Noémi: „Béla Pintér and His Postmodern National Theatre“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 160.

¹⁶ Saiu, Octavian: „Silviu Purcărete: The Master of the Rich Theatre“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 178.

Theater ein¹⁷. Andrei Șerban ist seinerseits ständig auf der Suche nach einem bestimmten künstlerischen „Jenseits“, das schwer zugänglich ist, aber potenziell großzügig in der Bedeutung¹⁸. Der spezifische künstlerische und gesellschaftliche Kontext veranlaßt ihn die Subtexte zu lesen und freizulegen, Bezüge und visuelle Metaphern aufzustellen, vorgefaßte Befürchtungen aufzugeben, Ähnlichkeiten mit der Gegenwart herzustellen, um sie schauspielerisch zu lokalisieren. Daniel Șpinars programmatische Theaterästhetik positioniert sich zwischen Schönheit und Instinkt, eigentlich grundlegende Forderungen des Regisseurs an das Theater als solches¹⁹. Durch die Gründung des Europäischen Zentrums für Theaterpraxis „Gardzienice“, leistet Włodzimierz Staniewski eine Neubewertung der Geschichte des alternativen polnischen Theaters²⁰. Rimas Tuminas poetisches Theater wird von Harmonie und Rhythmus²¹ geleitet, in einer Welt, die nach den Gesetzen der Vorstellungskraft lebt, in der die Grenze zwischen Realität und Traum nicht wahrnehmbar ist, die Bilder der Vergangenheit sich mit der Gegenwart vermischen und die Vorstellungskraft jeder Manifestation des Lebens eine paradoxe Form verleiht. Das Markenzeichen von Krzysztof Warlikowski's Theater des Bösen, das gesellschaftliche Tabu und Heuchelei anprangert. Er verwandelt die Bühne in ein Mittel der Auseinandersetzung mit einer dunklen Welt, geprägt von Abgelehntem und Verdrängtem, Gewalt und Erniedrigung, eine grausame Metapher der Menschheit.²²

So gesehen, ist das osteuropäische Theater eine Annahme der wichtigen westlichen Regietheorien, zugleich eine Adaptation, die aber ihren eigenen, originellen Weg sucht. Es profilieren sich Persönlichkeiten, die mit innovativen, manchmal schockierenden Ästhetiken die Theaterwelt bereichern. Es treffen sich sensible Welten, individuelle Visionen, kontroverse Vorschläge, provozierende Haltungen, die sich in ein kulturelles, historisches und politisches Netzwerk eingliedern lassen.

¹⁷ Schuller, Gabriella: „From the Theatron to the Agora: Changing Concepts of Theatricality in Schilling Árpád's Oeuvre“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 195.

¹⁸ Tomuş, Ion M.: „Andrei Șerban: The Search for New Forms“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 204.

¹⁹ Zahálka, Michal: „Beauty by Instinct or Daniel Špinar's Theatre of Style“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 207.

²⁰ Wiśniewski, Tomasz: „Włodzimierz Staniewski: (Re-)Constructing Traditions and Archetypes“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 235.

²¹ Trubotchkin, Dmitry: „Rimas Tuminas: A Poetic View of Theatre“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 246.

²² Jarmulowicz, Małgorzata: „Krzysztof Warlikowski: A Beautiful Shock Therapy“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 250.

Als Leser erleben wir einen einmaligen Dialog in einer facettenreichen Inszenierung, die ihrerseits diverse Stimmen und Betrachtungen aus zwei Positionen thematisiert – einerseits erscheinen die Autoren mit ihren Artikeln, die mit ihrer Sicht das Beschriebene prägen und andererseits die Regisseure, die beobachtet werden und letztendlich zu Wort kommen. Eine Sonderposition erlangen die Statements der Regisseure im Dialog mit den Herausgebern des Buches, in dem Versuch den Bezug bzw. die Verbundenheit zum „Stammbaum“ der Theaterfamilie zu eruriern, nebst der Fragestellung nach der Problematik des zeitgenössischen Theaters und seine Beziehung zu den neuen Realitäten hinter der Bühne. In diesem Zusammenhang tauchen die Namen von Persönlichkeiten wie Konstantin Stanislawski, Vsevolod Meyerhold, Antonin Artaud, Bertolt Brecht, Jerzy Grotowski, Tadeusz Kantor, Pina Bausch und Peter Brook auf, denn die Verwandtschaft mit ihnen ist stets zu erkennen. Eine gewisse Vorliebe der Regisseure für die Klassiker ist festzustellen, insbesondere für Shakespeare und Tschechow, für die antiken Dramen, nebst dem Interesse für das politische Theater, für die postmodernen Dramatik und diversen Experimenten. Andere Modelle und Inspirationsquellen stammen aus der Welt der Musik, des Tanztheaters, der bildenden Künste, des Kunstfilms, des fernöstlichen Theaters, dem Kanon der Weltliteratur und den persönlichen Erlebnissen, die ihrerseits als wichtige Begleiter den Weg der Künstler beeinflusst haben. Rückblicke auf die Tradition, innovative Theaterformen, schockierende Ästhetiken treffen aufeinander und bestimmen auf diese Weise die Wahrnehmung der „neuen“ Wirklichkeit mittels der heutigen Theaterkultur. Ein besonderer Fokus gilt der Diskussion bezüglich der Rolle des Theaters als Verteidiger von Menschlichkeit und Harmonie in einer zunehmend disharmonischen Gesellschaft, wie diese erhalten bzw. sogar neu erfunden werden kann. Dazu das Statement von Andrei Șerban, der eine mögliche Antwort bringt und die Essenz der Fragestellung zusammenfaßt: „Ich möchte, dass wir uns alle mehr für das Wesentliche interessieren – jenseits von Politik, Stil, jenseits von allem, was zum Klischee wird, was morgen schon alt ist. Was liegt tiefer als das, näher an unserem Wesen als Menschen und Künstler?“²³

Der besondere Verdienst der Publikation besteht darin, dass es versucht, das Gebiet der Kreativität und Innovation abzubilden, das mit dem Sammelbegriff „osteuropäisches Theater“ bezeichnet wird. In der heutigen globalisierten Welt manifestieren sich Trends und Theaterbewegungen, die nicht mehr auf Regionen, Traditionen oder Länder begrenzt bleiben, sondern zu den Methoden, zur Bildersprache und zu den Darstellungsformen von Künstlern aus der gesamten Welt gehören, die sich untereinander vernetzen.

²³ Șerban, Andrei: „The Stakes Today“, in: Kalina Stefanova, Marvin Carlson (Hrsg.), *op. cit.*, S. 291.

AUTORII



AUTOREN



AUTHORS

Attila BALÁZS, MA

Studii: Artele spectacolului, actorie la Academia de Artă Teatrală „Szentgörgy István” Târgu-Mureș (1994). MA în politici culturale europene la Facultatea de Arte Plastice în colaborare cu Facultatea „Paris 8”, Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara (2006). Actor și director la Teatrul Maghiar de Stat „Csiky Gergely” Timișoara. Creație artistică: roluri în teatru (selecție): Ludovic al XVI-lea în *Tom Paine*, regia Victor Ioan Frunză, Gyton în *Satyricon*, regia Victor Ioan Frunză, Calyphas în *Tamerlan cel Mare*, regia Victor Ioan Frunză, Lorenzo de Medici în *Lorenzaccio*, regia Victor Ioan Frunză, Hamlet în *Hamlet*, regia Victor Ioan Frunză, profesorul în *Lecția*, regia Victor Ioan Frunză, Don Juan în *Don Juan & Faust*, regia Alexander Hausvater, Teddy în *Întoarcerea acasă*, regia Bérczes László, Brown în *Opera de trei parale*, regia Victor Ioan Frunză, Seymour Krelborn în *Prăvălia ororilor*, regia Vas Zoltán Iván, Guildenstern în *Rosencrantz și Guildenstern sunt morți*, regia Victor Ioan Frunză (premiul UNITER pentru cel mai bun spectacol), Ulise în *Întoarcerea lui Ulise*, regia Balász Zoltán, Jacques melancolicul în *Cum vă place*, regia Koltai M. Gábor, Peer Gynt în *Peer Gynt*, regia Horváth Csaba, tata în *Opera țărănească*, regia Szikszai Rémusz, roluri în *Vremuri de pace*, regia Hajdu Szabolcs, roluri în *Moliendo Café*, regia Silviu Purcărete, Pechum în *Opera cerșetorilor*, regia Kokan Mladenović, Candy în *Oamenii și șoarecii*, regia László Sándor, George Berger în *Hair*, regia Puskás Zoltán, roluri în *Detalii naive, total lipsite de profunzime din viața și moartea unor spectatori*, regia Radu Afrim, roluri în *Shakespeare, Sonnet 66*, regia Kokan Mladenović, părintele în *EXIT*, regia Schilling Árpád, Henric al IV-lea în *Henric al IV-lea*, regia Victor Ioan Frunză, roluri în *Tragedia omului*, regia Silviu Purcărete.

Studien: Darstellende Kunst, Schauspiel an der Akademie für Theaterkunst „Szentgörgy István” aus Târgu-Mureș (1994). MA in Europäische Kulturpolitik an der Hochschule für Bildende Künste in Zusammenarbeit mit der Hochschule „Paris 8”, West Universität Temeswar (2006). Schauspieler und Intendant des Ungarischen Staatstheaters „Csiky Gergely” Temeswar. Künstlerische Tätigkeit: Rollen im Theater (Auswahl): Ludwig

XVL in *Tom Paine*, Regie Victor Ioan Frunză, Gyton in *Satyricon*, Regie Victor Ioan Frunză, Calyphas in *Tamerlan der Große*, Regie Victor Ioan Frunză, Lorenzo de Medici in *Lorenzaccio*, Regie Victor Ioan Frunză, Hamlet in *Hamlet*, Regie Victor Ioan Frunză, Professor in *Die Unterrichtsstunde*, Regie Victor Ioan Frunză, Don Juan in *Don Juan & Faust*, Regie Alexander Hausvater, Teddy in *Heimkehr*, Regie Bérczes László, Brown in *Dreigroschenoper*, Regie Victor Ioan Frunză, Seymour Krelborn in *Horrorladen*, Regie Vas Zoltán Iván, Guildenstern in *Rosencrantz und Guildenstern sind tot*, Regie Victor Ioan Frunză (UNITER Preis für die beste Vorstellung), Odysseus in *Heimkehr des Odysseus*, Regie Balász Zoltán, Jacques der melancholiker in *Wie es euch gefällt*, Regie Koltai M. Gábor, Peer Gynt in *Peer Gynt*, Regie Horváth Csaba, Vater in *Bauernoper*, Regie Szikszai Rémusz, Rollen in *Friedenszeiten*, Regie Hajdu Szabolcs, Rollen in *Moliendo Café*, Regie Silviu Purcărete, Pechum in *Beggars' Opera*, Regie Kokan Mladenović, Candy in *Menschen und Mäuse*, Regie László Sándor, George Berger in *Hair*, Regie Puskás Zoltán, Rollen in *Naive Details*, *totaler Mangel an Tiefe aus dem Leben und Tod einiger Zuschauer*, Regie Radu Afrim, Rollen in *Shakespeare, Sonnet 66*, regia Kokan Mladenović, Pater in *EXIT*, Regie Schilling Árpád, Heinrich IV in *Heinrich IV*, Regie Victor Ioan Frunză, Rollen in *Die Tragödie des Menschen*, Regie Silviu Purcărete.

