TEEMU PAAVOLAINEN

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Theatre/Ecology/Cognition

Theorizing Performer–Object Interaction in Grotowski, Kantor, and Meyerhold

Acta Universitatis Tamperensis 1619

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ACADEMIC DISSERTATION
To be presented, with the permission of
the board of the School of Communication, Media and Theatre
of the University of Tampere, for public discussion
in the Demo Theatre
of the Centre for Practise as Research in Theatre,
Hämeenpuisto 28 D, Tampere,
on June 11th, 2011, at 12 o'clock.

UNIVERSITY OF TAMPERE

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ACADEMIC DISSERTATION
University of Tampere
School of Communication, Media and Theatre
Finland

Distribution
Bookshop TAJU
P.O. Box 617
33014 University of Tampere
Finland

Tel. +358 40 190 9800
Fax +358 3 3551 7685
taju@uta.fi
www.uta.fi/taju
http://granum.uta.fi

Cover design by
Mikko Reinikka

Acta Universitatis Tamperensis 1619
ISBN 978-951-44-8464-3 (print)
ISSN-L 1455-1616
ISSN 1455-1616

Acta Electronica Universitatis Tamperensis 1080
ISBN 978-951-44-8465-0 (pdf)
ISSN 1456-954X
http://acta.uta.fi

Tampereen Yliopistopaino Oy – Juvenes Print
Tampere 2011

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Acknowledgements

I have always appreciated Freddie Rokem's early "fantasy," expressed in his Preface to *Performing History* (University of Iowa Press 2000: ix), "that the ultimate goal of academic scholarship was to compose a study consisting of quotes so perfectly put together that no one would notice that this was an act of plagiarism." While accusations of plagiarism can readily be rebutted by the contextualist metaphor that the "meaning" is in the "weaving" (see S.C. Pepper's *World Hypotheses*), a work this concerned with notions of situated and distributed cognition is inherently obliged to the various threads of thought and human belevolence that pervade its apparent weft. These extend infinitely beyond my ubiquitous quotation marks.

Some of the most fertile cognitive ecologies I have been privileged to feed on were formed in The International Centre for Advanced Theatre Studies, or ICATS, summer schools, organized by Professor Pirkko Koski and co-tutored by Professors Bruce McConachie, Janelle Reinelt, Freddie Rokem, S.E. Wilmer, and W.B. Worthen. The three week-long sessions I participated in – 2003 to 2005, in Lammi and Helsinki – also remain the most fun experiences of my academic life; on both fronts my gratitude extends to dozens of colleagues from dozens of countries around the world.

Another formative experience has of course been that of Poland. In archival terms, special thanks are due to Bruno Chojak, Adela Karsznia, and Duncan Jamieson of the Grotowski Institute in Wrocław; and Anna Halczak and Bogdan Renczyński of Cricoteka in Kraków. For their various ways of enabling and facilitating my 2002 exchange period in the University of Wrocław, I thank Dorota Michułka, Piotr Rudzki, and Juha Paavolainen. Warm thanks also go to Katarzyna Kwapisz Williams.

Closer to home, the Polish materials alone would have wreaked chaos were it not for the various work premises I have been provided at the University of Tampere. For these and all other practical support I thank the former Department of Literature and the Arts (especially Tarja Lipsonen, Anne Sannikka, and Pekka Tammi) and more recently everyone at the Centre for Practise as Research in Theatre or T7. Special thanks to Director Mika Lehtinen at T7 for the coffee and bisquits that kept appearing during the final rounds of long nights in the late summer and early fall of 2010.

Throughout, I have been enjoying the enduring support and enthusiasm of perceptive professors as my supervisors: in order of appearance, I pledge my gratitude to Pia Houni, Pentti Paavolainen, and Hanna Suutela. Not least, it is their superb suasive skill that is to be commended for the near miracle of my receiving so very many rounds of funding. Early on, this list also includes Aarre Heino and Panu Rajala.

Bruce McConachie, Janelle Reinelt, Freddie Rokem, and Bill Worthen have enhanced my thinking with solid advice, in and after ICATS; their insightful comments have remained with me, as something of an internalized sounding board throughout the years. While Bruce is to thank (or blame) for my initial turn to cognitive studies, I am grateful to them all and humble before the professional extent of their expertise.

For abiding collegial support, and for sharing the absurdities of struggling with research, special thanks are due to my fellow postgraduates Riku Roihankorpi (now Ph.D.), Katriina Andrianov, Heli Ansio, Tiia Kurkela, and Sarianne Paasonen. Like it or not, Heli also nudged me toward the cognitive waters on which I remain adrift.

Thanks also to all colleagues and professors involved in the Doctoral Program of Music, Theatre and Dance, in its many manifestations over the years – specifically to Kati Andrianov, Pauliina Hulkko, Erkki Huovinen, and Pentti Paavolainen, for the considerable effort of reading and commenting on an extensive manuscipt of 2007, in accordance to the "batch day" convention instituted therein. I am also much obliged to

Professor Eric Clarke, who visited the Program in 2006, for his musicologist's insight into my first attempts at marrying Gibson's ecological approach to the art of theatre.

For inspiring and entertaining discussions on all matters metaphorical, historical, artistic, theoretical, and even life-related, a plethora of vaguely categorized thanks are due to Kaisa Ikäläinen, Ville Kivimäki, Maria Korteila, Ilkka Naulapää, Janne Tapper, and Petri Tervo. You come from different places but have all been important.

For providing me with research materials otherwise inaccessible – often Polish dvds – I remain obliged to Owen Daly, Mikko Kanninen, Kaśka Kwapisz Williams, and Hannu Tommola. Also, I wish to thank Edwin Hutchins and Bruce McConachie for trusting me with drafts of cutting-edge research prior to publication.

Of late, I take substantial pleasure in being positively challenged by kind yet perceptive pre-reviewers' statements by John Lutterbie and Bruce McConachie. Also, I am deeply grateful (and this is the correct lexical choice) to Virginia Mattila for her unyielding effort, for hours on end, at polishing the English of my draft manuscript. Having absorbed most of her advice, I can only marvel at her eventual success.

Parts of the first two chapters have been previously published in Volume 18 of *Theatre Symposium*, on stage properties (2010, edited by J.K. Curry), and in the third yearbook of the Finnish Theatre Research Society (2009, edited by Laura Gröndahl, Anna Thuring, and myself). I thank the Society and the University of Alabama Press, respectively, for permission to reproduce extended versions of this material here.

Apart from the Theatre Symposium, Wake Forest University 2009, and various conferences of The International Federation for Theatre Research (FIRT/IFTR: St. Petersburg 2004, Helsinki 2006, Lisbon 2009, Munich 2010), drafts of the material have been presented e.g. in the British Grotowski Conference of 2009 (University of Kent, Canterbury), that of the UK Cognitive Linguistics Association in Cardiff 2007, in the 2009 Stage Animation Conference at my home university, and in visiting lectures in Helsinki kindly invited by Professors Laura Gröndahl and Esa Kirkkopelto, respectively of the then University of Art and Design and the Theatre Academy.

Beginning with the Erasmus grant that took me to Wrocław for the spring of 2002, these travels to archives and conferences have been financially afforded by the Doctoral Program of Music, Theatre and Dance, and at the University of Tampere by the University of Tampere Foundation, and the Department of Literature and the Arts.

For financial support for the research in general and for numerous finishing touches thereon, I pledge my gratitude to the Finnish Cultural Foundation (2009), the University of Tampere (2008), Jenny and Antti Wihuri Foundation (2007), the Doctoral Progam of Music, Theatre and Dance (…of Perfoming Arts, in 2003-6), and of course to my ever generous parents (as of 1977). Rather than subscribing to capitalist metaphors of Time being Money – and therefore not to be squandered – I do think the prospect of quality is afforded by time, and that money *can* at least buy you time.

Yet such extensive temporal investments also call for a high degree of patience from one's superiors and loved ones. Of late, considerable amounts were exhibited by Professor Suutela and Riku Roihankorpi, now managing the project DREX in which I am privileged to have been involved since. In duration, the support from my parents Viola and Mauri Paavolainen pre-dates anyone else's and extends beyond gratitude. The gratitude extends to all of my family and also embraces the family Ikäläinen.

At home, Kaisa has been a marvel of more than patience and understanding. For all my focus on processes of embedding, embodiment, and extension, those discussed in the thesis pale in face of a special little someone, having actually embodied them under our eyes and skin over the final months of my merely academic gestation.

Tiivistelmä – Finnish Abstract

Tutkimus käsittelee esiintyjän ja esineen keskinäisiä vuorovaikutussuhteita teatteriesityksissä, kantavana tutkimuskysymyksenään, miten ja millaisia merkityksiä tämä jo sinällään toiminnan ja havainnon tasoilla kantaa ja tuottaa. Teoreettisesti työ edustaa humanististen tieteiden kognitiivista käännettä, mutta pyrkii aihepiirinsä mukaisesti käsittämään mielen ja kognition myös olennaisesti ekologisena ilmiönä, päätä ja aivoja laajempana, toiminnan ja havainnon prosesseihin liudentuvana. Tutkimuksen keskeiset käsitteet (*metafora*, *kuvaskeemat* ja *tarjoumat* eli *affordanssit*) perustuvat kognitiiviseen kielitieteeseen ja ekologiseen psykologiaan, tärkeimpinä vaikuttajina Mark Johnson, James J. Gibson ja Tim Ingold; keskeiset tapaustutkimukset pureutuvat Jerzy Grotowskin, Tadeusz Kantorin ja Vsevolod Meyerholdin valittuihin ohjauksiin.

Ensimmäisessä luvussa havainnon, toiminnan ja kognition prosesseja havainnollistetaan temaattisesti keskeisillä toimijuuden ja esineyden käsitteillä: dramaturgisesti luku etenee abstraktista ajattelusta perustason kategorioiden ja ekologisten tarjoumien kautta metaforan ja käsitteellisen integraation prosesseihin, samalla kyseenalaistaen teatteriesineistön perinteistä jakoa lavastukseen, tarpeistoon ja puvustukseen. Filosofisemmalla tasolla luku kyseenalaistaa metaforan "olemisen suuresta ketjusta" – jossa mieli asettuu aineen ja subjekti objektin yläpuolelle – ja kehittelee sen teoreettiseksi vaihtoehdoksi kognition ekologista perustaa ruumiillisena, paikallisena, toiminnallisena ja ympäristöön hajautuvana (*embodied*, *embedded*, *enacted*, *extended*).

Toisessa luvussa tarjoumien ja kuvaskeemojen käsitteet niveltyvät hajautettuihin ja enaktiivisiin taito- ja kognitioteorioihin "ekologista pätevyyttä" korostavassa esitysanalyysissä Meyerholdin *Jalomielisestä aisankannattajasta* (1922). Paitsi tämän lavastusta ja näyttelijäntyötä – konstruktivismia ja biomekaniikkaa – luvussa tarkastellaan varhaisen Neuvosto-Venäjän kulttuuriekologiaa sekä analysoitavasta esityksestä näiden kaikkien historiallisessa vuorovaikutuksessa "tarjoutuneita" tulkintoja. Metaforiset painotukset vaihtelevat teatterillisista draamallisiin ja sosiologisista psykologisiin, mutta palautuvat kaikilla mainituilla tasoilla esitysekologian jo itsessään tukemiin *osan* ja *kokonaisuuden*, *esineen*, *säiliön* ja *syklien* kuvaskeemoihin.

Kolmas luku käsittelee Grotowskin ja Kantorin ajatuksia "köyhästä teatterista" suhteessa niiden puolestaan heijastamaan kommunistisen Puolan kulttuuriekologiaan. Tässä kontekstissa perustavina skeemoina näyttäytyvät *säiliö*, *keskus-äärialue*, *sykli*, *väylä* ja *vertikaalisuus*: näiden esitetään metaforisesti määrittävän molempien ohjaajien ajattelua ja toimintaa, myös esineiden ja esiintyjien suhteita heidän näyttämöekologioissaan (usein Kantor liitetään esineteatteriin, Grotowski näyttelijöiden teatteriin). Tätä seuraavat yksityiskohtaiset analyysit Grotowskin ja Józef Szajnan *Akropoliksesta* (1962–68) ja Kantorin ohjauksesta *Kuolkoot taiteilijat!* (1985–90) haarautuvat ensimmäisen esityksen esinedramaturgioista Grotowskin myöhemmän uran ekologisiin ja enaktiivisiin painotuksiin (luvussa 5), toisaalta Kantorin uran läpi toistuvista esineistä ja metaforista "hajautetun" muistin ja identiteetin teorioihin (luvussa 6).

Lyhyessä epilogissa tarkastellaan paitsi Grotowskin ja Kantorin metonymistä ja metaforista perintöä suhteessa heidän totuttuun julkisuuskuvaansa (ks. yllä), myös yleisempiä jännitteitä ja jatkumoita suhteessa tämän hetken länsimaista kulttuuri- ja esitysekologiaa enenevästi määrittävään medioitumiseen ja teknologisoitumiseen. Laajennetun ja hajautetun kognition viitekehyksessä – myös "ekologisessa etiikassa" – uudet *kyborgisuuden* ja *posthumanismin* metaforat kuvaavat pikemminkin aina jo ollutta asiaintilaa – mikäli siis niiden kyseenalaistamalla "ihmisyydellä" tarkoitetaan itseriittoista, ympäristöstään olennaisesti riippumatonta kartesiolaista yksilösubjektia.

Conventions

Text: In citations, *italics* are from the original unless otherwise noted.

Quotation marks are used to mark direct quotations, bar the occasional emphasis on key terms and non-obvious cases of metaphorical expressions (e.g. “have in mind”).

Names of “image schemas” are given in SMALL CAPITALS, those of metaphors and metonymies, with Capital Initials (e.g. Time is Space, Place for Event).

Notes: So as to enable maximally concise discussion in the text, most notes are given in clusters referring to whole paragraphs.

Generally in the order of their appearance in the text, specific sources are identified by key words therein, cited in parentheses: e.g. Johnson 2007: 17 (“recruited”).

Sources in languages other than English will be given in [square brackets], throughout. When an English translation exists, I will refrain from specifying the Polish original unless it entails some amendment to the translation.

INTRODUCTION

The first paragraph for what has become a rather extensive study might do worse than try and say things straight: thus, I will begin by briefly unpacking the key words that appear in my title. The general theme of the thesis is *performer–object interaction*, as enacted and perceived in the *theatre* – its overarching research question, how varieties of "meaning" may already be enacted and perceived thereby. In *theorizing* this, the work generally subscribes to the *cognitive* turn of the humanities (if only making its way into our own discipline of theatre and performance studies) but also aspires to nudge it toward an *ecological* ontology, more congenial to the theme: of mind or cognition "beyond the brain," "out of our heads," inseparable from action and perception. As for audiences, accordingly, the thesis is that the interplay of actors and objects as such – and "organism-environment interaction" is one possible definition of ecology – affords a degree of enjoyment and understanding, whether or not the given spectator has any command of the spoken language of the performance. As to research material, finally, this last point is well exemplified by the wide international enthusiasm over the Polish-language productions of two of the main protagonists of the study, Tadeusz Kantor (1915–90) and Jerzy Grotowski (1933–99): the former, best known for the later work of his Cricot 2 company, which he chose to call the "theatre of death," the latter, for the "poor theatre" he explored with his Theatre Laboratory, in the 1960s.

Given my theme, the choice of these two may seem both obvious and curious: where Kantor's painterly theatricality would often subject the human element to an all-imposing objecthood (the earlier "stages" of his work, including notions like the *happening*, *informel*, and *zero theatre*), Grotowski would abandon the "theatre of productions," at the turn of the 1970s, for an ever deeper involvement with human spirituality and performativity (from *paratheatre*, through *theatre of sources* and *objective drama*, to *art as vehicle* – the work on which still continues in his final base in Italy). Of course, these statements are only intended as stereotypical generalizations; to set them into something of an historical perspective, I will also address the ambiguity of technological and human efficiency as it played out in director Vsevolod Meyerhold's (1874–1940) brief engagement with notions of *contructivism* and *biomechanics*, in early Soviet Russia – after his death in Stalin's purges, his example is clearly to be seen in the works of his Polish progeny, if only in a darker, post-holocaust mode. As for the specific productions I will analyze, all three resonate among signature images

of twentieth-century avantgarde, with said difference: Where Meyerhold's actors, in *The Magnanimous Cuckold* (1922), whirled a new world of industrialized efficiency, in the spirit of the October Revolution, Kantor's dead souls could only erect a barricade out of their pillories, against the collectivist terror of *Let the Artists Die!* (1985); out-glooming even Kantor, Grotowski's *Akropolis* (1962) set out to "confront" some of the key cultural heritage of Europe, with its utter devastation at Auschwitz.

Then again, for the small industry of research devoted to these practitioners – and in the wake of the UNESCO-designated Grotowski Year of 2009, important books and dvds have seen their publication up until the final stages of my own[1] – the study of *objects* has remained diffuse, at best, and surely marginal to theatre research. While often implicated in discussions of space (McAuley 2003, Wiles 2003), scenography (Aronson 2005, Brockett *et al.* 2010), or stage technology (e.g. Baugh 2005), the key perspectives to have explicitly *theorized* theatrical objects come down to semiotics (Veltruský 1964, Fischer-Lichte 1992, Pavis 2003), phenomenology (States 1985, Garner 1994), and cultural materialism (Gil Harris & Korda, eds., 2002); for a concise overview of these developments, I warmly recommend Andrew Sofer's "Introduction" to his *The Stage Life of Props* (2003). Apart from Sofer, and the two recent issues on objects and props, in *Performance Research* and *Theatre Symposium* (Clark, Gough & Watt, eds., 2007; Curry, ed., 2010), entire volumes/anthologies have mostly been devoted to puppets (Jurkowski 1988, Tillis 1992) or "performing objects" (Proschan, ed., 1983; Bell, ed., 2001) – yet as Bell admits, much writing about object theatre "is not distinctly defined as such" but originates in other disciplines still. Accordingly, we must also take into account the wider interdisciplinary effort at tackling the circulation of objects, outside the theatre – whether framed as things or artifacts, gifts or commodities, technologies or magical effigies – and especially, in the "four areas of intense object study" the editors of the recent *Object Reader* (Candlin & Guins 2009) identify in "anthropology and material culture studies, science and technology studies, technoculture and digital media, and critical theory and philosophy."[2]

Having thus outlined but the most general frame of reference for my own study, the fact remains that the "matter" of (stage) objects – when not entirely eclipsed by its alleged familiarity and mundanity – still tends to be overlooked for allegedly "deeper" human or social concerns: as Candlin and Guins continue, the preoccupation with "the social life of things" (see Appadurai, ed., 1986) "is ostensibly concerned with objects [--] but actually entails the colonization of the object by the subject and the social." In

the theatre, accordingly, we might do well to foreground what Sofer chooses to call (extending Appadurai's social metaphor) "the *stage* life of props – as opposed to their symbolic, psychological, ideological, cultural, or figurative lives." On the one hand, this entails shifting our attention away from objects as an isolated or fixed category – whether the stage prop, in Sofer's case, be treated as "static symbol (as in traditional drama criticism), synchronic lexeme (as in theater semiotics), sensory image (as in theater phenomenology), neurotic symptom (as in psychoanalysis), or placeholder for a particular ideological configuration (as in new historicism)" – and rather focusing on the fluid *relations and interactions* between actors and objects, people and things.[3] On the other hand, we must also beware not to reduce these relations to exclusively *anthropocentric* ones ("colonizing" the object as a mere "extension" of the subject), nor into a *technological determinism*, with the human as if subdued by the material.

As I will elaborate in Chapter 1, however, this latter dynamic often comes with a whole set of modernist anxieties – an interplay of fear and fascination, over notions of dominance, displacement, and human agency – that we do need to address, if on a more philosophical level. In stage practice, for now, much of it may simply be a question of aesthetics and tradition: in his more conservative tones, puppetry scholar Henryk Jurkowski laments the "ascent of the actor" who rather wishes to manage a "theatre of objects" – "atomizing" her very body into "heads, feet, and thighs" – than "submit," as she should, to the "programme of acting" embodied by the puppet. What I wish to suggest, instead, is a fundamental *complementarity* between objects and performers (e.g. puppets and puppeteers), such that the former materially *enable and constrain* the latter's actions, yet always *reciprocally* to her skill and intentions: burn the puppet, and the range of such "affordances" will again be drastically different. The same applies to all the key productions I am to analyze: if Grotowski (and perhaps, Meyerhold) may appear to side with humanity and Kantor, with objects, such juxtapositions soon become moot, depending on simple matters of perspective. Insofar as we concentrate on the acting or the revolutionary ethos of *Cuckold*, it would seem to be all about efficiency; at the same time, the playtext itself is about a poetic simpleton who messes up his life by becoming pathologically jealous. In *Let the Artists Die!*, the "artists" are put in the pillory, yes, but at the end, they erect a barricade thereof. Conversely, what Grotowski's actors erect in *Akropolis* (yes, with exquisite skill) is a crematorium that is only to devour them in the finale – "and the smoke rises in spirals."[4]

As said, finally, my interdiscipline of choice for tackling these issues lies at the more or less co-constitutive interface of *performance and cognition*: whether or not we entertain some fuzzy division of labor between actors, characters, and spectators, what I mean by "co-constitutive" is that mind and thinking, in the theatre and out, cannot be artifically cordoned off from basic experiences of action and perception. To the extent that this concerns material objects, the way we constantly tend to think *through* them should not detract from the "cognitive life of things," as but the most up-to-date variation of the now familiar metaphor: as the editors of a recent anthology by the title suggest, "[o]ne could say that things are to human intelligence as the eye is to sight, i.e. constitutive and yet invisible" (Malafouris & Renfrew 2010). As far as visual metaphors apply, cognition and the wider ecologies in which it is culturally embedded can only be approached in roughly the "binocular" fashion Bert States has introduced at the (not necessarily unrelated) nexus of semiotics and phenomenology – and I cannot but underline that "cognitive science," here, is no alien monolith but one of the most interdisciplinary engagements to flourish in our current academia. If recent special sections (*TDR* 53:4/2009) or issues in some of our key journals are any indication, it may just be that theatre and performance studies are now ready to join in – prior to my more theoretical introduction, let me quote at length from David Z. Saltz's "Editorial Comment" to the December 2007 issue (59:4) of *Theatre Journal*:

> The announcement for this special issue cast a very wide net, inviting papers exemplifying "New Paradigms" for scholarship in theatre and performance studies. The call observed that scholars "are growing restless or disenchanted with critical and theoretical paradigms that have dominated the field since the 1980s. The field appears to be at a crossroads, with no clear consensus about what rigorous scholarship should look like." The pool of submissions we received, however, suggested that a consensus of sorts does seem to be emerging among a large and diverse group of scholars. We received an outpouring of papers espousing cognitive approaches rooted in scientific research – thus this special issue on "Performance and Cognition" was born.[5]

Performance and Cognition: The Necessary Exposition

Since the early 1990s, the key figure in urging theatre and performance scholars – myself deeply included – to engage the interface of our discipline with the sciences of the mind has unequivocally (yet very vocally) been Bruce McConachie. While the wider interdisciplinarity of the cognitive enterprise ranges from hard sciences such as neurobiology and artificial intelligence, to psychology, linguistics, anthropology and

(perhaps closest to my specific concerns) cognitive archaeology, the more limited array of studies to which my take on actors and objects wishes to contribute, has to date addressed not only various cultural/historical/theoretical concerns (McConachie 2003; Nellhaus 2010; in a sense also Fischer-Lichte 2008), but also the specifics of acting (Blair 2008; Zarrilli 2010) and audiences (McConachie 2008) – together with a burgeoning industry of "Cognitive Shakespeare," in more literature-oriented criticism. To the extent that this loose constellation is generally united in "recognizing embodied cognition as one aspect of the uniqueness of theatre that must now be considered alongside cultural and historical determinants" (the formulation is from McConachie's 2006 anthology co-edited with F. Elizabeth Hart, *Performance and Cognition*),[6] one or two notes are now in order, regarding this very "embodiment" of the mind.

First, insofar as it denotes an ongoing process that cannot be meaningfully decomposed into *mind* and *body*, as separate entities, the notion of embodied cognition renders suspect such strict dichotomies "between abstraction and materiality" as are often related to a "cognitive emphasis on meaning" – together with their attendant calls, as it is phrased in the revered anthology on *Critical Theory and Performance*, of "transcending rational and cognitive methods in order to find adequate modes of analysis for the affective and embodied aspects of analysis and spectatorship." Rather, as McConachie provocatively put it in 1994, already, cognitive theatre scholars "need to understand the lure of the obvious as well as the allusive," the "manifest and direct meanings of bodies" embedded in "the sensuous materiality of performed presence." Accordingly, the notion of *cognition* itself has come to far exceed its core meanings related to reasoning, knowledge, memory, learning, and the like: add the centrality of action, intention, and emotion to what has sometimes been called "second-generation" cognitive science, and the range of the "cognitive" extends well into areas where traditional philosophy would only detect cognitive *silence*. "Backstage cognition" being a nicely theatrical metaphor for such unconscious mental activity, it however "constitutes our unreflective common sense," or so the hypothesis goes – mind, a function of species-specific physiology and anatomy, such "common" sense thus has its grounding in commonalities of embodiment and (crucially to the present project) ecology.[7]

Another way to frame the matter is that mind and cognition arise from "aspects of experience traditionally regarded as the purview of aesthetics" – this is the point of view recently adopted by cognitive philosopher Mark Johnson, for whom, rather than to be "dismissed as a mere matter of subjective taste," *aesthetics* "becomes the study

of everything that goes into the human capacity to make and experience meaning." While Johnson, then – drawing essentially on pragmatist philosopher John Dewey – has already asserted that "we can find no better examples of how meaning happens than by attending to the arts," what I wish to draw attention to in this dissertation is how, in the theatre, this comes down to embodied creatures, much like the alleged viewer, interacting with environments specifically constructed to afford "heightened, intensified, and highly integrated experiences of meaning."[8] To outline what such an "aesthetics of human understanding" might look like, *as it is performed*, the rest of this section will review three key concepts necessary for advancing my argument – and for the reader's appreciation of it – arising from Johnson's work with linguist George Lakoff, in the discipline of cognitive semantics. In conclusion, I will briefly outline my "ecological" approach to performance and cognition, "out of our heads."

Cognitive Semantics: Three Basic Concepts

Conceptual Metaphor

One way to approach the matter of cognitive *theatre research* would be through Lakoff and Johnson's conceptual metaphor theory; indeed, much of its burgeoning tradition has focused on culturally "dominant" metaphors and "image schemas" which, in specific socio-historical contexts, tend to be "re-embodied" in performance.[9] "Metaphor," here, would not be a "figure of speech" as much as a ubiquitous, embodied way of *thinking and acting* – a conceptual mapping which enables us to understand and make sense of abstract things "in terms of" more literal experiences, such as *movement*, *manipulation*, and *perception*. Of obvious importance to the use and study of theatrical objects, as well, let us see how each of these works as a "source domain" for understanding such an abstraction as *understanding*, as the metaphorical "target domain": By way of simple examples, perception, here, gives rise to such metaphorical expressions as "I *see* what you mean"; when I proposed that "one *way* to *approach* the matter" was "*through* conceptual metaphor," I drew on the movement domain, myself, and in terms of manipulation, one can say one "did not quite *grasp* the point."

In Lakoff and Johnson's view – and this is the big issue – neither scientific nor artistic discourses can do without a set of deeply "ontological" metaphors: How, for instance, would you speak of the "high points" of your life, literally? Of love, with no recourse to metaphors of union, madness, illness, magic, nurturance, journeys, close-

ness, heat, or of physical force such as attraction or electricity?[10] Or indeed, of "the stage life of props," without drawing on concepts of biology, biography, ecology?

Instead of reflecting some pre-existing reality, in short, what conceptual metaphors do is *create* what we take to be real in the first place: as the title of Lakoff and Johnson's ground-breaking *Metaphors We Live By* (1980) suggests, there is a profoundly performative rhetoric to metaphor, whether it is a "*war* on terror" or a "cognitive *turn* in theatre studies" it makes us think and act in terms of – in short, metaphors carry implicit sets of assumptions we can refer to as "ideology" or "worldview."[11] As for a theatrical performance, accordingly, it makes a world of difference whether the unit of analysis is conceived of as an *event* or as a *work* of art, process or product; foregrounding some aspects of the imagined target domain, every such metaphor will effectively conceal many others. What makes metaphor *conceptual*, beyond poetical flourish or semiotic arbitrariness, is the way it is systematically motivated – "framed," to use a theatrical metaphor – by embodiment and cultural practice: innocent as it may sound, to speak of "reading" meaning "into" or "out of" a theatrical event, say, such expressions only make the sense they do in terms of literacy and spatial boundedness. As *instances* of conceptual correspondences, however, they provide a reasonable linkage between language and embodiment, without reducing the latter into the former.

Image Schemas

As for the other important concept, much of the work on conceptual metaphor in theatre theory has concentrated on metaphors grounded in "image schemas." Linguist George Lakoff defines these as "relatively simple structures that constantly recur in our everyday bodily experience: CONTAINERS, PATHS, LINKS, FORCES, BALANCE, and in various orientations and relations: UP-DOWN, FRONT-BACK, PART-WHOLE, CENTER-PERIPHERY, etc." In Mark Johnson's "informal phenomenological analysis," these structures and relations are "dynamic, recurring pattern[s] of organism-environment interactions," "constantly operating in our perception, bodily movement through space, and physical manipulation of objects" – discussed as metaphorical source domains, above. The basic premise is that image schemas have "*sufficient internal structure to constrain our understanding and reasoning*," making the latter, in effect, "bodily activities." The foundational "logic" of each schema comes down to "a small number of parts standing in simple relations" (take, an inside, an outside, and a boundary between, for CONTAINMENT) that can also be "recruited for abstract thinking";

representing metaphorical and literal aspects of CONTAINMENT, for example, being "*out of* one's mind" may sound to us no less intuitive than being "*in* a room."[12]

In the present context, image schemas seem to be at work not only in how we *speak* about the theatre, but in the ways we *perform*, ourselves, and *perceive* others to perform: as Bruce McConachie already suggested in 1994, the existing inventory could even "stand as a tentative chart of distinctive structures of performance simply on the basis of its accessibility, inclusiveness, and comparability," providing "a rough grammar of performance conventions – that is, descriptive terms that link audience comprehension with performance activity." According to Tobin Nellhaus, a handful of image schemas is enough to generate what he calls *performance strategies*, "more-or-less integrated systems" of acting, space, narrative, and spectatorship, in a given historical period. On a more mundane level, their ubiquity is evidenced in how readily "at hand" image schemas are for renewed embodiment in co-verbal gestures: just observe people's hands as they intuitively "perform" metaphors of Time, say, in terms of SCALES, CYCLES, or the FRONT–BACK orientation (and note that "future" could quite as well be situated behind, on the logic not of locomotion but of its unforeseeability). All in all, the analytic strength of theorizing such "basic structures" of "encounter[ing] a world that we can understand and act within" (Johnson) lies in how their very basicness reveals important *continuity* within seeming *diversity*: consider only how the logic of CENTER and PERIPHERY is metaphorically recruited for discussions of relative "importance," in a multitude of domains from bodies and trees to cultural theory (a case in point could be the "marginality" of theatrical objects as an academic topic).[13]

Conceptual Metonymy

Finally, it could be argued that the very coherence of image schemas arises by virtue of their PARTS being configured into experientially meaningful WHOLES – involving a "metonymical" correlation that often serves as the basis for metaphorical ones: where the latter entail a uni-directional transfer of meaning *across* conceptual domains, metonymy can be defined as a reciprocal "stand-for" relationship, involving "direct physical and causal associations" *within* the given configuration. Given how Roman Jakobson already understood them as modes of *thought and behavior* in the 1950s, many cognitive linguists now recognize the salient cases of metaphor and metonymy, as indeed reflecting his structuralist criteria of *similarity* and *contiguity* – not as two distinct poles, though, but on a continuum of regular correlations in embodied experi-

ence: thinking of quantity in terms of VERTICALITY (More Is Up, Less Is Down) has a perceptual basis in a metonymical relation of Cause and Effect – add something to a container or pile, and the level goes up – whence the mapping can be metaphorically extended to cases where no such objective correspondence exists (e.g., *Prices rose*).[14]

While only recently recognized as a topic equivalent to metaphor, in cognitive semantics/linguistics, metonymy is clearly foundational to the cognitive work of stage objects, in the theatre: metonymically implicated in the most mundane processes of movement and manipulation, discussed above, they often engender what the early Prague School scholars already analyzed as "scenic metonymies." To quote Sofer's discussion, simple props may thus "silently convey" locale, period, time of day, occupation, identity, and so forth; apart from such "visual shorthand" functions, and both anticipatory and retrospective uses in dramaturgy ("'ghosted' by their previous stage incarnations"), "fetishized" and "haunted" props may "emanate" or "ventriloquize" absent histories and subjects, sometimes leading more "poetically minded playwrights to promote them to title characters," as in *The Seagull* or *The Glass Menagerie*. While it may be too much to suggest, with the structuralists, that metaphor and metonymy organize entire genres or styles (poetry/prose, symbolism/realism, Kantor/Grotowski), it can be argued that single objects do gain in metonymical weight, so to say, in the lack of elaborate scenery, and are thoroughly *interimplied* with their human wielders, given the definitional reciprocity of metonymical relations (Part for Whole, Cause for Effect, Controller for Controlled – each pair may stand for each other both ways).[15]

Finally, metonymical thinking also seems to motivate some standard *theoretical* approaches to theatrical objects – I am thinking specifically of "new historicism" and "cultural materialism," much applied in regard to early modern practices. As Sofer explains, they tend to refer stage objects to the larger circulation of "cultural anxieties, ideological fault lines, and symbolic economies"; inseparable from its "historical, cultural, and ideological baggage," "no recognizable object arrives on stage innocent." While much of cultural "symbolism" does indeed carry such metonymical baggage (somewhat punningly, we could often speak of "Property for Property" metonymies, whether a fancy vehicle, say, is taken to stand for social status or ecological footprint), there is a bias, however, to many notions of *cultural* materialism and material *culture*, in how they often tend to "overlook the actual materiality of the material world," for social construction, cultural conceptualization, or indeed cognitive representation. The quote is from Nicole Boivin, the point, already recognized by many: in our terms, the

"material" is all too often reduced to a mere Effect of such more abstract Causes – objects, to "props" in a story already "written by human agents" – instead of their emerging as equal PARTS in a developing, cognitive/ecological WHOLE. If, as Jon Erickson puts it, the postmodern "demystification of man has resulted in the mystification of language, discourse, ideology, writing," the question arises why "he" is not rather "seen *within* the material world of nature of which he is a constituent part?"[16]

Expanding the Field: The Ecological Turn

In my brief foray into metaphor, I suggested "it makes a world of difference whether the 'unit of [performance] analysis' is conceived of as an *event* or as a *work* of art" – the same applies equally to metaphors of cognition. Where early "cognitivists" understood the Mind as a Computer, and much of current neuroscience relies on versions of a Mind as Brain metaphor, the ecological approaches I will draw on see it as an "embodied dynamic system" emerging from organism-environment interactions.[17] Contrasting cognitivist vestiges of *mental representation* or *information processing* with more embodied levels of thinking, imagining, and making sense – not in terms of input and output but in terms of perception and action – notions of *cognitive ecology* often posit that much of our cognition is extended (Andy Clark), distributed (Edwin Hutchins), or enacted "out of our heads" (Alva Noë 2009): essentially, *performed* in the world. A relative minority as such emerging conceptions may still remain, within the field of cognitive science at large – among their historical antecedents, the likes of William James, John Dewey, Lev Vygotsky, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Gregory Bateson to name but a few – the most influential figures for my own approach would likely be Mark Johnson, anthropologist Tim Ingold, and psychologist James J. Gibson (the latter two, actually, fiercely critical of traditionally cognitive perspectives).

Now, what this implies for the study of material objects – whether framed as "cognitive artifacts" (Hutchins 2001) or "things that make us smart" (Norman 1993) – is that instead of mental representations (as in Margolis & Laurence, eds., 2007), we should rather concentrate on their actual *materiality* and its performativity, as it were: a focus well in agreement with Gibson's ecological notion of *affordances* (on prior uses in film, music, and drama, see Anderson 1996, Clarke 2005, and Worthen 2010). Beyond Gibson and his followers – Alan Costall, Harry Heft, and Edward Reed have been specifically important – much of my thinking about objects has been influenced by a recent profusion of dedicated titles, many of them affiliated with the loose field

of cognitive archaeology: e.g., *Thinking Through Material Culture* (Knappett 2005); *Doing Things with Things* (Costall & Dreier, eds., 2006); *Material Cultures, Material Minds* (Boivin 2008); and *Material Agency* (Knappett & Malafouris, eds., 2008). In their introduction to *The Cognitive Life of Things* (2010), Lambros Malafouris and Colin Renfrew sum up the general idea as an "ontological coalition" or "co-extension of the mental with the physical," such that "minds and things are in fact continuous and *interdefinable processes* rather than isolated and independent entities. By knowing what things are, and how they become what they are, you gain an understanding about what minds are and how they become what they are – and vice versa."[18]

In these terms, what may have begun as something of a modernist sensibility, on my part – a somewhat idealistic hypothesis relating the imaginative use of material objects to the very specificity of theatre and performance, as distinct art forms – has slowly given way (for better or for worse) to a focus on the *cognitive work* of things and objects, as profoundly affecting who, what, and where we are as human beings. In terms of emphasis, the general approach remains distinct not only from essentially *neural* takes on performance and cognition – to the extent that these may sometimes beg the question (roughly along the lines of "so what?"), an ecologically valid analysis has to arise from the material reality of the performance, itself – but also, from some prior treatments of "theatre ecology": where much of Baz Kershaw's (2007) important book, for example, remains essentially *metaphorical* – drawing "analogies and homologies" between "eco-activist protests and the black holes of space," or "the free radicals of molecular physics [and] nineteenth-century acting" – my focus will be on "the interrelational interdependence of 'organisms-in-environments'" he also argues "theatre and performance in all their manifestations always involve."[19] The crux is to take this literally – in this book, the "ecology" of a stage performance involves Gibsonian "affordances" well beyond such fixed typologies of theatrical objects as props, scenery, and costume: just as the objects on stage always enable and constrain forms of action available for the *performers*, the interplay of actors and objects will also enable and constrain the range of interpretations the *audience* is liable to come up with. The range is wide, to be sure, but anything will not likely "mean" just anything.

Outline of Chapters and Methodologies

Before a very brief outline of what is to come (and for the more impatient reader, the above might just suffice for jumping to specific case studies straight away), a word or

two might be in order, concerning some of my sources and choices of methodology. Given that much of my research material is literary – apart from the video recordings that exist of Grotowski and Kantor – a good part of my general method comes down to analyzing the conceptual metaphors and image schemas of written texts (whether by directors, critics, or scholars). Of special importance are the worldviews and artistic visions of my target directors, given that each of them also goes to some length in explicating his ideas about the theatricality of material objects: "halfway between function and symbol," Meyerhold's props are often discussed as "more than simply the things they are but less than mere symbols of something else."[20] For Kantor and Grotowski, I will use a variety of Polish-language sources that have not as yet figured in Anglo-American criticism, and shift the received view of their work in many important respects; apart from these, I will obviously analyze the onstage ecologies of my target productions on levels of interpretation as pragmatic as a profound reciprocal engagement of visual, film, and written remainders only can afford. While hardly able to do *full* justice to any of my subjects – and I expect many readers to be utterly sensitive to such matters, given the highly specialized regimens of research and practice pertaining to each – I do hope to demonstrate how theories of cognitive ecology lend themselves to detailed analyses, beyond the impressionistic variety characteristic of some prior theatrical applications of cognitive research – how such an approach *can* accommodate cultural context and is also capable of doing historically specific work.

With Jiři Veltruský's brief but influential essay "Man and Object in the Theater" (1940) as something of a constant reference point, **Chapter 1** takes the key notions of *agent* and *object*, to theorize general processes of perception, action, and cognition: progressively blurring such traditional concepts as *set*, *props*, or *costume*, the chapter proceeds from "domain-specific" abstractions through "basic-level" categories and "ecological" affordances, to the "domain-general" work of blending and metaphor. In its more philosophical framing, it addresses metaphors of "the Great Chain of Being" – instrumental to the artificial division of mind over matter and subjects over objects – and instead, makes a theoretical case for the *ecological grounding* of all cognition, modified by the four influential *e*'s: mind as embodied, embedded, extended, enacted. In **Chapter 2**, this theoretical framework is further elaborated in a detailed analysis of Meyerhold's 1922 staging of *The Magnanimous Cuckold* – from the affordances of its "constructivist" setting to an extended discussion of its "biomechanical" acting (the then metaphors of reflexology and Taylorism, contrasted with distributed and enactive

notions of cognition and skill) and from the "cultural ecology" of early Soviet Russia to the variety of interpretations the interplay of all these have historically afforded. Toward the end, the general theory is developed into something of a tentative method, as concerns how the notions of image schemas and affordances (only vaguely related in existing cognitive research) may intertwine to serve the "ecological validity" of performance analysis: As for the *Cuckold* case, image schemas of PART-WHOLE, OBJECT, CYCLES, and CONTAINMENT emerge as equally integral to its staging, to its cultural context, and to its canonical interpretations, no matter how otherwise conflicting.

With **Chapter 3**, the conceptual focus shifts to Kantor's and Grotowski's notions of "poor theatre," reflecting as they seem a cultural ecology very different from that of Meyerhold's Russia. More specifically, the chapter addresses ecologies of CONTAINMENT, CENTER-PERIPHERY, CYCLES, PATHS, and VERTICALITY, as fundamental to the overall mindset of Communist Poland, and discusses how they are metaphorically reflected in the thinking and practice of both directors – including the embodiment of these structures in their onstage ecologies of performer-object interaction. On these bases, **Chapters 4 and 5** present detailed analyses of *Akropolis*, as staged by Grotowski and Józef Szajna first in 1962, and of Kantor's 1985 production of *Let the Artists Die!* – the former, ranging from its "plot points" of performer-object interaction and some of their textual bases (in Stanisław Wyspiański's original drama of 1904 and in Tadeusz Borowski's stories of Auschwitz), to the ecological and enactive emphases of Grotowski's later work; the latter, from some of Kantor's overarching metaphors, objects, and emphases throughout his career, to "distributed" notions of memory and selfhood. To conclude, a brief **Epilogue** will address not only the metonymical/metaphorical "afterlives" of Grotowski and Kantor, respectively – more to do, perhaps, with their prototypical profiling with "actors" and "objects" than the two of their productions I will discuss to rather more mixed effect – but some of the tensions and continuities that go with "performing humanity" in the ever more mediatized ecologies of new technology that we currently inhabit. While only emerging with these new ecologies, on the notions of extended and distributed cognition such ostensibly contemporary metaphors as the *cyborg* or the *posthuman* only go to define what we have always already been – *if* by the "human post" we mean a self-contained Cartesian individual, somehow disentangled from its ecological embedding.

1 AGENTS AND OBJECTS: A PRIMER TO CONCEPTS AND APPROACHES

Looking at how scenography has traditionally been conceptualized, we basically find two levels of abstraction and analysis: one concerned with "objects," rather generally – theoretical, detached, and fairly recent – and one, with the more pragmatic vocabulary of *scenery*, *props*, and perhaps *costume*. A proponent of the former, semiotician Patrice Pavis notes the "difficulty of drawing a definite boundary between the actor and the surrounding world" as a basis for using *object* as the analytical term, "neutral [and] empty," as opposed to the baggage of tradition carried by *props* or *scenery*. Part of a "Western cultural heritage," he deems the latter terms "classical," or even "antiquated," and in the event of performance, there is indeed a sense in which these alleged categories may easily morph into one another: as Jiří Veltruský has phrased it, "It often seems that a given object in one situation is part of the set or costume, and in the next becomes a prop." By extension, however, this proclivity to overlapping definitions appears to be the case for the more abstract and more concrete terminologies, in equal measure; to illustrate their difference, one can really only refer to what one takes to be typical examples. To set up much of what I shall argue in this chapter, accordingly, I choose to quote at length from semioticians Shoshana Avigal and Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, on the one hand, and from psychologist James J. Gibson, on the other. While the former focus on theatrical objects, and the latter on objects in general, their respective approaches appear representative enough when it comes to divergent levels of abstraction, in how we may choose to conceive of an "object."[1]

[AVIGAL & RIMMON-KENAN]
– either inanimate or capable of becoming inanimate;
– materially realizable on stage in three dimensions;
– transportable or placed so as to enable the actors to move around it;
– deprived of intentionality: the object is manipulated but cannot itself initiate a discourse;
– either multifunctional, or different from its everyday use, or completely non-utilitarian except in its technical theatrical function;
– capable of "furnishing" the "stage-space" and acting as mediator between

[J. J. GIBSON]
– a handle (a graspable object attached to a portable object).
– a hand-hold (a graspable object attached to an immovable layout).
– a stick (or rake). An elongated rigid object affording a long reach (or a long grasp). [--]
– a throwable object, missile (rigid, graspable, movable, of moderate weight).
– an object that affords *hitting*; a club, hammer.
– an object that affords cutting; a knife, axe [--].
– an object that affords *piercing*; needle, spear.
– an object that affords knotting, binding,

the actor's body and this space;
– seemingly mimetic and referential;
– artificial, "fabricated," unnatural;
– artifact, capable of being evaluated with the help of such aesthetic criteria as are used in the plastic arts

lashing: string, thong, rope, thread.
– a surface that affords support for useful objects: a bench, shelf, table.
– an object that affords *rolling* (sphere or cylinder) as distinguished from one that has a flat *base* and affords *sliding*.

As for the distinction of *actor* and object, the focal impetus not only for this chapter is to be found in the little essay from 1940, "Man and Object in the Theater," by the Prague School semiotician Jiři Veltruský (1919–94). In something of an early generalization over the two terminologies proposed above, what he suggests therein is that neither actors nor objects (set, props, or costume) can be "delimited" into "sealed-off spheres" outside the *living continuum* over which they constantly fluctuate between "the dynamic forces of action and the static forces of characterization." To only introduce the central concept of his argument – proceeding in a vertical sort of dramaturgy, from actor to object and back, to the "dialectic antinomy" he terms their relationship – Veltruský thus considers such fluctuation a matter of actors and objects alike, gaining and shedding what he chooses to call their "action force." While some of his examples do appear somewhat lame from today's perspective (e.g., the pendulum of a clock as an "active object," soldiers flanking a barracks, as object-like people), there remains a provocative thrust to his proposal that even inane props may come to be perceived "as spontaneous subjects, *equivalent* to the figure of the actor." For historian of props Andrew Sofer, for example, this appears "murky" and all too universal for distinguishing stage objects from stage subjects – equating Veltruský's concept with "semiotic subjectivity," he thus arrives at much the same boundary syndrome as earlier did Pavis.[2]

And as for the present study, this is a syndrome of some importance: once the question is posed about whose action force it is that "comes to the fore" stronger, in a performance (that of the human or the object), there often emerges a whole set of modernist anxieties to accompany what seemed to be merely a simple issue of definition. First, and most clear-cut, there is the anxiety over *dominance* – in the sense that the stage objects of a Kantor or a Grotowski, say, are typically discussed in terms of their imposing on, or submitting to, the very humanity of their actors. Second, there is the notion of the human and the objectlike as if switching functions, and the fear and the fascination this may entail: echoing "the two opposite connotations" of puppetry, as proposed by Veltruský's Prague School colleague Otakar Zich, where Sigmund Freud finds "uncanny" "the impression of automatic, mechanical processes at work

behind the ordinary appearance of mental activity," philosopher Henri Bergson finds the "comical," likewise, embedded in "anything rigid, ready-made, mechanical in gesture, attitude and even facial expression." Finally, there is a sense in which all of these seem to embody a basic anxiety over human agency: as philosopher Don Ihde notes, a recurring "replacement worry" can be detected from Luddite-era anxieties about machines replacing humans to the postmodern dilemma as to whether virtual reality will supplant or replace real life.[3] Yet, as replacement, mingling together, and dominance alike all imply the prior existence of two distinct entities, perhaps this exactly should be called into question – the *duality* of subjects and objects, the very idea of "drawing a definite boundary between the actor and the surrounding world"?

Accordingly, this chapter will be framed by two philosophical overviews, utterly distinct in their metaphors for agency, objecthood, and their causal relationship: beginning with a discussion of *dualist ontologies* – how actors and objects, or mind and matter, are metaphorically divided as if over a vertical chain – it will conclude by proposing an *ecological epistemology* in which they only emerge in "horizontal couplings" over a field of relationships. Apart from other anxieties motivated by dualist approaches, what I end up terming an "ecological approach" should relativize what I see as an "anti-cognitive prejudice" in theatre and performace studies as they stand; over the intervening sections, notions of *agent* and *object* will be used as a convenient point of entry for discussing larger issues in the intertwining processes of cognition, perception, and action – also, for renouncing such fixed typologies of theatrical objects as props, scenery, or costume, for their grounding situatedness in performance.

As for Veltruský's pioneering contributions, most of what I will have to say will be at least sympathetic to his underlying thesis that "question[ing] the relationship between man and things with respect to activity" may indeed be one of the theatre's "fundamental features" – even one of its "most important social objectives," insofar as it may provide altogether "new ways of perceiving and understanding the world." What is not acceptable, however, is the way he relates the distinction and its blurring (in 1940) to the "epistemological horizons" of "civilized life," as opposed to "the mythical world views of primitives or children" – nor is it realistic that the former would have "broken up the direct relationship between man and his environment." As we will see, "the Western conception of a person as a bounded, unique, more or less integrated motivational and cognitive universe" is "a rather peculiar idea" not only

"within the context of the world's cultures," as anthropologist Clifford Geertz has pointed out, but in that of contemporary, ecologically conscious cognitive science.[4]

Philosophical Underpinnings: The Great Chain and the Anti-Cognitive Prejudice

> In the subject-oriented criticism inaugurated by Aristotle, stage objects either remain at the bottom of the hierarchy of theatrical elements deemed worthy of analysis [--] or else drop out of critical sight altogether. (Andrew Sofer)
>
> It is by drawing a boundary between the world of objects and the world of meanings that the 'modern' project has emerged. (Alf Hornborg)
>
> Breaking down the humanities–natural science divide thus requires overcoming, or at least bracketing, some very powerful folk intuitions. (Edward Slingerland)

One way of blurring these alleged horizons and approaching the issues of fear and fascination is by considering the wider ontological assumptions such notions rely on: seventy-five years after his *magnum opus* on the subject, the idea of a "Great Chain of Being" remains, as historian of ideas Arthur Lovejoy then suggested, "one of the half-dozen most potent and persistent presuppositions in Western thought." From the cognitive metaphorical perspective promoted by George Lakoff and Mark Turner, we can take this "Chain" as a ubiquitous cultural model for understanding humans, animals, plants, and objects as if on a *vertical scale*, relative to their supposedly "higher" or "lower" attributes and behavior (reason, instinct, biological or physical function, and so on); such specific "extensions" aside as include society, cosmos, and God, say, this "basic" chain appears widespread across the range of historical cultures. Image-schematically, besides its VERTICAL orientation, each level on the Chain is predicated on two interrelated senses of conceptual CONTAINMENT: for one, they are conceived of as having "essential," *inner natures*, manifest in their outer behavior. Secondly, there is a transitivity to how higher forms of being are conceived of as containing all the properties that lower forms do, but not vice versa: not only *beyond* those at lower levels, the higher a distinguishing attribute is on the Chain, "the less generally accessible it is to our perception and our understanding" (cf. morality to object constancy).[5]

Apart from its image-schematic organization, what makes the Chain *metaphorical*, then, is how any better-understood level in its hierarchy can be used to make sense of the more opaque aspects of other levels. The mappings may equally proceed from a "lower" source to a "higher" target (as in Meyerhold's understanding of biol-

ogy in terms of object mechanics, or in endowing nations with human character traits) as conversely – as in mapping agency and intentionality to inert things such as puppets or natural formations. In a fairly clear-cut sense, this is reflected in Veltruský's very argument that actors and objects move *up and down* a scale of "spontaneity" and "schematicity" in any given performance, between what he calls "the dynamic forces of action and the static forces of characterization." The lead "at the peak" and the "supporting" cast below, he extends the "hierarchy of [dramatic] parts" to include functions of props, costume, and setting – at the "zero level" of action – denying any determinate gap between the "spheres" of actor and object. Mechanical and habitual processes as the "lowest" levels of action, "personification" becomes a matter of their being "raised to" the prominence of action proper.[6] Without attenuating the *continuum* aspect of Veltruský's model – of which more later in this chapter – this section only proceeds to outline some of the aesthetic, ontological, social, and moral implications of the suspect metaphorical world order I maintain it subscribes to.

In aesthetic terms, first, we could take the "Chain" as one of *representation* – beginning, as I had historian of props Andrew Sofer suggest in epigraph, with Aristotle's all but dismissing "spectacle" for the apparently higher components of tragedy. The very idea of *scala naturae* dating back to classical Greece (and not unrelated to the then "naturalness" of masters and slaves), another "founding manifestation of the antitheatrical prejudice" that stands out would of course be Plato's in/famous allegory of the Cave – affirming, as puppet scholar Scott Cutler Shershow notes, the "ontological lowness" of performing objects at the earliest formal stages of Western thought. Describing "[t]he chain of imitation descending downward from the poet" (to what Plato effectively presents as a form of shadow theatre on the back wall of his cave) as *subordinate* to "the vaster chain [--] descending from the Forms and Ideas of absolute reality into the sensory multiplicity of the world," Shershow outlines how this "Platonic hierarchy of representation [--] merges with the iconophobia of the Judaeo-Christian theological tradition" and still "survives as a model for theatrical authorship" (his specific reference is to Jacques Derrida's notion of "theological theatre"). Just as casting God as the author of "intelligent design" – as a kind of heavenly stage manager – metaphorically appropriates the roles of humans, much lower down the Chain, as designers, makers, and users of material artifacts, so the "principle of belongingness" theatre phenomenologist Stanton B. Garner notes in the unabbreviated term *property*, makes for what he calls a "dual subordination" of theatrical objects, "to

instrumentality and to the otherness of dramatic mimesis." No wonder in these terms that theatre itself, as Marvin Carlson puts it, is often "viewed as secondary, derived, [--] deceptive and corrupting" – as "lowering" the "higher values" of life or literature.[7]

By implication, what we have here is then a Great Chain of Binaries, conventional and interrelated, cast again on a scale of intrinsic value: what I am thinking of are such metaphysical and epistemological dualisms as mind/body, mental/physical, inner/outer, or subject/object, as presuppose not only a fundamental ontological divide between the two terms, but a *hierarchic asymmetry* to their evaluation (the first term of each pair designated as superior to its opposite). And just as Veltruský proposes an "internal differentiation" to such theatrical "spheres" as set and props, there is an "internal hierarchy" of higher and lower forms of being to each level on the Great Chain: just as the material environment (of objects, plants, etc.) invites such dichotomies as culture/nature or hi-tech/lo-tech, so the human and social levels will often be polarized along the lines of male/female, adult/child, master/slave, upper class/lower class, or civilized/primitive – as they were for Veltruský. Indeed, this hierarchical dualism even extends to the behavior and attributes that metaphorically *define* the levels: think of kinds of action (active/passive, theory/practice) or of such "higher" properties as mind and cognition (reason/emotion, conception/perception, knowledge/imagination, conscious/subconscious). While the latter subset especially seems relevant to actor training and to the theatre – eighteenth-century actors "subordinating low, selfish passions to the dictates of high, enlightened reason"; Brecht, warding off "emotion"; Kantor and Grotowski, defining "consciousness" in relation to objecthood and animality – note only how most of these dichotomies seem to map the higher/lower distinction onto that of the *inner* and the *outer*, utterly separating the "mind," for example, from such "external" domains as perception, practice, and material culture.[8]

With these considerations, then, we arrive at a specifically *modern* rendering of the Great Chain. While most of the above dualisms reach far back in the Western metaphysical tradition, it is only with the Renaissance emergence of the *humanistic* viewpoint that "man" – no longer implicated in a transcendent order as in most premodern versions of the Chain – comes to be conceived of as an individual set apart from "his" environment: a disembodied *subject* (what Descartes called *res cogitans*) enjoying a detached experience of an ever uncertain world (*res extensa*), reduced again to a theoretical *object* of contemplation in something of a "Cartesian Theatre." As social theorists such as Michel Foucault and Bruno Latour have argued, the very

notions of *man* and *object* – as bounded entities or indeed, as *nouns* – can thus be seen as decidedly modern inventions: for Latour, such "asymmetric" and "entirely distinct ontological zones" as people and things or culture and nature come down to the "purification" practice definitive of "the modern critical stance." Combining the insights of psychologists Harry Heft and Alan Costall, moreover, such a detached, passive, spectatorial stance has been pervasive not only in Western aesthetic theory, but in much of modern scientific practice: the natural sciences, having "abstracted for themselves a 'material world' set apart from human concerns," and the human or social sciences, "a world of actors devoid of things," the basic underlying dualism of actors and objects seems indeed "institutionalized within the structure of our academic disciplines." As Asian Studies scholar Edward Slingerland puts it, the primary rationale behind the "jealously guarded division of labor" between these "two cultures" is a decidedly metaphysical belief in an ontological division between mind and matter.[9]

In conventional cognitivist terms, moreover, it is with this "spectator theory of knowing" – as philosopher John Dewey called it – that "knowing" becomes a matter not of engagement but of representation: standing apart from the world much as a spectator, or perhaps, a photographer, would, the individual can only confront the world as *spectacle*, not as something of which she takes herself to be an intimate part. As anthropologist Tim Ingold notes, however, this is "an impossible foundation" for knowledge, for "in order to turn the world into an *object* of concern," science as it stands "has to place itself above and beyond the very world it claims to understand." Ingold's elaboration of this is worth paraphrasing at some length: "a *tabula rasa* for the inscription of human history," the world here appears as a "a preformed surface" to *conquer* and *occupy*, life and society, as "extra layers of being" merely wrapped around it – as demonstrated by the "familiar globes of geography classrooms." Yet as he contends, this image of "the world as a globe" – its outer surface, an interface between world and mind, sensation and cognition, materiality and agency – is essentially a *colonial one*: our "humanity" in our alleged *transcendence* of physical nature, "it is the world that belongs to us," and not the other way around. In terms more explicitly consonant with the cultural model of the Great Chain, this spectatorial othering of lower forms of being by the supposedly "higher" is thus not only a matter of *externalization* – of world from mind, or ecology from cognition – but essentially, of *ownership* and *domination* (all predicated on the CONTAINMENT schema). Nature, a "standing reserve" for human use in both Aristotle and the Biblical tradition, the

Chain is then ultimately a *political issue*, as well, with social, ethical, and religious consequences – as Lakoff and Turner note, "it can become a chain of subjugation."[10]

By implication, there is thus also a *temporal* aspect to the Chain's workings: as Latour notes, modernization simultaneously defines "an archaic and stable past," a "Great Divide between Them – all the other cultures – and Us – the westerners." Images of VERTICALITY and CONTAINMENT abound: just as ontogenetic "maturation" is often imagined in terms of individuation and detachment, so – as Ingold wittily reads the familiar evolutionary scenario – the "descent" of man *within* nature would also spell his "ascent" *out of* it, "in so far as it progressively liberated the mind from the promptings of innate disposition." While Darwin did replace the image of a single Chain by that of a branching tree, the founding logic of a universal *scale of perfection* remained intact: mirroring the global colonial conquest of White Europeans, the ladder of evolution and history now appeared "as a naturally preordained ascent towards the pinnacle of modernity." And once the scale is set not only "from the lowest of animals to the highest of men," but from the "primitive" to the "civilized," within the human domain, there appear metaphorical *stages* to its very humanity, some of which are not only *below* but *behind*, in the "core curriculum" of the West's "markedly ethnocentric vision of human potentials." Often enough, this has to do with technology (hi/lo), as when nations not industrialized are considered "under-developed"; when Veltruský relates "the primitive way of life" to its direct engagement of the environment, this seems a matter not only of its *lowness* on the Great Chain (closer to animals and objects) but of the limited "horizons" of its local containment (as opposed to "the global ontology of detachment"). In a sense, such notions of cultural advancement also map a *horizontal* dimension to the scale of evolution: released from the chains of nature, to have "embarked upon the road to civilization," humanity must at some point have crossed a crucial "threshold" beyond the "upper limits" of its very biology.[11]

As these examples should begin to demonstrate, then, there is a sense in which the Great Chain metaphor is *multiply motivated* by human embodiment and ecology alike, and as such, utterly resistant to change or revision; as Lakoff and Turner note, its "frightening" natural appeal implies that the "social, political, and ecological evils" it continues to induce "will not disappear quickly or easily or on their own accord." Adding to Mark Johnson's witty discussion of "the bodily basis of our latent Cartesianism," Ingold's examples go on to show how such predispositions are also gounded in the *environment*: The very split between the material and mental, *vertically embod-*

ied not only in the evolutionary rise and triumph of "head over heels" – the myth according to which "humans are in nature from the waist down, while the hands and arms impress the mind's intelligent designs upon the surface of nature from above" – but at the (inter)face of the earth – the ground below and the sky above, metaphorically mapped onto domains mundane and sublime – "the human biped figures as a constitutionally divided creature," "half in nature, half out." In the evolutionary scenario, "standing up straight" is the characteristic posture that almost single-handedly *distinguishes* humans from all other animals: "man marches confidently into the future, head high, body erect, while the stooping apes trundle along obediently behind." Metaphorically, "uprightness" or "standing" then becomes "a measure of rank and moral rectitude"; what Ingold has to add to the conventional conceptual metaphor account of this, is that the mapping is characteristically Western, and *artifactually supported* by "a battery of devices from high-chairs to baby walkers" to "the technology of footwear" – which he suggests is "an effort to convert the imagined superiority of hands over feet" (intelligence/instinct, reason/nature) "into an experienced reality."[12]

On the other hand, however, the difficulty of ever really undoing the Great Chain does not undo the value of the effort, anxiety-ridden as it may turn out once the hierarchy is conceived of as normative within a society, if not definitive of *the* "natural order" of things (and of dominance, especially in more Fascist versions). Hence, fear and fascination: as anthropologist Alf Hornborg suggests, "[a]nimism, fetishism, and objectivism can [all] be understood as alternative responses to universal human problems of drawing boundaries between persons and things" – and as we have noted, vagueness, here, can appear "uncanny" (Freud) as well as "comical" (Bergson). For their part, Lakoff and Turner discuss not only the many *political* revolutions that "have been fought to rid a society of some part of the [--] Chain," but the *avantgarde poetics* of "challenging old ways of understanding the world" that "implicitly embody ideologies – views of man and his relation to nature, to society, and to the cosmos." The latter, of course, is reflected not only in Veltruský's core argument that it is by questioning the human/object relationship that the *theatre* "can show new ways of perceiving and understanding the world," but in much of twentieth-century avantgarde performance, since – "founded on the promotion" of material objects, "with a corresponding surrender of 'action force' by the actor," as Keir Elam puts it. Tracing its "liberation" from what he called its "dual subordination," Stanton B. Garner also discusses how the "manipulability" of the theatrical object phenomenologically

"[gives] way to an independence from – and eventually, an antagonism toward – the human subject's attempt to appropriate and humanize its spatial surroundings."[13]

Then again, where art and the theatre have already begun to question such divisions as between agents and objects, or mind and world, science and theory are often lagging behind; to appropriate Veltruský's phrasing, one central thread of this very dissertation revolves around the tension (if not "dialectic antinomy") between "static" notions of skull- and brainbound cognition, and "dynamic" notions of what we could call its *ecological unfolding* (in a *co-constitutive* relation, e.g. to material objects). That a tension will remain cannot really be avoided: as Lakoff and Turner note, such attempts at its "inversion" or "subversion" as of the ecology movement remain "influenced by the Great Chain as it stands" – in part, the anxiety that often accompanies explicit reversals of its vertical hierarchy (programmatic, as will be seen, for some Tadeusz Kantor) also follows from their being predicated on an allegedly "natural" order of "things" with well-defined "qualities" (in the sense that the "manipulability" of the human body, say, draws on a whole chain of assumptions we entertain about the behavior of material objects). In an utterly pragmatic sense, this is, of course, as it should be: such assumptions are absolutely crucial for our very survival as a species – insofar as we do not mistake them for ontological realities. On the one hand, agents and objects are not "closed spheres," just as Veltruský proposed; moving from closure to openness, detachment to engagement, we ought to "transgress the ontological tidiness of [such] modern taxonomies" and deconstruct their dichotomous definitions into those of reciprocity and interimplication. On the other hand, *pace* Veltruský, neither is the "fluctuation" between them dependent on some pre-given "epistemological horizon" (such as civilized/primitive): veridical "seeing" and imaginative "blurring" are equally intuitive to human embodied understanding, our relationship to the objects around, an ongoing event that is simultaneously aesthetic, pragmatic, and cognitive.[14]

In conclusion, the certain prejudice with which the initial applications of cognitive science to theatre and performance studies have been met within the field – not entirely unmotivated by the way the science has often been framed and used – follows the same logic as seems to ground the much longer history of the "antitheatrical prejudice": the assumption that materiality and embodiment, and hence, the more perceivable aspects of the theatre, are somehow down and out on the Chain of Being, subservient to allegedly finer sensibilities of the "mind" – less perceptible and somehow uncontaminated by the material world, metaphorically "higher" and suspiciously

"inner" (in the conceptual hierarchy as well as in our human anatomy). To advance from such asymmetric dichotomies of *mind over matter*, toward the symmetrical couplings of ecology and embodiment wherein resides the *materiality of mind*, the rest of this chapter will take the vertical dramaturgy of Veltruský's argument, only retracing it not between humans and objects but across levels of explanation concerning both. Over the next few sections, the direction of the discussion is thus steadily *downward*: from the conceptual and generic, toward the perceptual and specific, wherein the schematic abstractions of the "higher" levels are metaphorically grounded – no more than humans and objects on Veltruský's continuum, however, these levels "do not mark irreducible ontological distinctions but are merely abstractions from the continuous interactive [--] process that is experience," as Mark Johnson puts it.[15] With a keen eye on the image-schematic assumptions behind each, the discussion will then re-emerge "back up" on the *metaphorical* level and pursue to define both agency and cognition along lines utterly different from any Great Chain hierarchy. A process of *performative engagement* with/in our world, rather than a spectatorial stance *apart* from it (be it theatrical or theoretical), "cognition" emerges as foundational to the meanings we are able to make of the use of material objects, in the theatre.

Perceiving Actors and Objects: Three Levels of Framing the Distinction

The Domain Level: Image Schemas and Cognitive Models

> The basis of the drama is action. [--] Action is the active relationship of a subject to some object; it is a teleological fact, governed by a purpose in line with [--] the intent of a subject. [--] [The function of any theatrical object] is determined by the antinomy of two opposing forces contained within it: the dynamic forces of action and the static forces of characterization. (Jiří Veltruský)

At the beginning of this chapter, I cited Pavis's advice to replace theatrical notions such as *props* or *scenery* with the more "neutral or empty" term *object*, given the alleged "difficulty of drawing a definite boundary between the actor and the surrounding world." As Gay McAuley would add, "[m]odern performance practice delights in blurring the distinctions [--] but the device can only work if it is underpinned by a clear recognition of the distinction between human being and object." In this section, I will discuss only few of the parameters along which different cognitive theorists suggest this crucial distinction is made, in the human conceptual system – how we track a

degree of *sameness* in their diversity (a possible definition of "categorization"), and how developmental and evolutionary considerations, especially, propose these privileged categories may come to function as basic cognitive "domains" (i.e. as the rather abstract background against which more nuanced conceptual cuts may then be made). On the one hand, the ontological distinction between persons and objects appears just as intuitive in what Veltruský calls the "mythical world views of primitives or children," as it is in "our present-day epistemological horizon [of] civilized life": children and indigenous adults rank no "lower," in this basic ability of parsing their worlds. On the other, as Pascal Boyer and Clark Barrett note, such domains of competence "are not given by reality but are cognitively delimited": the mind does not draw the line between agents and objects as a scientist or a philosopher would.[16] Accordingly, what we witness in a puppet performance, for instance, is not so much the "difficulty" of drawing definite boundaries but rather the utter *easiness* of overlooking them – a fact of cognitive fluidity to be discussed in more detail as the chapter proceeds.

And just as Veltruský cites "action" as the basis of drama, so it seems to be for much of our intuitive ontology: frequently, the crucial distinction appears to be not so much between the biologically living and non-living, as between the *animate* and the *inanimate* – things that move, act, or behave, as opposed to all those other things that do not. The basic perceptual discriminations, here, have been generally agreed upon, at least since Albert Michotte's influential studies on the perception of causality, in the 1940s: animate things move on their own, in nonrigid trajectories, and respond to their environment, whereas inanimate things neither respond nor move, unless externally caused to move, in which case they do so in a more or less predictable manner. In her *image-schematic* interpretation, in a project informally known as "How to Build a Baby," developmental psychologist Jean Mandler has the very concepts of animacy, inanimacy, and agency, well before the emergence of language, indeed grounded on such "conceptual primitives" (or image schemas) as self-motion versus caused motion, animate versus inanimate trajectories, and contingent versus contact interaction. Again, the focus is on motion – "how objects move and interact with each other," and the sorts of PATHS they take, with special attention on their beginnings and endings: thus, for example, inanimate objects such as theatrical puppets will only follow "animate paths" *contingently* with those of an agent picking them up, after which "the path of the manipulated object [again] reverts to that of inanimate motion." For Mandler, such "analysis of spatial structure into image-schematic form" is the first

step toward conceptualizing what a thing "*is*, above and beyond what it looks like"; commonality within a domain or category depends not on the physical appearance of objects but on their *roles within events* – on what they do or what is done to them.[17]

Simplistic as these definitions may sound, the value of such perceptual "clues," for us, lies in the utter easiness of simulating them, on stage: as Veltruský suggests, "even a lifeless object" may be *perceived* as "spontaneous," regardless of the fact that most of us will simultaneously perceive the human causes behind its apparent spontaneity. Apart from animacy – as again has been known since the days of Michotte – it appears that the construal of *agency* is no more dependent on the object's being human: if only the proper parameters of motion and interaction are met, there is a sense in which neither infants nor adults *can help* but perceive, say, featureless blobs on a computer display, as "chasing," "following," or "avoiding" one another. In Mandler's analysis, an agent is an animate object that moves itself and also causes another object to move, along a goal-directed path; in line with her hypothesis that the "earliest concepts" are "global or domain-level" ones that only become differentiated with experience, she finds the attribution of agency "a domain-general assumption" that is only "narrowed down" to animates ("objects most reliably apt to behave in goal-directed ways") over developmental time – and "never completely" so. While other theorists are more liberal in treating all of the above as potential "agency cues," it is clear then that the cognitive notion of *agency* is far more general than the usual sociological one (onto which we may perhaps graft a Great Chain with society above humanity). As Mary Crane explains, cognitive theory "does not disallow the idea that ideology can constrain subjects from acting as free agents," but neither does it "define human agency solely in relation to ideology" – more fundamental than that, agency stands out as "a constitutive feature of the human experience of embodied selfhood."[18]

Concerning embodiment, however, it is notable how adamantly Mandler wishes to restrict her analysis to the perception of "kinetic" or spatial relations – movement – to the neglect of any *bodily* experience we may have of "dynamic" or forceful interactions ("grafted onto" more primary aspects of visual information, at most). For other theorists, however, the kinds of spatiotemporal patterns she discusses only become meaningful in terms of "force-dynamic" schemas such as pushing, pulling, blockage, counterforce, or attraction; in Mark Johnson's words, although we usually only notice forces "when they are extraordinarily strong, or when they are not balanced off by other forces," they are always experienced through *causal interaction*, "either as we

act upon other objects, or as we are acted upon by them." As with Veltruský's key concept of action force, "[t]he agent of the causal sequence can be either an animate and purposive being, or it can be a mere inanimate object or event"; thus, for example, we may equally experience COMPULSION (the schema of "being moved by external forces") with "wind, water, physical objects, and other people." In linguist Leonard Talmy's nicely dramatic original formulation, the very notion of "force dynamics" comes down to a construal of two conflicting entities: a focal *agonist*, with an intrinsic tendency either toward action or toward rest, and an opposing *antagonist*, which either manages to resist that tendency or is eventually overcome by it. As is the case with "the dynamic forces of action and the static forces of characterization" that Veltruský discusses, the point is not that objects actually have such "tendencies," only they are ascribed such in human categorization: with all movement constrained by the twin dynamic factors of *force* and *resistance*, force-dynamic cognition is altogether erroneous with respect to most of the more scientific notions of theoretical physics.[19]

Now importantly, what has happened with this shift from kinetics to dynamics, is a turn from the mere *perception* of objects and their paths of motion (a kind of "theatricality") to a more "theoretical" approach which not only has them as if folded in on themselves, but set apart from the environment in which they move: Talmy speaks of their "intrinsic" tendencies, Veltruský, of the action force "contained within" the given actor or object – image-schematically, in a word, we have turned from analyzing PATHS, to different kinds of conceptual CONTAINMENT. On the one hand, it is difficult not to imagine categories themselves as containers of "features": while certainly more primitive than those listed by Avigal and Rimmon-Kenan, at the beginning, there is a sense in which this also goes for Mandler's image-schematic discriminations – and whether these be "sufficient" or even "necessary," I do think they are cognitively motivated, as opposed to being merely arbitrary or conventional. On the other hand, there *is* a difference between "domain-general" approaches such as both Talmy's and Mandler's – as will be seen later, both may cut across conceptual domains from the physical to the psychological to the social – and those that presuppose very *specific* (e.g. force-dynamic) properties to different ontological categories.[20] In this "theory-theory" or "domain-specific" tradition, the candidate domains themselves are quite clear-cut, not only at their boundaries – such qualifying epithets aside as *naïve*, *folk*, or *intuitive*, their "theoretical" status is reflected in how these domains are often referred to as *mechanics*, *physics*, *biology*, or *psychology* – but "inside," as well,

defined as they are in terms of what are taken to be their "causally deepest" properties. And as it happens, different features appear criterial for agents and objects: by way of conclusion, I will briefly consider the pros and cons of this approach.