Studies: Performing Arts, acting at the Academy of Theatre „Szentgörgy István” Târgu-Mureş (1994). MA in European cultural politics at the Faculty of Arts in collaboration with the Faculty „Paris 8”, West University of Timisoara (2006). Actor and manager of the Hungarian State Theatre „Csiky Gergely” Timisoara. Artistic activity: roles in theatre (selection): Ludovic XVI in *Tom Paine*, director Victor Ioan Frunză, Gyton in *Satyricon*, director Victor Ioan Frunză, Calyphas in *Tamerlan the Big*, director Victor Ioan Frunză, Lorenzo de Medici in *Lorenzaccio*, director Victor Ioan Frunză, Hamlet in *Hamlet*, director Victor Ioan Frunză, teacher in *The Lesson*, director Victor Ioan Frunză, Don Juan in *Don Juan & Faust*, director Alexander Hausvater, Teddy in *Coming back home*, director Bérczes László, Brown in *Threepenny Opera*, director Victor Ioan Frunză, Seymour Krelborn in *The Horror Shop*, director Vas Zoltán Iván, Guildenstern in *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead*, director Victor Ioan Frunză (UNITER price for the best performance), Ulysses in *Comeback of Ulysses*, director Balász Zoltán, Jacques the melancholic in *As You Like It*, director Koltai M. Gábor, Peer Gynt in *Peer Gynt*, director Horváth Csaba, father in *Peasant Opera*, director Szikszai Rémusz, roles in *Time of Peace*, director Hajdu Szabolcs, roles in *Moliendo Café*, director Silviu Purcărete, Pechum in *Beggars' Opera*, director Kokan Mladenović, Candy in *Of Mice and Men*, director László Sándor, George Berger in *Hair*, director Puskás Zoltán, roles in *Naive Details*, *totally lacking deepness in the life and death of some spectators*, director Radu Afrim, roles in *Shakespeare, Sonett 66*, director Kokan Mladenović, pater in *EXIT*, director Schilling Árpád, Henric IV in *Henric IV*, director Victor Ioan Frunză, roles in *Man's Tragedy*, director Silviu Purcărete.

E-mail: direktor@tm-t.ro

Anca Roxana CONSTANTIN VAN DER ZEE, Drd. / PhD student

Studii: Facultatea de Chimie-Fizică la Universitatea din București (1993). Școala de jurnalism și comunicare Radio France Internationale-Radio Delta (1993). Facultatea de Teatru, Universitatea Națională de Artă Teatrală și Cinematografică „I.L. Caragiale” din București (2004). Doctorandă la Școala de Muzică și Teatru, Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara, cu tema de cercetare „Arta teatrală și digitalizarea. Spectacolul și spațiul virtual.” Publicații: *Manual de scriere creativă pentru elevii de liceu* (2017), publicat în cadrul proiectului „Nonformal Creativ” al Asociației Culturale Flower Power, *Manual Radio-Drama, Teatru radiofonic pentru elevii de liceu* – publicat în cadrul proiectului „Ani de liceu – Povești on-air” al Asociației Culturale Flower Power (2018), *Ce trebuie să știi pentru a scrie un scenariu de film*, manual pentru elevi cu noțiuni de bază despre producția de film, realizat în cadrul proiectului „Scenarii ca-n filme” al Asociației Culturale Flower Power (2019), Co-autor *Lecția de Shakespeare* – proiect editorial al Teatrului Național București realizat prin Centrul de Cercetare și Creație Teatrală „Ion Sava” cu sprijinul Asociației Teatrului Național „I.L. Caragiale”, finanțat de AFCN. Din 2014, coordonator și producător general al Studioului de Producție Multi-media al Teatrului Național „I.L. Caragiale” din București. Arii de cercetare: teatru, digitalizarea în teatru, fixarea spectacolului de teatru pe suport digital, transmisia on-line a spectacolului de teatru.

Studien: Hochschule für Physik und Chemie an der Universität Bukarest (1993). Journalismus- und Kommunikationsschule Radio France Internationale-Radio Delta (1993). Hochschule für Theater, Nationale Kunstuniversität für Theater und Film „I.L. Caragiale” (2004). Doktorandin an der Doktoratsschule für Musik und Theater, West Universität Temeswar, mit dem Forschungsthema „Theaterkunst und Digitalisierung. Die Vorstellung und der virtuelle Raum”. Publikationen: *Lehrbuch für kreatives Schreiben für Gymnasialschüler* (2017), publiziert innerhalb des kreativen nonformellen Projekts der Flower Power Kultargesellschaft, *Lehrbuch Radio-Drama, Radio Theater for high school students* – publiziert innerhalb des Projekts „High school years – On-air stories” der Flower Power Kultargesellschaft (2018), *What you need to know to write a film script*, Textbuch für nonformelle Erziehung der Schüler mit Grundkenntnissen über Filmproduktionen innerhalb des Projekts „Scenarios as in movies” der Flower Power Kultargesellschaft (2019), Co-Autorin für *Shakespeare’s Lesson* – Projekt des Bukarester National Theatres in Zusammenarbeit mit „Ion Sava” Theaterforschungs- und Kreativzentrums, unterstützt von der Nationalen Theatergesellschaft „I.L. Caragiale” und AFCN. Seit 2014 Generalkoordinatorin und Produzentin des Multi-Media Produktion Studios des „I.L. Caragiale” National Theaters aus Bukarest. Forschungsschwerpunkte: Theater, Digitalisierung im Theater, Fixierung der Theatervorstellungen auf digitaler Unterstützung, online Übertragung der Theatervorstellungen.

Studies: Faculty of Physics and Chemistry at the University of Bucharest (1993). School of Journalism and Communication Radio France Internationale-Radio Delta (1993). Faculty of Theatre, National University of Theatre and Cinematography “I.L. Caragiale” Bucharest (2004). PhD student at the Doctoral School of Music and Film, West University

of Timisoara, with the research topic “Theatrical art and digitalization. The show and the virtual space”. Publications: *Creative writing manual for high school students* (2017), published within the Creative Nonformal project of the Flower Power Cultural Association, manual *Radio-Drama, Radio Theater for high school students* – published in the project “High school years – On-air stories” of the Flower Power Cultural Association (2018), *What you need to know to write a film script*, non-formal education textbook for pupils with basics about film production, made within the project “Scenarios as in movies” of the Flower Power Cultural Association (2019), co-author of *Shakespeare’s Lesson* – editorial project of the Bucharest National Theatre realized through the “Ion Sava” Theatre Research and Creation Center with the support of the Theatre Association National “I.L. Caragiale”, funded by AFCN. Since 2014, Coordinator and General Producer of the Multi-Media Production Studio of the “I.L. Caragiale” National Theatre in Bucharest. Research areas: theatre, digitalization in theatre, fixing the theatre show on digital support, online transmission of the theatre show.

E-mail: anca.constantin69@e-uvt.ro

Camelia CURUȚIU-ZOICAȘ, MA, Dr. / PhD

Studii: Facultatea de Litere, specializare Actorie (2004), Masterat în Filosofia Culturii și Artele spectacolului (2005) și doctorat cu teza *Rolul imaginației în arta actorului. Strategii de elaborare a rolului* (2015), la Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai”, Cluj-Napoca. Lector univ. la Facultatea de Teatru și Televiziune, Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai”, Cluj-Napoca. Colaborator la Teatrul de Nord Satu-Mare, Teatrul Imposibil și Teatrul Național Cluj-Napoca. Participare la festivaluri, proiecte naționale și internaționale de teatru și pedagogie teatrală: Festivalul Internațional de Teatru Clasic Arad, Festivalul Internațional de Teatru la Sibiu, Festivalul Internațional de Film Transilvania, Cluj-Napoca, Festivalul Dramaturgiei Clujene, Cluj-Napoca, Festivalul Internațional Matei Vișniec, București, Festivalul Internațional Întâlnirile Internaționale, Cluj-Napoca, Festivalul Gala absolvenților UNATC, București, Festivalul de Teatru al absolventului GALACTORIA, Cluj-Napoca. Coordonator în proiectul *Practica Teatrală* Cluj-Napoca și Târgu-Mureș (2010-2012), coordonator în proiectul european *Programul Operațional Sectorial pentru Dezvoltarea Resurselor Umane*, Cluj-Napoca (2007-20013). Participare la workshopuri: Andrei Șerban (2005), Vava Ștefănescu (2006), David Zinder (2005), Robert Cohen (2009), Georges Baal (2006), Florin Șerban (2010), Mihai Mihalcea (2010) Vlad Massaci (2010), Adrian Damian (2012), Stephan Perdekamp (2014), Rainer Dobering (2012), Bordas Atilla (2013), Stephan Perdekamp (2014), Mihai Mălaimare (2017), Mihaela Sârbu (2018), Ogarjov Aleksandr (2019), Bobi Pricop (2020), Carmen Lidia Vidu (2020), Cătălin Ștefănescu (2021), Ștefan Lupu, (2021). Colaborare la reviste: *Colocvii Teatrale*, *Studia dramatica*, *DramArt*, *EmArt*. Publicații: „Imagination and empathy of coalescence, transfer and implementation“, *Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai, Dramatica*, (2017), „The Actor and the Absence-Imagination or Memory (2018), „What’s Hecuba to him

or he to Hecuba?“ (2019), „Artistic Creativity and Creative Imagination - Original Components in the Contemporary Performing Arts. Interferences and New Approaches“ (2019), „THE NEUTRALITY or the silence before the action“ (2021).