The basic propositions appear intuitive enough: what a welter of developmental, evolutionary, and anthropological evidence suggests is that not only are we innately sensitive to the distinction between "natural kinds" (plants, animals, and people) and inanimate objects (whether natural or man-made), but that we do maintain distinct ontological assumptions, very early on, as to the nature and behavior of each. Where machines and objects are perceived according to their changing use functions, we take the observable qualities of living kinds to be *causally determined* by some hidden, "essential" properties that we need not actually know but assume to remain unchanged over external transformations such as changing costumes: for our pleistocene ancestor likewise, a stone could be a knife, the tip of an arrow, or just a thing to hurl, whereas a tiger retained its voracious essence – whether sleeping, hunting, or bereft of one of its legs – as long as it was alive. Reminiscent as they are of the "vitalism" and "mechanism" discussed by Joseph Roach, the cognitive distinction of essence and function thus also has important consequences in terms of *inductive potential*: all perceivable features aside, we only need to track a kind as "essentializable" (in a sense, again, as ranking higher on the Great Chain of Being) to act accordingly. In the case of human behavior, it is proposed we understand its "causal essence" in terms of such unobservable entities as intentions, beliefs, and desires – this is variously dubbed *folk psychology*, the *intentional stance*, a *Theory of Mind*, or even *mind-reading*. Were we to imagine an "essence" to objects, on the other hand, it is often said to consist in their *design*, as opposed to the corresponding *descent* of living kinds – whether we track this metaphorical PATH to the past intentions, again, internal to their human designer, or only, as is often the case with theatrical props, to their salient use in the present.[21]

Again, we should remain assured that there is no metaphysical claim about the world, to our alleged "essentialism": what is at stake is a psychological notion about *categorization*, although one that some evolutionary psychologists would claim was instrumental to the very survival of the human species. In this line of argument, it would have been a crucial adaptation for ancient hunter-gatherers, a "cognitive shortcut" or a "better safe than sorry" strategy of perception, in an ambiguous world of predators and prey – and indeed such "spontaneous over-attribution" of agency and organization it implies does appear like something we do occasionally do, e.g. in the

theatre: Be our perceptions but interpretations and bets (eat or be eaten), a "Promiscuous Teleology" will have us "spontaneously interpret a tapping at our window as a visitor, not a branch, and a tickling on our neck as a bug, not a loose thread." However, we need to be careful with just how far we are willing to go with this – it is one thing to recognize the *reality* of such "folk theories" or "idealized cognitive models," quite another to theorize them into pre-formed cognitive *modules*, produced by prehistoric selection pressures and hard-wired into each and every human brain, thereafter: while the former view allows radical influence to cultural beliefs and knowledge, the latter should be universally and *biologically* in place, at birth, regardless of sociocultural factors, whatsoever. And this is exactly what happens when the central metaphor turns from the architectural (Mandler's "How to Build a Baby") to the geographical (*Mapping the Mind*, as a representative anthology on domain specificity is titled): as a genetically specified CONTAINER, no less than the cognitive domains it contains, "the mind" becomes a sort of inner academy, with distinct "faculties" and "modules" each in the business of "theorizing" the world – as Tim Ingold suggests, "[i]t is not hard to recognise, in the suite of capacities with which all humans are said to be innately endowed, the central values and aspirations of our own society, and of our own time."[22]

In no way denying, then, that a certain "folk theory of essences" may often play into our perceptions of theatrical objects, say, I wish to conclude this section with three interrelated amendments as concerns its alleged "domain specificity." First, the very types of cognitive domains that arise are very much a matter of cultural context; as Mandler suggests in her own critique, "innate" knowledge about types of events is "not required because the world provides it for us." Second, as evidenced in the domain-specific formulation that "observable features" may *index* either essence (for animals) or intention (for artifacts), there is an important sense in which the kinds of "theories" mostly discussed here can be seen as a form of cultural *semiotics*: indeed, the very language of "cues" and "inferences" – e.g., from perceived PATHS to their related ontological domains – seems to follow the same metonymic logic of abduction as does the use of props, for example, to index character, locale, or ideology. (And surely there is an irony, then, to how Bruce McConachie can equally deny all spectatorial semiotics, and fluently discuss our "reading the minds" of actor/characters.) Finally, a highly modular mind would simply be all too rigid, given the utter flexibility with which we often treat objects as agents, and vice versa – nor is it substantiated by what is known about the highly *distributed* nature of human neuroanatomy. As more

moderate evolutionary psychologists such as Boyer and Barrett themselves suggest, the "evolved brain" is just "not philosophically correct": since we cannot interact with "agents" and "objects" in general, most of the cognitive work is likely organized around types of *situations*, rather than broad ontological domains. Accordingly, while certain domain-specific assumptions will surely orient some of our theatrical experiences, the next two sections will address such "finer-grained specificity" as we are bound to interact with – perceptually and cognitively – at any performance event.[23]

The Basic Level: Prototypes and Contextual Categories

From Aristotle to de Saussure, categorization has classically been understood as a simple binary matter of satisfying or not some set of necessary and sufficient conditions. Contrasting the fairly primitive kinds just proposed for the general *domains* of agents and objects – for which a case can be made for a degree of cognitive motivation – with extensive listings of attributes such as Avigal and Rimmon-Kenan's, cited earlier, the problem with such conceptual CONTAINMENT often has to do with its undue exclusiveness: how come should the "things" on stage always be either multifunctional or non-utilitarian or, for that matter, artificial, to "become objects," in theatre? Go "down" to such more specialized categories as *set*, *props*, or *costume*, and the conceptual boundaries tend to become "fuzzier," still – insofar, at least, as we exclude the backstage pragmatics of their often being supplied by different personnel. In the event of performance, as many a theatre scholar has effectively argued, a bit of costume may occasionally turn into a prop, and a chair will only remain a bit of scenery until drawn into the action itself: as Manfred Pfister aptly puts it, any object may "shift from one position to another within the structural spectrum of 'figure–costume–property–set'." For Veltruský, advocating a fluid continuum over any fixed categories, none of these positions could really be "delimited as a closed sphere," any more than need even the concepts of *human* and *object* be, on the domain level. In Andrew Sofer's nicely sober definition of props, finally, theatrical objects only "become" such when physically manipulated by actors: regardless of their size or portability or whatever other conceivable conditions, "wherever a prop exists, an actor-object interaction exists." With *motion* as the prop's "defining feature," he denies their having any "underlying logic" other than "what Wittgenstein called a family resemblance."[24]

And this is a notion that cognitive theories of categorization, in psychology and linguistics, have taken fairly seriously, since the 1970s. Primarily associated with the

work of Eleanor Rosch and her associates, what this tradition of research has added to our conventional taxonomies of conceptual organization is the idea that some concepts, for reasons of "cognitive economy," appear "privileged" not only across their domains' VERTICAL levels of abstraction and CONTAINMENT (e.g., objects/furniture/chairs), but within each horizontal level as well (e.g., chairs/beds/tables). Fuzzy and graded, rather than absolute, each category would thus only be defined by family resemblance; image-schematically, category membership would not reflect the clear-cut boundaries of binary CONTAINMENT, but rather, a CENTER–PERIPHERY type of organization with "prototypical" and less prototypical examples (recall, again, my citing Gibson versus Avigal and Rimmon-Kenan, as typical examples of highly different levels of abstraction, for the vertical taxonomy of objects). In short, some instances of a category will simply count as "better examples" than others, given their salience in a culture: for most, robins will be more representative of *birds* than, say, chickens, penguins, ostriches, or emus; in the *object* domain, artifacts and natural objects appear to be more CENTRAL than mental ones, a rock being more prototypical than wind or water, which are about as PERIPHERAL as you can get. Apart from the clear cases' being easier to agree upon than the boundaries – think of *art*, for example – the boundaries can also be extended in ways that classical categories do not allow: where central members do often have a number of clearly identifiable attributes, peripheral cases need not share any. Just consider comedy and tragedy: the prototypical examples are certainly very different, but there is undeniably fuzzy ground in between.[25]

As for "theatrical objects," accordingly, a case could perhaps be made for *props* standing out as more prototypical of the category than costumes or set pieces – more metonymically evocative of the WHOLE, that is, in the sense that *masks* may be of the overall art form. Some association between acting and manipulation may play into it (leading McConachie to propose a family resemblance between props and puppets), but primarily, *prop* is the term people are most likely to know: actors' bodies would not count, since objects are conceived of as being inanimate, furniture and costume, given their salience offstage. If, indeed, our Western prototype of *theatricality* still "consists of features typical for nineteenth-century theater," as Małgorzata Sugiera has suggested, even puppets and masks might require further cueing as to the specific *kind* of theatre – and the "two central foci" as they clearly are for the category of "performing objects," there has been considerable controversy over such more peripheral proposals as sand paintings within that domain. In a graded category based on family

resemblance, however, this is not really a problem, nor is "the fuzzy distinction" Sofer rightly recognizes between props and furniture: mobile over the kind of spectrum suggested by Pfister, above, none of these categories need be restricted to their conceptual CENTERS. Overlapping at their PERIPHERIES, the kind of continuum Veltruský drafted between actors and objects can be seen as a deliberate "fuzzying up" of their categorical distinctions, his crucial insight about the theatre, how it may *extend* our prototypical expectations in endemically performative ways. Where Neal Swettenham has related "the so-called 'magic' of live performance" to "a heightened sense of physical interaction, and an increased possibility of category disruption," it has even been suggested that *creativity*, on the whole, consists of moving away from prototypes and proximate associations to more distant ones, a good source for radical innovation – think of a Brecht or an Artaud – often being what is prototypical elsewhere.[26]

Then again, unless we focus on a specific period or dramatic genre – as does Sofer in historicizing the skull, the fan, and the gun, for example – I would not expect even most theatre people to have a clear prototype for the overall *category* of props, say, given its level of *abstraction*: Just as we cannot interact with or purchase or draw or mentally visualize a "general piece of furniture" (one that is not a chair, a table, or a bed, for instance), we cannot do those things to a prop in general – indeed, a possible explanation for prototype structure is that our categories and cognitive models do not quite "fit" the discontinuities of the world we inhabit. However, there appears to be one "psychologically relevant" level, *intermediate* in the VERTICAL hierarchy from abstract domain to specific instance, where this fit is considerably better: the highest level at which category members share overall shapes and call for similar motor patterns, this cognitively "basic" level is identified faster, named earlier by children, and has the shortest primary lexemes – take, *cat* or *car* or *chair*. Go up in the taxonomy, to what are called "superordinate" levels, and their respective members will look less alike (*animal*, as opposed to cat) and call for more diverse interactions (*vehicle* versus car, *furniture* versus chair); moving downwards, "subordinate" categories will be less distinct from one another, often calling for special expertise (e.g. *Persian*, *Porsche*). While prototype effects do occur on each level – superordinate (furniture and tools as clearer cases of *artifact* than buildings or bread), basic (tables, chairs, and beds as more representative of *furniture* than rugs or telephones or ashtrays), and subordinate (desk chairs faring better than rocking chairs or beanbags or bar stools) – categorical *differentation* is at its optimal, on the basic level: subordinate coverage being very re-

stricted in range, and *domain* specificity mostly a theoretical matter, it is the basic level that appears for us maximally informative for the least cognitive effort.[27]

In the theatre, accordingly, subordinate "realism" in material detail will gain "little informativeness at the cost of much distinctiveness," as Bruce McConachie has phrased it: only paying attention to specific connotations, over time, all that spectators "require to make sense of the action" is basic-level scenery and costuming – and this is a point on which there seems to be some general concensus. First, what Finnish director and theorist Juha-Pekka Hotinen calls the "informational duty" of theatrical objects, dictates that they be distinctly perceived and easily recognized, no matter what the visual style of the whole: "Scenery verging on surrealism, the suitcase remains real." In cognitive film theory, Joseph D. Anderson advances this perceptual basis as the "common denominator" that makes cinema so universally accessible and gives it its "palpable sense of reality": in an average action adventure film, "there may be little more than [basic-level appearances] to the movie at all." For their part, Avigal and Rimmon-Kenan relate the possibility of theatrical "resemantization" to the given object's familiarity "in the spectator's everyday universe of discourse," and for Veltruský himself, any object can only "radiate its action force" insofar as it "preserves its reality" – this given, spectators may well remain indifferent to the subordinate *kind* of chair they actually see on stage (the material sign-vehicle, if you will) yet they have no trouble in directly perceiving its basic appearance and function: it is a chair, and for most of us, chairs afford sitting. Again, however, what is notable about such "basic-level" props or scenery, is their utter subordination even to such technical divisions as between *set*, *dress*, and *hand* props – within the latter category, we should rather think of the likes of guns or fans, to quote two of Sofer's examples. To make our categories maximally distinct, in short, we end up more or less with the kinds of objects listed by James J. Gibson, at the beginning: each directly specified by its form and function, a *gun* is not a *fan* is not a *bed* is not a *chair* is not a *table*.[28]

Concomitantly, it is little short of artificial to posit guns or fans as basic instances of "props" or "theatrical objects," subordinate as they are to such real-world categories as *weapons* or *air conditioning* – whatever proppy amendments there may be to their form and function, we are much more likely to consider them in terms of categories we find "natural," to our cultural environments. More importantly still (as the artificiality of these "real-world" superordinates should begin to hint), even then our acts of categorization will be utterly dependent on *context*: in terms of basic-level

action, for example, we all know how to sit on beds and tables though we relate the word to chairs, more often; by way of theatrical extension, we may turn a rehearsal block or a fellow actor into a "throne" (subordinate to *chairs*, with no chair present) or we can mime opening a door by using the fan as its handle. Indeed, as Frank Keil and his colleagues have noted, the "identity" of many artifacts – in the theatre and out – may exhibit "dramatic leaps" across category hierarchies "in ways not possible for living kinds": where the latter are biologically embedded in unique taxonomies that are exhaustive and not arbitrary, "some artifacts do not seem to fit any organized hierarchy or conceptual structure whatsoever." Hence, it is proposed that they may be "more consistently categorized by *thematic* rather than taxonomic relations" – not as objects in isolation, that is, but as "props" for the events in which they are embedded (to cite a theatrical metaphor evoked by Eleanor Rosch): *in situ*, a chair may appear the prototypical choice *not* in relation to a superordinate domain of furniture, but for a goal-derived or "ad hoc" category such as "things you need to change a light bulb." Often enough, a perfectly "natural" grouping of objects, on stage, may share no other features, perceptual or functional, than a thematic adherence to some "scripted" framework in which they are likely to occur – be it of a factory, a death camp, or a cemetery, only to cite upcoming examples from Meyerhold, Grotowski, and Kantor.[29]

As was proposed at the end of the domain section, then, a general case could again be made for much of the above representing instances of *metonymy*, scenic or otherwise. On the one hand, any theatrical object may prototypically stand for an entire *category*, whether it be organized thematically ("a single typical object tak[ing] the place of a host of less typical ones," as Meyerhold suggested) or taxonomically, as "the *class of objects* of which it is a member": insofar as we relate Keir Elam's semiotic formulation not to "all actual and possible [instances]," as Freddie Rokem critically reads it, but to *basic-level categories*, crude evocation of form and function will suffice to enable such "non-literal signifiers" as the earlier fan-as-door-handle. More generally, any one object may come to represent either character (think of the etymology of *properties* as qualities or attributes), dramatic theme (*Othello*'s handkerchief and Ionesco's chairs, enabling Kenneth Pickering to count props among the "key concepts" in drama and performance), or theatrical style: apart from Bert States's deriving "the whole phenomenology of realistic acting" from the chair, in effect, the mere abundance of either may suffice for the prototypical categorization of a performance, as "theatre of the actor," or as "theatre of objects" (and I will return to how this works

with Grotowski and Kantor). In each case, however, it is not the objects themselves that are primary, but rather, the *situations* within which we come to distinguish them as "objects," to begin with – as Alan Costall and Ole Dreier note, "[s]tability is not the 'natural' state of things," classificatory practices, themselves, "often subservient to other ends in practice." If, as Mark Johnson suggests, concepts are one of the ways in which we "meaningfully engage [our] past, present, and future environments," we should not perhaps speak of concepts, at all ("as quasi-things"), but of conceptualizing, as an act – as "one of the things we *do* in and with our experience."[30]

In developmental terms, finally, the general concensus seems to be as the psychologist Ulric Neisser phrased it over twenty years ago. In contrast to Jean Mandler's proposal that our first concepts be of abstract *domains*, what he suggests is that categorization *begins* at the basic level, so much so that it may "seem at first to be perceptually given," yet the "course of development soon moves beyond appearances" – "up" from metonymy to metaphor, in a sense: "in some domains to the scripts and superordinates defined by culture, in others to an acceptance of internal or historical criteria that lie beyond immediate experience" (cognitive essentialism). In the words of Mark Johnson, such generalization over felt experience is, however, "still always and only [a feat of] *abstraction* and selection from the flow of perception": in so doing, we "pay the price of losing connection" to our perceptual experience, "but we *never* leave it wholly behind." Indeed, as George Lakoff suggests, the "basic level" of human categorization could neatly be called "human-sized," in that the properties of concern are not inherent to things, per se, as much as they are *interactional*: "what *we* understand as properties by virtue of our interactive functioning in our environment." As for theatrical objects, accordingly, we might want to zoom out from the kinds of *concepts* we may prefer to use, to the kinds of *relationships* they inhere in, or, to enlarge on Sofer's definition, to situations of "actor-object interaction": in the end, what we encounter in the theatre are not "concepts," but actors and objects, in a specific space and over a specific extent of time. Where Lakoff and Johnson propose that "[e]ven the amoeba categorizes the things it encounters into food or nonfood," in other words, there is a rationale to rather concentrating on "what it moves toward or moves away from": not on actors and objects, as separate *categories*, but on the kinds of *actions* of which they appear as "codefining poles" – certainly, we can and do perceive certain surfaces as "sit-on-able," without first categorizing them into chairs.[31]

The Ecological Level: Action, Perception, and Affordances

> [Objects] are not mere accessories of acting. Most of them are closely associated with actions of different kinds because in human experience more or less familiar objects are so associated, as a general rule. Some of them are tools of certain actions; some belong to situations in which certain actions are likely, and certain others unlikely, to take place; some are perceived as calling for certain actions aimed at them; some are merely potential targets of certain actions, and so on. [--] [On the stage], their capacity to evoke such actions as part of their own respective meanings tends to become their chief quality. (Jiři Veltruský)

> The affordances of the environment are what it *offers* the animal, what it *provides* or *furnishes*, either for good or ill. The verb *to afford* is found in the dictionary, but the noun *affordance* is not. [--] I mean by it something that refers to both the environment and the animal in a way that no existing term does. It implies the complementarity of the animal and the environment. (J. J. Gibson)

As has been noted, Jiři Veltruský found the kind of conceptual fluctuation just discussed a matter of actors and objects, alike, gaining and shedding what he enigmatically called their *action force*. In what comes closest to a definition, he says this force "attracts a certain action" to the prop or whatever has such, and "provokes in us the expectation of [that] action." Dynamic by nature, it also emerges as relative to "the static forces of characterization," predominant when a dagger, for instance, merely appears as part of a costume; in the dynamic context of stabbing someone, it exhibits its action force and "becomes a prop," functioning as "a sign of murder" thereafter. For Andrew Sofer, however, this appears "murky" and all too universal for distinguishing stage objects from stage subjects – in the sense that "convey[ing] an abstract idea independent of an actor" here seems to suffice for semiotic subjectivity. For a different line of interpretation, still, Gay McAuley has referred action force to what anthropologist Marcel Jousse dubs "the gesture of things": for the latter, "we really know things only to the extent that they perform or 'gestualise' themselves in us," and for Veltruský himself, "it is often difficult to decide for certain human actions to what extent their performance is predetermined by the properties of the body, and to what extent by those of [say] clothing." According to McAuley, this in fact goes beyond action force: instead of just creating expectations or (passively) participating in action, objects "contain their own gestural demands" and actually impose behavior on actors. In essence, this comes close to what the Gestalt psychologist Kurt Koffka had described as the *demand character* of phenomena, five years prior to Veltruský's

action-force essay of 1940: the postbox "invites" the mailing of a letter, the handle "wants to be grasped," all in all, things "tell us what to do with them."[32]

All these considered, my proposal here is to modify Veltruský's "action force" with the more analytical concept of *affordances*, coined by "one of psychology's most centrally placed and interesting misfits," as Alan Costall calls the American perceptual psychologist James J. Gibson (1904–79). In contrast to the domain-specific and basic-level categories discussed so far, these would not in fact be "specific" to any concepts at all, but to particular objects, agents, actions, and situations – "not properties of the environment or the agent *simpliciter*," as philosopher of ecology Kevin de Laplante puts it, "but properties of the agent-in-relation-to-environment." Indeed, their relevant level of description has come to be termed *ecological* – Gibson's overall project, as ecological psychology – yet in a sense that substantially extends what could be called the prototypical conception of its domain, as "a natural biological science distinct from the human social sciences": understood in the highly inclusive terms of *organism–environment interaction*, there is an "ecology" to actors and objects, in the theatre, just as there is to burrowing worms or to specific historical cultures. In evolutionary terms, as Tim Ingold aptly phrases it, "the human emerges not as a creature whose evolved capacities are filled up with structures that represent the world [e.g. domain-specific cognitive modules], but rather as a center of awareness and agency whose processes resonate with those of the environment." Importantly, here, the CENTER and PERIPHERY of this ecological resonance can only be understood as equal PARTS in systematic, ever-changing WHOLE: as Gibson had it, just as "[n]o animal could exist without an environment surrounding it," an environment necessarily implies an organism to be surrounded. Remove either one, and there will be no affordances – indeed, even the term "interaction" is suspect, in that it leads one to think that the two could in fact be defined outside of the relation between them.[33]

Within this larger ecological framework, then, "affordances" are what one can do with things, their functional meanings or values for an individual, or the possibilities for interaction in an environment – more to do with verbs than nouns, in a sense, but always in terms of a basic, ecological fittedness of agent and world (including that of actors and objects, in the theatre). Apart from his overall understanding of ecology, importantly, this idea of a fundamental mutuality or reciprocity would also characterize Gibson's basic notions of *action* and *perception*, defined, effectively, as being *on* and *of* affordances: intimately interwoven with one's motor possibilities,

"direct perception" equals one's continuous awareness of both the environment and of oneself, and especially of the affordances of their ongoing functional relationship. "Environment," consequently, is for Gibson not the objective, abstract reality of physics or geometry, but an ecological one, specified in relation to the organism it surrounds and the interactions their relationship affords. Yet it is a profoundly meaningful environment: "information," in the Gibsonian brand of direct realism, need not be added to arbitrary stimuli, but only picked up by perceptual systems attuned to what he calls the "invariant" aspects of surrounding reality. Accordingly, affordances themselves would be "compound invariants," the functional meaning of which we likely perceive even more directly than we do their individual components: Specified by "an edge with an acute dihedral angle," what we likely attend to in Veltruský's dagger is their "compound" that specifies the range of its action force. Likewise, it might take some conceptual labor to analyze an object into a horizontal, flat, and rigid surface, "knee-high above the ground," instead of just perceiving that it affords sitting on.[34]

Unlike physical properties, then, affordances only emerge in *situated interaction* within a given ecology, relative to an acting organism whether this be an invidual or a species: for fish, water serves as a medium for living and breathing and moving within, for us, as a substance to drink or swim in or wash ourselves with. At the level of individual situations, a like distinction could be made between the multiplicity of *potential* affordances we're surrounded with every living moment – in a sense, physically out there in the waiting – and the much more limited range that may actually come to be *actualized*, in relation to our specific line of action. To cite an example from ecological psychologists Turvey and Shaw, "[a] change of pace or a change of location can mean that a brink in the ground [again, *physically* invariant] now affords leaping over whereas at an ealier pace or location it did not" – along such a line of interpretation, then, "action force" would not be something "contained within" that an object or an actor may come to "radiate" (as for Veltruský) but would only come into being *in between*, as it were, in a given situation in a given ecology. In high epistemological terms, accordingly, the concept of affordances is "both physical and psychical, yet neither," cutting across the subjective and the objective as merely two "poles of attention": for Gibson, "[w]hat a thing *is* and what it *means* are not separate, the former being physical and the latter mental as we are accustomed to believe."[35] Compared to your standard semiotics, thus, such an ecological theory of meaning will tolerate – indeed presuppose – a variety of unintended signs besides the intentional: the

potential affordance or action force of the dagger will be perceived immediately (Veltruský's "expectation of action") and can then be actualized or not, given the reciprocity of perception and action – and note it does afford more than stabbing.

Understood as features of a *relationship*, then, affordances do not cause or "impose" action in some behavioristic manner (as for Jousse or Koffka), but only make it possible within a very precise set of material, cultural, and biological *constraints*. To consider again the simple example of sitting down, we cannot really appreciate the "environmental counterpart" of this act in terms of its physical properties, alone, but will have to perceive it as a "surface of support" at about knee-height from the ground – *with respect* to our own mass and leg length, that is, in the sense that a bar stool will not afford sitting for a very young infant, nor will a cardboard box for a slightly older and heavier one. Again, it is always the perceived relationship that specifies the affordance: each organism can only encounter its environment in its own sensorimotor terms, its capabilities of action and perception, critically important to which kinds of things will stand out as *meaningful* in its experience – as Carl Knappett neatly phrases it, "if humans did not exist (along with any other being capable of sitting behavior), then chairs could hardly be said to afford sitting." To a person, as musicologist Eric Clarke wittily elaborates, a wooden chair may afford sitting, or perhaps self-defense if under attack, "while to a termite it affords eating": "The relationship is neither a case of organisms imposing their needs on an indifferent environment, nor a fixed environment determining possibilities: to a person, a chair [--] simply cannot afford eating because of the relationship between the capabilities of the human digestive system and the properties of wood." In sum, where no individual chair can afford just anything (given the set of invariant properties specific to the object), what it does afford will always be reciprocal to the behavioral capacities of some specific agent.[36]

In terms of dramaturgy and stage ergonomy, accordingly, suffice it at this point to consider the actors' or characters' side of the agent/environment equation. For one, simple material objects can simultaneously afford very different actions for different individuals, or indeed for the same individual at different times: functioning as a "trap" for Tartuffe, in Molière's play, Orgon's table obviously affords hiding, for the latter. Reciprocally, the perception of any affordance will always involve the "coperception" of one's relevant bodily proportions – in *Waiting for Godot*, the tree appears too weak for Didi and Gogo to hang themselves (with "an erection" and "all that follows") and too narrow to hide behind, given their width and weight: as the latter is at

pains to explicate, "Gogo light – bough not break – Gogo dead. Didi heavy – bough break – Didi alone." Then again, hanging oneself, dagger-stabbing another, or hiding under tables, make little sense unless taken in the context of *intentional action*: phenomenologically, as Harry Heft has argued, we need to define affordances with respect to each agent's "intentional repertoire," and not her body alone. Finally, embodiment, skill, and intentionality alike are always constrained by age, experience, and perceptual learning: keeping to Heft, as the motor abilities and intentional capacities of an individual change, "the affordances of the environment change concurrently," whole fields of affordances opening up and closing down, with development, aging, or indeed, theatrical training. On the one hand, as Phillip Zarrilli puts it, an actor may train up "a repertoire of sensorimotor skills that afford various possibilities of action within the theatrical environment," on the other, any pre-drafted scenery will fail if she cannot, say, reach something she should (though surely we find such shortcomings all over the plays, and quite intentionally so, of some Samuel Beckett).[37]

All these ecological variables considered, then, it is little short of redundant to speak of objects "becoming props," as do both Veltruský and Sofer – let alone of things becoming objects – apart from the kinds of being *for whom* they become such. Moreover, such a change of affordance or relationship is not really a matter of "becoming" at all, in that the *materiality* of objects (their physical invariants) usually remain even as they come to afford different things: as Freddie Rokem suggests, even when a chair on stage is "distanced from its identity and function – to sit at a certain height from the floor – we will always be able to say about it: 'Look, this is no longer a chair' as opposed to 'not a table', or 'not a man'." On a more superordinate level of categorization, Sofer does have a point in restricting the concept of props to situations of physical manipulation, but as for the audience – and for much of the actors' work, I venture to hope – it need not matter much what they are called: "To perceive an affordance is not to classify an object," as Gibson makes some effort to emphasize; subscribing to Wittgenstein's ideas of family resemblance, for classes of things, he insists "[y]ou do not need to classify and label things to perceive what they afford." While Joseph D. Anderson is surely correct that Gibson's concepts of invariants and affordances "apply directly to the process of basic level categorization," they are not really equivalent to form and function, in the traditional sense of those terms: as Gibson notes, "an object or layout that *affords sitting* can have many forms," and "you can call it whatever you please" insofar as you know what to do with it – indeed, we

often do not even have appropriate words for most affordances.[38] On the functional side, what this comes down to is that not all objects we perceive as "sit-on-able" need be *designed* as such: apart from beds and tables, we may well sit on natural ledges or prop ledges or indeed on prop chairs actually designed to collapse on us.

Thus, we arrive at the environmental side of the equation; suffice it here to limit the discussion to designed artifacts. In a nutshell, where Gibson already noted that "things can lie," authors like Donald Norman have since recognized the job of the designer in making the affordances visible: if you don't know how to open a door, it's not you who's to blame but poor design. Ideally, function should follow from form in a non-arbitrary manner, but in practice, the fit between the two does range from relative transparency (sit-on-able objects) to utter opacity (*look* only at prescription pills). In the theatre, moreover, not only may objects be designed to behave differently than the "real thing" allegedly would – consider again the "hidden" affordance of collapsing, in the prop chairs suggested above – but, in principle, any object can be used differently from its designed "proper functions." While the latter have been dubbed the *intentional*, *conventional*, or *canonical* affordances of designed artifacts, these remain separate from such "first-order" affordances as have variously been called *immediate*, *physical*, *sensorimotor*, or even *natural* – in the sense that your regular mailbox does afford inserting litter, for instance, if you happen (or choose) to remain oblivious of its socially agreed uses. In fact, the distinction between the immediate and the intentional (affordances and categorization, the directly perceptible and the socially constructed) can only be fuzzy and graded, the canonical notion that *one* sits on chairs, only distinguished by a degree of impersonality and objectification, from such first-order affordances as are specific to agent and situation. In the theatre, we might add "performed" or "improvised" affordances to this range of what is physically possible (e.g., one *can* use the pill as a bug), the point being that these can always override the range of what is considered proper in a culture – which leads to another interesting analogy.[39]

In what has been written on affordances and *pretend play*, one proposition is that children first perceive the conventional affordances of objects (say, that socks are for wearing) and then come to detach or decouple these to engage in imaginative play – using socks as pretend guns, say. In more straightforward terms, however – and I quote developmental psychologist Ágnes Szokolszky – "pretend objects need to support pretend acts, not real acts; a pretend knife does not need to afford cutting, it only needs to afford *pretend cutting* which is a much less definite act" (comparable, of

course, to the action force of Veltruský's stage dagger). On the one hand, the child only needs to select an object that is good enough to support her playful intentions – on the other, the enactment also remains constrained by the properties of the object: socks may afford "being used as pretend guns, but do not make good pretend houses, nor even swords," as Alan Costall and Ole Dreier elaborate. Not that there are no constraints, then, it is only that the constraints are much looser: in the theatre, this can surely be related to the genre of the production as well as to its pursued level of realism, but on a more general level, it may be the only thing that really sets "playful" uses of objects apart from such "unconventional" uses as we engage in every day – in the sense that a book may well afford propping open a window or another book, say. Again, it will not afford just anything, but these are altogether real and practical uses, "proper" to the task at hand while only violating its proper "function." As Szokolszky relates, that such improvisation is often more difficult without objects has to do with their ability to *focus behavior* – likewise, that they are "always there to be perceived," as Gibson insists, may help explain some of the joy there certainly is to encountering an improvised affordance one has simply failed to perceive prior to its performance.[40]

In the phenomenological vein, finally, much of the above could be related to Martin Heidegger's understanding of *Dasein* as "concerned absorption in the world," i.e., the unselfconscious yet ubiquitous *involvement in situations*, as opposed to the deliberate, effortful, subject/object mode of intentionality to which we only switch once things get difficult. The latter, as Hubert Dreyfus explains, is "studied in detail by philosophers" since it is "the mode we tend to notice," yet it should not be thought of as superior to mere absorption in the ready-to-hand everyday. In a way, giving objective conditions for "objectivity" is a form of keeping the actual objects of study at bay, possible only for a God's-eye-view scientist devoid of personal complicity – and this, again, is not possible in an ecology of which one is always already a part. That we can occasionally adopt the categorization approach (i.e. encounter objects as "present-to-hand," with inherent properties and relations to other objects) is often predicated on some disruption in their functional transparency: in a sense, it is only in affording an *obstacle* that an object even obtrudes as such (as an *ob-ject*, that which "stands against"). For most intents and purposes, such reflective reification does work well enough, yet, as Mark Johnson neatly phrases it, we should rather think of objects as "stable affordances for us – stable patterns that our environment presents to [--] our specific capacities for perception and bodily action." In Gibson's terminology, the

kinds of objects, places, events, and so on that are to *count as such* for animals, will always depend on whether these features afford them something or not; in their ecological context, moreover, many of them will be "nested in superordinate and subordinate units" and need not even appear discrete and denumerable, for categorization.[41]

What these considerations afford in our present discussion, then, is questioning Pavis's definition of *object* as "neutral or empty," and extending Sofer's, of *props* as affording actual motion: albeit they both count as objects and can be used as props, a brick and a rope will inevitably afford different kinds of motions. Quite democratically, moreover, just as these affordances should be directly detectable in what Gibson would call their *substances* and *surfaces*, so should the admittedly more "elaborate" ones of the animate environment, captured in his slogan, *behavior affords behavior*. Defining the latter (with Edward Reed) as an animal's "ability to change its relationship with its surroundings," and agency (with Eleanor J. Gibson) as the "*control* of one's own activity and of external events" – inherent in the very reciprocity of action and perception – there is a sense in which a good actor may "control" not only the layout of her perceived surfaces, but the "behavior" of adjacent objects, in a way that does seem to relativize Sofer's worries about their "semiotic subjectivity." As for the distinction between *animate* and *inanimate* objects, Gibson in fact appears very much in line with both Veltruský and Jean Mandler: apart from "the fact that they move spontaneously," the former "*interact* with the observer and with one another." Where the difference lies is in how these perceptual discriminations end up being theorized – nicely exemplified in a little exchange of 2000, between Mandler and Eleanor J. Gibson, an esteemed reformer of their shared field of developmental psychology who outlived her husband by twenty-four years. For Gibson, "meaning" arises via the "perceptual learning of affordances," for Mandler, via a process of "perceptual meaning analysis" *redescribing* percepts into image-schematic concepts. For the one, there is information in the world that suffices to "specify" things *in the world*, for the other, there are cues in the world that need to be conceptualized in the mind.[42]

Fundamental as this distinction is for ecological and cognitive approaches (in their "representationalist" variety) more broadly, it is not so much a binary opposition as it is a matter of epistemological emphasis: in effect, the Gibsonian challenge is to see just *how far we can go*, in explaining cognition without positing "inner" structure. I will revert to this in due course; however, I wish to end this section on the very commonalities of Mandler's and Gibson's orientations, as indeed they both focus on

the grounding of meaning in *events*, *relations*, and the *consequences* thereof. Consider such force-dynamic schemas as pushing, pulling, compulsion, or enablement – defined by Johnson as a "felt sense of power" (e.g., to lift a baby but not a car) in the absence of "barriers or blocking counterforces": "part of the *meaning* of force," as he explicates, there is a sense in which all of these can also be seen to define reciprocally emergent affordances "for good or ill."[43] While this affinity of affordances and image schemas will be further elaborated in Chapter 2, what makes these concepts so integral to my whole project is their shared basis in *organism–environment interaction*: the central unit of my analysis as this is, a bold proposal would be that the relationship of actors and objects actually *consists of* affordances, insofar as we refrain from limiting the concept to either "side" of the ecological equation (actor/object, performance/scenography, production/audience). On the one hand, what I suggest is to renounce such fixed typologies of theatrical objects as props, scenery, or costume, for their ongoing reciprocity to stage action: understood as a *field of potential affordances* for the actors to engage in, the material reality of the stage stands out as both enabling and constraining their performances. Secondly (again a major topic in Chapter 2), what they do will again enable and constrain the range of *interpretations* the event affords its audience – at this point, let us consider how all of the above concepts, from the domain-level down, may afford such imaginative feats of conceptual extension as are the hallmark of our cognitive flexibility as humans, artists, and theatre-goers.

Crossing Boundaries: Metaphorical Mapping and Conceptual Blending

So far, what I hope to have demonstrated on various levels of conceptual abstraction, is the utter *intuitiveness* of the ontological distinction between persons and objects, regardless of one's "epistemological horizon" along the lines of "civilized/primitive"; as a corollary correction to Veltruský's discussion of these alleged horizons, what I would like to address now is how the ability to *cross* such boundaries seems quite as ubiquitous. In this sense, the "domain," "basic," and "ecological" levels just outlined specify multiple ways in which both persons and objects can yield effective source domains for *metaphorical extension*: beyond perceptible features, indeed, the very notion (or domain-level "theory") that something be "animated" by an "essence" within, already construes that something as a metaphorical CONTAINER of that unseen essence, whatever it may be. That such domain-crossing tendencies are by no means restricted to infants and psychotics and indigenous adults, has been professed on vari-

ous fronts: in the cognitive science of religion, Stewart Guthrie has found *animism* to be "pervasive in human thought and action," "even in complex, industrial societies"; Pascal Boyer would explain the "attention-demanding" qualities of supernatural concepts, in general, by the way they tend to critically *violate* our conceptual expectations. Cognitive archaeologist Steven Mithen finds the very "essence of human creativity" in the prehistoric leap from rigid modularity to the *integration* of "knowledge which had previously been 'trapped' within a specific domain," and for Veltruský himself, "one of the most important social objectives of the theater" lies in its metaphorical ability "to link together unconventionally various aspects of reality."[44]

In a sense, a sort of "objectification" is built into language itself: regardless of the processual aspects of people, objects, affordances, or the like, an implicitly thing-like ontology is imposed on each by the very count nouns we usually have to rely on, in discussing them. On the one hand, words and categories afford turning our thoughts into stable objects for us to "manipulate," on the other, such reification easily causes us to lock them up in some inner "theatre of the mind," utterly separated from the world we actually live in: indeed, the very etymology of "metaphor" (from *meta-* "over, across" + *pherein* "to carry, bear") implies the "carrying over" of Thoughts (as Objects) from one Place (or domain) to another. Conversely, its is only to be expected that the one "performing object" known to all humankind is commonly experienced as "rising" or "setting" – given their centrality to human cognition, the most abstract of realms are easily comprehended in terms of action and agency: time *flies*, personalities *clash*, ideas are *grasped*, arguments *prevail*. Importantly, it is not that scientific discourses be any less "animistic," in their explanations: genes are *selfish* and brains *inhabited* by ideas, which not only "are born, live and die" but also constitute *families* – and, as for Boyer, may downright *demand* our attention. Indeed, the verbs we routinely use to personify aspects of our worlds ("invites," "affords") often have us deal with it as though it were social and communicative, "as if every being, everywhere, were telling a message" – hence, the whole language of *cues*, *clues*, *signs*, and *signals*, equally important to semiotic and to many cognitive approaches. The more abstract the phenomenon to be understood the more it is in fact created by metaphorical extension: as Lakoff and Turner note in their discussion of the Great Chain of Being, the way we may speak of nations or societies as *aggressive*, *submissive*, *just*, or *peace-loving*, or of the universe itself, as *indifferent*, *benevolent*, or *malevolent*, relies on our metaphorically attributing to each none other than human character traits.[45]

Turning now to some key characteristics of conceptual metaphor, in general, consider first the kind of schematization that affords it much of its overall *flexibility*: rather than basic-level kind-concepts, the "supernatural" violations Boyer discusses only concern our domain-level ontologies of persons, animals, plants, and objects. Hence what are recruited are superordinate categories or image-schematic abstractions thereof: take LINK, CONTAINMENT, and PATH, and a "relationship" may well be construed not only as a *bond*, a *location*, or a *journey*, but as a generic *vehicle* for its performance – whether, on the basic level, we specify it as a car (spinning our wheels), a train (off the track), a boat (on the rocks), or a plane (just taking off). This, again, is just the kind of rich ecological knowledge that accounts for the *ubiquity* of metaphor: apart from their experiential basis in what Johnson dubs the semantics and aesthetics of "our embodied interactions with the world," many salient metaphors are materially realized in the cultural world, itself, such that "one generation's realizations of a metaphor can become part of the next generation's experiential basis for that metaphor." Thus, insofar as cognition itself is often conceptualized in terms of perception, manipulation, and movement (if you *see* or *grasp* what I'm *getting at*), there is a sense in which abstract metaphors of memory or creativity may be materially supported by mundane affordances of storage or discovery, say, on a theatrical stage – but note two things. Deeply *ontological*, or performative of our conceptual realities, all such metaphors can ever only be *partial* in what they may serve to reveal: as an analytical tool, metaphor theory does not give us what something "is," but only clues as to how it is conceived as so being. Inconsistent as the above source domains are with one another (e.g. journey/manipulation), neither can the target concepts (relationship/cognition) be one and the same, irrespective of their metaphors – and this applies equally to Lakoff and Johnson's own "Metaphors for Metaphor" (take, *mapping* or *projection*, based as they are on mathematics and on historically contingent imaging technologies).[46]

These characteristics considered, metaphor theory does help unpack some of the implications of object use Veltruský already intuited – insofar as we zoom out from *objects and entities*, again, to the kinds of *events and relations* in which they are embedded: in fact, it has been proposed that all conceptual metaphors are grounded in "two large metaphor systems," reflective of this very distinction (compare noun/verb). As a case in point, consider only how our very sense of *dramatic causation* – the most abstract, social and metaphysical varieties included – may reflect such literal events of *movement and manipulation* as are afforded by virtually every theatrical stage or ob-

ject: according to Lakoff and Johnson, the most prototypical case of causation comes down to object manipulation, by "human agency" using "direct physical force." Here, "Event Structure" is metaphorically conceived in terms of Objects or Possessions (e.g., *having*, *giving*, or *getting* a headache), the converse of which would be to focus on Locations and Movements in space (e.g., "*in* love," "*went* crazy," "got *over* it") – consider Bert States's discussion of how the action of many realistic plays "passes and defines itself" through the very objects on stage, "as in those coloring-book pictures children make by drawing lines through a series of numbers": in the end, we are amazed at "the self-sufficiency of the room to have contained, in advance, all of the properties necessary to produce this unique reckoning in time." In both cases, Causes are conceived as Forces, whether human or environmental; in the latter, the two perspectives may also intermingle, such that we apply the metonymic logic of (object) manipulation to that of (human) movement and invest all causal force in the environment. In short, there is a sense in which different metaphors afford different *dramaturgies*: to imagine Love as a Journey is to invest the protagonist with at least a degree of volitional agency, to conceive it as Physical Attraction, is to subject her to mechanical force and to only allow her the restricted affordances of a material object (structured enough, for Johnson to include OBJECT in his list of image schemas).[47]

As for the other metaphor system – that for objects and entities, epitomized by the Great Chain of Being – suffice it here to consider some widespread assumptions about *humanity* (body, mind, self) as they are reflected in theories of *acting* (such as discussed e.g. by McConachie, Tobin Nellhaus, and Phillip Zarrilli). In short, from the eighteenth century to the Method acting of the 1950s and onward, many Western actors, at least, seem to routinely rely on some metaphor of *interior selfhood*, to understand and practice their art; whatever their professional background, they tend to "perceive[] the self as a container that can be emptied and filled with fresh contents," as John Lutterbie has argued – often enough, emptied of cognitive thought, so as to allow the free flow of feelings. This should be no wonder, given the Western intellectual tradition (from Plato, through Descartes, to Freud and on) of positing the "self-contained individual" as the appropriate unit of analysis for psychological processes – with its corollary dichotomies of mind and body, intellect and emotion. Yet we should remain clear that such "internalization" of mind and self is no less metaphorical than their "objectification" in the force-dynamic scenario just discussed: as an entity to be *in* or *out of*, "character" becomes a CONTAINER of inner "properties" (perhaps "dri-

ven" by "subconscious" forces, internalizing the logic of naïve physics), a stable essence of which the likes of stage properties only serve as external attributes. Not that cognitive science is any less biased, here: where the "classical" version built the mind from the inside out (as a Computer, basically), more recent developments have aspired to rebuild it from the outside in, stressing the ecological settings where "knowing" is performed – clearly these stances are not devoid of equivalents in twentieth-century actor training. As Phillip Zarrilli has observed, moreover, *all* discourses of acting are necessarily metaphorical: what needs to be "constantly (re)considered" are the specific metaphors that specific actors are to "live by" in specific contexts.[48]

Then again, insofar as we rarely experience actors "in terms of" their characters, or vice versa, it may be that the kind of "theatrical doubleness" we do experience is not reducible to such unidirectional projections, at all; what McConachie and others propose is that we rather unpack the actor/character dynamic into larger "integration networks," such as postulated in Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner's influential theory of *conceptual blending*. Instead of stable mappings between distinct domains, this approach begins with the dynamic interaction of locally created "mental spaces," partial and temporary, such that in "compressing" them together, the resulting "blend" may develop "emergent structure" that is distinct from any of them. Accordingly, both actors and spectators are equally free to "decompress" their theatrical blends at any time, for example, when an actor stumbles over a line or an object; in McConachie's view, either "side" of "the actor-character blend" may become dominant (depending e.g. on whether it is a star persona or an amateur we are watching), but both should be acknowledged and sustained, for theatrical doubleness to occur. This is surely true, but a couple of ecological footnotes are in order. First, the "overarching goal" of conceptual blending is to achieve *human scale* – to compress complex thoughts into simple scenarios "with a minimal number of agents in a local spatial region and a small temporal interval": in revealingly Gibsonian terms, blends, too, become "more manipulable" in familiar frames of "direct perception and action." Second, whether or not what we thus *achieve* is a sense of "doubleness," we only need to consider non-Western forms like *bunraku* – where such functions are distributed between a puppet, its manipulators, and a distinct narrator – to note that its *constituents* may not be so neatly reducible to individual actors and their scripted "characters." In sum, neither is there any principled reason for such "integration networks" to be confined to the heads of individual cognizers: the "supreme material anchor" for any theatrical blend,

as Fauconnier and Turner concede, the actor's body is always already embedded in a whole network of relationships, *on stage*, with other bodies and material objects.[49]

If there is a way, then, to rid theatrical applications of blending theory of the mentalist and individualist assumptions Edwin Hutchins sought to address with his neat notion of "material anchors," it might be by appropriating the old Prague School concept of the *stage figure* – interpreted as a *temporally emerging blend* of more than McConachie's peculiarly Western notions of actor and character: for Veltruský, this figure would be a "dynamic unity," not only of "the actor's body, voice, movements, but also [of] various objects, from parts of the costume to the set." In his later work, especially, he suggests it "comprises not only a dramatic character in the naive sense," but "images" of the spectator and the actor (e.g., of her earlier roles), as well as "of the same character as projected by related stage figures and actions": thoroughly implicated in complex metonymical networks of parts and wholes, "every actor contribute[s] to the creation of several stage figures," while every character is duly embodied in "the work of several actors." From a characterological point of view, this emphasis on the "metonymic potential" of acting as a primarily *collective* enterprise also resonates with Bert States's account of how "every character trait" can only unfold as an actual "event in the plot": "made of Gertrude and Claudius" and all the others, Hamlet is for States but a "collection of relationships" and as such, not really "portable and adaptable" to other relationships. And where States argues that "[r]emoving a character from a play is like trying to pull up an oak tree," cognitive philosopher Alva Noë adds that every one of us is "like the plant itself," not like a mere berry to be plucked – *in and of* our soil, to the extent that when "transplanted" from our props, we ourselves are altered or even "disfigured." Reminiscent as this may be of naturalistic or expressionistic stagecraft – in the sense of States's "theatrical rooms" memorably "inhabit[ing] the people who inhabit them," the "causal masquerading as the casual" – Noë insists that this "isn't poetry," but "a well-supported empirical hypothesis."[50]

Accordingly, the wider implications on which I would like to end this overview chapter, lie in the utterly *ecological grounding* of all such performances of cognition as have been discussed. In early Prague School terms, what we need to recognize is the primacy of "action value" – indeed equated with "theatricality," by Veltruský and his colleagues – for perception and interpretation: understanding "action" in terms of affordances, and "meaning," in terms of action, what we round up with is the basic thesis of Veltruský's, again, that "[o]ne of the fundamental features of the theater" lie

in its "question[ing] the relationship between man and things with respect to activity." In the concluding section, I will try to show how this formulation anticipates important recent approaches to action, agency, and cognition: while the *metaphorical* sense we make of dramatic causation, say, will likely keep working with well-worn scripts of *subjects* acting on *objects* (or occasionally, vice versa), the ecologies we actually engage in – on stage or off – imply more complex processes of reciprocal or mutual influence, causally continuous and cumulative, rather than mechanistic or unidirectional. Once we relax our anthropocentric views of agents and artifacts, and allow for a more fuzzy boundary, again, between *ourselves* and our environments, we begin to see the fundamentally *distributed* character of agency and cognition, which, one might propose, is already implicit in Veltruský's early extensions of semiotic subjectivity. Finally, if "subjects" and "objects" are "really just abstractions from the interactive flow of organism-environment transactions," as Mark Johnson argues, stage objects need no longer appear "at the bottom of [a] hierarchy of theatrical elements" (the vertical Chain Sofer identified with the traditional "subject-oriented" position), but in horizontal networks of metonymical implication and ecological reciprocity.[51]

Out of Our Heads: An Ecological Approach to Performance and Cognition

To begin to untangle these admittedly demanding concepts, consider Carl Knappett's bracingly clear-cut formulation: "Agency is not something we confer on objects in a one-way relationship [but] emerges reciprocally as humans and nonhumans merge." Terminology aside, this division of labor is reminiscent not only of Jiři Veltruský's – between the "basic" and the "partial" subject, or, "the originator of the intent" and the thing "overtly performing the action" – but of the "primary" and "secondary" agents anthropologist Alfred Gell would discuss, some half a century later. Suspend *autonomy*, and the simplest of glove puppets could well claim such "second-hand" agency (pun intended), if not any real subjectivity, in its subjection to the puppeteer; thought of as agents *without intentionality*, stage objects need not turn into fully fledged subjects "equivalent to the figure of the actor," as for Veltruský, yet neither are they only agents "in a manner of speaking," should we go with Gell's line of thought. Convincing in its simplicity, his argument is that for any agent and patient to interact, there has to be physical mediation of *some* kind: allowing for its *distribution* in what he terms "the causal milieu," it is only the secondary agents that render primary agency effective, "objectification in artefact-form," the only way for social agency to have

impact. Or consider sociologist Bruno Latour's discussion of whether people or guns kill people: refusing the dualistic, "asymmetrical" terms of standard materialist and sociological explanations (that *either* guns or people do), he denies that either *alone* is the "actor," apart from the "hybrid" they form in conjunction. Again, there is no causation without coupling – the threat of the gunman, as that of Veltruský's dagger, is a *compound affordance* of the weapon and its wielder; as recent theorists of "material agency" suggest, rather than "debating what or who is or is not an agent," we should consider agency "as a situated process in which material culture is entangled," neither human or nonhuman but "distributed across bodies, artifacts and environments."[52]

And what better example to flesh this out than the one theatrical prop we've occasionally used as a seat of discussion all along? In an important analysis thereof, Bert States regards the inauguration of the *chair*, on the realistic stage of the 1850s, as a great "preconventional shock" that affected the whole phenomenology of its acting; for the first time, a simple prop came to articulate the characters' relations to their social milieu, bodily binding the actors, as well, to the concrete stage world here and now. Later, Bertolt Brecht would discuss his famous notion of the *gestus* in terms of the chairs and tables provided for him by his "stage-builder" Caspar Neher: as their relative height could make those sitting at the table bend over in "a quite specific attitude," if the two did *not* create attitudes, their legs were simply shortened until they did. To paraphrase Gay McAuley, these props afforded not only specific gestures, to enact, but whole "lifestyles" to represent, on stage – and lifestylewise, importantly, a like range of affordances would also have accompanied the introduction and use of chairs, outside of the theatre. According to historian Charles Fitzgerald, quoted by Freddie Rokem in his essay on the subject, there is "no aspect of furnishing and decoration which is not profoundly modified by the use of the chair when it replaces the mat": apart from their "need [for] tables raised high enough to fit the legs underneath," chair-sitters "will also sleep on raised beds." In effect, a similar argument can be also found in Marshall McLuhan, writing of chairs as an "extension of our backsides" that inevitably alters what he calls the "syntax of society" – in this case, creating the need for tables and other specifically measured furniture, quite in line with Fitzgerald's history, above. (And note, with Tim Ingold, that "[t]he 'sitting society' to which we are so accustomed today is largely a phenomenon of the last 200 years.")[53]

In Gibsonian terms, what this comes down to is his understanding of an animal's ecological *niche* as a set of affordances: as opposed to *habitat*, the term refers

"more to *how* an animal lives than to *where* it lives," the two being complementary in that "[t]he niche implies a kind of animal, and the animal implies a kind of niche." (Note also the theatrical metaphors often applied to the term: conventionally, a *niche* is defined as the "role" of the animal in its environment, even in an "ecological theatre" of "evolutionary play"; in this sense, perhaps, the potential affordances on stage also delimit the possible roles/niches the actor/characters may come to "inhabit.") In Veltruský's terms, again, these examples relate to his discussion of action force as a function of "scenic metonymy," motivating not only the mutual complementarity of stage figure and stage action, but the "precise dramatic meaning" of theatrical objects. Importantly for the present discussion, the *cognitive work* of metonymy – defined as a conceptual "stand-for" relationship in which one entity *affords access* to another – may equally proceed in both directions: not only may an object stand for an action (Veltruský's action force, cf. the materialist interpretation of Latour's gun example), but reciprocally may mere action or mime suffice to evoke, say, "imaginary props." On both accounts – the ecological and the metonymical – agents and objects stand out as interdependent, interimplied, and interdefined; Veltruský's reservations aside, "the direct relationship between man and his environment" seems in full force, in how we perceive either one. Yet again, if agency is "a core element of what theatre is 'about,'" as Tobin Nellhaus argues, the big question to which I will devote the rest of this section is whether what applies to agency also applies to *cognition* – to list the basic aspects we need to discuss, I will subscribe to Johnson's definition of cognition as the "embodied action" of "meaning-making" (*not* "information processing"), "located in organism-environment interactions" that are "the locus of who and what we are":

> Meaning requires a functioning brain, in a living body that engages its environments – [--] social and cultural, as well as physical and biological. [--] Take away any one of these three dimensions, and you lose the possibility of meaning: no brain, no meaning; no body, no meaning; no environment, no meaning.[54]

To begin with the basics: While the current framework of "embodied cognition" does deny the ontological distinction of *mind* and *body*, what it does not imply is that the Mind be the Brain – a metaphor that has appeared rather tempting to some cognitively oriented theatre scholars. In the face of Rhonda Blair's recent proposal that ours be "the Century of the Brain," it is ironic how the cognitive science of the 1990s (the decade so designated) already witnessed a major shift *beyond* neural reductionism. As

philosopher Andy Clark puts it, the biological brain as such is just cognitively "incomplete"; what he objects to, more specifically, is reducing all the rest of our cognitive ecology to mere "scene setting," under the "illusion" ("surgically neat") that "the mechanisms of mind and self" only unfold "on some privileged stage marked out by the good old-fashioned skin-bag," "inside the ancient fortress of skin and skull." What he *endorses*, again in resolutely theatrical language, is the "crucial role" of "non-biological props" in the whole cognitive ensemble, "not just [as] aids for understanding the mind, but as key parts of the minds we seek to understand" – indeed, insofar as its "job" is to *coordinate* such ensembles, as philosopher Alva Noë would add, the function of the brain itself can only be understood in the context of our "dynamically interacting with objects and situations." In a sense, all of this is only in keeping with the basic etymology of cognition, as "knowing *together*" (from the L. *co* + *gnoscere*): more like dancing than digestion, for Noë, many cognitive and aesthetic phenomena in fact "lose[] resolution for us" if we try to "explain [them] away" by an exclusive appeal to neuroscience – frequently, "[t]he neuron is just the wrong unit of analysis." Adding one more to Gibson's complementarities, then, just as we cannot really keep *ecology* at arm's length "in the environment" (as if excluding ourselves), we should not think of *cognition* as only residing "in the head": in the current view, while still understood as the general "activity of knowing," it is an ongoing process that is at once embodied, situated, distributed, and enacted – indeed, *performed* in the world.[55]

Zooming out to the bigger performance, then, it makes good sense (and fun) to view the "drama" of human evolution as a succession of different "actors," with their characteristic "props" and "changes of scenery," as does archaeologist Steven Mithen. In a 2004 exchange in the journal *Metascience*, both Mithen and Clark toy with the evolutionary scenario that "[o]nce upon a time," there were indeed beings whose "minds were still entirely within their skulls" – and as far as the fossil record goes, of course, this is practically all that remains. While it does suggest significant increases in the *size* of brain and body alike, however, it is rather the *archaeological* record (of tools, art, and artifacts) that betrays cognition, or so Mithen proposes: more specifically, he suggests it was only with *art* that "culture became as important as biology for human thought," and that the "mind began to become something different from the brain." Recognizing the practice of "cave wall drawings and carving" as "the first scene in the cognitive drama of the modern hybrid mind," for his part, Clark then goes on to wonder whether "highly abstract thought [in general] is a product of, much more

than a precondition for, the use of iterative strategies of freezing thoughts and ideas in material media": with some licence, what he have here is a view of (1) cognition, as extended into the environment, and (2) abstract thought, as metaphorically extended from experiences of acting therein – a hypothesis based on the co-evolution and continuing feedback cycle between *cognition and material culture* which (once we take the ecological environment seriously) affords an understanding of "cognitive science" that is not only profoundly cultural but more than parasitically, humanistic.[56]

Then again, there are many ways to interpret this scenario: while the metaphor of "embodiment" is apt, I think, we need to get a more precise sense of just *where and how*, in varying situations, "mind" may be "embodied" – unless wary of the word's implications, we find the em*bodied* mind lodging the old "skinbag," again, to the neglect of the whole material/social/technological surround it engages. (A "lexical band-aid covering [and] perpetuating a schizoid [Cartesian] metaphysics," in Maxine Sheets-Johnstone's harsh criticism, there is indeed a sense in which the expression carries in itself the very dichotomy it was recruited to dismantle.) On the one hand, as Clark again puts it, we need to regard the *body itself* as "a genuine player in the cognitive drama, and not just a passive tool that does the brain's bidding": beyond mere bits of neural tissue, "embodiment" implicates the whole phenomenology of perception and action that affords us the kinds of relations we may have with the world around. On the other, just as the *brain* can be regarded "a cultural artefact" – in the sense that our neural nets only develop as they do as we engage the environments we do – so, in effect, can our bodies: beyond the generic "packaging" of species-specific physiology, as Tim Ingold notes, each organism is a "changing embodiment of a whole history of previous interactions," an artifact of its own artifacts (think only of gender-specific clothing). Finally, if indeed it is this "physical engagement with an environment in an ongoing series of interactions" that lies "[a]t the heart" even of Lakoff and Johnson's "embodied realism," there is a sense in which "elevating anatomic and metabolic boundaries into make-or-break cognitive ones" (Clark) may *cut off* lines of interaction that are in fact constitutive of some of the mental work we engage in. To access what philosopher John Sutton dubs "the cognitive life of things" (on stage and off) we need to enlist three more *e*'s and their associates, converging under Edwin Hutchins's nice rubric of "cognitive ecology": cognition as *embedded*, *extended*, and *enacted*.[57]

(1) *Embedded* or *situated* cognition. One way to address the above scenario is as marking the transition to what Merlin Donald calls the "theoretical" phase of human

cognitive evolution – one of beginning to "store" or "offload" parts of our cognitive feats (such as memory) to the external environment. Within this phase, further on, cultural cognition can be regarded as more specifically embedded in the "communication frameworks" that become dominant in different historical eras, such as the written, print, or modern media cultures that even came to serve as the decisive principle of periodization, for the recent introduction to *Theatre Histories* (2010/2006). More generally, the "situated" view emphasizes the dual embeddedness not only of the brain in the body, but of the body in the world – the dependence of mental activity on "the situation or context in which it occurs," whether it be "relatively local (as in the case of embodiment) or relatively global (as in the case of embedding)." As such, however, the approach is not devoid of the potential restriction of reinstating (again) a dichotomy between *fluid biology and stable culture*, in the sense of active, inner, skull-bound agents (again) *using* their material environment as but a passive, external medium of "storage," to quote Donald's central metaphor. On the one hand, accordingly, not all abstract ideas need *precede* their material manifestations, on the other, we inhabit "a shared environment that is already meaningful, rather than [--] multiple, idiosyncratic, cognitively encapsulated environments" solely constructed "in the head," as Harry Heft puts it; in Noë's words, we are "not locked up in a prison of our own ideas" but "already at home in the environment" – "We are out of our heads." In a sense, then, it is only once we abstain from regarding the cognitive features of our environments as "mere expressions of prior internal cognitive processing," or as "accidental extras" to "a basic biologically-given mind" (John Sutton) that we begin to move from what could be dubbed a *theatricality* of cognition (world as scene setting) to frameworks that begin to betray its fundamental *performativity* – namely:[58]

(2) *Extended* or *distributed* cognition. While these expressions, as well – related to the work, e.g., of Andy Clark and anthropologist Edwin Hutchins – could be understood as implying a pre-given "something" *to* extend or distribute, what is actually extended here is not some version of ultimately brainbound cognition but the very bounds of cognition itself, as a concept and as a *unit of analysis*. Thus, we come from metaphors of internal mind to those of organism-environment reciprocity, and how "meaning" is performed therein – of cognition, as materially, socially, and temporally *distributed* across agents, objects, and situations, "orchestrated" by cultural practices: in Hutchins's view, "culture" should not be regarded as "a collection of things" but as "a complex cognitive ecosystem" of which "mind" is one emergent property. His

prime examples coming from the world of maritime navigation, it is not too difficult to appreciate how *artistic* or *academic* cognition, as well, are often distributed across "cognitive artifacts" such as pen and paper, books, computers, and sketch pads – not as an "external memory [--] for the storage of fully formed ideas," as Clark notes, but as affording "iterated process[es] of externalizing and re-perceiving" that support cognitive properties beyond those of the individual scholar or artist. Thus, rather than its being a neural consequence of worldly interaction, what Hutchins argues is that "thinking *is* interactions of brain and body with the world"; rather than a source of "problems," the environment is a means for dealing with them, the neural economy itself, widely distributed over neurons, populations of neurons, and brain areas. Between these two extremes, the human being that emerges cannot be neatly fragmented along the lines of traditional scientific disciplines (e.g. of body, mind, and culture) but only arises as "a singular locus of creative growth within a continually unfolding field of relationships," as Tim Ingold puts it: "If mind is anywhere," it is not inside but "'out there' in the world." As the editors of the recent *Cambridge Handbook of Situated Cognition* admit, "[t]his is not your grandmother's metaphysics of mind."[59]

(3) Cognition as *enaction*. As concerns how the cognitive "ensembles" of the extended framework come about, finally, one influential verb of choice would be that they are "enacted" or "brought forth" through histories of "structural coupling." Advocated by the likes of Francisco Varela, Evan Thompson, Alva Noë, this phenomenologically inspired approach construes cognition "not [as] the representation of a pregiven world by a pregiven mind" but as "the enactment of a world and a mind on the basis of a history of the variety of actions that a being in the world performs." As Catherine Graham notes, this "sounds remarkably like theatrical practice," and indeed, Phillip Zarrilli has already found it useful for discussing acting and actor training, not from the "outside" position of "representational and/or mimetic meta-theories," but "from the perspective of the actor as enactor/doer from 'inside' the process." In a sense, *enaction* is to movement much as *embodiment* is to the body; in another, what enables it to enact more than a semantic trick is again its ecological grounding in the "codetermination or mutual specification of organism and environment," allowing us to negotiate "the temporality of cognition as lived history, whether seen at the level of the individual (ontogeny), the species (evolution), or social patterns (culture)." Thus, the very same setting may afford vastly different networks of distributed cognition for different agents/animals to enact or traverse, *in situ*, and over time: if, in Thompson's

nice set of equations, the "emergence of a self" always entails the "co-emergence" of a world ("a domain of interactions proper to that self"), and if this again amounts to "sense-making, which equals enaction" – then effectively, the "environment" of an organism is "the sense it makes of the world." In theatrical terms, the drama is thus the sense made of the stage; the affordances of the objects on stage are "brought forth from a history of coupling" with actors, and the overall "meaning" of the event – only enacted in the co-emergence of the given performance with its given spectatorship.[60]

To conclude, I wish to address how the notion of "cognitive ecology" calls into question such interrelated dualisms, supported by the Great Chain of Being, as divide ontology and epistemology alike into domains of mind and matter. First, what most of the above frameworks reject is the metaphor of cognition as *representation*: the brain-bound "computation" of sensory inputs and motoric outputs, inherited from early *cognitivism* yet often presented as prototypical of cognition itself. Paraphrasing Johnson and Alan Costall, the notion is usually invoked to bridge an alleged gap between knower and known; acknowledge that we were never "separated or alienated" from reality in the first place, however, and it only seems to *create* one and "always gets in the way" – if the animal is "active, embodied, [and] environmentally situated," as Noë asks, why indeed would it need "to act as if the world were not immediately present?" Not that our human *world* were not replete with representational media of all sorts; rather, as Hutchins argues, the problem lies in how we "routinely mistake [the properties of complex sociocultural systems] for properties of ourselves," and how conventional cognitivism, specifically, would metaphorically project the source domain of human activity "inside the head," entirely "unhooked" from our worldly interactions. Inside and out, the world remains its *own best model*: insofar as the "opportunistic biological brain" need not really "bother" about maintaining rich inner representations thereof (Clark), neither will brain scans, as external estimates of neural activity, count as "pictures of cognitive processes [--] in action" (Noë). Finally, to reduce cognition to mental representations that people "carry in their heads" (McConachie) is to see bodily *performance* as irreducibly mediated thereby; as Varela *et al.* put it, whether representations are recruited "to recover what is outer" (realism) or "to project what is inner" (idealism), to see just *how* many human performances are "actually orchestrated in other ways" (Hutchins), we may need "to bypass entirely this logical geography of inner versus outer" and to study cognition itself as embodied action.[61]

As regards our core theme of agents and objects, then, not only will "a heavily drawn inside/outside boundary" reinforce the dualism of mind and matter *per se*, but the idea that technological differences can only reflect differences in mental capacity, as Hutchins notes – hence, the dichotomy of "civilized" and "primitive." Once the two spheres are conceived of as *autonomous* and institutionalized into distinct disciplines, the ecological idea of reciprocity gives way to metaphors of master and slave, whether recruited for narratives of social constructionism or technological determinism – hence, the dynamic of fear and fascination, noted at the very beginning of this chapter, and its attendant anxieties over dominance, agency, and displacement. Paraphrasing Ingold, Knappett, and Nicole Boivin, however, the sort of cognitive ecology proposed above seems to "preclude any simple academic division of labour" along the lines of biological animacy, psychological agency, and social personhood; not only can we not com/part/mental/ize our humanity into such "separate but complementary components" (stacked atop one another as if on a Great Chain of Being), but neither is it "determined" by nor is it the sole "constructor" of its emerging environments: rather, our projects are *enabled and constrained* by the kinds of objects we engage, inevitably implicated in the theatrical and workaday worlds we may come to enact or perform. Most importantly for my choice of subject matter, we need to recognize how the very idea of ecological coupling, in its various guises, "rejects [any] strict subject–object dichotomy": as Johnson has it, it is "one of the primary facts of our existence that we are not now and never were [--] alienated from things, as subjects over objects." Once we surrender such mutually exclusive dualisms for the webs of relationships we properly consist in, no longer need theatrical objects appear DOWN and OUT on a Chain of Being – as if *apart from* us, rather than *a part of* our extended agency – nor need we reduce our very selves, into mere marionettes to either discourse or technology.[62]

In the end, what may appear a sort of *routine anti-dualism* in many of the above discussions, has more to do with leveling the sorts of prejudice that dualistic thinking routinely affords – including what I earlier dubbed an "anti-cognitive prejudice," in which "mind" is seen as utterly separate from life and performance alike, "thinking," as downright detrimental to processes of acting and actor training. While I do value the neural findings already accommodated to cognitive theatre theory by scholars like McConachie and Blair, then, the ecological approach I propose is rather situated at the other end of the same continuum: why restrict cognition only to its neural "backstage" in some inner "theatre of mind," when effectively, *all the world's a stage* for the em-

bodied/embedded/extended processes of enaction in which it is performed? To "carve nature at [its] most causally relevant joints," as Clark paraphrases Plato's advice, there might just be a phenomenological rationale to "bracketing" the brain, insofar as the nature in question consists in the cognitive work performed by material objects in the theatre – as Hutchins notes, "[c]hoosing the right boundaries for a unit of analysis" is "a central problem in every science." Reflecting their ultimately metaphorical constitution, each of the above approaches, as well, is only "apt to draw attention to certain features [--] while making it harder to spot others" (Clark) – sometimes defined as *post-cognitivist*, they do, however, share a family resemblance in how they all foreground metaphors of Coupling, over those of Inner Computation. To fully fathom "the cognitive life of things," accordingly, what remains to be done is to apply these theories to detailed case studies of historically specific cognitive ecologies (notably, both Clark and Sutton single out Evelyn Tribble's essay on Shakespearean theatre practice, as a successful example).[63] Combining cognitive linguistics and ecological psychology with enactive and distributed approaches to cognition and skill, the next chapter focuses on Vsevolod Meyerhold, and aims to provide more historical "scaffoldings" not only to evolving conceptions of mind and cognition, but to how the interplay of actors and objects would later be orchestrated by Grotowski and Kantor.

2 THE MEYERHOLD CASE: SCAFFOLDING ACTION AND INTERPRETATION

> In its final form, [--] the construction, which was placed frontally, parallel to the line of the stage, consisted of the two basic mountings joined by a bridge to form a single entity. The bridge, which had a railing along its back, went from the forward part of the left platform to the rear part of the right platform. The slide ran from the right platform down to the floor where it ended in a trampoline placed on the floor. [--] The passageway between the two mountings was used both as a playing area and for exits and entrances. The two stairways (right and left) were located on the end faces of the two platforms. [--]
>
> The framework attached to the rear of the right mounting consisted of vertical, horizontal, and diagonal supports. It rose above the platform and extended slightly beyond the sides of the mounting. [--] Behind the construction and at some distance from it, a service mounting was located for supporting the three wheels: the smallest, a red wheel above the left platform; an unpainted, medium-sized wheel behind it; and beyond them, the largest one, a black disk, that extended beyond the framework at the right. On the black disk, in white-painted Latin letters, were the consonants making up the last name of the playwright: CR–ML–NCK. (Alma H. Law: "Meyerhold's *The Magnanimous Cuckold*")

In recap, I have now introduced on various levels of conceptual resolution the two key *aspects* of the theatrical events I am to investigate – agents and objects – and argued that the valid metaphor for such investigation is not some version of a Great Chain of Being but the intricate web of *relationships* that properly defines what I called an ecological approach to performance and cognition. To conclude this introductory project, this chapter will again zoom out from these "aspects," to the *eventness* of performance in which they are embedded, in the theatre, and to the tangled reciprocities of agency, skill, environment, and technology that go into its actually "taking place." The production I will use as a case study could well be counted among the emblematic events of early twentieth-century avantgarde: Staged in Moscow in 1922 by director Vsevolod Meyerhold (1874–1940), *The Magnanimous Cuckold* [*Velikodushnyi rogonosets*] claimed its renown with the twin innovation of its "constructivist" setting and, as its ecological counterpart, if you will, its "biomechanical" style of acting – both in the glory of the October Revolution and of machinelike efficiency. In terms of interpretation, however – another key concern in the chapter – this twin perspective has also rendered its social implications intriguingly indeterminate: concentrate on the actors, "making do with the simplest objects which came to hand" (Meyerhold), and indeed it seems to have embodied "the socialist transformation of work into fun" (Peter Conrad) – "the new man freed from the power of things, from the power of an inert immobile environment" (Boris Alpers). Take a cultural materialist look at Lyubov Pop-

ova's landmark scenography, however, and Meyerhold's "workers" soon appear as "themselves machined by the machines-for-acting they appear to operate" (W.B. Worthen): out of constructivism (prototypical of the theatre of objects) will come Kantor, out of biomechanics (prototypical of the theatre of the actor), Grotowski.[1]

At the same time, however, the playtext itself – by Belgian playwright Fernand Crommelynck – was basically but a tragic farce about a poetically-minded village miller, Bruno, growing pathologically jealous of his obedient young wife, Stella. In an attempt to contain her infidelity, he at first has her locked up, then invites every man in the village to share her bed so as to unveil "the one" who dare not show up. Serving as an Iago to his own Othello (his assistant Estrugo, a mute character on whose behalf he would have to speculate on his own suspicions), the protagonist ends up so immersed in his passions that Stella agrees to flee with a Cowherd who at least grants her the prospect of remaining faithful – the play closes on Bruno's certainty that this is yet another of her "tricks" and that he will not be "fooled" this time. Thus, the causal indeterminacy of agency and environment is further complicated, in the production, along the lines of actor and character (the one standing apart from the other), or politics and psychology: from one perspective, the way the the background disks would *revolve* in sync with the action, could be seen as demonstrating the sheer brio and efficiency of building the new Communist society; from another, as equally well embodying the personal "falling apart" of the jealousy-consumed protagonist. For many, taking such a petty-bourgeois vice as subject matter was blatantly in conflict with the revolutionary ethos of the times, and indeed, many discussions have tended to bypass it for the sheer brilliance of the staging. However, both points of view (the theatrical/political and the dramatic/psychological) can be defended by merely reflecting on what we know about the stage action and can, if only indirectly, perceive in the visual evidence that remains. In short, as I will demonstrate toward the end of the chapter, virtually all (contemporary and subsequent) interpretations of the production can be seen as materially anchored in what we can properly call its onstage ecology.[2]

On one level, then – given how the cricital fascination with *The Magnanimous Cuckold* often seems to emanate from its "universal" scenography, the principles of which Meyerhold himself admits having "pursued to the limit of schematization" – this analysis will involve such image-schematic universals as PART–WHOLE, CYCLES, or CONTAINMENT, already implicit in the above discussion, and the way such structures have been hypothesized to be definitive of cultural history and change. As for

cognitive theatre research, this in fact is a crucial part of its emerging tradition: a good amount of Bruce McConachie's work, for example, has been on the kinds of schemas and metaphors that "emerge as dominant and significant" in specific socio-historical contexts, their "consistent constellations" informing the very "worldview" not only of theatrical productions, but of the given cultural moment at large ("containment liberalism," in his book on Cold War theatre in the US). In like terms, Tobin Nellhaus has theorized image schemas as "generative mechanisms" for "epistemological and ontological assumptions" which, in turn, are "re-embodied in performance" as historically situated "strategies" of theatrical production and reception. For the analysis to be cognitively valid, then, it has to address a whole variety of dramatic and cultural domains: in his brilliant analysis of *Macbeth*, for instance, Donald Freeman has shown how "the CONTAINER and PATH schemata dominate the salient metaphors of the play, as well as those of the critics who have written [about it] for the last two hundred years" – "including those who write against the grain of [critical] tradition." While even the metaphor analyst cannot cope without metaphors of her own (Empty Boys, Family Circles, and Fragmented Heroes, in McConachie's case), there seems indeed to be a degree of "cognitive probability" to such "symptomatic interpretation": where Freeman takes image schemas as "candidate source domains" that can falsifiably be argued for or against, McConachie's is a hermeneutics that "gradually eliminates" some of them and "focuses on the few that can account for more of the available evidence."[3]

In short, then, this work proposes a central method for researching whatever textual evidence one may have of a theatrical production in its cultural context – from playtexts, through directors' and actors' accounts, to critical reviews and academic scholarship. In the present case, the language of such accounts can at least partially be traced back to the ecology actors and objects, "symptomatically," as it were, if only there is a sufficient degree of invariance between the kinds of image schemas their interplay seems to support, and the sorts of metaphors applied in the interpretations – whether it be social, psychological, or metaphysical target domains they choose to elaborate. Given my fundamentally "ecological" subject matter, however, it will not do, here, to follow McConachie in his recent proposal of subsuming the notion of image schemas into that of "cognitive concepts": as opposed to such conceptual universals as *red*, the *human face*, or *identity*, image schemas should not only be distinctly *pre*-conceptual structures, and of a relatively limited number at that, but composed of simple parts and relations, reflective of sensorimotor experience – "pattern[s] of or-

ganism-environment interactions" that Mark Johnson suggests "can be recruited for abstract conceptualization and reasoning." What this is not to say is that such schemas are not, in the end, *proto*-conceptual structures (it is here that their inferential capacity lies) but to point out what possibly activates them in a given perceptual layout: what to look for, that is, in the specific context of study. "[A]ssuming that Lakoff and Johnson's terminology describes real interactions in the material world of a performance," as McConachie has it, what I suggest is that we need to begin by considering image schemas as they are physically instantiated in ecological invariants – whether these be of "people, props, events [or] states," and whether their relations consist of static configurations or more temporal sequences, to quote only a few of Johnson's examples.[4]

Moving from text to performance, thus, the other important level of the ensuing analysis is that of ecological psychology – and I evoke it to counter the *reduction*, not only of perceptual experience into little more than its schematic contours, but of such structures themselves into little more than their neural correlates. Specifically, I will argue for situating the debatedly "universal" aspect of image schemas not so much inside the individual body-mind, but rather in the variable cultural world it interacts with: if indeed they operate in such sensorimotor experience as perception, movement, and manipulation, as Johnson originally proposed, then ecologically there must be something to *afford* these behaviors, before any such cognitive abstraction is possible. Contrary to George Lakoff's early objection that Gibson's theory could not be extended to "the realm of cognition," accordingly, I will argue that it cannot be dismissed, either: even if "the affordances of the environment" could not account for "metaphorically defined categories," they are essential for the literal, nonmetaphorical understanding of the *source domains* that do the very defining – providing just the kinds of "inference patterns" that Lakoff argues remain invariant in metaphorical mappings. As Gibson already suggested in the 1960s (as if anticipating the theory of conceptual metaphor), there is "an element of perception in the appreciation of even the most abstract law" – and Lakoff and Johnson's own examples are full of implicit references to what their suggested source domains afford, for good or ill: "if ideas are objects, we can *dress them up in fancy clothes*, *juggle them*, *line them up nice and neat*"; metaphorical "difficulties" come as blockages, burdens, features of the terrain (as in: *He got over his divorce*; *Get off my back*; *It's been uphill all the way*).[5] Where the language of image schemas, given its level of abstraction, may help us track important continuities between theatre and culture, or production and reception, what

that of affordances, given its specificity, will bring into view are the equal continuities that relate mind to world, history to evolution, or indeed, culture to biology.