Studien: Hoschschule für Philologie, Fachbereich Schauspiel (2004), Masterat in Kulturphilosophie und darstellende Künste (2005), Promotion mit der Dissertation *Die Rolle der Vorstellungskraft in der Schauspielkunst. Strategien in der Erarbeitung der Rolle* (2015), „Babeş-Bolyai“ Universität, Klausenburg. Dozentin an der Hochschule für Theater und Fernsehen, „Babeş-Bolyai“ Universität, Klausenburg. Mitarbeit an Theatern: Internationales Festival für Klassisches Theater Arad, Internationales Theaterfestival aus Hermannstadt, Internationales Filmfestival Transilvania, Klausenburg, Festival der Klausenburger Dramaturgie, Internationales Matei Vişniec Festival, Bukarest, Festival der Internationalen Begegnung, Klausenburg, Festival Gala UNATC der Absolventen, Bukarest, Festival der Theaterabsolventen GALACTORIA, Klausenburg. Projektleiterin: *Theaterpraxis* Cluj-Napoca und Târgu-Mureş (2010-2012), europäisches Projekt *Sectoral Operational Program Project for Human Resources Development* Cluj-Napoca (2007-20013). Mitwirken bei Workshops: Andrei Şerban (2005), Vava Ştefănescu (2006), David Zinder (2005), Robert Cohen (2009), Georges Baal (2006), Florin Şerban (2010), Mihai Mihalcea (2010) Vlad Massaci (2010), Adrian Damian (2012), Stephan Perdekamp (2014), Rainer Dobering (2012), Bordas Atilla (2013), Stephan Perdekamp (2014), Mihai Mălaimare (2017), Mihaela Sârbu (2018), Ogarjov Aleksandr (2019), Bobi Pricop (2020), Carmen Lidia Vidu (2020), Cătălin Ştefănescu (2021), Ştefan Lupu, (2021). Mitwirken bei Fachzeitschriften: *Colocvii Teatrale*, *Studia dramatica*, *DramArt*, *EmArt*. Publikationen: „Imagination and empathy of coalescence, transfer and implementation“ (2017), „The Actor and the Absence-Imagination or Memory (2018), „What’s Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba?“ (2019), „Artistic Creativity and Creative Imagination - Original Components in the Contemporary Performing Arts. Interferences and New Approaches“ (2019), „THE NEUTRALITY or the silence before the action“ (2021).

Studies: Faculty of Letters – Acting Department (2004), Master’s Degree in Philosophy of Culture and the Performing Arts (2005), PhD Degree with the thesis *The Role of Imagination in the Actor’s Artistry. Strategies for Developing the role* (2015) at the “Babeş-Bolyai” University, Cluj-Napoca. Univ. Senior lecturer at the Faculty of Theatre and Television, Cluj-Napoca. Collaborator at the Satu-Mare North Theatre, Impossible Theatre and Cluj-Napoca National Theatre. Participation in festivals, national and international projects of theatre and theatrical pedagogy – International Festival for Classic Theatre Arad, International Theatre Festival of Sibiu, International Film Festival Transilvania, Cluj-Napoca, Festivalul of Dramaturgy from Cluj-Napoca, International Matei Vişniec Festival, Bucharest, Festival of International Meetings, Cluj-Napoca, Festival Gala of the UNATC graduates, Bucharest, Festival of Theatre Graduate GALACTORIA, Cluj-Napoca. Coordinator in the project *Theatre Practice* Cluj-Napoca and Târgu-Mureş (2010-2012), Coordinator in the European project *Sectoral Operational Program Project for Human Resources Development* Cluj-Napoca

(2007-20013). Participation at workshops – Andrei Șerban (2005), Vava Ștefănescu (2006), David Zinder (2005), Robert Cohen (2009), Georges Baal (2006), Florin Șerban (2010), Mihai Mihalcea (2010) Vlad Massaci (2010), Adrian Damian (2012), Stephan Perdekamp (2014), Rainer Dobering (2012), Bordas Atilla (2013), Stephan Perdekamp (2014), Mihai Mălaimare (2017), Mihaela Sârbu (2018), Ogarjov Aleksandr (2019), Bobi Pricop (2020), Carmen Lidia Vidu (2020), Cătălin Ștefănescu (2021), Ștefan Lupu, (2021). Collaboration in journals: *Colocvii Teatrale*, *Studia dramatica*, *DramArt*, *EmArt*. Publications: “Imagination and empathy of coalescence, transfer and implementation“ (2017), „The Actor and the Absence-Imagination or Memory (2018), „What’s Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba?“ (2019), „Artistic Creativity and Creative Imagination - Original Components in the Contemporary Performing Arts. Interferences and New Approaches“ (2019), „THE NEUTRALITY or the silence before the action“ (2021).

E-mail: camelia_curutiu@yahoo.com

Andrea GAVRILIU, MA, Drd. / PhD student

Studii: Licențiată în Arta Actorului la Facultatea de Teatru și Film din cadrul Universității „Babeș-Bolyai” Cluj-Napoca (2008) și master în Artă Coregrafică la Universitatea Națională de Artă Teatrală și Cinematografie București (2013). În prezent doctorandă la Școala Doctorală de Teatru și Film, Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai”, Cluj-Napoca, cu tema de cercetare: „Dans văzut, dans dansat, dans creat. Perspective coreologice”. Publicații: *Triple Personality: Creating, Performing and Appreciating Physical Theatre* și *Finding Words for Dance from a Choreological Perspective*, ambele publicate în „Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai – Dramatica”. Creație artistică: *Zic Zac* (UNATC, București, 2013), *Hotel PM* (Teatrul German de Stat Timișoara, 2015), *Sărbătoarea primăverii* de Igor Stravinski („M-Studio” Sfântu Gheorghe, 2016), *OST* (Organic Sound Twist) (Teatrul Național „Lucian Blaga” Cluj-Napoca, 2017), *Viva la vulva!* de Marius Aldea (Teatrul Național „Marin Sorescu” Craiova, 2021).

Studien: BA Schauspielkunst an der Hochschule für Theater und Film der „Babeș-Bolyai” Universität Klausenburg (2008) und Masterabschluß in Choreography an der Nationalen Kunstuniversität für Theater und Film Bukarest (2013). Gegenwärtig Doktorandin an der Doktoratsschule für Theater und Film der „Babeș-Bolyai” Universität Klausenburg mit dem Forschungsthema: „Gesehener Tanz, getanzt Tanz, geschöpfter Tanz. Choreologische Perspektiven”. Publikationen: *Triple Personality: Creating, Performing and Appreciating Physical Theatre* and *Finding Words for Dance from a Choreological Perspective*, beide in „Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai – Dramatica” veröffentlicht. Künstlerische Tätigkeit: *Zic Zac* (UNATC, Bukarest, 2013), *Hotel PM* (Deutsches Staatstheater Temeswar, 2015), *Sărbătoarea primăverii* de Igor Stravinski („M-Studio” Sfântu Gheorghe, 2016), *OST* (Organic Sound Twist) (Nationaltheater „Lucian Blaga” Klausenburg, 2017), *Viva la vulva!* de Marius Aldea (Nationaltheater „Marin Sorescu” Craiova, 2021).

Studies: BA Performing Arts (Acting) at The Theatre and Film Faculty, “Babeş-Bolyai” University Cluj-Napoca (2008) and Master Degree in choreography at the National University of Theatre and Film Bucharest (2013). Currently doctoral student in the domain of “Theatre and Performing Arts” at the Doctoral School of Theatre and Film from the “Babeş-Bolyai” University Cluj-Napoca with the research topic: “Seen Dance, Danced Dance, Created Dance. Choreological Perspectives”. Publications: *Triple Personality: Creating, Performing and Appreciating Physical Theatre* and *Finding Words for Dance from a Choreological Perspective*, both published in “Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai – Dramatica”. Artistic creation: *Zic Zac* (UNATC, Bucharest, 2013), *Hotel PM* (German State Theatre Timisoara, 2015), *Sărbătoarea primăverii* de Igor Stravinski (“M-Studio” Sfântu Gheorghe, 2016), *OST* (Organic Sound Twist) (National Theatre “Lucian Blaga” Cluj-Napoca, 2017), *Viva la vulva!* de Marius Aldea (National Teatre “Marin Sorescu” Craiova, 2021).

E-mail: andreagavriliu@gmail.com

Bikang HUANG, Dr. / PhD

Studii: Limba și literatura engleză, Universitatea Lanzhou din China (MA, 1988). Studii doctorale la Universitatea Peking (1998) cu tema de cercetare: *Literary Theories and New Historical Approach to Shakespeare: Images and Political Ideologies in Shakespeare's History Plays*. Din 2003 profesor universitar de anglistică și traductologie la Universitatea Peking; membru în Comitetul Consultativ pentru Predarea și Cercetarea Limbilor Străine al Ministerului Educației, PRC (1999-2003); Fulbright Research Scholar la University of California, Irvine (2003-2004); Erasmus Mundus Visiting Scholar la University of Kent (2013); International Senior Fellow la The Institute of Advanced Studies (IAS) (2017); Artist-in-Residence Fellow la The Folger Shakespeare Institute, Washington DC (2019). Publicații: peste 40 de articole în limba chineză și engleză publicate în *Foreign Languages and Literatures*, *Foreign Language Teaching*, *Foreign Literatures*, etc. cuprinzând Shakespearean Studies, American Studies, Comparative Literature, Languages Teaching și altele. Cărți: *Politics in Forms: Imagery and Ideology in Shakespeare's History Play*, Peking University Press (PUP), Beijing (2000); *American Statesmen and Their Political Speeches*, PUP, Beijing (2013); *Selected Readings in Shakespeare*, (PUP), (2005); *A History of English Prose*, Foreign Languages Teaching and Research Press (FLTRP), Beijing (2020); Traduceri: *Fiction of Authority: Women Writers and Narrative Voice*, PUP, Beijing (2002); *Shakespeare's Sonnet in Classic Chinese Poetry*, (FLTRP) (2018); *Peony Pavilion (Translated in Reference to Shakespeare's Poetic Style)*, Commercial Press (2020). Arii de cercetare: Shakespearean Studies, classical Chinese theatre, translation studies, American Studies.