Given the importance of these continuities to my later analysis of Meyerhold's biomechanics, we may now briefly extend our considerations of "ecology," beyond the previously discussed time-scales of bodily action and its cultural situatedness. On the one hand – while admitting that humans have altered the very face of the earth (to change what it affords them, basically) and done so in radical and often disastrous ways – Gibson would deny any sharp distinction between "nature" and "culture" as misleading: for him, there was "only one world," laid out in substances and surfaces whether natural or modified. A related dichotomy he wished to unpack was that between "material" and "non-material" culture, implying as it seems that "language, tradition, art, music, law, and religion are immaterial, insubstantial, or intangible, whereas tools, shelters, clothing, vehicles, and books are not": from a perceptual point of view, as he convincingly argues, "[n]o symbol exists except as it is realized in sound, projected light, mechanical contact, or the like." On the other hand, as Alan Costall has noted, there is "a fundamental inconsistency" to his vacillation between a properly "mutualist" conception of ecology and more universalizing claims: in contrast to Gibson's insidiously anti-ecological insistence that we were all in all "created by the world we live in," a more ecological scenario might indeed be that different organisms and their environments *mutually specify each other*, in a kind of "structural coupling." Rather than a given, in this view, our world is "enacted" from our actions: the effects of such enaction range from the dramatic (humans and the atmosphere) to the less obvious (take the geological effects of worm behavior) but in each case, the behavior and morphology of a species is always reciprocal with that of its environment – "whether one considers burrowing worms or thinking humans," as psychologist Edward Reed neatly puts it. For Reed, "convergent evolution" provides powerful proof that it is indeed "*affordances and only the relative availability* [--] *of affordances* [that] *create selection pressure on the behavior of individual organisms*":

> Animals that may differ in anatomical structure and in their underlying physiological processes may nevertheless come to closely resemble one another because of their functional role in the habitat. [--] In many important cases [their convergent] selection pressures come not from resources at the molecular or energetic level of the environment but instead from resources at the level of affordances for behavior. [--] The convergence between elongated bird beaks and the exaggerated proboscises of some moths suggests that the selection pressure here

> came from *the shape of certain flowers*, not merely from nectar. To get the nectar, these very different animals *need to do the same thing*, which is to say they need to stick their eating parts into a relatively long tunnel.[6]

But of course, it is humans quite exclusively who have developed whole infrastructures of material artifacts and symbolic representations, so as to embody and preserve their cumulative knowledge gains in environmental features – this is what Merlin Donald has famously dubbed the "theoretical" phase of human cognitive evolution. Again, such "stabilization of knowledge and practice" cannot properly be characterized as mere passive "adaptation" to a pregiven environment, but rather, as the collective enaction of *cultural ecologies* beyond such false dichotomies as culture/nature or history/evolution: as Edwin Hutchins aptly puts it, humans "create their cognitive powers in part by creating the environments in which they exercise those powers." Often enough, as Gibson knew, this comes about through the cumulative modification of affordances: as Chris Sinha argues, "human ecology" is "artefactually supported, sustained and reproduced," and as such, "both inherited and renewed with each new generation" – largely *constructed*, that is, yet "not so much in the social constructivist sense of being created out of talk and texts, but rather in the social materialist sense of being created by human productive activity." Accordingly, while cultural cognition in its theoretical phase can indeed be regarded as more specifically embedded in the "communication frameworks" that become dominant in different historical eras (such as the oral, written, print, and media cultures on which the recent *Theatre Histories* would capitalize as its decisive principle of periodization) and while Nellhaus and McConachie are surely correct to derive the relative "dominance" of different image schemas in large part from such practices, there remains a whole range of "cognitive artifacts" operating center stage in our historical cultures that are not at all restricted to affording but modes of *communication*. Equivalent to Lakoff and Johnson's deriving their "embodied realism" from "our physical engagement with an environment in an ongoing series of interactions," it is, as Sinha wittily paraphrases Wittgenstein, "the limits of the affordances of my world [that] are the limits of my imagination."[7]

Given this similarity of their foundational commitments, finally, and the fact that both "embodied" and "ecological" realism admit affinities e.g. with Gestalt psychology, phenomenology, and American pragmatism, it is curious how ignorant they seem to have remained of one another: some cross-references have begun to appear, but certainly there has been no attempt at a comprehensive synthesis. On a more gen-

eral level, however, a combination of ecological and cognitive perspectives has been forcefully promulgated by one of the virtual founders of cognitive psychology, Ulric Neisser, since the mid-1970s. A friend and colleague of the Gibsons – James and Eleanor – he then "found it necessary" to suppose *anticipatory schemata* as the cognitive structures that "control the activity of looking": while the (Gibsonian) exploration of available information (in the world) is indeed an important part of what he would term the *perceptual cycle*, it is the "schema" that hypothetically directs the exploration and, again, is modified by the information (so as to direct further sampling). For all its relative antiquity, Neisser's example will serve as an important antecedent for many of the issues still to be discussed: importantly for the study of image schemas and conceptual metaphor, first of all, he offers his wider schemata as "a connecting link between perception and the higher mental processes," in that they can also be "detached from the cycles in which they are originally embedded."[8] And as will be seen, the notion of CYCLES is fairly crucial not only to Meyerhold's staging of *The Magnanimous Cuckold*, but to his formulations of biomechanical acting: accordingly, the rest of this chapter will evolve in three interlocking "cycles," moving from (1) the "intratheatrical" ecology of Popova's stage construction, to (2) an extended discussion of biomechanics, beginning with its relation to the extratheatrical ecology of certain culturally dominant image schemas, to (3) an exercise of "symptomatic interpretation" in which my above proposal of combining the cognitive with the ecological will be elaborated into something like a tentative method.

The Construction: From Aesthetics to Engagement
(or, "Affordances Appropriate to the Theatre")

> The production of a play [--] is a conceptual task, which I accomplish physically using all the means that theater affords. (Vsevolod Meyerhold)

Lengthy as it is, the quote from Alma Law at the beginning of this chapter only captures fragments of the detailed verbal re-construction its author presents of Meyerhold and Popova's landmark scenography. While the brains of theatre scholars are bound to reverberate with images of the design they know so well, the fact remains that such descriptions – however exact – make a hard reading: piecing it out from words alone is a tough call. What I will suggest in this section is for scenographic depiction to move slightly away from any "objective" vocabulary of geometrical abstraction (e.g.,

vertical, horizontal, and diagonal lines in frontally conceived space) to a renewed sensitivity to what material things *afford* in actual performance situations. Taking cue from the overall constructedness of "human ecology," and from the playfulness often associated with Meyerhold's production, the approach can perhaps be compared with that to *children's environments*, by Harry Heft: Illustrating his point with an ordinary photograph of a park landscape – a fairly simple configuration of trees and a field, in standard description – he suggests that a *functional classification* of environmental features may illuminate attributes such form-based taxonomies are bound to miss. Firstly, such an ecological approach will of course describe the environment with respect to individual agents and their capabilities. Secondly, it might conceivably be "more psychologically meaningful" as regards the individuals' immediate experience: intuitive and obvious as it may appear to categorize features as "mold-able" or "climb-on-able" (in terms of their affordances), form-based distinctions may in fact be more abstract to conceive of. Thirdly, a functional taxonomy will not only identify common properties across different feature types, but draw distinctions among features that are typically conflated in standard description: while a form-based category could "mask a variety of functional types within it," it remains an ecological fact that "not all trees afford the same activity." A "climbable feature" affords "passage from one place to another (e.g., stairs, ladder)" as well as "exercise" and "mastery" – add "biomechanics," and we are dealing with the theatre of Meyerhold.[9]

Accordingly, my opening quotation serves much the same purpose as does Heft's photograph of the park, pointing to the relativity of formal description as regards Lyubov Popova's "constructivist" scenography for *The Magnanimous Cuckold*. Apart from translation problems – *equipment* or *mounting*, *prop* or *device*? – and some confusion about "right" and "left" (stage or audience?), standard accounts of the "construction" often remain ambiguous in the very choice of what to call its constituent parts. A recurrent piece of scenery in Crommelynck's plays, the "gallery," for instance, appears to have been transferred to the production directly from his stage directions, yet there remains an ambiguity, in commentaries, as to whether it defined "the upstairs area" or "[t]he lower part of the left mounting." In terms of dramatic content, the two doors and windows have been related to Stella's bedroom and to the outside world, respectively, yet among the translated testimonies, the only one to refer "one platform" in the upstairs area to "his room" in the play appears to have been leading actor Igor Ilyinsky, himself. Altogether, the construction could not quite avoid

"representing," most obviously, the mill in which the play is situated ("suggesting now a bedroom, now a balcony, now the grinding mechanism, now a chute for the discharging of the sacks of flour," as Edward Braun relates), but from an ecological point of view – and ultimately in line with Popova's Productivist concerns – such questions can well be temporarily suspended. In her search for "expediency" and "functional form," stressing "concrete production rather than making abstract constructions," Popova's statements differ from Gibson's (here, addressed to students of architecture) in little more than theoretical vocabulary and analytical precision:

> [In equipping] the theatrical action with its material elements [--] one criterion should be utilitarian adaptability and not the resolution of any formal-aesthetic problems such as the question of color or volume, or the organization of the theatrical space, and so on. (Lyubov Popova)
>
> We modify the substances and surfaces of our environment for the sake of what they will afford, not for the sake of creating [--] esthetically pleasing forms. [--] For what we perceive first of all is not abstract color and space, as psychology has taught, but surfaces and their layout. (James J. Gibson)[10]

Then again, one finds numerous descriptions of how Popova's construction could very literally be "walked upon, passed through, climbed on, swung on, and slid down," stressing the specific skills it would demand of the actors: as Nick Worrall disarmingly puts it, "[t]he construction is solid. If the actor walks into it, it hurts." Indeed, stressing as he did "the surfaces and shapes of *tangible materials*," it was not the "abstract scenery" many commentators have addressed that Meyerhold was concerned with – not the "planes, forms, lines, and points of geometry," that is, but facts of surface layout which Gibson argues "have an intrinsic meaning for behavior." In Gibsonian terms (and as Costall concedes, he often "goes to great lengths to inform us about the blindingly obvious"), the construction was something of an *attached object*, consisting of *partial enclosures* and other kinds of "places" with their unique affordances, "nested" within one another and together comprising the "invariant structure" that underlay the dramatic action. While it did retain what Meyerhold and Popova saw to be the "essential elements" mentioned in Crommelynck's play (those that afford theatrical action, basically) its overall appearance was that of a concrete object, of wooden boards and common nails. Given the utter poverty not only of Meyerhold's theatre at the time but of the young Republic, this was practically all the Constructivists could afford, more generally: denied the skyscrapers and glass palaces they

dreamed of, the most they could demonstrate of their "life-building" environments was to be in ordinary materials on theatrical stages. As for Popova, her ultimate objective remained that of creating functional "working conditions" for the actors.[11]

If, however, her "acting machine" drew some criticism for its "contrived frontality" as well as for exhibiting remnants of "aesthetic habit" – if, indeed, the general controversy was that of replacing "works of art" with "working places" and artists with "engineers"[12] – we might do well in backstaging, for a while, the canonical image of the construction as we know it from Popova's designs and most photographs. Here, Figure 1 does retain this frontal ("aesthetic," "art") point of view, but augments it with a hypothetical view from *above*, suggesting a skeletal map of the construction's affordances for the actual performance "work" the actors could engage in. With some reference to the numeral markings in the figure, the below is an attempt to sketch out the most important, at least, of these "nested" affordances – the *verb*, as it were, to accompany the noun – followed by more general reflection on their reciprocity with the actors' "biomechanics," in the subsequent sections of the chapter.

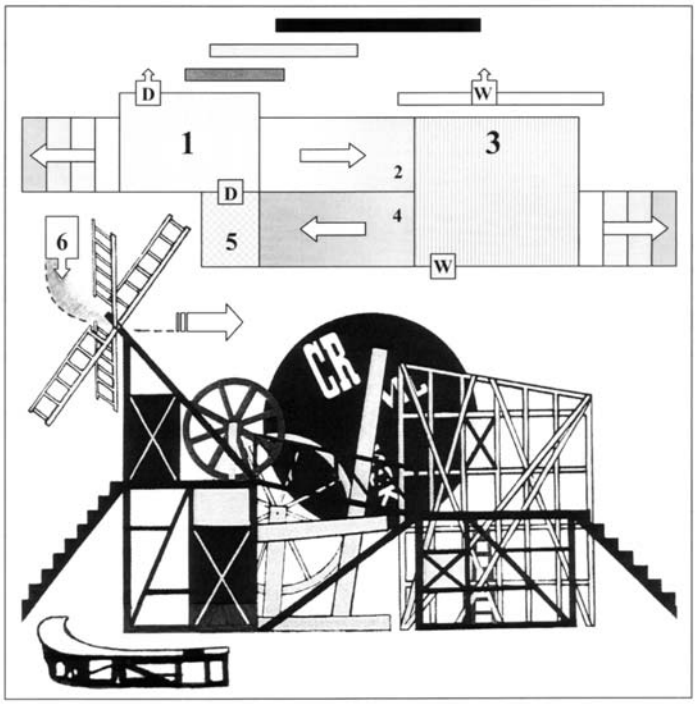

Figure 1. Lyubov Popova's construction for *The Magnanimous Cuckold*, represented from above, as well as frontally (adapted from Law & Gordon 1981, front page).

Notes: The "above" view is only skeletal, approximating dimensions and neglecting – for the sake of clarity – both the crossed-ladders "windmill" and the service mounting for the wheels, in the back. D's are for doors, W's for windows. White arrows indicate affordances for descending.

Beginning with its overall layout, the most general affordances of Popova's construction could be termed *occlusion* and *vertical passage*. Although there were no drops, flats, wings, or even closed walls, to "conceal things" from the spectator – the only opaque surfaces in the set were the doors, the windows, and the black disk – the fact

remains that both the actors and the tech crew could sufficiently well *hide behind* the construction itself, as only the downstage area was brightly lit. (Witness the shadows on the back wall, in some photographs,[13] indicating this behindness.) Initially, the lack of a proper backdrop would cause some frustration among the actors – "Hang something up behind the construction, Popova's old petticoats, I don't care," Ilyinsky recalls having shouted, so as to have "some kind of screen" around him – yet eventually, even a backdrop of sorts did indeed appear, as constructions to other productions could only be stored by the back wall. In the action of the play, likewise, there is a whole "dramaturgy of occlusion" to be traced, with all the hiding, masking, peeping through keyholes, and so on that Crommelynck's text continually calls for.[14]

As for the vertical dimension, the construction featured two horizontal surfaces at different levels above the ground floor (1 and 3, "reach-able" or "jump-off-able" depending on the actor) as well as two stairways and two sloping surfaces (2 and 4), affording ascent and descent from one level to another. While the steeper slope could also be slid down sitting, bipedal locomotion was ultimately *impeded* only by the vertical structures that supported these surfaces; composed of crossed beams, however, they afforded *grasping* and *footholds* and hence, climbing, for suitably proportioned actors using both hands and feet. Dramaturgically, these vertical levels afforded effective montage from one scene to another – in one scene, what could have alluded to a "mill chute" was used for Stella's "processed" lovers to descend from her bedroom.[15]

Given the avowedly "active" nature of Constructivism, however – if "art" only "reflected reality," passively, the Constructivism of the manifestoes was to "act itself" – it is worth noting that the actually *movable* parts of Popova's set were relatively few, and dependent on human agency, throughout: doors (D), windows (W), wheels, two crossed ladders reminiscent of a windmill, and a trampoline (5) on the ground floor. Mechanically, the doors would be *revolving* ones, affording, as Meyerhold well knew, not only quick entrance and exit – passage in and out of occlusion – but numerous "antics appropriate to the theatre." Marking "partial enclosures," downstairs, and occluded platforms, upstairs, the doors and the windows alike afforded opening, closing, pushing, pulling, bumping into; in the lack of walls, however, actors could easily make their way through some opening *next* to a door or from *under* a window, as well (indeed, the plywood "windows" were only specified as such by their size and relative elevation from the surface of support). And of course, these remained *attached* to the overall structure; apart from props and costumes (to be discussed more thoroughly in

relation to biomechanics and interpretation) the movable objects *detached* from the construction included a sloping bench (6) and a pair of ladders – *portable* but not *graspable* or *manipulatable* in the sense that props or tools are. Technically, the construction as a whole could have been "dismantled and erected in any surroundings" – it was not attached to the floor – but there is no evidence for this ever having taken place (note how the "occluding" affordance would also be disrupted in the open).[16]

Finally, we need to briefly consider the wheels and the "windmill," given their central dramaturgical function in the performance. Interestingly enough, they only held *concrete* affordances for the occluded technicians – and apparently Meyerhold himself – who would *rotate* them both clockwise and counterclockwise; the wheels did not grind grain (*if* the spectator related them to a "mill," that is) nor did the two ladders making up the sails of the windmill afford ascent, either as themselves or as the "propeller" they also might have suggested. What they did, in effect, was to highlight emotional peaks in the performance: quoting Nick Worrall's stealthily ecological account, their nervous revolution provided a "laughing comment on [--] those who are badly adapted," "affording contrast" to the "inane behavior of the protagonist." Less metaphorically, they did occasionally help *synchronize* the movements of the ensemble, and this of course is quintessential to the whole "Taylorization of the theatre" Meyerhold pursued: according to different narratives, he would enhance the turning wheel accompaniment with those of a piano and, eventually, an onstage jazz band, to keep his performers "in time." What is interesting is how Edward Braun, for example, would argue that this was the only sense in which the construction actually worked as a "functional machine"; according to Rudnitsky, it was "meaningless," in itself, and for Worrall alike, its "meanings" would have been "only potential or latent," until "linked with human activity." A much quoted example of such an intimate relationship between meaning and movement would have been the white letters on the black disk, fragmenting the name of the playwright: in Heft's terminology, a formal description (CR–ML–NCK) will necessarily fall short, for they only afforded reading whilst the disk was in motion – provided the spectator was familiar with the Latin alphabet.[17]

In a sense, this brief analysis of the potential affordances of Popova's construction for *The Magnanimous Cuckold* has been an exercise in what Mike Pearson might call "archaeological imagination" (projecting one's body not onto ruins but designs, photographs, and models that have little to do with the original, concretely), although I have, of course, tried to restrict the discussion to instances I have some reason to

presume were actually utilized in the production. Given the above emphasis on the reciprocity of meaning and physical action, however – as well as the more general Gibsonian tenet of that between the animal and the environment – what needs to be considered next is whether there is a sense in which Popova's construction actually "afforded biomechanics" for Meyerhold's actors. Surely, this does not mean that it somehow *caused* them to act in certain ways or that the actors *needed* it to perform; indeed, they could well exhibit their skills in, say, walking, running, jumping, crawling, or doing somersaults, on the ground floor. Although a "leap onto the chest" would naturally be supported by the higher end of the bench, in the performance, the fact remains that for a perfectly efficient application of "biomechanics," in a literal sense, little more is needed than bones, muscles, and gravity. Yet the set *could* occasionally enhance or orient their poses and their gestures, not only in the practical terms of their bodily proportions (think of reaching or fitting through an aperture), but in providing them with structural patterns to incorporate – material "elements of the design" rather than "straight lines and acute angles," to cite a student of Meyerhold's, which again did not *cause* them to imitate given forms but only afforded them this aesthetic intention.[18] Biomechanics is the topic of the next large section in this chapter, interesting repercussions as there are in its practice and in its initial theorization, to both ecological and more "mentalistic" approaches to cognitive science.

Enacting Biomechanics: Reflexology, Taylorism, and the Embodiment of Skill

Metaphors to Act By: Aspects of a Cultural Ecology

To begin to untangle the very term, "biomechanics," I wish to make a clear distinction between two different usages: apart from naming a specific practice of acting and actor training, derived explicitly from Meyerhold, the term may also refer to a branch of kinesiology concerned with human movement more generally. Barely aware of theatrical curiosities, biomechanics flourishes as a scientific discipline of its own, with its attendant journals and societies worldwide – and in this sense, notably, the concept is also of crucial concern for ecological psychology (insofar as such biomechanical properties as body scaling or muscle strength are "critically important to what things can *mean*" and must of necessity figure in any proper treatment of affordances). Where Meyerhold is concerned, however, he adopted the concept from his compatriot Aleksei Gastev, who used it as a metaphor not only for understanding the human

body, but for perfecting it – making it more reactive, functional, and precise. While surely not exhaustive of either of these usages, then, it is worth noting to begin with the *metaphorical constitution* of the term itself: taking the living organism (*bios*) as its target domain, the concept of biomechanics sets out the promise of defining it in terms of mechanical principles, such as relate to motions, interactions, and "the effects of forces acting on objects." Hence for Meyerhold, it is "because any manifestation of a force [--] is subject to constant laws of mechanics" that the actor must study those of her body; while *mechanics* may also refer to "working parts" or "operational details," an early scientific definition of biomechanics thus relates it to "the action of forces, internal or external, on the living body." Along with these source domains, what I will address in this section is how Meyerhold's theatrical concepts, at this moment in time more generally, often relate to OBJECTS, CONTAINMENT, PART–WHOLE, and CYCLES, and how a variety of sources seem to converge on the more general cognitive dominance of these image schemas, in the post-Revolutionary Russia of the 1920s.[19]

Regarding the domain of OBJECT mechanics, first, the way Meyerhold would address psychological phenomena in strictly physical terms has often been related to the twin emergence of "Objective Psychology," in its Russian and American variants of Reflexology and Behaviorism; I will return to these in the following section. More generally, one could draw on the different metaphorical conceptions of "the self" outlined by Lakoff and Johnson, as does McConachie in his "cognitive approach to biomechanics," in *Theatre Histories*. In contrast to Stanislavsky's "locational conception of the Self" (with its attendant notions of character interiority), he suggests it was "the physical object Self" (as something to "get moving" or "lose control" of) that appealed to Meyerhold: in this view, the actor's "ability to manipulate him/herself, understood as a physical object, [was] fundamental to all of [his] training." If this sounds too universalistic, finally, a more culturally situated argument for the cognitive impact of OBJECTS is how the word itself – *veshch*: thing or object – had by the early 1910s become one of the most widely circulated terms in Russian aesthetics, the futurist idea of a "rebellion of objects," resonating through Formalism and Constructivism, to the very vocabulary of stage design: as Alma Law relates, a construction and a production alike were addressed as *veshch*, scenery, as a matter of "object formulation." Discussing the "Culture of the Thing" among the Constructivists – drawing on a key 1925 essay on the subject by Boris Arvatov – art historian Christina Kiaer proposes that their aim was to bestow on things a new kind of social agency, or, to produce "active

'socialist objects' that [would] be 'coworkers' in the construction of socialism." To achieve this, as she neatly puts it, they would "imagine no possessions": only when "liberated" from capitalist structures and the commodified everyday life of private consumption – "laying bare their constructive essence," in Arvatov's words – could "Things" achieve a transparency of purpose and begin to affect "physical culture."[20]

Thus, we come to the formalist notion of "baring the device," the undoing of its CONTAINMENT by capitalist structures and naturalistic paraphernalia: the "truth to external appearances," the "confines of tradition," the "accumulation of centuries." In 1922, this could quite pragmatically refer to "all [the] trash" Meyerhold reports his company had to "clear off" their newly acquired stage, "cluttered up" with "gold-painted sets" and the like – how they "simply tossed out the bourgeois theater with all its crockery," as actor Erast Garin flamboyantly puts it. "In vain," declared Popova, "do aesthetes take shelter behind the visual, poetic, and theatrical arts": as for the production of *Cuckold*, specifically, Meyerhold's stated aim was "to lay every line of the setting completely bare," to furnish "a new kind of setting which broke away from the conventional framing of the acting area with wings and a proscenium arch." As Robert Leach notes, the "'baring of the device' meant drawing attention to the theatricality of the presentation," in the sense that many Russian artists of the time would seek the very *essences* of their respective art forms; when Rudnitsky speaks of "freeing" the actor from theatricality, instead, surely he is referring to the true-to-life conventions of stage naturalism, the "illusion of place" and the like that Nick Worrall sees as inanimate equivalents "to the psychological conception of character." To rid the actors of the latter, Popova equipped them with uniform overalls in which they could no longer "hide" from the public; to "free" the audience from the "hypnosis" of illusion, Meyerhold had his actors act "not the situation itself, but what is concealed behind it and what it has to reveal for a specifically propagandist purpose" (and surely this differs from Ilyinsky's proposal that it was "the theme of jealousy itself"). Importantly, biomechanics should have affected traits of *national* "character" as well, along the lines of sloth, gentility, and "lyricism": for Gastev, its project was one of purging Russian specificity, altogether, for the universal efficiency of the machine.[21]

So, the "device" in need of baring was precisely that: a device or a machine, more generally, a *structure* exhibiting its mechanical *construction* – definitive of both Formalism and Constructivism, the shared etymology of these terms suggests they can be treated as schematic configurations of a WHOLE and its PARTS. In one sense, La-

koff's notion that we experience ourselves as "whole beings with parts that we can manipulate" only seems to return us to that of the self as a physical object; in another, it does admit "the basic law of Biomechanics" that "the whole body [should take] part in each of our movements," or conversely, that "the merest gesture" should "resound throughout" its entirety. Citing Meyerhold's student Nikolai Basilov, the PARTS of the actor's body, and hence, the "material" of her art, would be "the torso, the extremities, the head, the voice"; to know their "mechanics" is to know their systematic dependence, so that each movement of one of them will "immediately reshape the relationships in which the parts of the body are arranged." Importantly, such "coordination of the self" (Garin) should also extend to partners, objects, and props: each treated as "a part of the body," "wearing a costume" and "relating to objects" are discussed by Basilov as specific arts of their own. In their temporal unfolding, finally, such PARTS of biomechanical acting should combine into WHOLES within specifically trained "acting cycles," a succession of which would in itself constitute the very process of acting. Each CYCLE comprising the "three invariable stages" of *intention*, *realization*, and *reaction*, this basic structure, as Jonathan Pitches points out, would then operate "at a number of levels – from the micro-gestural to the macrotextual": individual "exercises" would become more elaborate "études," which again might be recycled into theatrical productions. On the national level, paraphrasing Spencer Golub, PARTS and WHOLES also provided an apt source domain for a society "in the throes of trying to decide how to remake itself," along the CYCLICAL logic of the Revolution.[22]

Indeed, as Nick Worrall suggests, the "breakdown of Naturalism," as well as the fracturing of reality in Cubism and film editing, could be seen "as part of a whole historical process [--] bound up with disintegration, revaluation, and reassembly." As for the average theatre-goer, however, such key moments in this process as the publication of the Quantum Theory in 1901 or the discovery of the atomic nucleus in 1910 (both also referred to in relation to Meyerhold) would have been of little concern as compared to the emerging discursive presence, closer to home, not only of Constructivism, but of Reflexology, and the "scientific management" of labor. What I wish to imply by calling them *discursive*, is that what each provided the specifically Russian cultural ecology of the 1920s was rather a set of metaphorical source domains (e.g. the "factory") than actual material "interfaces" to incorporate into everyday life: While many artistic and technological innovations have drawn on "intentional" affordances already in existence and re-imagined them in more "immediate," sensorimotor

terms – applying the wine-presser interface to develop the printing press, for example, or that of ship hoists, for changing theatrical backdrops – in the Russian case, such mass production was simply inconceivable, as would have been needed for the creation of a "completely Constructivist environment." According to Richard Stites, the way many "social engineers" of the day would face the constraints of reality was by "copying the art they knew best": drawing as they did on military and industrial metaphors – and surely the model of the steam engine helped in conceiving of biomechanics not only in terms of the externally-powered machine but in terms of the "human motor" – the concrete example was often set by the theatre. And Meyerhold certainly did not reduce acting to the specifics either of the factory, the laboratory, or even of "the sports arena": rather, these were only various models for "approaching" the arena on stage – as were the biomechanics of children, animals, and puppets.[23]

Thus, in devoting the following two sections to Reflexology and "Taylorism," I do not wish to imply that the practice of Meyerholdian biomechanics could in any sense be reduced to either of these theoretical frameworks – indeed, his appeal to them has often been traced to a conscious rhetoric of *contemporaneity*, of not being "unscientific" and "anachronistic" but part, as Pitches puts it, of a "state-supported research programme [--] investigating the universal laws underlying behaviour." In short, what I will argue is that while both of these frameworks did afford his students altogether expedient metaphors to act by, the notion of biomechanics cannot be equated, as one of them proposed, with "the *natural* possibilities of the human body": while "subject to the laws of mechanics," animate bodies are "not *governed* by these laws," as Gibson points out. To apply Tim Ingold's reading of Marcel Mauss, not only is there "no such thing as a 'natural' way of walking," as distinct "from the real-time performance of the activity itself," but neither is there such thing as a "standard form" of human anatomy: "the organism is not a constant but the continually changing embodiment of a whole history of previous interactions." Instead of appealing to "human nature," then, we might do better to speak of *skilled practices* based on local affordances, neither "biological" nor "cultural" but always – whether it be walking, riding the bicycle, or playing the cello – "incorporated into the human organism through practice and training within an environment."[24] Thus, the general trajectory of the upcoming sections is from determinism to contingency, or, from what might have been politically correct, to what seems viable in practice: from the centripetal determinism of stimuli and responses, in the case of Reflexology, to the notion of skilled knowl-

edge; and from the centrifugal emphasis on production, in the case of Taylorism, to the construction and scaffolding of such knowledge, in stage practice.

Acting (in) CYCLES: On Reflexology, Situated Action, and the Eventness of Stag/ing

> But the ancient Cartesian doctrine still hangs on, that animals are reflex machines and that humans are the same except for a soul that rules the body by switching impulses at the center of the brain. The doctrine will not do. Locomotion and manipulation are not triggered by stimuli from outside the body, nor are they initiated by commands from inside the brain. [--] They are constrained, guided, or steered, and only in this sense are they ruled or governed. And they are controlled not by the brain but by information, that is, by seeing oneself in the world. Control lies in the animal-environment system. (James J. Gibson)

This is not the place for any in-depth discussion of behaviorist psychology, nor am I particularly qualified to analyze its Russian variant of "Reflexology" (developed by Ivan Sechenov, Vladimir Bekhterev, Ivan Pavlov, and others) that more directly influenced Meyerhold's thought and practice. Rather, my emphasis will be on the pros and cons of these two forms of "objective" psychology, in relation to different strands of cognitive science – and given how the latter enterprise was more or less born as a reaction *against* behaviorism, in the US, it will only be fair to begin with what still remains viable and seems to have been neglected, in the process. The first issue has to do with the old dilemma of the INSIDE and the OUTSIDE, or, of "building the role not from inside outwards, but vice versa," as Meyerhold himself phrased what has become the common caricature of his approach: whether "[a]ll psychological states [be] determined by specific physiological processes" or not, the notion of bodily emotion preceding conscious feeling, at least, has retained a degree of scientific credibility. (Beginning with William James, the more up-to-date reference would be the neurobiologist Antonio Damasio, as discussed e.g. by Blair and McConachie; as for the much discussed *graspability*, *manageability*, or *fixability* of an actor's "external" technique, these seem well in line with the affordances of the Self as Physical Object metaphor.) The second and ultimately more important issue for my present concerns has to do with the *unit of analysis* such an "objectivist" position entails: in rejecting the "introspective" psychology of the day, and in denying the very division of the mental and the physical – in seeing them as but "two aspects of [the] individible phenomenon [of] life," to cite Joseph Roach – the objectivists were ultimately concerned with actual *actions*, and also sensitive to a Gibsonian sort of reciprocity between behavior and its

environment. “Whatever its limitations,” as Eleanor Rosch has pointed out, “behavior analysis offers [one possible] background for [--] an ecological model of mind.”[25]

What needs to be seriously challenged, however, is reducing the basic unit of action to the dichotomy of *stimuli* and *responses* – or *reactions* or *reflexes*, depending on the terminology. As Roach puts it, the Russian Reflexologists “saw organisms as reflex machines responding automatically to stimuli and subject to conditioning into habit”; accordingly, they would analyze complex behaviors into mere “chains” or sequences of simpler reflexes. For Meyerhold, this meant that acting was also to be defined as the coordination of reactions to stimuli: no-one could become an actor without what he termed “reflex excitability,” or, “the ability to realize in feelings, movements and words a task which is prescribed externally” (perhaps, of being “always on the alert for ways of building socialism”). In general, what has been deemed questionable in the model, is of course the utter passivity it imposes on the acting organism, and its neglect of all things “mental” – hence, the emergence of cognitive science, with its self-conscious rhetoric of “revolution” and “liberation” from “mechanistic” behaviorism. However, as Edwin Hutchins has noted, we also need to beware of the *over*reaction, here, of neglecting *all* perceivables of behavior: of turning “the mind” into the *only* active component, and of reducing both interaction and the environment to near irrelevance. As psychologist Alan Costall forcefully argues, “a dualism between body and mind persists in modern cognitive psychology in a blindingly obvious way,” in how the body itself has “atrophied [--] to a shapeless and abstracted container” – to a mere “outline box” for such “more interesting” boxes as relate to internal cognition. Postulating the mind as a *mediator* in between, conventional cognitivism has effectively retained the basic mechanistic schema it was purportedly rejecting: whether we think of stimulus and response, or input and output, the dichotomy seems indeed essential for *defining* “what psychologists could possibly mean by ‘cognitive’” (i.e., features of behavior that appear to fall outside of it).[26]

Now from the Gibsonian perspective, of course, “perceiving is an act, not a response, an act of attention, not a triggered impression, an achievement, not a reflex.” As Costall puts it, Gibson replaced the whole formula of stimulus and response with what he prefers to call “an ‘ecology of embodied agency’: an exploration of the material conditions – *affordances* and *information* – that support [--] our effective and collective being in the world.” On the perceptual side of the equation, once we replace the notion of environmental stimuli with that of stimulus *information*, specific to both

the world and to an acting agent therein, the causal determinism of the physical acting on the psychological can be abandoned for more nuanced notions of their enactive co-constitution: to cite Costall's example, nicely resonant with the production of *Cuckold*, "[s]tairs are not stimuli. They do not force us to climb them." Accordingly, neither can we reduce "behavior," in the equation, to a matter of simple reflexes or even sequences thereof: as ecological psychologist Edward Reed observes, "[o]ne can track a moving object by moving one's eyes with a stationary head, or by moving one's head and keeping one's eyes steady, or by combining these two procedures. In each case there are very different stimuli and responses, but the awareness of the moving object can be the same if the information picked up is the same [--]." In short, behavior becomes a matter of *actively engaging with an environment*; instead of treating people as passive recipients of stimuli, such an approach acknowledges the way we constantly explore and do also intentionally act upon our surroundings. Replacing the idea of conditioned reflexes with that of *situated action*, the dichotomy of stimulus and response gives way to an ecological reciprocity of action and perception, resulting in "a continuous perception-action cycle"; if only to situate it in the space-time of performance, I now briefly discuss its constituent aspects in turn.[27]

First, consider philosopher Alva Noë's "enactive" or "sensorimotor" reformulation of what is basically the ultimate Gibsonian thesis: that perceiving is "not something that happens to us, or in us," but "a way of acting," in and of itself. Accepting that we all in all "perceive in an idiom of possibilities for movement," this idiom stands out as deeply implicated in the phenomenal "qualities" we experience ourselves to perceive in our environment: instead of there being *sensations* of roundness or distance, for example, "[w]hen we experience something as a cube [--] we do so because we recognize that its appearance varies (or would vary) as a result of movement" – that it exhibits "a specific sensorimotor profile." Once we distinguish the *looks* of things (or, their *perspectival* properties) from actuality, "elliptical," for instance, "is just how circular plates viewed from an angle look": with direct reference to Gibson, "[t]he invariant structure of reality [only] unfolds in the active exploration of appearances," being primarily a structure of "sensorimotor contingencies." With these intriguing concepts, "there is a sense, then, in which *all* objects of [perception] are affordances," according to Noë: to experience an object as "on the left," for example, is to experience it as affording "various possibilities of sense-affecting movements," one's relation to it, as being "mediated by the appropriate sensorimotor con-

tingencies." As to the charge whether such identification of perception and action be a form of *behaviorism*, Noë maintains that his approach to perceptual experience is not one of behavioral dispositions: "perception depends on the possession and exercise of a certain kind of practical knowledge. This is not a behaviorist thesis." As to issues of spatiality and, by implication, scenography, he finds it "highly implausible that we have any grip whatsoever on spatial content" apart from our sensorimotor skills: "spatial properties present themselves to us as 'permanent possibilities of movement.'"[28]

In Gibson's terms, then, not only must we "perceive in order to move, but we must also move in order to perceive"; from an ecological point of view, the biomechanics of *movement* are deeply implicated in our very sense of objects and spatiality. Begin with objects: in the idiom of action and perception, we do not primarily encounter them as "set" or "props," say (see Chapter 1), but in terms of whether they be *attached* or *detached* – in short, the former articulate possibilities for locomotion (paths and barriers, enclosures and occluding surfaces) but not for manipulation, at least not in the sense afforded by detached objects that are also easily graspable. Of course, the distinction does apply to prototypical *instances* of set and props, as well as to Erika Fischer-Lichte's semiotic understanding that the performance space and its decorations "allow for" *proxemic* signs, whereas the concept of props is more connected with the actors' intentional *gestures* – semiotically, however, the latter remain "difficult to categorize" as they can also partake of other sign systems. As for Fischer-Lichte's early approach to spatiality, what is of concern to action and perception are neither her fourteen sign systems nor whether they be "space" or "actor-related," but the remaining "oppositions" of *acoustic*/*visual* and *transient*/*lasting*: just as we "aren't given the visual world all at once" (Noë), neither does any theatrical prop "offer itself up to our gaze 'all at once' as a digestible sign," as Andrew Sofer would add. In short, what is problematic in the "spatial signs" burden of some semiotic approaches to stage objects, is the sort of utterly static imagination it tends to activate: in the words of British geographer Doreen Massey, and against our untutored intuition, "[i]t is not that the interrelations between objects occur *in* space and time; it is these relationships themselves which *create*/*define* space and time." In those of Gibson, space cannot be "filled" with objects as "there was no such thing as an empty space to begin with" (*pace* Peter Brook): indeed, he conceives of "space" and "time" alike as but conceptual abstractions of the direct perception of surface *layouts* and ecological *events*.[29]

In the end, then, "[s]tage space and the stage event are one and the same thing": in line with Bert States's succinct formulation, we might do well to bring "stagecraft" down to the *eventness* of its stag/ing, and in recognizing the ultimate eventness, also, of all actor/object (performance/scenography) relationships that emerge therein. As Meyerhold understood, *mise-en-scène* is not a matter of static groupings, but a fundamentally temporal process: quoting Worrall, the "meaning" of a place or an object on stage remains "only potential or latent" until suggested by an actor – and as implied, this potential does not primarily lie "in space," but in the affordances of their unfolding relationships. On the one hand, space (or as Gibson prefers, "the medium") does afford perception, movement, and behavior, but it cannot itself be touched or seen, if not for the layout of surfaces that delimits it, from a point of observation; whether these be attached or detached, moreover (*fixed* or *semifixed*, in E. T. Hall's proxemic terminology), their *affordances* cannot be reduced to any fixed "features," apart from their reciprocity to an acting agent. Conversely, neither may the biomechanics of even such mundane activities as walking or running be understood in isolation from their surroundings: instead of their being two "cultural" variations of a "biological" universal, to cite Tim Ingold's favorite example, whether one walks "from the hips" or "from the knees" turns out to be utterly consistent with the sorts of terrain and carrying devices with which the two techniques have traditionally been coupled, in their Western and Japanese contexts of emergence. Most importantly, as Zarrilli has noted, the reciprocity of perception and action is not a matter of theoretical or propositional knowledge, but a *form of practice*: if indeed affordances are always also "skill-relative" – in the sense that sensorimotor skill may enable a situation to afford opportunities otherwise unavailable (Noë) – then "fluency of performance" is ultimately a matter of "fine-tuning" one's CYCLES of action and perception (Ingold).[30] Skill and its emergence is the topic of my final take on Meyerhold's biomechanics.

> The work of Frederick Taylor, some people believe, has had a larger impact upon [twentieth-century life] than that of anyone else. [--] He is primarily responsible for our notions of efficiency and of the work practices followed in industry around the world, and even for the sense of guilt we sometimes feel when we have been "goofing off" instead of attending to business. (Donald Norman)

As performance scholar Jon McKenzie attests, it is hard to overestimate the influence of F. W. Taylor (1856–1915), the American engineer best known for his principles of "Scientific Management" – and reflected as they are in the merest "preparation of fast-food hamburgers," today, his ideas were also decisive for the sorts of biomechanics imagined by Gastev and Meyerhold in early Soviet Russia. In short, what he found was that the "output" of industrial workers could be improved by subjecting it to standardization under Central Management: by replacing "rules of thumb" with "science" and "the one best method," by "tayloring" out individual skill and initiative, by analyzing complex tasks into their minimal constituent PARTS. Here, I will address these issues in terms of such founding oppositions of "the modern condition" as Tim Ingold has related not only to work, technology, and time, but to what he calls the "master dichotomy" of *freedom and necessity* – directly reflected in "the divorce of knowledge from practice" that lay at the "core of Taylorism": thinking/doing, management/craft, design/implementation. Notably, this *division of labor* is also retained in full by Meyerhold, even as he would promote "the entire creative act" as "a conscious process": a somewhat political attempt at "Taylorizing" the necessities of Reflexology, perhaps, having the actor embody both "organizer" and "organized" only seems to displace the division, along the lines of mind and body. Hence, again, the link from Taylorism to cognitive science, noted by McKenzie and related, by media scholar Lev Manovich, to the shift from industrial to post-industrial society in which the efficiency of *manual* labor begins to give way to that of *cognitive* performance (as in "information processing"). Again, attempts at its "management" have not gone uncriticized: philosopher John Shotter, for one, dubs "cognitive Taylorism" such "breaking down" of people's mental conduct "that eventually they may be replaced by machines."[31]

And this, of course, was also an important theme in the context of manual labor, though for its main ideologues, at least, the enthusiasm for "the human machine" in the 1920s often boiled down to the *positive* appeal of productivity and precision; indeed, the official name of Aleksei Gastev's biomechanics laboratory was "The Cen-

tral Institute for the Scientific Organization of Labor and the Mechanization of Man." In the analysis by Anson Rabinbach, the "modern countenance" of the machine metaphor (beginning with Aristotle and well established by the time of Descartes) would have been that of the *human motor*, "regulated by internal, dynamic principles" in analogy with the newly-invented steam and internal combustion engines – its attendant language of *energy and fatigue*, "central to many utopian social and political ideologies of the early twentieth century: Taylorism, bolshevism, and fascism." As for Meyerhold, he would solve the "cardinal problem" of fatigue by "incorporating rest" in the process of acting, itself, "incompatible" as the very division of *labor and rest* would have been, with a Socialist society – and the list can be extended: for theorist Boris Arvatov, all such divisions as between work and social life, production and consumption, "the world of things and the world of people," were only possible in the capitalist system, "with its administrative top brass standing above production." Yet of course this was squarely required by the Taylor system, itself, in its division of design and "management," from the labor of construction – and as Ingold relates, this distinction may even leak into our modern concepts of *art and technology*, once equal as skilled practices but now, often opposed "as the spontaneous work of the human imagination to the mechanical execution of predetermined operational sequences." In his Marxist analysis, the process of mechanization is a history "not of complexification but of externalization," of alienation and dehumanization: transferred "from the centre to the periphery of the fabricative process," individual workers are metonymically *de-skilled* into mere "hands" on the production line (and apart from Shotter's concerns, this does seem to resonate also with the passive agents of Reflexology).[32]

Regarding how these hands would be metonymically reassembled into an efficient mechanism, "time and motion studies" would then deprive workers of anything that slowed them down, be it individual thought or unnecessary movements. As the name implies, Time was essentially conceived in terms of Motions – "straight lines and acute angles," such as would "*facilitate the maximum use of work time*": where Gastev sought to define each limb's most efficient purpose, a properly Taylorized *actor* could "perform in one hour that which requires four at present." Crucially, the whole ethos of *saving* time would have been driven by the institutional pairing, in industrial capitalism, of productivity with the paycheck; as Ingold notes, the very demarcation between work and leisure implies a metaphorical understanding of Time as Money (whether "spent or saved, [--] hoarded or squandered"). Ironically, its focus on

productivity found Communist Russia drawing on a profoundly capitalist metaphor: the "*deus ex machina* of capitalist development," Taylorism came with a proliferation of "time-leagues" waging a "war for time" – a commodity that industrialized foreigners "instinctively revered" but that Russians seemed to ignore and misuse. Then again, the very notion of time being *quantifiable* relies on its gradual *abstraction* from direct modes of action, to the standardized "motions" afforded by a specific family of cognitive artifacts: for philosopher of technology Lewis Mumford, as Ingold points out, "it was the *clock* rather than the steam engine that heralded the birth of the machine age." In the factory, accordingly, the operations of individual workers would be subjected to the "precise and impersonal clockwork regimen" imposed by the production line, well before the age of automation: as David Kirsh notes, the notion is "latent" in the merest kitchen chore insofar as it is *spatially decomposed* into specific subtasks. The point, as it was to the early time-leagues rearranging Russian factories, is that both manual and cognitive "labor" is affected by cues and constraints, such as serve to hide or highlight affordances in its spatial arrangement. "Out of sight is out of mind," as Kirsh has it – Pitches summarizes the American prototype of efficient car production as follows:

> Shifting from a situation where tools were spread around the factory and used by multiskilled workers, to one in which the car itself was central, imposed a logic on the operation that had hitherto been absent. Thus, the story of the Model T unfolded along the conveyor-belt 'plot' of Ford's production line.[33]

The principles of Taylorist management thus outlined, it becomes clear that the plots enacted via Meyerhold's biomechanics often reflect a different story, altogether. First, while he did agree on erasing *superfluous* "gestures for the sake of gestures," those that went into an étude like Throwing the Stone were not so much *reduced* to some bare minimum of habitualized PARTS as much as they were multiplied, complexified, and elongated, so as to "estrange" what we *usually* perform automatically: from Taylor's perspective, as Pitches notes, "the stone would have been thrown hours ago!" Accused of "blatent anti-Taylorism" and of an "exorbitant waste" of energy, his proponents claimed that in *theatrical* Taylorism, the "shortest trajectory" must give way to "broad, open, and natural" motions that are expressive "at a great distance." Second – drawing on Ingold's Marxist analysis, again – where "machine performance" within the factory layout entails a *decoupling* of action from perception, and "the substitution of a mechanically determining system for a skilled system of constraint," neither were

Meyerhold's actors thus "externalized" from their unfolding performance as a whole, nor were they immobilized to fixed stations in the spatial layout of its production. Rather than being "conventionalized" so as to enable outcomes beyond their skilled control, the affordances they drew on remained on a direct, sensorimotor level: if not for the whirling wheels' keeping them "in time," turning the crank did not afford any such mechanical conversion as would have been decoupled from the act of its turning. Finally, this double emphasis on the actors' *embodied agency* is only in keeping with the sociotechnological conditions of its emergence: in the lack of machines, as Julia Vaingurt argues, the likes of Gastev could only focus on "adapting" bodies rather than environments, on fostering "reflexes without the presence of external stimuli." Predating Cybernetics, hence, his line of biomechanics was "a peculiarly Russian method of body engineering": "In a country devoid of machines, you are the best mechanism."[34]

In terms of skill and cognition, then, it can be argued that Popova's construction for *Cuckold* was not so much a "machine" at all, as it was precisely what it looked like – a *scaffolding* for their acquisition and maintenance. Often generalized to mean "any kind of external aid and support," social or artifactual, the term is derived from the work of Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky, and resonates with notions of "social engineering" already entertained: where Meyerhold and Gastev sought to create a "new man [--] capable of any form of labour" by way of "compulsory" gymnastics and the three-fold mastery of the hammer, the knife, and the pick respectively, Boris Arvatov imagined a "new world of Things" which, "connected like a co-worker with human practice," would by itself create a new "regimen of physical culture." (A Constructivist counterproposal to capitalist commodities, as Christina Kiaer elaborates, such "objects-as-comrades" would be "aesthetic rather than anaesthetic," in seeking to "amplify sensory [and cognitive] experience, rather than sedate or lull it.") From the Taylorist perspective, such notions of cognitive scaffolding do admit its central tenet of highlighting "the System," yet by the very same token – *distributed* as it would be across whole networks of bodies and objects – such a system would effectively elude any overseeing control imposed on it by Central Management: insofar as they entail "attentive engagement rather than a mere mechanical coupling," skilled systems are "notoriously refractory to codification in the form of rules and representations," as Ingold explains. Instead of just mechanically implementing sequences of instructions imposed from above, individual workers/actors remain ever sensitive to their actual surroundings, the minimal conceptual scaffolding provided by metonymic "rules of

thumb" such as Taylor explicitly sought to erase. Rather than by transmission or by conditioning, the very development of skill is afforded by the *specific contexts* in which novices can "fine-tune their own capacities of action and perception."[35]

Out of context, by implication, neither will any inventory of props and objects of itself enact the "rebellion" against their "fixed meanings" in terms of which their use in *Cuckold* has often been discussed: indeed, such inertia of evidence "is only to be expected when examining one element in a system of distributed cognition." Taken from Evelyn Tribble's discussion of cognitive artifacts in Shakespeare's Globe – created "not to solve problems for scholars four hundred years hence but to help an Elizabethan company put on a play" – the quote plays well with the "unspoken" aspects of the *Cuckold* scenography that Pitches has tried to illuminate by "tracing" its "rebellion" to the kinds of *training* in which it was rehearsed, to begin with. Most of them oversized, schematized, caricatural, or merely "mimed into existence," what he argues is that "the polysemic quality of the objects" had more to do with the actors' "hardwon skills" in their manipulation than it did with their exaggerated design – the 1920s' fascination with work actions (scything, sawing, hammering), preceded by a ten-year history of object training rooted in popular theatre traditions. Combining a number of these – "sport (the javelin, the foil), circus (the baton, the juggling club), *commedia* (the slapstick), silent comedy (Chaplin's cane)" – he isolates "the constant of the 'wand'" or stick as "a kind of *ur-prop* in biomechanics," and discusses its functions at length as an index of balance and of "embodied knowledge," in the training. That most of the post-revolutionary études consist in the mere *miming* of affordances – Shooting the Bow or Throwing the Stone, to an "ironic lack of weaponry" – reflects not only the ill-equipped environments the new biomechanical labor now needed to accommodate, but the pedagodical notion that external scaffoldings should always eventually give way to somatic embodiment. Indeed, there is a sense in which the études *per se*, with their characteristic tripartite rhythm, can be regarded as cognitive artifacts such as afford the structural scaffolding necessary for creative improvisation to take shape – frequently, such as make the required motions more *difficult* to perform, be it by unwieldy restrictions (leap from the *left* foot) or by increased tempo.[36]

Then again, to see the actors' biomechanical affordances as enabled and constrained by various kinds of material and cognitive scaffolding is not to see them as thus *determined*: while an exclusively intra-individual view of cognition has often led us to "imagine the workings of complex group structures in mechanistic terms," as

Tribble notes, to see it as "distributed across [an] entire system" is not "to suggest that individual agency has no place" – only the "place" it takes is as PART of a WHOLE. Citing Pitches, thus, training with "the *ur-prop* of the stick or 'wand'" essentially demanded "collective responsibility and rhythmic responsiveness," such as is well captured in critic A. Gvozdev's memorable acronym, "Il-ba-zai," for the "triple-bodied" trio of actors Ilyinsky, Babanova, and Zaichikov, in *Cuckold*. As for individual actors, the *proprioceptive* leanings of the training are evidenced in its emphasis on the lines and folds of the loose-fitting overalls Popova designed as their "work clothes": in terms of sheer biomechanical work, minimal tights or shorts would doubtless have been more expedient, yet insofar as their very design would inhibit the use of detailed gesture and invite them to project the "skeletal movement" of "the human frame" (Worrall), the awareness required of the actors was not only of their bodies but of how they would *look*, in different positions – "a director's consciousness," as Meyerhold put it in his curriculum, or "an outside perspective on the material in its coordination with the stage space, partner, costume, and properties." As Roach suggests, and in advance of later forms of "performance management" discussed by McKenzie, such an emphasis on acting "engaging the creativity as well as the muscular memory of the worker" seems all in all to replace the "coercive top-down managerial style of Taylorism with on-the-job creativity, collaboration, and decentralized decision making."[37]

Importantly, however, this is not achieved by simply *inserting* mind and control into the stimulus-response equation of Reflexology, nor by *internalizing* the division (*individable*, in practice) of thinking and doing – such that the actor "embodies in himself [--] A1 = the artist who conceives the idea and issues the instructions necessary for its execution; A2 = the executant who executes the conception of A1." Where Meyerhold's famous "pseudo-algebra" (Roach) effectively suggests that "Pavlov's dog [has] to decide whether or not to salivate" (Pitches), in cognitive terms this leads to an unacceptable Cartesian dualism in which the body becomes a mere instrument for what could be termed *neural constructivism*: a "scientific management" of psychological processes, retaining not only the maxims of efficiency and saving time – though now counting input and output in the *milliseconds* required for efficient information processing – but the basic Taylorist separation of "brain-work" from "muscle-work" (as Lev Manovich suggests, "[w]hat Taylor's scientific management was for the age of industrialization, cognitive sciences became for the age of automation"). In short, the overall performance will not yield to *any* kind of Central Management, be it

of an omnipotent director – as lead actor Igor Ilyinsky concedes, he "always tried to bring Meyerhold's tasks down to earth," for himself – or of the individual actor: indeed, Alma Law explains the "remarkable success and durability" of *Cuckold* "as countless young actors passed through [Meyerhold's] company" by its roles being created "in such a way that they would fit anyone stepping into them." In the language of distributed cognition, novices can be embedded in a system and, given the cognitive supports it provides, perform far above their individual inclinations: as Hutchins puts it in the navigation context, "one can be functioning well before one knows what one is doing, and one can discover what one is doing in the course of doing it." In the theatre, moreover, there is a sense in which one can *never* really know "what one is doing" – at least if the "product" under "construction," as a student of Meyerhold's put it, is "*not a tangible object but an emotional reaction aroused in the spectator*."[38]

Montage of Attractions – or, Affordances for Interpretation?

By way of conlusion, I thus turn to consider what the performance affords the spectator (or the analyst, by extension) in terms of *interpretation*: if, as already suggested in Chapter 1, the "field of potential affordances" on the stage both enables and constrains what the actors can actually perform thereon, then over time, their collective performances will again enable and constrain what the spectators can possibly *make of it* – affording certain interpretations while excluding some others. If art in general, in cognitive scientist Merlin Donald's perhaps reductive equation, implies the "cognitive engineering" of "how people (including the artist) view the world," the prototypical conception of Meyerhold's "mechanistic vision of the theatre as factory and schoolroom" is perhaps best summed up by Mel Gordon, suggesting, in the 1970s, that in his use of "the fastest and most efficient motions (Taylorism) to produce a predetermined audience reaction (reflexology), we find a total emphasis on work output – the manifacture of effects in the spectator, creating a state of mind." Combine this with Viktor Shklovsky's notion of *ostranenie* or "making strange," however, and things become considerably more interesting: in opposing the *automaticity* of perception by the "stoniness" of the stone, this formalist maxim "effectively turns Pavlov on his head" (Pitches), drawing attention not to what is presented as a sort of transparent, referential medium, but to the object itself and its affordances "in the concrete world" – in the Marxist view, as Robert Leach elaborates, "the stone had to be seen not simply as stony, but as a potential component of a barricade." Accordingly, Sergei

Tretyakov saw in *Cuckold* "the scaffolding for *our* housing under construction"; such was the ethos of creating "a new man" that the biomechanical actor, as Pitches notes, appeared "almost as a footnote to a far more universal project." Secondly, moreover, a "strictly mechanistic" view of an actor engineering a homogeneous audience was always undercut by Meyerhold's need to *polarize* his spectators – to "excite" them and to "encourage them consciously to engage with the stoniness of the stone."[39]

So, we come to the *emotional* side of the equation: how it is that we become engaged with the actions and affordances onstage although we most often only perceive them "at second hand," rather than through direct egocentric involvement. In light of recent neurocognitive research, at least, much of the involvement that ensues could perhaps be explained through a mechanism of neural "resonance" or "simulation." With shades of Stanislavski, the evidence is usually summarized along such lines: while observing an object – or *someone else* interact with it – the neural system is activated "as if" the observer were interacting with it herself. More specifically, this relates to the discovery of two kinds of "bimodal visuomotor neurons" (originally in macaque monkeys) called *canonical* and *mirror neurons*, respectively: the first fire for objects, the second, for intentional actions. Comparable to Stanton B. Garner's phenomenological account of the audience as "the individual/collective 'third body' (along with character and actor) of the stage's intercorporeal field," and of the "experiential duality" of the latter as it is simultaneously "perceived and inhabited," the Meyerholdian phrasing of this could be that the actor's "excitation" is "kinaesthetically regenerated in the audience," as Pitches puts it – in his own words, it "induces [them] to share in the actor's performance: what we used to call gripping the spectator." As McConachie and Hart argue, this also implies that the usual distinctions between passive and active spectators, as related to realistic versus overtly theatrical productions, are only differences "of degree, not of kind": "all viewing, even of a television soap opera, involves active cognition." In a way, the grounding idea of what we could dub *ecologies of spectatorship*, is summarized in McConachie's notion that "the 'response' of the audience was never separated or divorced from the 'reality' on stage," and that the two must instead be considered as a "single phenomenon."[40]

From this, however, we cannot quite infer that Aristotle's "imitation of action" has somehow "shifted" from the stage to the audience, as argued by McConachie and Amy Cook: in that they do not seem to *distinguish* between the visual and the motoric – the observer and the agent – the very definition of mirror neurons seems to preclude

any clear-cut division of labor between "imitator" and "imitated," to begin with. (And of course there is the issue of enticing theatrical metaphors: while *mirror* neurons are surely more exciting than "Area F5 Neurons," as Cook admits, a more realistic interpretation, perhaps, is Antonio Damasio's recent proposal that they be "more like puppet masters," the puppet itself, widely distributed across "a large brain network.") From an ecological, out-of-the-head perspective, however, what matters more is how the usual reciprocity of perception and action is often *suspended*, in the theatre – consider only such cultural conventions as darkened auditoria – and yet is not entirely so: as Mark Johnson argues, suspending our practical engagements for an *entirely* disengaged, "aesthetic" experience (cf. the Taylorist "de-skilling" of industrial workers) stands out as "directly proportional" to the artwork's "ceas[ing] to speak to our human situation." Indeed, even the most formalizing impulses of modernist scenography, aiming at a wholly disembodied perception of an autonomous work of art, could not dissolve each individual spectator's *proprioceptive* possibilities: As something of a counter-notion to Drew Leder's account of our "phenomenological anatomy," as characterized by zones of invisibility or experiential "disappearance" ("lined by a multiplicity of absences" such that the eye, for instance, can never see itself seeing), we only need to consider the ever-present invariants of "[o]ne's nose, hands, feet, heart, and stomach" – perhaps the less than comfortable chair underneath, specifying both self and situation – which Gibson points out are always potentially co-perceived, just as are "one's ideas, insights, fantasies, dreams, and memories of childhood."[41]

On the one hand, then, Meyerhold challenged and provoked his audiences by what his pupil Sergei Eisenstein duly dubbed a deliberate "montage of attractions" (or antics, or excitations); on the other, we might want to follow the cognitive hermeneutics of Francisco Varela and colleagues, in understanding "interpretation" as "the *enactment* or *bringing forth* of meaning from a background of understanding." Most importantly, in the terminology Willmar Sauter has proposed in his influential book on *The Theatrical Event*, we need to recognize that all "artistic" or "symbolic" levels of interpretation have to be *perceptually specified* as the event unfolds, so as to afford what he terms "affection," "pleasure," and "identification," over its course; emphasizing "the interaction between presentation and perception," Sauter himself attests that "nothing is symbolic" unless "perceived as such by the observer." From an ecological point of view, this perceptual grounding of interpretation – however cultural or ideological in orientation – is generally agreed on by all "ecological" accounts of different

art forms that I know of, most notably in the musical hermeneutics of Eric Clarke: in short, he finds the most abstract and social of musical values to be "directly specified in the sounds themselves to a suitably attuned perceiver," whether she conceives of what she hears as "over-the-top singing" or as "Verdi's Rigoletto." While the notion of affordances always implies that of embodied action (even in his "decidedly non-standard, even aberrant" sense that music affords dancing or foot-tapping or marching or waiting on the telephone or taking drugs or playing the air guitar), Clarke crucially acknowledges that "interpretation is also action – the speaking, writing, gesturing, and grimacing in which interpretation is manifest." To cite his key musical example, "the recapitulation of the first movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony affords writing (or speaking) about *in terms of* murderous sexual rage, or the heavens on fire," but not in terms of "world-weary indifference" since the latter has "semantic requirements which this material cannot meet" – it is these "terms" that we now need to focus on.[42]

Invariance over Affordances: An Ecological Perspective on Image Schemas

In this section, I aim to specify the perceptual bases "in terms of which" metaphorical mappings and interpretations are hypothetically enacted, in and out of the theatre. Combining the insights of Lakoff's *invariance principle* (according to which they preserve the "cognitive topology" or "image-schema structure" of the source domain) with Ulric Neisser's notion of the *perceptual cycle* (in which "[t]he schema is just one phase of an ongoing activity which relates the perceiver to [her] environment"), the task effectively boils down to ecologizing the concept of *image schemas*. For all the theoretical insight it has afforded and continues to afford, the fact remains the term has not been too well defined in the two decades and more since its inception – and not only in cognitive theatre studies, where a cumulative poverty of definition can be traced from McConachie's subsuming the notion into that of "cognitive concepts" (see the beginning of this chapter) to a reviewer of his work, dubbing image schemas the "basis of the cognitive sign." In the 2005 anthology *From Perception to Meaning*, representing "the current state-of-the-art in image schema theory" in cognitive linguistics, the one recurrent question is just what image schemas *are* – and as is appropriate for cognitive categorization, many of the authors favor prototypes and family resemblances, over any necessary and sufficient criteria. What is notable, however, is their shared enthusiasm over Mark Johnson's call, in the volume, for the "flesh and blood of embodied understanding [--] that gives image schemas their life, motivating

force, and relevance to human meaning," beyond the merely "skeletal structures" most often discussed, in the literature: as none of them attempts to answer this call from a Gibsonian perspective, let us consider the affordances of that option, here.[43]

Intuitively, in any case, the concept of image schemas has a good deal in common with that of ecological affordances: first of all, both are advertised as aspects of *relationships* or "structural couplings," such, moreover, as capture the very *meanings* inherent in organism-environment interactions (including those on a theatrical stage). Secondly, various affordance relationships virtually suggest themselves, as regards the kinds of concepts usually listed as image schemas: a SURFACE may afford SUPPORT, BALANCE, or BLOCKAGE; a CONTAINER – CONTACT, COMPULSION, making it FULL or EMPTY. Thirdly, both can be detected across perceptual modalities, as well as various kinds of "transformations" within the given modality: as Gibson suggests, it is "easy to visualize a form being transposed, inverted, reversed, enlarged, reduced, or foreshortened by slant," but in each case (including like manipulations of image-schematic forms), the underlying *structure* should remain invariant. Finally, if image schemas prototypically occur together in various kinds of experiential gestalts, then much of the "flesh and blood" that Johnson calls for can be seen as a function, at least partially, of what their "invariant compound" *affords* in the given situation. In other words, what Lakoff and Johnson discuss as the logical "entailments" of different schemas – take, protection from external forces or restraint of forceful movements, for CONTAINMENT – can only be fleshed out through the affordances of their given physical embodiment: CONTAINMENT is not "for good or ill" as such, unless it affords protection or captivity, in direct physical interaction. As linguist Vyv Evans recaps Jean Mandler's developmental position, the "meanings" of image schemas emerge by virtue of "the functional consequences with which they are correlated" – only in the Gibsonian view, this need not entail any distinct layer of "conceptual redescription."[44]

As regards their levels of abstraction, however, image schemas should clearly be superordinate to affordances, which Gibson and his followers insist are directly detected at a perceptually basic level. Both Lakoff and Johnson identify these two "levels" as "the only directly meaningful" ones, but fail to really elaborate their relationship: by default, image schemas should only contain fragments of perceptual detail, yet there are clearly degrees to their "schematicity," in different accounts. Where Lakoff's original notion of CONTAINMENT – as "a *boundary* distinguishing an *interior* from an *exterior*" – effectively abstracts away from such functional aspects as passage

and restriction, other accounts do presuppose ecological properties such as *surface*, *barrier*, and *material closure*, as necessary "subparts" of the *container object*. Among McConachie's theatrical examples of the same schema, the cognitive effects of the proscenium arch and the "behavioral tics" of Method actors (indicating the complex inner life of their characters) remain very different from that of participating in "Family Circles," on the dramatic level. As regards the well-lived temptation of illustrating image-schematic structures with diagrams, finally, these have quite rightly been criticized for being less schematic than they appear to be, in imposing choices to which the schema proper should be utterly indifferent: as for CONTAINERS, such drawings must commit themselves to being open or closed, empty or occupied, perhaps to sizes of opening and angles of entry, in case there is content that originates from without.[45]

Whether the schematic abstraction takes heed of such factors or not, however, any ecological instantiation of it will, by default. An egg or a cocoon come with very specific substances, surfaces, textures, and colors, and indeed they can be "wholly enclosed environment[s] for an embryo or a pupa," as Gibson suggests; yet such full CONTAINMENT is but a limiting case, since each eventually "has to be broken." In other words, there is a necessarily dynamic aspect even to such seemingly static structures: in fact, it matters a great deal whether we call the schema a CONTAINER – i.e., a *thing* – or CONTAINMENT, which may be an *event*, an *act*, or a *process*, as much as a *state* attained. As Robert Dewell has argued, the "cluster of patterns that make up CONTAINMENT" may indeed originate with such dynamic events as *entry* and *enclosing* – ecological affordances, that is, "with the primary variable being how active the container and the contained are relative to each other." What such a view entails, then, is a certain primacy to the *interactional* properties of image schemas, over the dominant interpretation that they be "topological" abstractions of "spatial relations," such as define not functional affordances but "form itself." As Johnson specifies, what makes them "image-like" is that they do indeed "preserve the topological structure of the perceptual whole," yet insofar as this boils down to *invariance under change* ("geometry on a rubber sheet," as the mathematical notion of topology is sometimes described), both "form" and "space" appear too rigid categories to specify it on the ecological level. On the one hand, as Gibson insists, identity or constancy can only be observed within change: the "static form" of something "is not at all what is permanent about it." On the other, talk of "forms" often comes with rationalist/empiricist assumptions about their being imposed *on*, or their existing *in*, the objective world:

hence, Johnson and Lakoff themselves may paradoxically argue that image schemas are both "universal, and possibly innate," as well as "derived from experience."[46]

Having affiliated the logical "entailments" of image schemas with the specific *affordances* of their real-world instantiations, accordingly, the next step in ecologizing the notion is to relate its "conceptual" or "universal" dimension to the formless, topological *invariants* that perceptually specify persistence and change in the environment. To elaborate, invariant relationships can be "structural" as well as "transformational": where the former remain invariant over transformations (the schematic structure of a windmill, say, or that of a face in smiling or frowning), the latter are invariant over structures (the invariant of rotating, in the windmill; the event of smiling or frowning, on different faces; the biomechanics of walking, over separate species). By implication, Gibson does concede a difference between extracting the invariants of a persisting entity, *over time*, and the abstracting of invariants, *over entities*, yet he insists that perception and conception are only "different in degree but not in kind": "Abstraction is invariance detection across objects." In these terms, then, an image schema like PART-WHOLE could be understood as a higher-order invariant we may not perceive, *per se*, but can detect over a whole variety of invariants we do – from the very specific (e.g., to individual anatomy) to ever more generic ones (e.g., across actors; actors and the set; acts, scenes, and "acting cycles," over time). By way of analogy, these levels bear comparison not only with the "situated" and "compound" image schemas Michael Kimmel has discussed, but with the interplay F. Elizabeth Hart has traced between "rich images" and their schematization, in Shakespeare – CONTAINMENT, raised to interpretive prominence in *Henry V*, by the repeated "images of things-that-encircle" in its opening Chorus ("Can this cockpit hold/The vasty fields of France?"). Let us now consider how different invariants, affordances, and image schemas may interact in a spectator's perception of mere *actors and objects* – as Neisser suggests of the newborn infant, she seems "engaged in the perceptual cycle, from the first."[47]

To begin with, if only the stage is exposed to view before the performance begins, some image-schematic structures will already be detected in what stands out as "invariant" in its static layout. From this, however, the spectator cannot really predict what kinds of affordances the actors will come to utilize; she might "pick" altogether different ones, herself, and indeed, the same setting would in all likelihood yield a totally different performance were it coupled with a different set of performers (transforming, as this would, the whole ecology of the event). Insofar as they embody such

conceptual "entailments" as discussed by Lakoff and Johnson, the affordances that *are* utilized, will then evoke further image schemas as the performance proceeds: in the absence of a literal container object, for example, the mere perception of *occlusion* – say, of an actor by a screen or a door – may metonymically tap into CONTAINMENT through its entailment of making what is "contained" either accessible or inaccessible to view. As Tim Rohrer has proposed, from a neural perspective, image schemas are "temporally dynamic in the sense that once they are triggered, we tend to complete the whole perceptual contour of the schema": while the occasional moment of occlusion might well pass unnoticed, the overall schema would likely be reinforced if, over time, the affordances the actors utilize cohered with its other entailments such as protection, restraint, fixity of location, or transitivity (in Gibsonian parlance, we could speak of their affording "shelter," "obstacles," or "nesting"). Rather than accumulating in a logical *montage*, however, such cognitive *attractions* will do their work on a mostly tacit level, below conscious awareness; much like the rich images in language and thought discussed above, such perceived moments of performer–object interaction would only keep the schema in a "state of readiness for further use," as Hart puts it, likely to bias many audience members' interpretation of the performance.[48]

This, again, resonates with Ulric Neisser's initial notion of schemata as "anticipations" or "readinesses for particular kinds of optical structure," in the cyclical interaction that is perception; as Raymond Gibbs suggests about image schemas, they can be thought of as "emerging points of stability in a [cognitive] system as it engages in real-world interaction" – the merely perceptual interaction of a spectator with a performance, included. To apply Kimmel's terms, while my overall emphasis here has been on *situating* image schemas within specific ecological events and invariants, what hypothetically happens on the cognitive level, then, is that some of these begin to *compound* together and inform the spectator's "perceptual cycle" more than others. As this process of generalization extends over time, a schematic abstraction such as CONTAINMENT may emerge as a "dominant" frame of interpretation that eventually comes to override its ecological instantiations altogether, yielding structural coherence to the audience's perceptions, though obviously not making them identical. As an ecological process, the perceptual cycle always involves both the observer and her environment – not in Lakoff's sense of the brain "imposing" form and structure on the world (or art), nor in McConachie's, of the world (or art) somehow "pushing back," but in the specific Gibsonian sense of perceptual systems *resonating* with meaningful

invariants therein, as well as learning to *abstract* higher-order ones, over time. All in all, attention is "a skill that can be educated": in enactive terms, just as the use of objects in a given production is dependent on their history of coupling with the specific actors, so is any given spectator's understanding of it, on a whole variety of such histories – not least with the kinds of theatre she has previously engaged with (below the all-extensive cultural level, aesthetic "styles," say, can be seen as specified by schematic invariants that hold across many enough artistic phenomena, in circulation).[49]

In short, I have proposed to conceive of image schemas as structural and transformational invariants that perceptually specify contuinuities and resemblances, both *within and across* entities, events, and relationships – whether these relate (in our case) to acting, scenography, or the specific affordances of their interaction over time. Add psychological, social, or metaphysical levels of interpretation, and the imaginative abstraction inherent to this definition only differs in degree, but not in kind, from the "invariance principle" Lakoff detected in the workings of *conceptual metaphor*: owing its basic semantics to the affordances of its ecological instantiations (e.g. protection and restraint, for CONTAINMENT), the "schema" itself is abstract enough (the in/out structure, here, invariant over both of these affordances) to be "appropriated for reasoning about abstract domains," as Johnson puts it – a conceptual scaffolding, if you will, that tacitly enables and constrains the kinds of interpretations audiences are liable to enact, even if they remain free to metaphorically abandon it, "after use." In the ecological approach of psychologists Cathy Dent-Read and Ágnes Szokolszky, *metaphor* is defined as "perceptually guided, adaptive action that involves the detection and use of structural or dynamic properties that remain invariant across kinds" – to assimilate their language with that of cognitive linguistics, it involves the detection of *cross-domain* invariants, such that one domain is understood in terms of another (in conceptual blending, the "integration network" is held in place by what Fauconnier and Turner might call "generic" invariants, such that apply to each of its components). Most importantly, metaphors can also "change one's perceiving of the world": just as culturally "dominant" schemas and metaphors tend to be "re-embodied" in performance, according to McConachie and Tobin Nellhaus, so are audiences' metaphorical inclinations as such "a powerful device that can guide perception."[50] To conclude, I consider to what extent the standard sociological and psychological interpretations of *The Magnanimous Cuckold* are metaphorically consistent with its onstage ecology.