Studien: Englische Sprache und Literatur an der Lanzhou Universität China (MA, 1988). Doktoratsstudien an der Peking Universität (1998) mit dem Forschungsthema: *Literary Theories and New Historical Approach to Shakespeare: Images and Political Ideologies in Shakespeare's History Plays*. Seit 2003 Universitäts-Professor für Englisch und

Übersetzungstheorie an der Peking Universität; Mitglied im Beratenden Ausschuss für Fremdsprachen und Forschung des Bildungsministeriums, PRC (1999-2003); Fulbright Research Scholar an der University of California, Irvine (2003-2004); Erasmus Mundus Visiting Scholar an der University of Kent (2013); International Senior Fellow an dem The Institute of Advanced Studies (IAS) (2017); Artist-in-Residence Fellow an dem The Folger Shakespeare Institute, Washington DC (2019). Publikationen: über 40 Artikel in Chinesisch und Englisch publiziert in *Foreign Languages and Literatures*, *Foreign Language Teaching*, *Foreign Literatures* usw. über Shakespearean Studies, American Studies, Comparative Literature, Languages Teaching and others. Bücher: *Politics in Forms: Imagery and Ideology in Shakespeare's History Play*, Peking University Press (PUP), Beijing (2000); *American Statesmen and Their Political Speeches*, PUP, Beijing (2013); *Selected Readings in Shakespeare*, (PUP), (2005); *A History of English Prose*, Foreign Languages Teaching and Research Press (FLTRP), Beijing (2020); Übersetzungen: *Fiction of Authority: Women Writers and Narrative Voice*, PUP, Beijing (2002) ; *Shakespeare's Sonnet in Classic Chinese Poetry*, (FLTRP) (2018); *Peony Pavilion (Translated in Reference to Shakespeare's Poetic Style)*, Commercial Press (2020). Forschungsschwerpunkte: Shakespearean Studies, classical Chinese theatre, translation studies, American Studies.

Studies: English language and literature, Lanzhou University, Lanzhou, China (MA, 1988). Peking University (PhD 1998); Doctoral studies about *Literary Theories and New Historical Approach to Shakespeare: Images and Political Ideologies in Shakespeare's History Plays*. Professor of English and Translation Studies in the School of Foreign Languages, Peking University (2003-); Member of the Advisory Committee of Foreign Languages Teaching and Research of the Ministry of Education, PRC (1999-2003); Fulbright Research Scholar at University of California, Irvine, USA (2003-2004); Erasmus Mundus Visiting Scholar at University of Kent, UK (2013); International Senior Fellow at The Institute of Advanced Studies (IAS) (2017); Artist-in-Residence Fellow at The Folger Shakespeare Institute, Washington DC, USA (2019). Publications: Articles: over 40 Chinese and English monographs in *Foreign Languages and Literatures*, *Foreign Language Teaching*, *Foreign Literatures*, etc. on Shakespearean Studies, American Studies, Comparative Literature, Languages Teaching and others. Books: *Politics in Forms: Imagery and Ideology in Shakespeare's History Play*, Peking University Press (PUP), Beijing (2000); *American Statesmen and Their Political Speeches*, PUP, Beijing (2013); *Selected Readings in Shakespeare*, (PUP), (2005); *A History of English Prose*, Foreign Languages Teaching and Research Press (FLTRP), Beijing (2020); Translations: *Fiction of Authority: Women Writers and Narrative Voice*, PUP, Beijing (2002) ; *Shakespeare's Sonnet in Classic Chinese Poetry*, (FLTRP) (2018); *Peony Pavilion (Translated in Reference to Shakespeare's Poetic Style)*, Commercial Press (2020). Research areas: Shakespearean Studies, classical Chinese theatre, translation studies, American Studies.

E-mail: hbk@pku.edu.cn

Maria LECA, BA

Studii: Artele Spectacolului, Actorie la Facultatea de Muzică și Teatru, Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara.

Studien: Darstellende Kunst, Schauspiel an der Hochschule für Musik und Theater, West-Universität Temeswar

Studies: Performing Arts, Acting at the Faculty of Music and Theatre, West-University of Timișoara.

E-mail: maria.leca00@e-uvt.ro

Mihai MOLDOVEANU, BA

Studii: Facultatea de Științe Politice, Filosofie și Științe ale Comunicării, specializarea Jurnalism și Limba Germană, Universitatea de Vest Timișoara (2008). Secretar relații cu publicul la Teatrul German de Stat din Timișoara (2009 - 2012). Muzician (JazzyBIT, Urma, Amalia Gaiță etc.).

Studien: Hochschule für Politikwissenschaft, Philosophie und Kommunikationswissenschaften, Fachbereich Journalistik und Deutsche Sprache, West Universität Temeswar (2008). Pressereferent beim Deutschen Staatstheater Temeswar (2009 – 2012). Musiker (JazzyBIT, Urma, Amalia Gaiță usw).

Studies: Faculty of Political Science, Philosophy and Communication Sciences, speciality Journalism and German Language, West University of Timisoara (2008). Public relations secretary at the German State Theatre Timisoara (2009-2012). Musician (JazzyBIT, Urma, Amalia Gaiță etc.).

E-mail: michibassdeva@yahoo.com

Diana NECHIT, Dr. habil. / PhD

Studii: Licență în Filologie, limba și literatura franceză, limba și literatura română (1997) și studii masterale „Stilistica limbii române” (1999), Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu. Doctor în Filologie cu teza de doctorat: *La problématique de l'espace théâtral chez Bernard-Marie Koltès* (2012), Universitatea București. Lector univ. dr. la Facultatea de Litere și Arte, Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu, în cadrul Departamentului de Studii Franceze și Francofone (1997-2012). Din 2012, Conf. univ. dr. habil. la Facultatea de Litere și Arte, Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu, în cadrul Departamentului de Artă Teatrală (2012-prezent). Publicații: studii, traduceri, recenzii în publicații precum *CA & D, Colocvii teatrale, Transilvania, JRLS, Jurnalul Artelor Spectacolului, Pratiques, Aplauze*. Traduceri de text de teatru în Antologia oficială a Festivalului Internațional de Teatru de la Sibiu. Numeroase traduceri de texte dramatice pentru reprezentare scenică, printre care: *Regulile jocului* (Yann Verburgh, 2018), *Itinerarii* (Eugen Jebeleanu, 2020), *Băiatul-văduvă* (Eugen Jebeleanu, 2021), *Dovedește!* (Eugen Jebeleanu, 2021). Cărți de

autor: *La problématique de l'espace théâtral chez Bernard-Marie Koltès* (2013), *Abribus* (2014). Din 2017, editor, selecționar și traducător al Antologiilor Lansman, publicate în colecția FITS, Editura Universității „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu. Arie de cercetare: studii teatrale, adaptări teatral-cinematografice, traductologie teatrală, dramaturgie contemporană franceză.

Studien: Französische und Rumänische Sprache und Literatur (1997) und Masterstudien in Rumänische Stilistik (1999), „Lucian Blaga” Universität Hermannstadt. Promotion mit der Dissertation: *La problématique de l'espace théâtral chez Bernard-Marie Koltès* (2012), Universität Bukarest. Universitätslektorin an der Hochschule für Philologie und Kunst der „Lucian Blaga” Universität Hermannstadt, Department für Französisch Studien (1997-2012). Seit 2012 Dozentin an der Hochschule für Philologie und Kunst der „Lucian Blaga” Universität Hermannstadt, Department für Theaterstudien. Publikationen: Studien, Übersetzungen, Rezensionen in Publikationen wie: *CA & D*, *Colocvii teatrale*, *Transilvania*, *JRLS*, *Jurnalul Artelor Spectacolului*, *Pratiques*, *Aplauze*. Übersetzungen in der offiziellen Anthologie des Internationalen Theaterfestivals Hermannstadt. Zahlreiche Übersetzungen von Theaterstücken ins Rumänische: *Regulile jocului* (Yann Verburgh, 2018), *Itinerarii* (Eugen Jebeleanu, 2020), *Băiatul-văduvă* (Eugen Jebeleanu, 2021), *Dovedește!* (Eugen Jebeleanu, 2021). Eigene Buchpublikationen: *La problématique de l'espace théâtral chez Bernard-Marie Koltès* (2013), *Abribus* (2014). Seit 2017 Herausgeberin und Übersetzerin für die Lansman Anthologien, publiziert in der Sammlung des Internationalen Theaterfestival, Verlag der „Lucian Blaga” Universität Hermannstadt. Forschungsschwerpunkte: Theaterstudien, Theater-Film Bearbeitungen, Theaterübersetzungen, Französisches Gegenwartsdrama.

Studies: French and Romanian language and literature (1997) and master's degree in Romanian Stylistics (1999), “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu. PhD thesis: *La problématique de l'espace théâtral chez Bernard-Marie Koltès* (2012), University of Bucharest. Assistant professor at the Faculty of Letters and Arts, “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu, Department of French Studies (1997-2012). Since 2012, Associate professor at the Faculty of Letters and Arts, “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu, Department of Theatre Studies. Publications: studies, translations, reviews in publications such as: *CA & D*, *Colocvii teatrale*, *Transilvania*, *JRLS*, *Jurnalul Artelor Spectacolului*, *Pratiques*, *Aplauze*. Translations in the official Anthology of Sibiu International Theatre Festival. Numerous translations of plays for performances, such as: *Regulile jocului* (Yann Verburgh, 2018), *Itinerarii* (Eugen Jebeleanu, 2020), *Băiatul-văduvă* (Eugen Jebeleanu, 2021), *Dovedește!* (Eugen Jebeleanu, 2021). Own books: *La problématique de l'espace théâtral chez Bernard-Marie Koltès* (2013), *Abribus* (2014). Since 2017, editor and translator for Lansman Anthologies, published in the Sibiu International Theatre Festival Collection, “Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu Publishing House. Research areas: theatrical studies, theatre-cinema adaptations, theatre translation, French contemporary drama.

E-mail: diana.nechit@ulbsibiu.ro

Patricia NEDELEA, MA, Dr. / PhD

Studii: Jurnalistică-Engleză la Universitatea de Vest Timișoara, BA (1996), Master în Lingvistica Română la Universitatea de Vest Timișoara (1997). Actorie (Română) (2002) și master în Studii Europene la Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai” Cluj (2003). Master (2004) și doctorat la Universitatea Central Europeană Budapesta, Departamentul de Studii de Gen – Teză pe Queer Theory aplicată pe Shakespeare (2008). Master (2009) și Doctorat la Institutul Universitar European Florența, Departamentul de Istorie și Civilizație, Teză despre Cărțile de Tarot ca sisteme ale memoriei renașcentiste (2012). Bursă doctorală Marie Curie la Universitatea din Bologna (2007). Publicații: *Femina Ludens Re-Con-Queering Shakespeare* (2012), *Three Shakespearean Graces – a Queer Perspective* (2012), *Ochiul care privește – ochiul care plătește* (2012), *Femina Ludens Playing Shakespeare* (2017). Arii de cercetare: Shakespeare, istoria Renașterii, femeile în Renaștere, arta memoriei, teorii queer și feministe.

Studien: BA Journalistik und Anglistik (1996), Masterstudium in Romanistik an der West-Universität Temeswar (1997). Schauspiel (in Rumänisch, 2002), Masterstudium in European Studies an der „Babeș-Bolyai” Universität Klausenburg (2003). MA (2004) und PhD an der Central European University, Department für Gender Studien – Dissertation über Queer Theorie angewandt an Shakespeare (2008). MA (2009) und PhD am European University Institute, Department für Geschichte und Zivilisation – Dissertation über Tarotkarten als Orte des Renaissance Gedächtnisses (2012). Marie Curie Doctoral Fellowship an der Universität Bologna (2007). Publikationen: *Femina Ludens Re-Con-Queering Shakespeare* (2012), *Three Shakespearean Graces - a Queer Perspective* (2012), *Ochiul care privește - ochiul care plătește* (2012), *Femina Ludens Playing Shakespeare* (2017). Forschungsbereiche: Shakespeare, Geschichte der Renaissance, Frauen in der Renaissance, Kunst des Gedächtnisses, Queer und Feministische Theorie.

Studies: BA Journalism and English at the West University of Timisoara (1996), Master Degree in Romanian Linguistics at the same university (1997). Acting (Romanian) (2002) and Master Degree in European Studies at „Babeș-Bolyai” University Cluj (2003). Master (2004) and PhD at Central European University, Department of Gender Studies – Thesis on Queer Theory applied on Shakespeare (2008). Master (2009) and PhD at European University Institute, History and Civilization Department – Thesis on Tarot Cards as Renaissance Memory Places (2012). Marie Curie Doctoral Fellowship at the University of Bologna (2007). Publications: *Femina Ludens Re-Con-Queering Shakespeare* (2012), *Three Shakespearean Graces – a Queer Perspective* (2012), *Ochiul care privește – ochiul care plătește* (2012), *Femina Ludens Playing Shakespeare* (2017). Research areas: Shakespeare, Renaissance History, Women in the Renaissance, Art of Memory, Queer and Feminist Theory.

E-mail: patricia_nedelea@yahoo.com

Andra-Miruna PANTEA-RADU, MA, Drd. / PhD student

Studii: Artele Spectacolului (Actorie) Facultatea de Muzică și Teatru; Arte plastice (Foto-video) Facultatea de Arte la Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara (2010). Teatru și artele spectacolului (Regie teatru) la Facultatea de Teatru și Film – licență și master Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai” Cluj-Napoca (2014, 2016). Doctorandă la Școala Doctorală de Teatru și Film la Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai” Cluj-Napoca cu tema de cercetare: „Procedee regizorale de simbolizare a trecerii timpului în scenă”. Profesor al Cercului de Teatru, Palatul Copiilor Timișoara (2017-2020). Regizor și actor colaborator. Cadru didactic asociat (2019-2020) și din 2020 asistent de cercetare al Facultății de Muzică și Teatru din Universitatea de Vest Timișoara. Arii de cercetare: absurdul, timpul și spațiul în teatru, mișcarea și vorbirea scenică.

Studien: Darstellende Kunst (Schauspiel) Hochschule für Musik und bzw. Kunst (Foto-Video) Kunsthochschule Temeswar – BA an der West Universität Temeswar (2010). Darstellende Kunst (Regie) Hochschule für Theater und Film an der „Babeș-Bolyai” Universität Klausenburg – BA and MA (2014, 2016). Doktoratsstudium an der Doktoratsschule für Theater und Film an der „Babeș-Bolyai” Universität Klausenburg mit dem Forschungsthema: „Directing Technique of Time Flow Symbolized in Theatre Scene”. Lehrende des Theaterzirkels im Kinderpalais Temeswar (2017-2020). Regie und Schauspiel – Mitarbeit an Projekten. Lehrauftrag (2019-2020) und ab 2020 wissenschaftliche Assistentin an der Hochschule für Musik und Theater der West-Universität Temeswar. Forschungsbereich: das Absurde, Zeit und Raum im Theater, Bewegung und Bühnensprache.

Studies: Performing Arts (Acting) Faculty of Music and Theatre; Arts (Foto-video) Faculty of Arts Timișoara – BA West University of Timisoara (2010). Performing arts (theatre directing) Faculty of Theatre and Film at the University “Babeș-Bolyai” Cluj-Napoca – BA and MA (2014, 2016). Doctoral student at Doctoral School of Theatre and Film at the University “Babeș-Bolyai” Cluj-Napoca with the research topic: “Directing Technique of Time Flow Symbolized in Theatre Scene”. Teacher of Theatre Circle at Kid’s Palace Timisoara (2017-2020). Theatre director and actor colaborator. Associate teacher (2019-2020) and since 2020 research assistant at the Faculty of Music and Theatre from West University of Timisoara. Research areas: the absurd, time and space in theatre, stage movement and speaking.

E-mail: andra.pantea@e-uvf.ro

Ofelia POPIL, Dr. / PhD

Studii: Actorie la Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu (2001), doctorat în Teatru și Artele spectacolului, Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu, teza de doctorat *Echilibrul psihic al actorului în actul creației* (2019). Din 2001 lector universitar la Catedra de Artă Teatrală din ULBS și la Facultatea de Teatru a Universității „Babeș-Bolyai”,

Cluj-Napoca, Secția Actorie. Actriță la Teatrul Național „Radu Stanca” - Sibiu (1997–2001). Publicații: „Spiritul ludic și actorul” (2019) și „Forme ale activității psihice a actorului” (2020) – ambele publicate în *Jurnalul Artelor Spectacolului*. Creație artistică: roluri în teatru (selecție): Mefisto în *Faust*, regia Silviu Purcărete (premiu UNITER pentru rol principal, premiul Herold Angel la Edinburgh), Bess în *Breaking the waves*, regia Radu A. Nica (nominalizare UNITER pentru rol principal), *Felii*, regia Lia Bugnar (premiu UNITER pentru rol principal), Sofia Egorovna în *Platonov*, regia Alexandru Dabija (nominalizare UNITER pentru rol secundar), Seigen și Shinnobu Sota în *Povestea prințesei deocheate*, regia Silviu Purcărete (premiu UNITER pentru rol principal), Martha în *Cui i-e frică de Virginia Wolf*, regia Andreea și Andrei Grosu (nominalizare UNITER pentru rol principal); roluri în film (selecție): Leana Mică în *Undeva la Palilula*, regia Silviu Purcărete, Vera Răducanu în *Portrete în pădure*, regia Dinu Tănase, (nominalizare Gopo pentru rol principal), Elena Scăunașu în filmul *Q.E.D.*, regia Andrei Gruzniczki (premiul Gopo pentru rol principal), Ioana Preda în filmul *Moon Hotel Kabul*, regia Anca Damian (nominalizare premiul Gopo pentru rol secundar), The Woman în filmul *The Bet*, regia Svetoslav Ovcharov.

Studien: Darstellende Kunst, Schauspiel an der „Lucian Blaga” Universität aus Hermannstadt (2001). Promotion in Theater und darstellende Kunst an der „Lucian Blaga” Univeristät aus Hermannstadt mit der Dissertation *Das psychische Gleichgewicht des Schauspielers während des Schöpfungsprozesses* (2019). Seit 2001 Dozentin am Lehrstuhl für Darstellende Kunst an der ULBS und an der Hochschule für Theater der „Babeș-Bolyai” Universität, Cluj-Napoca, Department für Schauspiel. Schauspielerin an dem Nationalen Theater „Radu Stanca” Hermannstadt (1997–2001). Publikationen: „Spiritul ludic și actorul” (2019) und „Forme ale activității psihice a actorului” (2020) – beide publiziert in *Jurnalul Artelor Spectacolului*. Künstlerische Tätigkeit: Rollen im Theater (Auswahl): Mefisto in *Faust*, Regie Silviu Purcărete (UNITER Preis für die Hauptrolle, Herold Angel Preis in Edinburgh), Bess in *Breaking the Waves*, Regie Radu A. Nica (UNITER Nominalisierung für die Hauptrolle), *Felii (Scheiben)*, Regie Lia Bugnar (UNITER Preis für die Hauptrolle), Sofia Egorovna in *Platonow*, Regie Alexandru Dabija (UNITER Nominalisierung für die Nebenrolle), Seigen und Shinnobu Sota in *Povestea prințesei deocheate (Die Geschichte der verzauberten Prinzessin)*, Regie Silviu Purcărete (UNITER Preis für die Hauptrolle), Martha in *Wer hat Angst vor Virginia Wolf*, Regie Andreea und Andrei Grosu (UNITER Nominalisierung für die Hauptrolle); Rollen im Film (Selektion): Leana Mică in *Undeva la Palilula (Irgendwo in Palilula)*, Regie Silviu Purcărete, Vera Răducanu in *Portrete în pădure (Porträts im Wald)*, Regie Dinu Tănase, (Gopo Preis Nominalisierung für die Hauptrolle), Elena Scăunașu im Film *Q.E.D.*, Regie Andrei Gruzniczki (Gopo Preis für die Hauptrolle), Ioana Preda im Film *Moon Hotel Kabul*, Regie Anca Damian (Gopo Preis Nominalisierung für die Nebenrolle), Frau im Film *The Bet*, Regie Svetoslav Ovcharov.