Politics or Psychology? Interpretation and Performance Ecology

At the beginning of this chapter, I proposed that most discussions of *Cuckold* have tended to bypass its suspiciously "bourgeois" theme of jealousy, for the sheer brilliance of its staging; as Mike Sell puts it, the "relative dearth of contemporary documents [--] has compelled a kind of self-referentiality upon the Meyerhold industry," such that the body of commentary has by and large settled on the two sole elements of "stage design and acting." Now *ecologically*, what I wish to propose is that this is no impediment to alternative interpretations: whether we discuss the "slaps, falls and obscenities" that embarrassed People's Commissar Lunacharsky, at the time, or the "vowelless revolution" of "color-coded circles" imagined some eighty years hence, an "ecologically valid" performance analysis has to be based on what the stage invites, as it were – on *perceptual invariants* whether "live" or "mediated," direct or indirect (for all their ambiguity, thus, grainy photographs or written descriptions do indeed afford performance analyses, reciprocally with one's "attunement" to contextual detail.)[51] In this concluding section, accordingly, I wish to briefly outline some of the ways in which apparently contradictory interpretations of *The Magnanimous Cuckold* – contemporary and subsequent – seem to equally reflect some of the image schemas and ecological invariants I have discussed in previous sections (CYCLES and CONTAINMENT, say, grounded in the onstage affordances of "revolving" and "occlusion"). In effect, I will first recapitulate many of the issues already discussed, and then revisit the same schemas and affordances from an alternative perspective; roughly, the two orientations could be termed "theatrical/political" and "dramatic/psychological."

Beginning with CONTAINMENT, but once more, where the "occlusion" structure of the *Cuckold* set could equally motivate metaphors of *possession* and *imprisonment*, most discussions have by and large concentrated on those of *liberation* and *disclosure* – such that in "reversing" conventional theatrical flats (as he had done in a production of *Nora*, just days before) and then ridding them of canvas altogether, Meyerhold came to discover "the open workings of an almost clock-like mechanism." Still one of the more incisive interpretations of *Cuckold*, Nick Worrall's clock analogy capitalizes on a deliberate play with the ecology of occlusion – FRONT and BACK: to make the case that in reversing "the 'face' of stage Naturalism" (*Nora*) Meyerhold "reversed a whole historical pattern," he perceives "the large enclosed wheel" in Popova's scenography as a huge timepiece, such that the letters CR ML NCK become "like the maker's initials engraved on the back of the dial." Once the occluded BEHIND is identified

with “the numbers and the hands,” “register[ing] the passage of time” in a “linearly historical dimension,” the metaphorical entailments become grandiose, indeed:

> It is as if the actors on the stage have got *out of* one historical phase – the flow of which the clock face registered – and have, as it were, come *round the back* to see how it works. [--] If the disassociation between clock-face and workings can be seen as a *split* in consciousness, as a form of alienation, between social classes, [--] then the rediscovery of the workings becomes the conscious exploration of society by that element which has been *excluded from participation in* its making – a metaphor for the *entry into* this world of a new class.[52]

Thus, we are back at Meyerhold’s stated aim of “baring the device”: the “structure” of the clock’s “inner workings,” for Worrall, which I proposed schematically entails a configuration of PARTS and a WHOLE. As has been discussed, the whole approach of Meyerhold and his company, at the time, was based on the efficient coordination of interrelated elements, from limbs to actors to groups of actors – with one another and with the Constructivist “acting machine,” itself composed of functionally interconnected parts (the name of the playwright, also, disintegrated into its mere consonants). In *Cuckold*, Worrall insists this “pattern of interrelatedness [--] informed everything on the stage”: “[a]n extended arm or leg [was] never a gesture in isolation” but only became meaningful “insofar as it contributed to the organized pattern of the whole.” Temporally, PARTS combined into WHOLES within specifically trained acting CYCLES, gaining momentum as the the actors flung themselves up and down the construction’s slides and stairways – which again would afford VERTICAL metaphors of building *up* not only their roles but the brave new world. For their part, spectators were also expected to “take part” not only in the creation of the artwork – as its “fourth author,” imaginatively “filling in” what was missing – but, electrified with its efficiency, in that of the newly emerging society they found themselves inhabiting; to achieve such utopian effects, the production was structured as a continuous montage of attractions, such that a “slap in the face,” say, could set all the wheels and windmill sails in simultaneous motion. For Worrall, this entails that the actors were in command of the very CYCLES of nature: where “a conventional mill” is “driven by the wind,” that on stage was subject to “active choice,” reversing at will “a previously immutable order” and also the linear sort of “history which produced this kind of mill” (in Spencer Golub’s more ironic reading, “[t]he disenvoweled name of ‘CR ML NCK’ [only] achieved the illusion of linguistic integrity through actor- and spectator-assisted revolution”).[53]

Finally, there is a series of ways in which the PART-WHOLE organization of the *actors*' work has gone to imply a "liberation" from the CONTAINMENT of *character*, in its naturalist variety – "rooted in a constant psychology," with "nineteenth-century overtones of bourgeois individualism: of private morality and personal motivation." On the group level, first, such INTERNAL psychology was replaced by an EXTERNAL (ecological) one of human relations: with "no historical, national, or topical mark[s]" to their identical blue overalls, it became virtually impossible to attribute any of its PARTS with "an individual, determinable identity," as each could only define herself "through the relationships into which [she] enters or is forced." As regards "the odd distinguishing mark[s]" that did exist, what they served to distinguish was "not the specificity of character but rather the specificity of social class" or "action function": the Count's monocle and riding stick, as caricatural props of the bourgeoisie, the pair of red pompoms on Bruno's neck, metonymical for his "set role" as a "simpleton." On the temporal level, moreover, such type roles would change throughout, such that the WHOLE of an actor's performance only consisted in "self-contained units of action" (PARTS) that needed not add up to any consistent characterization or "through-line"; often, actors and characters were deliberately kept apart, such that the former could freely comment on the latter and "the living out of intense personal emotion in the Naturalist habit became the object of ironic parody" – Bruno, "ridiculed by the actor performing acrobatic stunts at the most impassioned moments of his speeches." In McConachie's terminology, actors would "jump in and out" (CONTAINMENT) of the "actor/character blend," thus encouraging the audience to "unblend" it, too, and "to identify with the actor at the expense of the character" – the former, considered as physical OBJECTS, he suggests the latter were primarily presented as "social selves."[54]

Then again, once we take to consider Crommelynck's play itself, this same set of schematic invariants soon comes to afford very different kinds of metaphors: inso-far as Meyerhold took the "self-excitement" of a poet as the "main motive force" of Bruno, the protagonist, and "bourgeois morality's reliance on property relations," as the "key idea" he was to work on, both Bruno and Stella (the female lead) effectively become OBJECTS – rather than social selves – in a machinery fuelled with "misogyny and sociopathy," rather than any grand social ethos: the one, "a tragicomic victim" of his own imagination, the other, a faithful wife "engineered into adultery." Much like Ibsen's Nora, Stella begins as an OBJECT to be CONTAINED (property and possession), only to liberate herself, at the end; in the very business of "outer" expression, mean-

while, Bruno's Quixotic attempts at CONTAINING her supposed infidelity – within the windmill they dwell in – are often "worked up" by his propensity for poetic flourish (the biomechanic slaps in the face, explained as "fits of lyricism" and inspiration). For all of Meyerhold's parody thereof, CONTAINMENT psychology thus motivates the action of the play to such a degree that its very progression – from Stella's first monologue on her plant and canary ("born to live in a pot" and a cage just as she "was born to love [her] Bruno") to the repeated motif of eyes being "opened" – can well be outlined by basic entailments of *protection*, *restraint*, and perceptual *accessibility*: The key conflict, set by Bruno's showing Stella off, then seeing her being seen, in Act I ("show him your legs"; "look, look"; "I thought I saw your eyes light up!"), Act II has the latter triply contained, not only in her room but in a cloak and a grotesque mask. By Act III, vice versa, her doors are open to all and "[e]veryone gets a turn," as Bruno wishes to "be a cuckold today or a corpse" – done with "hoarding [his] treasure," however, he will no longer be fooled by her "show of obedience": be it her refusing his own masked attempt at seduction, or her actually fleeing with a herdsman, at the end, all is now but "appearances," so engineered as to "protect" her genuine lover.[55]

In the PART-WHOLE scenario, meanwhile, there is clearly much more to Bruno's emerging "stage figure" than a simple blend of actor and character: in the manner of "Pirandellian fragmentation," as Crommelynck himself would have it, much of it was distributed not only across Igor Ilyinsky's fellow actors (especially, Erast Garin as the mute scribe Estrugo) but "kinetically signaled," by the stage construction. In something of a mirror pattern, where Estrugo would often serve as a dumb CONTAINMENT figure for Bruno to fill in with his fears – his silence, "confession enough" of Bruno's cuckoldry even as it was his own hand that forcibly held him silent – the protagonist was soon "contained within the larger container of [those] fears," as Donald Freeman suggests of Macbeth: a "Fragmented Hero," to hint at McConachie, whose possession over Stella (whether or not she remained in his possession) Worrall proposes was "exposed" by "an almost rational degree of sensibility" attributed to the set. For all their revolutionary efficiency, in short, to the extent that the wheels and windmill sails regularly spun in coordination with Bruno's jealous rage or melancholy, the WHOLE could quite as well be understood as a grand-scale metaphor of distributed personhood – specifically, of the *falling apart* of all his attempts at psychological CONTAINMENT. The same with CYCLES: while often allied with the grand idea of "revolution," itself, the perceptual fact remains that revolving disks do not really move things forward –

like Bruno, "comically rolling his eyes" amidst his fluctuating passions, the disks and wheels could not but appear as if forever stuck in their iterative patterns. Only with Stella's final exit on the Cowherd's shoulder, suggests Alma Law, would "the red and unpainted wheels and the sail stop turning, leaving the black wheel, like a cloud of lingering doubt in Bruno's mind, to go on revolving until the lights extinguish[ed]."[56]

On the political front, to conclude, there is a sense in which this very *openness* of interpretation – afforded by the simple invariants discussed – would eventually become problematic for Meyerhold's very career: to exemplify with later criticism, the likelihood of him having operated some of the wheels himself, from BEHIND, can well evoke metaphors not only of "a new class" (Worrall), but of the director "publicly bar[ing] revolution as a device while concealing its mechanism" (Spencer Golub). If some of the more "scandalous" aspects of the staging appeared "more innocent" due to its visual style and child-like playfulness, in 1922 – such that contemporary critics could only deplore, "Meyerhold's revolution is but the revolution of the anklebone!" – there are darker undertones, already, to the kinds of politically "correct" statements he and Ilyinsky were to issue, later on: the latter, admitting in his memoirs that *Cuckold* "nevertheless contained many of the unhealthy traits of decadent bourgeois art," Meyerhold, linking his "central idea" to "the brutal repression of wives as human beings," such that "the audience [would] conclude[] the need for socialist order" (1933). With hindsight, the Theatrical October of *The Magnanimous Cuckold* epitomizes but a limited era of exploration, in post-revolutionary Russia, when the CONTAINMENT of prior convention could briefly be undone for more relational notions of identity – an era of socially and ecologically distributed models of selfhood and nationhood, perhaps only enacted in the theatre, and soon again CONTAINED by the strict constraints of socialist realism: as for the "formalist" Meyerhold, once shot in 1940, his name was to be "erased from Russian theatre history and his face from theatre portraits."[57] While his example would clearly inform both Grotowski and Kantor (indeed, Kantor was to stage his murder in tribute), the next chapter will address the cultural ecology of "real socialism" in which they were embedded, some forty years later – reflecting as it did, a very different set of schemas than the PART-WHOLE utopias of the 1920s.

3 THE POLISH CASE: POOR THEATRE/S AND CULTURAL ECOLOGY

Tadeusz Kantor and Jerzy Grotowski purportedly detested one another: as Jan Kott puts it, "Grotowski respected Kantor, but Kantor hated Grotowski." Coming as they did from fine arts and actor training, their very names have become metonymical of larger trends – conveniently, we could call them the theatre of objects and the theatre of the actor, respectively – yet despite these alleged emphases, the general interest almost always seems to focus on the directors themselves. As such, they would surely be the best known, internationally, to have emerged from their native Poland in the latter part of the twentieth century, yet frequently this is all they are conceded to have in common; to combine the two in one study may even strike one as odd, given only the kinds of prototypical binaries briefly sketched above. In Western criticism, much has however been made of this Polishness, and in ways intriguingly similar concerning both: again, a stereotypical *image* of "Poland" (its history and politics) is applied not only to explain their work but, arguably, to compensate for the critics' often limited language skills – "embarrass[ed] of admitting the depths of their own ignorance," foreign reviewers would often conclude their productions "not only happened to come out of postwar Poland, but could only have come from there." Conversely, as Kazimierz Braun suggests, the then Polish theatre *was* "politically stigmatized" even as it pretended to have "nothing to do with politics": clearly there is more than "Western" ignorance to such Cold War overtones in its reception. When Kantor himself speaks of providing an "answer to reality," and Grotowski, of a "confrontation," one cannot help assuming at least *some* kind of shared social experience that is being answered to or confronted, regardless of their repeated denials of doing "political theatre."[1]

The above sets out the major themes to be discussed in this chapter. While my ultimate aim is to delineate the conceptual topology of how Jerzy Grotowski and Tadeusz Kantor *describe* their theatrical ideas, discursively (so as to pave the way to analyzing the onstage ecologies of their productions, in subsequent chapters), even a superficial reading of Polish history reveals the ubiquity of *very similar* concepts circulating in the cultural moment of their artistic activity. The specific metaphors the two elaborate are highly idiosyncratic, obviously, but on a schematic level, they do not come out of thin air. This, of course, is how the embryonic tradition of cognitive theatre historiography would have it to begin with: having recognized the organizing

structures of a theatrical genre (or, in my case, an *oeuvre*) the historian should expect to find similar orientations in many other areas of the surrounding culture. In this respect, I fully admit my outsider status and the ignorance it necessarily entails, but still, the affinities are too striking to be merely arbitrary: deliberately toying with the prospect of over-interpretation, I will suggest that certain image-schematic structures were indeed integral not only to Kantor's and Grotowski's writing and to their Polish context, but to the ecology of their performances as well as to the kinds of metaphors the latter would afford for interpretation. Not that the works of either were mere portrayals of the peculiarly Polish condition (though that interpretation is possible), the schematic structures I propose were readily and overwhelmingly available in the mindset of the times for them to appropriate – quite obviously they were also influenced by many other factors, not least by Western Art and Eastern Thought.

What makes a cognitive reading of their Polish context especially fruitful, however, is the highly "imagined" nature the "Nation" has repeatedly had to take, in the face of what ever "State" formations have historically been imposed on her (throughout the nineteenth century, for example, the country was partitioned by its powerful neighbors, Russia, Prussia, and Austria, and did not exist on the European map – not to mention the Communist experiment closer to our present concerns). Poles themselves seem very affectionate about the way their experience has been depicted by Norman Davies, *the* international authority on the subject, who openly admits to a "Romantic view of Polish History," seeking its "essential sources [--] in the realm of culture, literature, and religion," and frequently relying on descriptive or conceptual metaphors over the usual social and economic explanations. For my concerns, his could be read as a cognitive history of mentalities, and while the kinds of schemas I am to outline will also be found in the "official" sociology of the Communist era, it is on Davies that I often rely to specify their practical entailments (back then, the possession of his works could lead a Pole into serious trouble). Fully aware that "reduc[ing] the multiplicity of events to simple intelligible proportions" may cause him to be charged "with the mortal offences of 'over-simplification', 'unwarranted generalization', or worst of all 'schematization'" – which pretty much summarizes my project, at hand – Davies seems utterly sensitive to the fact that there hardly is a politics without the hidden *poetics* that brings it down to a cognitively human scale.[2]

Suffice it to consider the ubiquitous, affect-laden metaphor of the "body politic," which has historically given Western political discourse a major framework for

reasoning about the supposed nature and behavior of states: surely there is a difference between its *marching* towards Socialism and its being *infected* by Communism? What, indeed, is the *role* of Poland in the *family* of European nations – is she an *actor* or mere *object* in the international theatre? After World War II, she was conceived of as "Europe's rheumatism" or "the world's headache," and would only gradually prove herself the "Achilles' heel" of the entire Soviet Bloc (or at least that is a favored self-image of hers). Davies calls her *God's Playground* and the *Heart of Europe*, in the respective titles of his two major overviews – openly likening some of her ruling classes to "parasites living off the body of Polish society," and describing how various of her incarnations were "conceived, born, raised, nurtured, killed, and buried" (how, more specifically, the Second Republic of 1918–39 "did not die of natural causes" but was "foully murdered by two assailants acting in collusion"). And at all times, given the aforementioned Nation/State problematic, there is this Other Body ever hovering behind the scenes or back of the Body Politic Proper (i.e., of the dominant State) – that curious creation of Polish Romanticism, of Poland as the "Christ among Nations" – crucified, buried, and awaiting Resurrection, in the cosmic morality play that is history. (As image schemas often arise from canonical bodily orientations, much of the discussion below can be taken as metaphorically "dissecting" these various "embodiments" of the body politic as well as of their oppositional doubles or shadows.)[3]

Now, the foregoing identifies *one* aspect of the image-schematic processes I am to delve into – what we could term the "top-down" construction of social and political identities. As always, the kinds of concepts in question do not exist as objective facts of reality, but are produced and contested in human discourses: it is one thing to perceive structures of VERTICALITY or CONTAINMENT on a theatrical stage, another to project them onto any "imagined community" beyond the confines of the auditorium. While the imaginants are always multiple – as for the political theatre of postwar Poland, Davies opposes its "native actors" with the "self-appointed prompter" that was the USSR – and the possibility of elaborating *different* image schemas is always available, there is always also the pressure, once a metaphorical frame has been set, to conform and to "live by" its entailments (think of the War on Terror). Then again, we also have to consider the "bottom-up" processes by which our candidate schemas take on what Michael Kimmel calls a "situated ontology," i.e., are "performatively elaborated" or embedded in a "cultural ethos," *below* the more abstract domains of politics and identity formation. In other words, for a set of image schemas to really emerge as

"dominant" in any historical culture (as McConachie suggests they do), they have to recur with unremitting consistency in people's everyday lives in their local cultural ecologies: the structures that help imagine communities etc. may indeed arise from bodily experience, but bodily experience varies with regard to social organization, architecture, and religious belief; it is not a human universal in a high Lakoffian sense. (In this area, much of my analysis will rely on Polish ethnologist Leszek Dzięgiel.)[4]

Apart from Kantor's and Grotowski's own writing, then, the discussion below will draw on readings of Polish history, sociology, political geography, and ethnology. As for the cultural context, the main focus will quite naturally be on the "People's Republic" of 1945–89 in which they both initially functioned, intertwined, however, with the "Romantic ethos" that clearly affected them on a more abstract level – as Davies suggests, this nineteenth-century tradition "still reign[ed] supreme in the Polish mind," given that so did the "oppressive hothouse conditions which fostered [it] in the first place." Beginning with brief geopolitical considerations, the two central sections will introduce but selected aspects, entailments, and values of a small group of image schemas I take to have "reigned supreme" in the cultural cognition as well as in the everyday ecologies of said context, with regard to the kinds of metaphors they seem to motivate in Kantor's and Grotowski's thinking. In conclusion, I will extend these considerations into a more general conceptual profile of what it was the two of them, respectively, might have meant by the "poor theatre" that keeps recurring in their writing: there is a family resemblance, true, yet we are clearly talking about two different species. As the international context at large was that of the Cold War, and as the overall centrality of one peculiar schema to that peculiar mentality has been independently argued for by at least two cognitive scholars (Paul Chilton and Bruce McConachie), it is appropriate to begin with the dynamics of CONTAINMENT as it emerged and took shape in the Polish experience of World War II and after.[5]

Spheres of Captivity and Freedom

> 966 beginning, 1772 Russians [--] entered, 1793 Russians entered, 1795 Russians entered, 1831 Russians left but they entered again, 1863 Russians left but they have entered again, 1918 Russians have left, 1920 Russians entered but left soon, 1939 Russians entered, 1944 Russians entered, 1981 allegedly Russians were about to enter, 1992 Russians say they will leave in a moment [--].

Taken from a 1990s newspaper article, the above account of Polish history "in a nutshell" is heavily biased, obviously (as it presumably would be, after the extensive experience of Soviet "captivity"), but is indicative of a victimization-based ethos that many claim runs deep in the culture – and *entering*, of course, is a dynamic function of negotiating *insides*, *outsides*, and their *boundaries*, i.e., of CONTAINMENT. In comparison to McConachie's core argument about its cognitive dominance in Cold-War America, what the Polish case brings out is a drastic difference between nation states that actively *contain* others, and those that *become* thus contained: At the outbreak of World War II, to adhere to a "nutshell" exposition, the then independent Poland was *invaded* by Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union, at its close, *installed* a Communist regime to rule until 1989. If the historically Polish lands of the pre-Partition era had been exclusively contained in Russia, Prussia, and Austria, from 1795 to 1918, the territorial demarcation of postwar Poland (as agreed in the conferences of Tehran, Yalta, and Potsdam) saw its borders considerably shifted to the West: taking *in* former German cities such as Opole and Wrocław (Oppeln and Breslau, in which Grotowski was to work), leaving *out* such important historical centers as Vilnius and Lwów. That this new positioning of the territorial container came with a similar "transplantation" of its *human content*, combined the "nation-building" experiment of 1945-7 with the greatest series of human migrations in modern European history – a "demographic surgery" Norman Davies attests was not a mere change on the map but "an assault on a nation's body." Contrary to the official propaganda, the Polish "repatriants" who populated the so-called "Recovered Territories" of the West were *not* "returning home": in contrast to the relatively more stable status of Kantor's Kraków, it was only by the late 1970s that Grotowski's Wrocław was ceasing to be perceived as Poland's "Wild West" (or, becoming accomodated to the national container).[6]

Add an overwhelming sense of instability, fuelled by historical experience as well as the lingering prospect of another war, and the whole conception of borders and boundaries stands out as having been extremely delicate in the Polish postwar mental-

ity. In such a context, any gesture of inclusion or exclusion that merely concerns the *theatre* may appear shallow, indeed, unless we acknowledge its necessarily *ethical* aspect – as an "answer" to, or "confrontation" with, whatever categorical boundaries are being negotiated. Simplifying to the utmost – only to lay out the general thematics of much that is to follow – what this aroused in Kantor and Grotowski alike was a need for "transgression," sharply distinguished, however, by its ultimate ends: as opposed to the former's established conviction that "life" could only be expressed, in art, through its *absence*, an appeal to "death" and "emptiness," the latter's stated aim remained, on the contrary, that of "fill[ing] our emptiness" and "fulfil[ling] ourselves" – "wholeness," not a void or a lack.[7] Regarding their relations with extratheatrical reality, the early and mid-1970s saw the two as if switching positions: Kantor, abandoning his more open-ended projects for the "closed work of art," "cut off [from the spectator] by an invisible BARRIER," Grotowski, moving *outside of* the theatre and again *including* the spectator/participant in activities that only related to the theatre through a "radical expansion of [its] boundaries." Emptiness and fulfilment, alienation and encounter – as far as the logic of CONTAINMENT goes, Grotowski's "exit from the theatre" can thus be seen as clearly entailed, already, in his earlier call for its "recogniz[ing] its own limitations." If indeed there are things that rightly fall *within* its domain, and things that can be *cast out* as "superfluous" (the idea of *reduction*, endemic to his "poor theatre"), it is perfectly legitimate for one to "step beyond" it, oneself. If the theatre "cannot exist without the actor-spectator relationship," and if the distinguishing barrier between the two compromises the very notion of "encounter" that was to be its "essence," then let it emerge within a more inclusive container (exclusive only of external witnesses, for the sake of community and concentration).[8]

Whatever the terms, then, it is for Grotowski the *human* aspect of theatre that "separates [it] from other categories of performance," and defends its value as "film and television encroach upon its domain"; flirting as he does with some *sciences* of his day, he calls for the "elimination" from theatre of all artistic disciplines "not essential" to it. For Kantor, on the contrary, the "essence" of theatre is *destroyed* by such "marking [of] its 'separateness'": wishing to erase any "rigid boundaries between the arts," he locates its "sources" in the "whole of [modern] art" that "'come[s] to,' rather than 'come[s] out of,' theatre" (*not* in the sense of Grotowski's "rich theatre"). While he does call for the "elimination" from theatre of its "conventional elements" such as props and design, it is with a concurrent *taking in*, from the *outside*, of

such elements as "real objects" and "real places" – be this as involuntary intrusions, or as conscious gestures of "annexing reality." Aligning the problem of artistic boundaries with his key concept of the "poor object," "balanc[ing] at the threshold [--] between eternity and garbage," he suggests it only "reveal[s] its essence" once "wrenched" from its conventional functions – keeping *at* the boundary of life and art, in a sense, as opposed to the more deliberate transgression of those between different art forms. Similar principles apply to the actual productions of the two practitioners: While the "main commandment" of Grotowski's poor theatre was not to introduce into the performance space "anything which is not there from the outset," the room of Kantor's memory was constantly "invaded," in his productions, by forces of History: there was a boundary, but a fragile one. What was "built" in the productions, thus, could not be contained or – in the case of Grotowski's *Akropolis* – would eventually contain its builders; "zooming out," at this point, the next step is to focus on two specific kinds of metaphorical buildings, and their affordances for both good and ill.[9]

Prison

First of all, it is not only Eugenio Barba (in reminiscence of his collaboration with Grotowski in the early 1960s) who has conceived of Communist Poland as a "prison." Kazimierz Braun, to whom I owe the title of this section, represents the very history of postwar Polish theatre as a fifty-year "struggle with captivity"; himself referring to Czesław Miłosz, what he means is "an internal personal state of mind" as much as "an external predicament." As for the latter, the *de facto* experience of arbitrary imprisonment – ubiquitous not only during the war (Kantor's father was killed in Auschwitz) and the Stalinist era that immediately followed – was combined with the equally real sense of now belonging to the "Soviet sphere of influence," i.e., to a Socialist "Camp" or "Bloc" that the "Iron Curtain" had forcefully cut off from the "family of European nations" (the Russians initially called this a "liberation"). The sense of isolation was accentuated, physically and symbolically, by the near impossibility not only of obtaining a passport – i.e., of being able to *travel* abroad – but at best of having any other line of contact with the outside world, least of all with the large *emigré* community (a Polish government-in-exile continued to function in London; while Grotowski's father had already emigrated in the 1930s, he himself followed suit in 1982). In such circumstances, then, the emergence of both xenophobia and language barriers – note the IN/OUT logic of each – was politically induced, as indeed the official propaganda con-

demned everything that came in from the West. In the arts, what Braun calls the "corset of socrealist dogma" was loosened in the mid-1950s, yet Kantor, especially, was continuously accused of "smuggling in" foreign trends of decadent origin.[10]

In the language of logical "entailments," what we have now touched upon would be the relative *fixity of location* that comes with CONTAINMENT, as well as its twin tendencies both to *resist* external forces, and to *limit and restrict* the forces within. How the latter entailment affected the average Polish citizen in her everyday life – *inside* the country, as opposed to her relations with the world *outside* – was through a proliferation of permits, licenses, and official stamps, which effectively formalized and contained virtually all aspects of her existence in a rigid bureaucratic framework. State banks operating as a functional "barrier" to currency exchange, the little money she made could only be spent on goods produced, priced, and distributed by the State; as Western imports were arbitrary at best – though framed as a "generous gift" from the government – access to better quality often depended on re-imported *exports*, already rejected outside the domestic market. (In colloquial language, the felt sense of goods being "barred" from the consumer was reflected in expressions such as "What are they *giving* here?": giving, not *selling*.) What is more, apart from all production enterprises, all services, all transport, and all administrative offices, the State indeed *owned* every housing estate in which its subjects were to live; a telephone remained a scarce convenience – the lines might be disconnected, anyway – and the official limit on living space amounted to some seven square meters per inhabitant. Looking back at this cramped variety of uniform accommodation, in the 1990s, Dzięgiel likens the remaining housing estates to the "bars of a concrete cage."[11]

As for Grotowski and Kantor, these prisonlike inducements of CONTAINMENT appear thematic not only to the two productions of theirs I am to analyze – both *Akropolis* and *Let the Artists Die!* present the condition of a "prisoner" as something utterly different from that of the theatrical spectator (the "world of the dead," "cut off from the living" by an "impenetrable barrier," to paraphrase both Kantor and Grotowski's literary advisor, Ludwik Flaszen) – but to the language and practice of how they conceived of the *actors*' tasks and functions. While Kantor often strove to *limit* their possibilities with various kinds of machines and hampering bio-objects, Grotowski would describe their psychophysical "blockages," metaphorically, as "concrete obstacles" or "barriers" which they could "break down" or "transcend" via training; depriving the actor of "that which shuts him off" spelled for him a "liberation" of her

impulses, a "release [of] that which is most personal," an "opening [of] the cage which enclosed [her] flora and fauna," her "emerge[nce] from a dungeon." As some of his critics have noted, such metaphors of Grotowski's are often imbued with the very dichotomies he is famous for claiming to "transcend" – e.g., of body and mind: think of the distinction between "inner impulse and outer reaction," calling for the virtual "annihilation" of the body as something of a disturbing intermediary – and indeed, Flaszen himself would later see them as "dualistic, whore-saint, Manichean." Similar metaphors also went to define the actor's relationship with the spectator: only after an initial identification of *acclaim* with "a type of bondage," and the abolition of the stage and the auditorium (like that of "the bars in the lions' cage at the zoo," according to Eugenio Barba), was it recognized that such manipulations were an "obstacle" themselves, as was the whole concept of "theatre." As Flaszen states, "it was no longer necessary to establish a wall in relation to others by being an 'artist' behind objective structures" – this, simultaneously with Kantor's erecting his conceptual, dividing "BARRIER" between the actor and the audience, in his Theatre of Death.[12]

On a more abstract level, perhaps, these practical orientations of Kantor's and Grotowski's again reflect their ultimate convictions about the function of art – "To cross our frontiers, exceed our limitations, fill our emptiness," to recapitulate Grotowski's – and the situation of the artist: one of enclosure and restriction, for Kantor, marked in contrast by a deliberate *closing out* of what attempts to fill the conceived "emptiness." While Grotowski's "transgression of barriers" was "to enlarge the island of freedom [we] bear" and to have the "doors which were closed and double-locked" before him, opened, for Kantor, on the contrary, freedom *could not exist* "without something that closes it in and limits it": "every boundary that is reached [--] becomes in turn a closing in" and a form of "imprisonment"; trying to find an exit, the artist "sees more and more doors being locked around him," having to "close [many of them] himself." On a more explicitly social level – apart from naming a 1950s pamphlet of Ludwik Flaszen's, confiscated by the censors – a metaphorical image in terms of which both would draw like positions was that of *The Head and the Wall*: as opposed to Kantor's artistic need *for* "a wall to beat his head against," it was rather the drilling of "holes in the wall" that Grotowski, "faced with an extremely rigid social system," would advertise as his felt "obligation" (though only after having himself left Poland behind). Indeed, while the extensive international touring of both surely afforded them more than an occasional "breakout" from their totalitarian confinement, it

was only Grotowski who ended up in exile, during the martial law of the early 1980s – where Kantor is concerned, he considered Poland *to be* "his wall," and emigration, as conflicting with his "need to question and protest" (and as will be seen, this probably had its repercussions on the domestic reception of both practitioners).[13]

Shelter

If Kazimierz Braun's analysis of postwar Polish theatre is to be followed, however, there *were* also "spheres of freedom," beside those of captivity – notwithstanding his emphasis that every conceivable sphere of life was politicized through and through. What he is surely not referring to, thus, is a condition of unbound openness (impossible within a totalitarian system that strives to contain everything) but, perhaps, a variety of CONTAINMENT that can *protect* its contents from external forces such as that very system – the prototypical building to embody this entailment would be called a "shelter." In face of permanent shortages, this "protecting" function could quite mundanely be performed by the nooks and corners of one's tiny flat – fridges and bathtubs, whatever one could hoard up with necessities – but extends, on a more existential level, to ideas of "internal emigration" as concerned the felt sense of captivity: for many, the glimmer of resistance could only be cherished in the fragile privacy of one's home. "Poland was a prisoner, but its soul was unbound" – as far as shelter imagery goes, the vitality of this Romantic conception can perhaps be related to two contrasting images of Poland, herself, at a protecting boundary between ideologically defined INSIDES and OUTSIDES – the *for* and the *against*. On the one hand, she was now a mere "buffer state" for the security of the Soviet Union (against the "expansionist forces of world Capitalism"), on the other, she still conceived of herself as the "Bulwark of Christendom" – a guardian of European values against the "barbaric" threat of her "Eastern" Others. In the face of repeated political catastrophes, however, the latter duty had long since retreated from the material world into the moral or spiritual, i.e., to notions of "fortifying" the nation's *culture* as its "last line of defense" – in architectural terms, veritable containers of this heritage included historic cities and institutions such as Kraków (cf. *Festung* Breslau), the Church, and the Theatre.[14]

And again, the roots of this curious analogy lay in the era of the Partitions: according to Kazimierz Braun, the theatre and the Roman Catholic Church came to be seen as "*strongholds* of Polish identity and *repositories* of the national spirit" in a context in which they were indeed the only institutions (within the Russian Partition)

in which the public use of Polish language was still allowed. In later times of hardship – anomalous as it was in a Communist country – the Church remained not only a general "*guardian* of the nation's conscience," but provided an *umbrella* of cultural freedom and a physical *sanctuary* for independent theatre activities that eagerly *took shelter under* its *protective wings* (such shelter metaphors abound in the literature). In practice, such "Church Theatre" could function beyond the censors' reach, yet overtly enough to attract the thousands; as Braun would have it, the police never dared to intervene and the actors were easily identified with priests. However, there is another branch to Polish "Underground" theatre whose tradition goes back even further, that is, the kind clandestinely performed in *private apartments*: behind blacked windows, convened by word of mouth, devoid of applause so as not to alarm anyone. This is what Tadeusz Kantor and future Pope Karol Wojtyła had done in the Nazi occupied Kraków (in their separate companies) in the 1940s, and what then resurfaced in the early 1980s (the heyday of Solidarity and of Church Theatre) but can again be found in Partitioned Poland, already – in the homes of its gentry and intelligentsia, reading and sharing the prohibited Mickiewicz or Słowacki they had managed to smuggle across.[15] In a sense, *concealed under* the *guise* of *thick layers* of symbols and allusions, it was in these early Romantic poems and *closet* dramas exactly that the national "spirit" found one of its most effective "shelters," as Davies suggests:

> Polish politics, driven from the public arena by an army of police and censors, *took refuge* in the metaphors of the poets and the allegories of the novelists. It developed its own vivid literary code, a corpus of symbols and conventions which assumed a life of their own. For this reason, nineteenth-century Polish Literature [--] has proved markedly unsuitable for export, and largely untranslatable. But in Poland, its role was paramount. It quickly became *a great fortress*, *a cultural Fort Knox*, *impregrable* because its invisible walls could not be breached by guns and search warrants.[16]

The Romantic leanings of both Grotowski and Kantor have already been mentioned; indeed, much of the former's theatrical work in the 1960s would draw on the self-same domestic classics as did half the nation at the time. As regards how he strove to *protect* his work from censorship and to *secure* its funding, suffice it to mention Grotowski's noted predilection for "verbal masks" – his *concealing* his ultimate aims by naming his more esoteric projects in strictly theatrical terms, throughout – or indeed, his early strategy of dubbing his theatre a "laboratory." Unwittingly suggested by the Ministry of Culture, it was this title to a good extent that afforded his group relative

shelter not only from the censor (little concerned with extended rehearsals and workshops behind closed doors) but also from many of the authorities' more general requirements – eventually even that of being a "theatre." (After Grotowski's defection, the Laboratory still functioned as an organizational shell of protection for those who remained in Poland.) As for Kantor's conceptual "shelters" – more fragile and unofficial, surely – the main equivalent would be the "Poor Room of [his] Imagination," beginning with the real apartments of his war-time Underground and abstracted, in his later work, to a general sort of "inn" or "asylum" on the stage: "The only place in this world [--] where the individual, policed by society, can hide"; a "fortress" that "defends itself" against forces of arbitrary History and of which he himself would appear as a nervous "guardian." On an equally metaphorical level, there is a protecting function not only to Kantor's favored notion of the *Emballage* – of *wrapping things up* "when we want to shelter and protect, to preserve, [--] to hide something deeply" – but indeed to Grotowski's well-known ideas about structure and discipline: in order for the actor's "inner process" to truly become spontaneous, she has to be "inside something which is structured and can be repeated" – *secure* in the score that contains her yet exposing what usually is "hidden behind [her] everyday mask."[17]

And not only that: as if countering the very notion of "taking shelter" (be it of necessity or in cowardice), there is a complementary ethos of *not hiding*, to Kantor and Grotowski. For the latter, this negative variety of hiding equals that of the "courtesan actor" – behind her technical "arsenal" or "bag of tricks," i.e., the "safe haven" or "asylum" of fixed *methods* as much as that of "formless improvisations": while all these merely "protect [her] from the act of truth," the proper transcendence of barriers (*getting out*, as discussed in the Prison section) could only be achieved by a simultaneous *letting in*. "Opening up," becoming "defenseless" in an act of "exposure" or "self-penetration": such is the momentum of these notions that, in the 1970s' guise of "disarmament" or "untaming," they would eventually override even that of the actor's technique; in the strictly theatrical period, already, what was understood as "concealing" and thus calling for "sacrifice," encompassed not only cultural "deformations," everyday masks and social roles, but indeed the very personality of each participant. While Kantor's "personal confessions" would also present "the *Small*, *Poor*, *Defenceless*, but magnificent history of *individual human life*" (exposing it to "ridicule"), the similarities remain superficial as the "hiding," in his scenario, again concerns the conceptual boundaries of life and art, rather than individual psychophysics. Depending on

the context, it could be a function either, as well as of official recognition: the "real object" was to be "bereft of the life function that veiled its essence," art, on the whole, of "its dead temples and pantheons" – the "thin veil of illusion" that "hides, seals off, pastes up, glosses over, and covers up the true and raw matter of life." The act of creation could not be "hidden in the wings": the actors were to appear "defenceless, without safety shields," "stripped of their 'dignity,' whereas spectators are not" – a notion of physical safety Grotowski would also come to cherish (cf. Barba's lion's cage metaphor of how "our feeling of security vanishes" once the "bars" are removed).[18]

Now, what I briefly glossed as *necessity* or *cowardice*, above, relates to the alluring prospect of considering these latter tactics of Kantor's and Grotowski's as an answer to, or a confrontation with – not only the historical imperative of "taking shelter" only just discussed – but the perceived sense of secrecy about the ruling establishment that necessitated such behavior: to conclude our brief excursion into Cold-War CONTAINMENT in some of its specifically Polish varieties (though not exclusively), what we again end up with are the complexities of the Nation and the State.