Studies: Acting at the “Lucian Blaga” University from Sibiu (2001), PhD in Theatre and Performing Arts at the “Lucian Blaga” University from Sibiu with the doctoral thesis *The Psychic Balance of the Actor in the Act of Cretion* (2019). Since 2001 senior lecturer

at the Department of Theatre at the “Lucian Blaga” University from Sibiu and at the Faculty of Theatre at the „Babeş-Bolyai” University from Cluj-Napoca. Actress at the “Radu Stanca” Theatre from Sibiu (1997-2001). Publications: Publications: *Spiritul ludic și actorul* (2019) and *Forme ale activității psihice a actorului* (2020) – both published in *Jurnalul Artelor Spectacolului*. Artistic creation: roles in theatre (selection): Mefisto in *Faust*, director Silviu Purcărete (UNITER Award for main role, Herold Angel Award in Edinburgh), Bess in *Breaking the waves*, director Radu A. Nica (nominalisation for UNITER Award for main role), *Felii (Slices)*, director Lia Bugnar (UNITER Award for main role), Sofia Egorovna in *Platonov*, director Alexandru Dabija (nominalisation for UNITER Award for secondary role), Seigen and Shinnobu Sota in *Povestea prințesei deocheate (The Story of the Enchanted Princess)*, director Silviu Purcărete (UNITER Award for main role), Martha in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolf*, director Andreea and Andrei Grosu (nominalisation for UNITER Award for main role); roles in film (selection): Leana Mică in *Undeva la Palilula (Somewhere in Palilua)*, director Silviu Purcărete, Vera Răducanu in *Portrete în pădure (Portraits in the Forest)*, director Dinu Tănase, (nominalisation for Gopo Award for main role), Elena Scăunașu in *Q.E.D.*, director Andrei Gruzsniczki (Gopo Award for main role), Ioana Preda *Moon Hotel Kabul*, director Anca Damian (nominalisation for Gopo Award for secondary role), the woman in *The Bet*, director Svetoslav Ovcharov.

Flavius RETEA, MA, Drd. / PhD student

Studii: BA Artele spectacolului, Actorie (2013) și MA Artele spectacolului de teatru la Facultatea de Muzică și Teatru, Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara (2020). Doctorand la Școala Doctorală de Muzică și Teatru, Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara cu tema de cercetare: „Thomas Ostermeier. Metarealitatea convenției”. Actor. Colaborări cu Teatrul Național „Mihai Eminescu” din Timișoara începând cu 2011 până în prezent, Teatrul de Stat din Braunschweig (2017) și Compania B. Valiente din Oslo (2015).

Studien: BA Darstellende Kunst, Schauspiel (2013) und MA (2020) an der Hochschule für Musik und Theater, West Universität Temeswar. Doktorand an der Doktoratsschule für Musik und Theater mit dem Forschungsthema: „Thomas Ostermeier. Die Metarealität der Konvention”. Schauspieler. Mitarbeit am nationalen Theater „Mihai Eminescu” aus Temeswar ab 2011 und gegenwärtig, Staatstheater Braunschweig (2017) und Company B. Valiente aus Oslo (2015).

Studies: BA Performing Arts, Acting (2013) and MA (2020) at the Faculty of Music and Theatre, West University of Timisoara. PhD student at the Doctoral school for Music and Theatre at the West University of Timisoara with the research topic “Thomas Ostermeier. The Metareality of Convention”. Actor. Collaborations with the National Theatre “Mihai Eminescu” from Timisoara since 2011 up to the present, Braunschweig State Theatre (2017) and Company B. Valiente from Oslo (2015).

E-mail: retea.flavius@gmail.com

Eleonora RINGLER-PASCU, Dr. habil. / PhD

Studii: Anglistică și Germanistică la Universitatea din Timișoara (1979). Bursieră Franz-Werfel la Universitatea din Viena. Doctorat despre teatrul lui Peter Handke – Universitatea din Viena (1997). Abilitare cu teza: *Dramaturgia în secolul 20: experiment, antiteatru, teatru postdramatic sau neodramatic, reîntoarcere la tradiție*, Universitatea de Arte Târgu-Mureș (2013). Crucea de Onoare Austriacă pentru Știință și Artă a Republicii Federale Austria (2017). Profesor universitar la Facultatea de Muzică și Teatru, Departamentul: Muzică – Artele spectacolului, Actorie (lb. română și lb. germană), Universitatea de Vest din Timișoara și Director al Școlii Doctorale de Muzică și Teatru. Președinta Societății Culturale Româno-Germane din Timișoara (2014-2017). Publicații: studii și articole în *Banatica*, *DramArt*, *Estudios Filológicos Alemanes*, *Lenau-Jahrbuch*, *Symbolon*, *Thalia Germanica*, *Transcarpathica*, *Zeitschrift der Germanisten Rumäniens*. Cărți: *Unterwegs zum Ungesagten. Zu Peter Handkes Theaterstücken „Das Spiel vom Fragen“ und „Die Stunde da wir nichts voneinander wussten“ mit Blick über die Postmoderne* (1998); *Österreichisches Gegenwartstheater zwischen Tradition und Innovation* (2000); *Österreichische Literatur ohne Grenzen. Gedenkschrift für Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler*, Attila Bombitz, Renata Cornejo, Slawomir Piontek, Eleonora Ringler-Pascu (ed.) (2009); *Kurzdrama – Minidrama*, Excelsior Art, Timișoara (2009), *Drama der Antike* (2010), *Österreichische Literatur. Traditionsbezüge und Prozesse der Moderne vom 19. Jahrhundert bis in die Gegenwart*, Laura Cheie, Eleonora Ringler-Pascu, Christiane Wittmer (ed.) (2018). Traduceri: Peter Handke: *Absența* (2000); Armin Klein: *Managementul proiectului cultural* (2005); Thomas Bernhard: *Immanuel Kant* (2013). Arii de cercetare: teatrul austriac și german contemporan, teatrul minorității germane din Banat.

Studium: Anglistik-Germanistik an der Universität Temeswar (1979). Franz-Werfel Stipendiatin an der Universität Wien. Promotion über Peter Handkes Theater – Universität Wien (1997). Habilitationsschrift: *Dramatik im 20. Jahrhundert: Experiment, Antitheater, postdramatisches oder neodramatisches Theater, Rückkehr zur Tradition* Kunstuniversität Târgu-Mureș (2013). Österreichisches Ehrenkreuz für Wissenschaft und Kunst der Republik Österreich (2017). Univ.-Prof. an der Hochschule für Musik und Theater, Department: Musik – Darstellende Kunst, Schauspiel (rumänische und deutsche Sprache), West-Universität Temeswar und Direktorin der Doktoratsschule für Musik und Theater. Vorsitzende der Rumänisch-Deutschen Kulturgesellschaft Temeswar (2014-2017). Publikationen: Studien und Artikel in *Banatica*, *DramArt*, *Estudios Filológicos Alemanes*, *Lenau-Jahrbuch*, *Symbolon*, *Thalia Germanica*, *Transcarpathica*, *Zeitschrift der Germanisten Rumäniens*. Bücher: *Unterwegs zum Ungesagten. Zu Peter Handkes Theaterstücken „Das Spiel vom Fragen“ und „Die Stunde da wir nichts voneinander wussten“ mit Blick über die Postmoderne* (1998); *Österreichisches Gegenwartstheater zwischen Tradition und Innovation* (2000); *Österreichische Literatur ohne Grenzen. Gedenkschrift für Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler*, Attila Bombitz, Renata Cornejo, Slawomir Piontek, Eleonora Ringler-Pascu (Hg.) (2009); *Kurzdrama – Minidrama* (2009); *Drama*

der Antike (2010),), *Österreichische Literatur. Traditionsbezüge und Prozesse der Moderne vom 19. Jahrhundert bis in die Gegenwart*, Laura Cheie, Eleonora Ringler-Pascu, Christiane Wittmer (Hrsg.) (2018). Übersetzungen: Peter Handke: *Absența (Die Abwesenheit)* (2000); Armin Klein: *Managementul proiectului cultural* (2005); Thomas Bernhard: *Immanuel Kant* (2013). Forschungsschwerpunkte: österreichisches und deutsches Gegenwartsdrama, deutschsprachiges Theater im Banat.

Studies: English and German studies at the University of Timișoara (1979). Franz-Werfel Scholarship at the University of Vienna. PhD – Doctoral studies about Peter Handke's theatre – University of Vienna (1997). Habilitation thesis: *Dramatics in the 20th Century: Experiment, Antitheatre, Postdramatic or Neodramatic Theatre, Back to Tradition*, University of Arts Târgu-Mureș (2013). Austrian Cross of Honour for Science and Arts of the Federal Republic Austria (2017). Professor at the Faculty of Music and Theatre, Department: Music – Performing Arts, Acting (Romanian and German language), West University of Timișoara and Director of the PhD School for Music and Theatre. President of the Romanian-German Cultural Society from Timisoara (2014-2017). Publications: studies and articles in *Banatica*, *DramArt*, *Estudios Filológicos Alemanes*, *Lenau-Jahrbuch*, *Symbolon*, *Thalia Germanica*, *Transcarpathica*, *Zeitschrift der Germanisten Rumäniens*. Books: *Unterwegs zum Ungesagten. Zu Peter Handkes Theaterstücken „Das Spiel vom Fragen“ und „Die Stunde da wir nichts voneinander wussten“ mit Blick über die Postmoderne* (1998); *Österreichisches Gegenwartstheater zwischen Tradition und Innovation* (2000); *Österreichische Literatur ohne Grenzen. Gedenkschrift für Wendelin Schmidt-Dengler*, Attila Bombitz, Renata Cornejo, Slawomir Piontek, Eleonora Ringler-Pascu (ed.) (2009); *Kurzdrama – Minidrama* (2009); *Drama der Antike* (2010), *Österreichische Literatur. Traditionsbezüge und Prozesse der Moderne vom 19. Jahrhundert bis in die Gegenwart*, Laura Cheie, Eleonora Ringler-Pascu, Christiane Wittmer (ed.) (2018). Translations: Peter Handke: *Absența* (2000); Armin Klein: *Managementul proiectului cultural* (2005); Thomas Bernhard: *Immanuel Kant* (2013). Research areas: contemporary Austrian and German theatre, theatre of the German minority of Banat.

E-mail: eleonora.ringlerpascu@gmx.de; eleonora.ringlerpascu@e-uvt.ro

Andrei C. ȘERBAN, MA, Dr. / PhD

Studii: Licență în Filologie, limba și literatura română, limba și literatura franceză (2012) și studii masterale, specializarea literatura română (2014), Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu. Doctor în Filologie cu teza de doctorat: *Teatralitate și imaginar medieval în lirica lui Virgil Mazilescu* (2017), Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu. Din 2018, secretar literar la Teatrul Național „Radu Stanca” Sibiu și Festivalul Internațional de Teatru de la Sibiu. Din 2018, asist. univ. dr., iar din 2021, lector univ. dr. la Facultatea de Litere și Arte, Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu, în cadrul Departamentului de Artă Teatrală, Facultatea de Litere și Arte, Universitatea „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu. Din 2018, reviewer

și membru al juriului pentru The Monthly Film Festival, Glasgow. Din 2018, managing editor al *Jurnalului Artelor Spectacolului*. În 2021, moderator al secțiunii spectacole-lectură în cadrul Festivalului Internațional de Teatru de la Sibiu. Publicații: studii, articole și cronici literare și cinematografice în publicații precum *CA & D*, *Transilvania*, *Jurnalul Artelor Spectacolului*, *Euphorion*. Cărți de autor: *coregrafii* (poezie, 2015), *casa de dincolo de ocean* (poem-monodramă, 2020), *Respirația cavalerului. Teatralitate și imaginar medieval în lirica lui Virgil Mazilescu* (2021). Din 2019, editor, selecționeer și traducător al Antologiilor Lansman, publicate în colecția FITS, Editura Universității „Lucian Blaga” din Sibiu. Arii de cercetare: studii teatrale, estetică cinematografică, dramaturgie contemporană franceză.

Studien: Philologie, Rumänische und Französische Literatur und Sprache (2012) und Master in Rumänischer Literatur (2014), „Lucian Blaga” Universität Hermannstadt. Promotion mit der Dissertation: *Theatralität und mittelalterliche Bildlichkeit in Virgil Mazilescus Lyrik* (2017), „Lucian Blaga” Universität Hermannstadt. Seit 2018 Dramaturg am „Radu Stanca” National Theater Hermannstadt und Internationales Theater Festival Hermannstadt. Seit 2018 Universitätsassistent und ab 2021 Dozent an der Hochschule für Literatur und Kunst, „Lucian Blaga” Universität Hermannstadt, Departament für Theaterkunst. Seit 2018 Reviewer und Mitglied der Jury für The Monthly Film Festival, Glasgow. Seit 2018 Managing Editor für *Jurnalul Artelor Spectacolului*. Im Jahr 2021 Moderator der Sektion für Lektüretheater des Internationalen Theaterfestivals Hermannstadt. Publikationen: Studien, Artikel und Rezensionen zu Literatur und Film in *CA & D*, *Transilvania*, *Jurnalul Artelor Spectacolului*, *Euphorion*. Eigene Bücher: *coregrafii* (Gedichte, 2015), *casa de dincolo de ocean* (Gedicht-Monodrama, 2020), *Respirația cavalerului. Teatralitate și imaginar medieval în lirica lui Virgil Mazilescu* (2021). Seit 2019 Herausgeber und Übersetzer für die Lansman Anthologien, herausgegeben in der Kollektion des Internationalwn Theaterfestival Hermannstadt, Verlag der „Lucian Blaga” Universität Hermannstadt. Forschungsschwerpunkte: Theaterstudien, Filmästhetik, fran-zösische Gegenwartsdramaturgie.

Studies: Romanian and French language and literature (2012) and master's degree in Romanian literature (2014), „Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu. PhD thesis: *Theatricality and medieval imaginary in Virgil Mazilescu's poetry* (2017), „Lucian Blaga” University of Sibiu. Since 2018, literary advisor for “Radu Stanca” National Theatre of Sibiu and for Sibiu International Theatre Festival. Since 2018, university assistant, and since 2021, senior lecturer at the Faculty of Letters and Arts, Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, Department of Theatre Studies. Since 2018, reviewer and member of the jury for The Monthly Film Festival, Glasgow. Since 2018, managing editor for *Journal of Performing Arts*. In 2021, moderator at the reading performances section in Sibiu International Theatre Festival. Publications: studies, articles and reviews on literature and cinema in publications such as *CA & D*, *Transilvania*, *Jurnalul Artelor Spectacolului*, *Euphorion*. Own books: *coregrafii* (poetry, 2015), *casa de dincolo de ocean* (poem-monodrama, 2020), *Respirația cavalerului. Teatralitate și imaginar medieval în lirica lui Virgil Mazilescu* (2021). Since

2019, editor, and translator for Lansman Anthologies, published in the Sibiu International Theatre Festival Collection, "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu Publishing House. Research areas: theatrical studies, cinema aesthetic, French contemporary drama.

E-mail: andrei.serban@ulbsibiu.ro

Anca SIMILAR, MA, Dr. / PhD

Studii: Artă teatrală, specialitatea actorie (2000) și teatologie la Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai” Cluj-Napoca (2000). Diploma de doctor în Teatru și Artele Spectacolului cu teza *Studiu explorativ al dezvoltării artei respirației în practicile vocale scenice* (2021). Studii universitare de master în științe la Facultatea de Comunicare, Cultură și Societate, Università della Svizzera Italiana, Lugano (2009) și un an de studii doctorale la Chronic'art din Paris în domeniul jurnalismului cultural și a managementului cultural. Bursă pentru cercetare postuniversitară la Universitatea Anvers în domeniul management cultural. Burse de cercetare la New University Sofia, Amsterdam Summer University, Teatro Stabile Torino și Old Vic Theatre London. Din 2016 este lector universitar la Facultatea de Teatru și Film, Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai” Cluj-Napoca ca specialist în voce și vorbire pentru scenă și film. Specializare în diverse metode din curricula pentru disciplina voce din Marea Britanie și SUA: Linklater, Fitzmaurice, Rodenburg, Voice body integration, Roy Hart. Actriță profesionistă la Teatrul de Nord din Satu Mare. A participat la festivaluri naționale și internaționale de teatru și film, workshop-uri și sesiuni de training în Anglia, Austria, Bulgaria, Franța, Estonia, Germania, Grecia, Italia, Olanda, Spania, Ungaria, Turcia și Asia. Creație artistică: peste 80 de spectacole și 10 filme. Publicații (selecție): „Breathing techniques in the Paris Singing treatise (Methode de chant, Paris”, *Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai Musica* (2021), „Gengis Khan d'Henry Bauchau: anatomie de la premiere mise en scene d'Ariane Mnouchkine en 1961”, *Symbolon* (2020), „The Hybrid Theater of Robert Pinget”, *Theatrical Colloquia* (2020), „Rhapsody of Modern Drama through: The Life of Lazarillo de Tormes and of His Fortunes and Adversities”, *Theatrical Colloquia* (2019), „À la recherche de l'impossible théâtre Dada”, *Studia Universitatis Babes-Bolyai Dramatica*, (2016). Arii de cercetare: sinergia dintre respirație, voce și mișcare.

Studien: Darstellende Kunst, Fachbereich Schauspiel (2000) und Theaterwissenschaft an der „Babeș-Bolyai” Universität Klausenburg (2000). Promotion in Theater und darstellende Kunst mit der Dissertation *Studie über die Entwicklung der Atmungskunst in der Bühnenstimmpraxis* (2021). MA Studien an der Hochschule für Kommunikation, Kultur und Gesellschaft, Università della Svizzera Italiana, Lugano (2009) und ein Jahr Doktoratsstudium bei Chronic'art in Paris im Bereich Kulturjournalismus und -management. Postdoc Stipendium an der Universität Anvers im Bereich Kulturmanagement. Forschungsstipendien an der New University Sofia, Amsterdam Summer University, Teatro Stabile Torino und Old Vic Theatre London. Seit 2016 Dozentin an der

Hochschule für Theater und Film, „Babeş-Bolyai“ Universität Klausenburg als Expertin in Bühnen- und Filmsprache. Ausbildung in diversen Methoden der Curricula für das Fach Stimm- und Sprechbildung in Großbritannien und USA: Linklater, Fitzmaurice, Rodenburg, Voice body integration, Roy Hart. Schauspielerin an dem Nord-Theater aus Satu Mare. Teilnahme an Festivals für Film und Theater, Workshops und Training in England, Österreich, Bulgarien, Frankreich, Estland, Deutschland, Griechenland, Italien, Holland, Spanien, Ungarn, Türkei und Asien. Künstlerische Tätigkeit: über 80 Theatervorstellungen und 10 Filme. Publikationen (Auswahl): „Breathing techniques in the Paris Singing treatise (Methode de chant, Paris)“, *Studia Universitatis Babeş – Bolyai Musica* (2021), „Gengis Khan d’Henry Bauchau: anatomie de la premiere mise en scene d’Ariane Mnouchkine en 1961“, *Symbolon* (2020), „The Hybrid Theater of Robert Pinget“, *Theatrical Colloquia* (2020), „Rhapsody of Modern Drama through: The Life of Lazarillo de Tormes and of His Fortunes and Adversities“, *Theatrical Colloquia* (2019), „À la recherche de l’impossible théâtre Dada“, *Studia Universitatis Babeş – Bolyai Dramatica* (2016). Forschungsschwerpunkte: Synergie zwischen Atmung, Stimme und Bewegung.

Studies: Performing arts, acting (2000) and theatre sciences at the “Babeş-Bolyai” University, Cluj Napoca. PhD degree in theatre and performing arts with the research work *Exploring study on the development of breathing art of voice practice on stage* (2021). MA at the Faculty of Communication, Culture and Society at the Università della Svizzera Italiana, Lugano (2009) and one year of doctoral studies at Chronic’art in Paris in the field of cultural journalism and cultural management. Postdoc scholarship at the University of Antwerp in the field of cultural management. Scholarships at the New University of Sofia, Amsterdam Summer University, Teatro Stabile Torino and Old Vic Theatre London. Since 2016 senior lecturer at the Faculty of Theatre and Film, “Babeş-Bolyai” University Cluj Napoca, as specialist in voice and speech on stage and film. Trainings in various voice methods taught in UK and US: Linklater, Fitzmaurice, Rodenburg, Voice body integration, Roy Hart. Actress at the North Theatre from Satu Mare. Presence at international festivals for film and theatre, workshops and trainings in England, Austria, Bulgaria, France, Spain, Estland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Hungary, Turkey and Asia. Artistic activity: over 80 theatre performances and 10 film productions. Publications (selection): „Breathing techniques in the Paris Singing treatise (Methode de chant, Paris)“, *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Musica* (2021), “Gengis Khan d’Henry Bauchau: anatomie de la premiere mise en scene d’Ariane Mnouchkine en 1961”, *Symbolon* (2020), “The Hybrid Theater of Robert Pinget”, *Theatrical Colloquia* (2020), “Rhapsody of Modern Drama through: The Life of Lazarillo de Tormes and of His Fortunes and Adversities”, *Theatrical Colloquia* (2019), “À la recherche de l’impossible théâtre Dada”, *Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Dramatica* (2016). Research areas: synergy between the breathing, voice and the body.

E-mail: ancasimilar@yahoo.com

Radu TEAMPĂU, Dr. / PhD

Studii: Artă teatrală, specialitatea regie de teatru, BA (1996) și master în Filosofia Culturii și Artele Spectacolului la Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai” Cluj-Napoca (2006). Diploma de doctor în Teatru și Artele Spectacolului cu teza *Narațiunea regizorală* (2015). Regizor și asist. univ. la Universitatea „Babeș-Bolyai” Cluj-Napoca. Colaborează, ca regizor, la mai multe teatre din țară: Teatrul Național, Cluj-Napoca; Teatrul Puck, Cluj-Napoca; Teatrul Elvira Godeanu, Târgu Jiu; Teatrul Municipal, Turda; Teatrul Tineretului, Piatra Neamț; Teatrul Maghiar de Stat Csiky Gergely, Timișoara; Teatrul Național Radu Stanca, secția germană, Sibiu; participare la festivaluri și workshopuri de teatru naționale și internaționale în Austria, Belgia, Elveția, Germania, Italia; spectacole în cadrul teatrului independent. Colaborare la revistele: *Colocvii teatrale*, *Steaua*, *Tribuna*, *Echinox*. Cărți: *Logolatria* (2003); *Taifasuri mileziene* (2007); *Teatru* (2010); *E-mail-uri teatrale* (2014); *Carena în cer – narațiunea actorului din perspectivă regizorală* (2015); *Nașterea unei pietre – narațiunea spectacolului din perspectivă regizorală* (2016); *Fly Butterfly – Three Short Plays*, traducere în limba engleză de Nadia Dimofte (2017).

Studium: BA Darstellende Kunst, Fachrichtung Theaterregie (1996) und MA in Kulturphilosophie und Darstellende Kunst an der „Babeș-Bolyai” Universität Klausenburg (2006). Promotion mit der Dissertation: *Die Narration des Regisseurs* (2015). Regisseur und Univ. Assist. an der „Babeș-Bolyai” Universität Klausenburg. Projekte als Regisseur an verschiedenen Theatern: Nationaltheater Klausenburg; Puck Theater Klausenburg; Elvira Godeanu Theater, Târgu Jiu; Landestheater Turda; Jugendtheater Piatra Neamț; Ungarisches Staatstheater Csiky Gergely, Temeswar; Nationaltheater Radu Stanca, deutsche Abteilung, Hermannstadt; Teilnahme an Theaterfestivals und Workshops in Österreich, Belgien, der Schweiz, Deutschland, Italien; Projekte für unabhängige Theater. Mitarbeit an den Zeitschriften: *Colocvii teatrale*, *Steaua*, *Tribuna*, *Echinox*. Bücher: *Logolatria* (2003); *Taifasuri mileziene* (2007); *Teatru* (2010); *E-mail-uri teatrale* (2014); *Carena în cer – narațiunea actorului din perspectivă regizorală* (2015); *Nașterea unei pietre – narațiunea spectacolului din perspectivă regizorală* (2016); *Fly Butterfly – Three Short Plays*, Übersetzung ins Englische von Nadia Dimofte (2017).

Studies: BA Performing Arts, theatre stage directing (1996) and MA in philosophy of culture and performing arts at the “Babeș-Bolyai” University Cluj-Napoca (2006). Doctoral thesis: *Narration of the Stage Director* (2015). Stage director and university assistant at the “Babeș-Bolyai” University Cluj-Napoca. Collaboration as stage director at diverse theatres: National Theatre Cluj-Napoca; Puck Theatre Cluj-Napoca; Elvira Godeanu Theatre, Târgu Jiu; Municipal Theatre, Turda; Youth Theatre, Piatra Neamț; Hungarian State Theatre Csiky Gergely, Timisoara; National Theatre Radu Stanca, German department, Sibiu; participation at theatre festivals and workshops in Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Italy; stage direction for independent theatre. Collaboration with journals: *Colocvii teatrale*, *Steaua*, *Tribuna*, *Echinox*. Books: *Logolatria* (2003); *Taifasuri mileziene* (2007); *Teatru* (2010); *E-mail-uri teatrale* (2014); *Carena în cer*

– *narațiunea actorului din perspectivă regizorală* (2015); *Nașterea unei pietre – narațiunea spectacolului din perspectivă regizorală* (2016); *Fly Butterfly – Three Short Plays*, translated into English by Nadia Dimofte, (2017).

E-mail: teampau@yahoo.com

Niky WOLCZ, MA

Studii: Universitatea Națională de Artă Teatrală și Cinematografie „I. L. Caragiale“ București (1967). Actor, regizor, profesor de artele spectacolului în Europa – Frankfurt, Düsseldorf, München, Berna, Zürich, Limoges, Paris, Florența, Glasgow și București, oferind workshop-uri de *commedia dell'arte*, chiffrage de Artaud, biomecanică, teatru alegoric, teatru dada și surrealism; din 1996 profesor la Columbia University School of Arts New York cu producțiile: *A douăsprezecea noapte*, *Cercul caucazian* (regizat împreună cu Andrei Șerban), *Cântăreața cheală* și *Lecția*, *Turandot* (regizat împreună cu Ursula Wolcz). Regie de teatru în Europa (selecție): *Disputa*, *Păsările*, *Scapin*, *L'Adoration*, *Umbra*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Visul unei nopți de vară*, *Macbeth*, *Așteptându-l pe Godot*, *Tentația Sf. Anton*, *Tinuturile joase* de Herta Müller (adaptare și regie împreună cu Ursula Wolcz), *Leonce și Lena*. Regie de operă: *Don Giovanni*, *Flautul fermecat*, *Il Campiello*, *Boema*, *Dragoste pentru trei portocale*, *Roberto Devereaux*, *Turandot*; cu Andrei Șerban *Prințul Igor*, *Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Văduva veselă*, *L'Italiana* și *Pagliacci*. Coregrafie: *Benvenuto Cellini*, *Faust* (Metropolitan Opera). Roluri importante ca actor: Touchstone, Arturo Ui, Luca, Mephisto, Tristan Tzara și Buster Keaton. Aria de cercetare: dezvoltarea unui program inovativ și unic de training înrădăcinat în tradiția milenară a artei spectaculare estice și vestice.

Studien: Nationale Kunstuniversität für Theater und Film „I. L. Caragiale“ Bukarest (1967). Schauspieler, Regisseur, Professor für Schauspielkunst in Europa – Frankfurt, Düsseldorf, München, Bern, Zürich, Limoges, Paris, Florenz, Glasgow und Bukarest; Workshops in *Commedia dell'arte*, Chiffrage de Artaud, Biomechanik, allegorisches Theater, Dada und surrealistisches Theater; seit 1996 Professor an der Columbia University School of Arts New York mit den Produktionen: *Zwölfte Nacht*, *Kaukasischer Kreidekreis* (Regie zusammen mit Andrei Șerban), *Die kahle Sängerin* und *Die Unterrichtsstunde*, *Turandot* (Regie zusammen mit Ursula Wolcz). Regietheater in Europa (Auswahl): *Die Auseinandersetzung*, *Die Vögel*, *Scapin*, *L'Adoration*, *Der Schatten*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Ein Sommernachtstraum*, *Macbeth*, *Warten auf Godot*, *The temptation of St. Anthony*, *Niederungen* von Herta Müller (Berarbeitung und Regie zusammen mit Ursula Wolcz), *Leonce und Lena*. Operregie: *Don Giovanni*, *Zauberflöte*, *Il Campiello*, *La Boheme*, *Liebe für drei Orangen*, *Roberto Devereaux*, *Turandot*; zusammen mit Andrei Șerban *Prinz Igor*, *Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Die lustige Witwe*, *L'Italiana* und *Pagliacci*. Choreographie: *Benvenuto Cellini*, *Faust* (Metropolitan Opera). Wichtige Rollen als Schauspieler: Touchstone, Arturo Ui, Luca, Mephisto, Tristan Tzara und Buster Keaton. Forschungsschwerpunkte: Entwicklung eines innovativen und

einzigartigen Trainingsprogramms verwurzelt in der Tradition der östlichen und westlichen Darstellungskunst.

Studies: National University of Arts for Theatre and Film “I. L. Caragiale“ Bucharest (1967). Actor, director, professor for acting throughout Europe – Frankfurt, Düsseldorf, Munich, Bern, Zürich, Limoges, Paris, Florence, Glasgow and Bucharest, offering workshops in *commedia dell'arte*, chiffrage de Artaud, biomechanics, allegorical theatre, dada and surreal theatre; since 1996 professor at the Columbia University School of Arts New York with the productions: *Twelfth Night*, *Caucasian Chalk Circle* (directed together with Andrei Șerban), *Bold Soprano* and *The Lesson*, *Turandot* (directed together with Ursula Wolcz). European theatre directing (selection): *La Dispute*, *The Birds*, *Scapin*, *L'Adoration*, *The Shadow*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth*, *Waiting for Godot*, *The Temptation of St. Anthony*, *Nadirs* by Herta Müller (adapted and directed together with Ursula Wolcz), *Leonce and Lena*. Directing opera: *Don Giovanni*, *The magic Flute*, *Il Campiello*, *La Boheme*, *Love for Three Oranges*, *Roberto Devereaux*, *Turandot*; together with Andrei Șerban *Prince Igor*, *Contes d'Hoffmann*, *The Merry Widow*, *L'Italiana* and *Pagliacci*. Coreography: *Benvenuto Cellini*, *Faust* (Metropolitan Opera). Important roles as actor: Touchstone, Arturo Ui, Luca, Mephisto, Tristan Tzara and Buster Keaton. Research area: developing an innovative and unique training program, rooted in many rigorous Eastern and Western performance traditions.

E-mail: wolczn@aol.com

PEER REVIEWERS

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