Suspicion

In effect, we arrive at the *accessibility* and the *transitivity* entailed by CONTAINMENT, and the emerging suspicion that creeps in once we take an *external* perspective on the metaphorical prisons and shelters largely discussed "from the inside," as yet – how can we know, on the surface, if a given container of identity is a mere façade or mask, or really presents us with the "true contents" of what presumably constitutes its "essence"? While a basic aim of Cold-War CONTAINMENT was to keep the "them" and the "us" apart without ambiguity, the two nevertheless inhabited the *same containers*, both geographically and ethnically, intermingled in a dynamics of reciprocal suspicion: from the System's point of view, anyone could be a subversive or an infiltrator, from that of the citizen – a Party informer or an agent of the secret police. Indeed, the latter were omnipresent, functioning in all theatres just as they did in virtually every other public institution: according to the testimony of Eugenio Barba, he and Grotowski were well aware "that hidden microphones were recording [their] conversations," in the Opole premises, as well. Fundamentally, however, the situation was one of extreme moral pressures, *on both sides*: as intimated above – and introducing a theme that is to recur in both productions to be discussed – the oppressors and the oppressed were ultimately "of the same kind." As Norman Davies attests, the gulf be-

tween the masses and the ruling élite (including the faceless *nomenklatura* anonymously chosen from among the former) "ran through the blood and bone of Polish society, and often enough, in the event of divided loyalties, through the heart and soul of an individual person"; the more "superficial" the Party's claims were perceived to be, the greater was the yearning, on the people's part, for something "authentic."[19]

The same within theatrical circles: That Party membership could equally be a shelter and a stigma is crystallized in how Grotowski would use his as the former and how Kantor, for one, would persistently perceive it as the latter – condemning all "laboratories" as but "sanctuaries" of "official art." In Kazimierz Braun's view, what was at stake was theatre's "dignity," i.e., whether it was "deeply embedded in the social fabric" or merely belonged "to a relatively thin facade": apart from the shadow of "collaboration" that affected some circles' attitudes toward the likes of Grotowski, he points out how the regime would quite deliberately use the theatre "as a facade to cover its real nature" or how, indeed, the growing internationalization of Polish artists would merely "mask[] communist power by showing its 'human face'" – what is notable in such shelter imagery (and Braun is certainly not alone, here) is its utter sensitivity to *appearances*. Generally, "official" ones at least were perceived as inherently false, if not indicative of some gaping void within society – be it the absence of "native sons" from virtually every war memorial erected (either as heroes or victims), or that of *reliable information*, altogether, in the face of "pre-emptive censorship." However, it was not the State alone that sought to "perform its own reality" through an appeal to spectacular externals: replacing the theatricality of May Day parades and military displays with that of red-and-white armbands, Polish flags, and portraits of the Pope, very deliberate sets and props also went into the grand spectacle of Solidarity, in the early 1980s. Given the early Stalinist taste for soaring façades, in architecture, and for conformity, among people, it was outer appearance that often remained the source for psychological compensation as well. Discussing what he calls the *façade self* of his countrymen, one Polish sociologist suggests the culture has traditionally been one of *gesture*, on the whole – appearance, "much more important than essence," effect and skill, "overshadowed by the theatrical value of the performance."[20]

Now, aligning such basic issues of *interiority* and *exteriority* with the respective positions of Grotowski and Kantor, CONTAINMENT-wise, there might just be something more to their compatriots' "preferring" the latter than his more ostensibly "Polish" subject matter, or Grotowski's suspect Party connections. As opposed to the Gro-

towskite ethos of "self-penetration" and "shedding of masks" – the quest for "wholeness" – Kantor's presented itself as an "external realism" of *appearances* and *emptiness*, preferring the "Material Shell of the world" and the "surfaces of phenomena," over any attempt to "go inside them, towards inner interpretations and commentaries." In the actual event of performance, given how Grotowski initially located "the core of theatre art" in the actors' *technique* and might downright accuse the audience of "seeking shelter in a social shell," the latter often found themselves *alienated* by the sheer virtuosity of the actors. While there might indeed have been certain "virtue" to the inaccessibility of Grotowski's later projects – witness the inferiority of what was "accessible," in the then context, as George Hyde suggests – there most certainly was a sense secrecy and *concealment*, in the eyes of many, even to such basic notions as "protecting" the actors' "inner process" by way of the "outer montage." (Conversely, Barba has wondered whether the actor's discovery of her "innermost identity" could at times function as yet another form of imprisonment.) As far as Kantor is concerned, not only was a form of alienation *implicit* in his very concept of the "dead actor," but the latter admittedly remained "beings of our own species": "dead façades" or "suspect day servants," enacting but a poor impersonation of "characters we often know and love" – *below* the spectator, most definitely, if the Grotowskite "holy actor" easily made the impression of being *above* them, physically and/or morally.[21]

While it is not my intention to stretch the issue of audience identification too far, here, these considerations already begin to point at a complex of image-schematic structures slightly at variance with those of CONTAINMENT – whether it be a matter of belonging, possession, constraint, security, or vulnerability, as discussed above. Bearing in mind the liminal position of Poland herself as the "buffer" or "bulwark" between the East and the West, what the second part of this chapter will bring into her "conceptual profile" (feeding into those of Kantoresque or Grotowskite theatres) is a more explicit sense of its *dynamics*, within a force field of domestic and international polarities more specific than that merely of "insides" and "outsides."

Other Notable Structures and Their Dynamics

CENTER–PERIPHERY

First, I proceed to consider a highly conventional metaphorical system that has been of historical importance to the very tradition of "geopolitics" – affording, as it does, fundamentally *spatial* conceptualizations of *social*, *moral*, *and political order*. Take the relevant example: "Spider at its *centre*, web upon tangled web *radiated out from* the Kremlin *into the farthest reaches* of the Soviet empire – the webs of central committees, of provincial committees, of city committees, of rural committees; the webs of fraternal Parties, and of the fraternal Party's committees." Norman Davies's metaphor gives an idea of the basic logic: the PERIPHERY is dependent on the CENTER, making the link and interaction between the two categorically unequal. Geographically the "heart of Europe," postwar Poland found herself not only a Soviet "satellite," but as equally peripheral to the widely defined "West" she had historically identified with; such was the latter's eminence as *the center* of European values and civilization that in Poland – while officially denying any inequality, as to the "Soviet Alliance," and finding all the "satellite" talk not only inaccurate but insulting – the Communist leaders themselves would often privilege those native artists and scientists who made it through in the West. After the war, many felt downright *betrayed* by the European Center, realizing it *had not prevented* the country from being pushed over to its Eastern Periphery, but when it came to external "centers of identity," they still preferred to look to the Vatican, say, than to Moscow – just as their forefathers had, during the Partitions, to artistic centers such as Paris (giving shelter to their major poets and playwrights) instead of the then ruling ones in St. Petersburg, Vienna, or Berlin.[22]

In short, the imagined Nation remained as central an ideal to Romantic minds *within* the State as it had been to those *without* one, in the previous century. Given their "peripheral complex of inferiority," in politics and economy, there was an equal complex of *superiority*, when it came to cultural capital – quite befitting a country that boasted the heliocentric revolution of Copernicus: if competing centers could be overturned on an astronomical level, they might on a more mundane one. On the one hand, there was a similar polarization to domestic "centers of identity" as there was to those abroad: as opposed to the political capital in Warsaw, what people felt affiliated with were religious centers such as Częstochowa, or historic ones, such as Kraków. (While the central administration was in Warsaw, it was Kraków and the Wawel Castle that

stood for the Nation's glorious past; indeed, the construction of the Nowa Huta steelworks at its periphery can be seen as an attempt, by the government, to obliterate the city's historical centrality.) On the other hand, while the ardent urbanization of the country kept structures of CENTER and PERIPHERY "center stage" throughout its expanse – architecturally, any minor center was already centered around a central market square called *Rynek* – it remains a fact that postwar reconstruction would concentrate on *large* centers almost exclusively, and that the intense centralization of power in Warsaw left all other Polish cities feeling intensely provincial. Kraków and Wrocław emerging as the leading *theatrical* centers, beside the capital, the operations of all professional theatres would be "centrally planned" by the Ministry of Culture which distributed the subsidies, imposed the repertoire, and controlled the personnel; while the "decentralization" of 1956 enabled the very emergence of such groups as Grotowski's and Flaszen's, in the peripheral Opole, what it amounted to, in the end, was a situation in which theatres found themselves doubly subjugated and controlled – by local, provincial, and municipal administrations in addition to the Ministry.[23]

Now in rough terms, the In/Out emphases of Grotowski and Kantor go with like orientations toward CENTERS and PERIPHERIES respectively, often in terms of the conventional metaphorical mapping, Essence Is Central / Appearance Is Peripheral (whether conceived as falling within or without the given conceptual CONTAINER). While both certainly appear as the *central figures* of their respective companies, "radiating" their influence from within one "inner circle" or another, they do also share a tendency to remain at the periphery – "sitting, pale, in the corner," whether in rehearsal (Grotowski) or during performances, as well (Kantor); aligning their aesthetic projects with what Jon Erickson calls the "humanization" and "dehumanization" of theatre, however, the "parallel course" of both is utterly *centripetal*, "toward the establishment of a pure and unified object for contemplation." Begin with Grotowski: having turned his marginal and "ex-centric" position to his advantage, in many ways – leading his theatrical investigations in Opole and Wrocław, as opposed to a Warsaw or a Kraków, and then retreating to "the peripheral areas of art," altogether – what he called the *via negativa* in the 1960s, remained a matter of peeling off or "eliminating" all that is merely peripheral: first, to the theatre, then, to the actor and the human being. As opposed to the merely social, conditioned layers of the psyche (the sheltering structures of "everyday masks" and individual personalities, as discussed in the CONTAINMENT section), his unyielding conviction was about the existence of "cultural

universals," and the possibility of approaching them by means of whatever "score" or "vehicle" was appropriate to the task – whether *archetypes* or *objective sources*, in name, one was to *find them within* one's very organism, "like the mediaeval wood carver who sought to recreate in his block of wood a form which already existed."[24]

Dating from as early as the 1960s, this analogy with the wood carver betrays the Platonic leanings of the whole approach to follow – acknowledging the "performativity" of the *means*, in the 1980s, Grotowski was not afraid of referring the *end* to an INNER CENTER most theorists of performativity have explicitly sought to deny:

> Essence: etymologically, it's a question of being, of *be-ing*. Essence interests me because in it nothing is sociological. It is what you did not receive from others, what did not come from outside, what is not learned. [--] As almost everything we possess is sociological, essence seems to be a little thing, but it is ours.[25]

For Kantor, in contrast to any such admitted essentialism, at least, theatre was "an activity that occurs if life is pushed to its final limits, where all categories and concepts lose their meaning and right to exist." In his 1975 manifesto for "The Theatre of Death," he goes as far as to describe his beloved *avantgarde* as a now "official freeway" he would rather exit for a "poor side street" – leading to the cemetery, on the one hand, and to the "Mannequins and Wax Figures," on the other, that he recognizes had "always existed on the peripheries of sanctioned Culture": "not admitted further," they had only ever "occupied places in FAIR BOOTHS, suspicious MAGICIANS' CHAMBERS, far from the splendid shrines of art." In the end of his career, thus – having always rejected such "shrines" for "real places [--] on the margin of the life's practice," just as he had the Central Planning policies of the State – Kantor's favored metaphorical peripheries were to be utterly related to *childhood and old age*, the cemetery and the fairground: "touch[ing] on the regions of nonbeing and death," as yet another manifestation of the culturally marginal he had cherished, throughout, as the ultimate source of artistic value. In his productions, this Bakhtinian sort of image-schematic reversal (PERIPHERAL as CENTRAL) was physically embodied in his own, haunting presence "on the side" – and not only that: in the 1975 *Dead Class*, Kantor would situate the performance activities "to the corner," on the whole (so as to make them more "real," as opposed to the "safe pretending" "before an audience" he related to "the middle"), in the 1980 *Wielopole, Wielopole*, relegate what "in some previous period [had been] at the centre of the action" – to the antechamber: "outside, behind

the door, [--] on the periphery."[26] In a late interview concerning the 1985 production of *Let the Artists Die!* (see Chapter 5), he would further "poetize" the idea of the "corner" in a tone not unlike that of philosopher Gaston Bachelard (see endnote):

> Everything that happens in my creations happens in the corner [--], because the corner is a special place. [--] In the middle of the room what happens are the official things. But the corner is where the children, who have the biggest sense of truth, play under the table. The corner is the place of the imagination. It is the difference between official and unofficial.[27]

CYCLES

Regarding how such structures as the above are *performed* in everyday ecologies, we often find the PERIPHERAL entity either *circling around* its chosen CENTER (consider again the political "satellite" metaphor, with "orbits" and "spheres of influence") or alternatively, *drawn into* it and then again *retreating*, in an iterative pattern. In both cases, it is in the center's interest to hold the CYCLES of the periphery stable and in check, yet there is clearly a difference whether it achieves this by "compulsion" or "attraction" (image schemas in themselves): staying with typically Polish examples, the latter could again be related to "moral centers" such as pilgrimage sites or the nearby confessional, the former, to the sort of bureaucracy that caused thousands of people, every day, to leave their home province for some Central Office in the capital. On a more mundane level, still, consider but the cyclical nature of *queuing*, day after day and for hours on end, to various kinds of distributional "centers" you could nearly count on would *not* contain what you had come for: as Leszek Dsięgiel testifies, the average Pole began to suspect this was "a deliberate policy of the authorities, aimed at tying down the actions and thoughts of millions of citizens with trivial matters of daily existence." At the *metaphorical* extreme, in consequence, such "literal" experiences of daily occurrence could only reinforce the old Romantic habit of projecting CYCLES on historical events, as well – most notably, the vain insurrections and other waves of protest (in 1794, 1830, 1846, 1863, 1956, 1968, 1970, 1976, 1980…) one author has indeed called "the wheel of Polish fortune." Notably, this is what Grotowski himself would refer to, in discussing his Nation's problem with the "foreseeable consequences" of "heroism and sacrifice," as well as Kantor, when he mentions the "vicious circle" as a "significant metaphor" in Polish art and life, alike – in his Theatre of Death, it would often be the soldier, "fallen in battle after battle in Polish history" as George Hyde points out, "who best represents the world of the dead."[28]

In more aesthetic terms, perhaps, CYCLES are endemic to Kantor's abiding attachment to the "stubborn *repetition of action*," beginning with his early Happenings and later accommodated into his new-found fascination with concepts of Memory. What is important in the former phase, is how this repetition "completely deprives both the activity and the object of their meaning" (their "life" meaning), providing a "stronger physical sense of being" to both so "they can [more] easily be manipulated"; come *Wielopole, Wielopole*, and "[t]his pulsating rhythm" is precisely equated with the structure of memory: "This is the room that I keep reconstructing again and again and that keeps dying again and again" – its inhabitants, repeating their activities as if "imprinted on a film negative shown interminably." On a highly conceptual level, the tension between Kantor's global explorations and his highly local subject matter can itself be seen as a sort of CYCLICAL drift between a CENTER and a PERIPHERY (the here-and-now and the there-and-then), the "main characteristic" of whose local pole he suggests is "that you leave it in order to return in the end" – and again, similar dynamics could also be directly perceived in many of his productions. For critic Jeffrey Lawson, "[t]he slow intrusion of an object or moment into the eye of a hurly-burly circle of activity and the consequent juxtapositions of stillness against movement, and of focus and intent against an almost pointless abandon" stands out as one of "the most provocative moments in Kantor's theatrical art." Dominated "at one point by the objective side and at another by the subjective," as Krzysztof Pleśniarowicz puts it, his stage ecologies found themselves continuously "decentered and then [again] recentered into an inverted [social] order" (the phrasing is Paul Deane's), yet whatever momentary center they chose to encircle, all these cyclical processions would soon dissolve without affecting any real change.[29] (In bleak contrast, the ecstatic parade at the end of Grotowski's *Akropolis* is at least drawn into the central gas chamber.)

All in all, there is a sense of PROCESS to Grotowski's CYCLE metaphors (as opposed to the feeling of stagnation we might get from Kantor), whether he discusses cycles of associations, impulses, or actions: "working through the whole cycle" of exercises; "open[ing] the door to the cycle of associations"; "transforming the body movements into a cycle of personal impulses." That these should be *simultaneous* can be read as a way of undoing the implicit body/mind duality which, however, flourishes in his CONTAINER-bound rhetoric of INSIDES and OUTSIDES: while insisting that "[i]mpulses precede physical actions, always," *pushing from the inside* "out toward the periphery" (in the sense of "in/pulse"), there seems to be no contradiction in his

nonetheless insisting that "inner impulse and outer reaction" be "concurrent" – or, as Shomit Mitter exquisitly puts it, on "a condition of unaffected resonance between inner and outer," "a state of being in which appearance and substance are one." When he comes to emphasize the value of *repetition*, again in contrast with Kantor, it is as a "test against dilettantism," "Please repeat": whatever changes might occur within the actor's "inner process," they could only take effect through the disciplined reiteration, day after day and year after year, of precise cycles of physical actions – whether in the form of daily exercises or, as the late counterpart of a theatrical performance, whole "performative structure[s] objectified in details." Regarding the "outer appearance" of Grotowski's career, in a sense, the image schema of CYCLES already stands out in the early emblem of the Theatre Laboratory – a configuration of loops or a "sign of infiniteness," inherited from the Polish interwar group Reduta – and toward the end, in Richard Schechner's observation how "Art as vehicle," as Grotowski's concluding phase, "nearly closes the circle [--] with the Theatre of Productions" (though he suggests a "spiral or gyre would be better figures").[30] In this as well as in other matters discussed, however, the image-schematic compound is by far more complex, still.

VERTICALITY

Another image schema that ubiquitously couples with that of CENTER-PERIPHERY, given the simple experiential grounding that "canonically," at least, the head is both Up and Central (be the "body" in question biological or political) is that of the VERTICAL orientation. In political discourse – while anterior to and partially replaced by the "horizontality of bounded territoriality" (CONTAINMENT) since the early modern period, already – the schema remains a basis for concepts of *supremacy*, *sovereignty* and *control*, as Paul Chilton has argued at length: "conceived in terms of vertically oriented bodies," *states* "are likely to be 'built up', [--] seek 'stable structures' and 'secure foundations'," whether they be metaphorized "as persons or buildings or both." Taken as a metaphorical power statement, no wonder then that all the public architecture of the Stalinist period tended toward the collossal, throughout the Soviet Bloc as well as within the Empire, itself – "the bigger the better," with Poland no exception. (Erected as a monument to "everlasting Soviet-Polish friendship," the Joseph Stalin Palace of Culture remains the literal and metaphorical apex of this trend, in downtown Warsaw.) Among the populace – though it surely could not compare with the more desperately "vertical" policy of *raising* food prices *up to* 300 per cent overnight – the

construction of huge office buildings in city centers met with growing irritation, however, especially given how sluggish the rebuilding of actual housing resources remained. As for the blocks of flats that actually came into existence, it incidentally turned out that neither extreme in their vertical ecology would afford any better living standard (the ground floor exposed to theft, the top floor to low-quality roofing that would soon start to leak); traditionally, many sought solace in the spacious heights of the mountains – the Tatras or the Karkonosze – yet soon enough, all sorts of controls and regulations emerged to restrict such liberatory expeditions, as well.[31]

In more conceptual terms, the central metaphor of Power being Up "gives rise" to all such expressions as being *under* occupation, *under* communist rule, *under* a Gomułka or a Gierek, and quite clearly it would be the image of "pyramidal hierarchy" that gives us the dubious entailment that there has to be a Single Center, Up There, that holds all the strings. "In terms of the [VERTICALITY] schema, two sovereign entities cannot coexist," as Paul Chilton neatly articulates it; in the words of another theorist, "[c]ommands *flow down* from the centre to the periphery, while information travels in the reverse direction" (the emphasis is mine, highlighting again the conceptual mapping between CENTERS and the VERTICAL orientation). Notably, the structure is readily recognized in what I earlier dubbed the "official sociology" of the Communist period, as well: as Jan Szczepański suggests in an internationally oriented handbook on the subject, the political structure of the People's Poland "might be compared to a pyramid with the first secretary of the Central Committee at the top," and "the local party committees and local presidiums of the People's Councils" at the bottom. However, the way he deliberately highlights the "interplay of [--] organized and unorganized political forces [--] at every level of the pyramid" – leaving the citizens "not without means of influencing the decisions of the authorities," while admitting "the group in power [was] in no danger of being removed" – could again be contrasted with the somewhat harsher view I have been advocating, throughout. "Building on" the same metaphor, Norman Davies is typically colorful, in his description of how "every rung of the Party ladder was formally required to execute the orders of the rungs above":

> Every Party member had to obey the instructions of his *superiors*. As a result [--] the Party dictated to the state; the Political Bureau dictated to the Party as a whole; and the First Secretary, once established, dictated to the Political Bureau. [--] So long as the First Secretary of the fraternal party was kept loyal to the Soviet interest, the whole of the State-and-Party *pyramid beneath* him could be assumed to be in line. [--] There was no rule of Law *above* the dictator of the day.

> [--] He was the one free man in the whole system – free to be as cunning as Lenin, as paranoid as Stalin, as quirkish as Khrushchev, as dull as Brezhnev. What is more, in relation to the mortals *beneath* him, his particular mode of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat', could be imitated by all the *descending hierarchy* of petty despots right *down* the endless links of the political chain.[32]

On yet another level, it is not only in English that the vertical aspect of the *up*risings, *down*falls, and *under*ground periods we have discussed is *down*right lexicalized; in the Polish language, as cognitive linguist Anna Wierzbicka elaborates, the high concept of "fate" itself seems more associated with a cycle of "ups and downs," than with some predetermined destination. Apart from being well motivated by some of the historical experience already touched upon, such a conception resonates with the Romantic metaphysics that went into making sense of it as early as the nineteenth century – that of "perfecting the spirit" through a "cycle of death and regeneration"; the idea of Poland as the "Christ among Nations," and the appeal to her *Resurrection* through which the vain *insurrections* of the era could be justified as worthy efforts, irrespective of their outcome. That much of this philosophy was formulated in the poetry and drama of the time, together with the covenant between the Church and the theatre I quoted Kazimierz Braun suggesting in the Shelter section, *raised* the responsibilities of the latter "*over and above* purely artistic ones"; an inter-war case in point would be the work of Juliusz Osterwa in his Reduta Theatre, whose "sacrificial" ethic of acting would again directly infuence many of Grotowski's ideas. In short, defining art as "an *uplifting* which enables us to emerge from darkness into a blaze of light," the latter suggests "holiness" as a metaphor for someone who "*climbs upon* the stake and performs an act of self-sacrifice [--] involving his whole being [--] from the biological-instinctive source via the channel of consciousness and thought, to that *summit* [--] in which all becomes unity." On the one hand, this indicates a mystical *ascent* to the "essence" in which there are no longer opposites, on the other, a more pragmatic opposition to anything which may "drag you *down*": the "*descent* into the 'general'," into dilettantism or lack of discipline – into the "'void' *beneath* the zero point" Ludwik Flaszen once identified as yet another kind of "wall" to be broken through.[33]

While Grotowski's may well be understood as an "archeology of performance," then – *digging beneath* what is merely individual or contemporary – there is an essentially UPWARD drive to the INNER process he advocates, throughout (of approaching the CENTRAL or "essential" by means of whatever CYCLE of actions is appropriate).

Summing *up* a lifelong attachment to philosophies of "mystical ascent," in the 1990s, it is notable that he would literally identify this aspect of the work as an "itinerary in verticality" – defined as the passage from a "coarse" to a "subtle" level of energy, "or even toward the *higher connection*"; ever reluctant of *naming* the Higher Power, he points out analogous theories of "the descending and the ascending" in traditional thought and the sciences alike, suggesting how in "several traditional languages," the very "quality of man" ("to stand") is "linked to the vertical axis." As opposed to the rather ironic conflict of orientations one may decipher in his 1960s metaphor of using the role as a "trampoline" with which to study one's "innermost core," what he calls "Art as vehicle" should function like "a very primitive elevator," in strict verticality: like a "basket pulled by a cord, with which the doer lifts himself toward a more subtle energy, to descend *with this* to the instinctual body." Thus, there is a place for both "the biological-instinctive source [and] the channel of consciousness and thought" he already spoke of in the 1960s: on the one hand, one should not "fixate" on the "horizontal" plane with its "vital forces" (the "density of the body"), on the other, "all should retain its natural place: the body, the heart, the head, something that is 'under our feet' and something that is 'over the head'" – "[a]ll like a vertical line, and this verticality should be held taut" between organicity and consciousness – "the vigilant awareness which makes man" (the Polish *człowiek* being gender neutral).[34]

For Kantor, by contrast, "consciousness" remains high up on the vertical axis, as well (having "*raised* [humanity] *above* all other creation"), but instead of "organicity" he would measure it against the "inexorable and final scale [--] of *DEATH*." As Krzysztof Pleśniarowicz observes, his most ubiquitous concepts tend to come as oppositional pairs, altogether – Illusion and Reality, Form and Matter, Life and Death, Consciousness and Object; while he is not misguided in relating the first part of each couple to "semiosis" or "immobility," and the latter, to "mystery" or "inaccessibility," it is equally informative to map each pair onto the ABOVE and BELOW elements respectively, of the schema we have been discussing. Beginning from the early 1960s, Kantor dubs his beloved peripheries the "Reality of the Lowest Rank" (Jeff Lawson abbreviates this to the "hyporeal," the prefix meaning *under* or *below*) and remains highly systematic, throughout, in identifying this "realm" with the kinds of values that conventionally reflect the DOWN part of the schema, according to Lakoff and Johnson – e.g., low status, emotion, and depravity, as opposed to high status, rationality, and virtue. In the "Zero Theatre" of 1963, he proclaims the reality of the lowest regions

both materialistic and "moral," insisting that the dramatic "movement" always be "*downwards*, into the sphere *below*"; at the turn of the 1980s, it is "the sphere of life" itself that is to be "of a lower rank," as compared to the "purity" and "greatness" of death and eternity. Whether the "divine concept of reincarnation" be substituted by "the human act of low impersonation" or the counter-productive "minus acting" of the 1960s, what is opposed is such "movement upwards" and "transcend[ing of] human dimensions" as is easily identified not only with "traditional techniques of plot development" such as Aristotle's, but with an ethic not dissimilar to Grotowski's.[35]

Beyond the VERTICAL practicalities, then, as regards for instance the two directors' trademark venues – Kantor's medieval cellars, in Kraków, Grotowski's famous upstairs space, in Wrocław – it is no accident that Kantor has the children play "*under* the table," in the earlier quotation about the peripheral appeal of the "corner"; by way of the same image-schematic transformation (Up Is Central / Down Is Peripheral), he may easily blame the "pushy [--] and pretentious form" of UPWARDS dramaturgy of "pushing [the object] aside," within one and a single sentence. What is more, given such basic orientational metaphors as More Is Up and Less Is Down – e.g., "The Communists *raised* prices while keeping the citizens' income *rock bottom*" – it is altogether intuitive that a "Reality of the Lowest Rank" should also be one of "poverty": a concept Kantor incidentally finds not only very dear but – relating his own ideas to inter-war writer Bruno Schulz's notions of "degraded reality" – "very Polish." Blending in a CYCLE of life with the additional VERTICAL evaluations of Health and Life Being Up / Sickness and Death Being Down ("*top* shape," "*fell* ill," "*dropped* dead"), here is how he would elaborate the concept, in one of his late interviews:

> [A]ll the greatest people [--] had to do something from nothing – in 'poverty'. So 'poverty' is for me a very human condition. Because man is born in 'poverty'. Then, he acquires things, becomes powerful and rich… and finally dies. So the beginning and the end are always in 'poverty'. Therefore, 'poverty' is for me a truly human condition, and also a condition in which art can exist.[36]

SOURCE–PATH–GOAL

Finally, there is one more image schema – and a fundamentally *dynamic* one – that often plays in when (political) states are metaphorized as (physical) "bodies": apart from having us conceive of them as CONTAINERS with a VERTICAL orientation and a CENTER-PERIPHERY structure of sorts, this constitutive source domain also entails such notions as *directional movement* and *goal-led purposiveness*. Beginning with the

primal scene in which an infant detects a jar of cookies and makes her way from her initial location to that perceived destination, the SOURCE-PATH-GOAL schema (or PATH, for short) provides a basis not only for abstract concepts such as purpose, but to political ones such as past history and future policy. Given the intuitive appeal of its structure, an example of how the schema can also be exploited for rhetorical effect has already been suggested in the context of the postwar migrations: apart from "mask[ing] the involuntary nature of their resettlement" by calling the Polish expellees *repatriants*, the Soviet leadership would identify the whole process as the "return of Poland to its 'Piast Path'" (referring to the ancient kingdom in which the Western territories had last actually been a part of Poland). Not that there was no path-like logic and purpose to the Nation's intrinsic aspirations, as well: the maternal womb of the "Fatherland" as the SOURCE of their sacrifices (there is an interesting gender conflict to the Polish word *ojczyzna*) past martyrs would not have died in vain, in struggling for the ultimate GOAL that was "Freedom" (*wolność*, vertically identified with the Resurrection of their Crucified Nation); what is more, there was the Romantic ethos of being "the guide of all Christian nations on their road to Perfection."[37]

Where the central conflict lay, however, is between what I discussed as the Poles' felt sense of CYCLICITY, and the more optimistic metaphors of "marching towards Socialism" the State preferred to cultivate. When it comes to the Soviet narrative, the very Vehicle for the Mission seemed ill-conceived: in a famous metaphor of Stalin himself, introducing Communism to Poland was "like fitting a cow with a saddle." Before concentrating on the conceptual "paths" or artistic "journeys" of Kantor and Grotowski respectively, it might be informative to briefly address the diversity of concepts the simple tripartite structure of the SOURCE-PATH-GOAL schema affords. Quoting Paul Chilton one more time, "journeys can be conceptualized in different ways depending [--] on which elements of the PATH schema are salient":

> To focus on endpoint alone might be to have a destiny, to be predestined or predetermined. [--] To focus on both origin and on end-point might involve having a mission, that is, being sent by some power or authority at the origin to some specified goal. [--] To focus on the path and destination while being unsure of the direction gives the concept of quest. [--] To focus neither on origin nor endpoint gives the concept of exploration. It also implies that the explorer is not selecting a single directed path and that the orientation is toward a process rather than toward an objective or authoritative origin.[38]

In these terms, then, the artistic trajectories of Kantor and Grotowski mostly seem to reflect aspects of quest and exploration, along specific PATHS of praxis they both also effectively historicized, themselves. Grotowski, having divided his work into five separate phases (yet arguing he had only ever followed "one sole thread"), Kantor, having "labeled" the "different 'stages' of [his] journey" in a variety of essays and manifestoes (yet arguing "[i]t was always at heart the same thing"), what sets them apart are the specific GOALS and SOURCES they would identify at different points – often with regard to the FRONT-BACK orientation (behind/ahead, past/future) inherent in the very experience of human locomotion. In the most clear-cut sense, Grotowski's PATH metaphors are systematically oriented toward SOURCES (cultural, human, universal), seeking to undo predetermined GOALS whatsoever ("the result," "how to do"): rather than "*go along* that *road*," his was to be a "*via negativa*," "a *way* to disarmament" – eventually, "an *itinerary* in verticality" by which the "doer" could "*approach*" the essential: "Discoveries are *behind* us and we must *journey back* to reach them." For Kantor, by contrast, "creativity" was nothing to do with experimentation or research (laboratories or workshops), but firmly embedded in the avantgarde ethos of conquest and ever-advancing movement: his own artistic life, "a daring *expedition* into the unknown and the impossible," "a *journey* during which new lands were discovered" as he "kept leaving *behind* [him] the lands [he] had just conquered," he would identify the "situation of an artist" with "the position of someone who is pursuing some *goal* and feels suddenly that this movement *forward* or *quest* becomes the real meaning of his *journey* and life in general." Despire recurring fits of despair ("Further On, Nothing!"), the artist cannot stop but "must keep *moving forward*."[39]

Then again, once Grotowski had chosen to "leave the theatre *behind*," Kantor would abandon what he now saw as the "official freeway" of the avantgarde, for a "poor side street" leading to notions of death and memory – that which lay behind, "pushed aside by those troupes marching *forward*, towards the *future*." Both of them acutely aware of their artistic SOURCES, where Kantor would attribute "[t]he past and its discoveries" to the likes of Meyerhold, Craig, and the Bauhaus, Grotowski was to frame his very career as "a consistent prolongation" of the "search for truth" initiated by Stanislavski – tracing different "links" in the "chain" of performing arts. As for their personal itineraries, where Grotowski's "links" more or less coincided with a series of emigrations through the early 1980s (from Poland to the US to Italy), the "unending world tour" that comprised the last fifteen years of Kantor's activity was

firmly anchored in the "most proximate homeland" he now found in the notion of childhood – framed not in terms of "nostalgia," but of "intimate commentaries" by which he would oppose the "*official* History" of mass ideologies, wars, and crimes. In like terms for Grotowski, tracing SOURCES did not mean "being attached to the past" but "a commitment to the beginning" – and "always in relation to [one's] own path": while his own, in 1980, did find him briefly revisiting the Nienadówka of his youth (incidentally, the same year as Kantor staged his childhood village of Wielopole), the "*starting point*" or "*beginning* of this *road*" could only be found in the here and now, being neither "ahead" nor "behind" oneself, but simply "where one is." The past, emerging as the "most tangible reality," for Kantor, for Grotowski, "[t]o be in the beginning [was] to renounce absence" – "not to conduct the process," moreover, but to "be conducted" thereby: the theatre, "a *transition* from the world of 'beyond' to the world 'here'," for Kantor, for Grotowski, it was ever only a PATH or a "*vehicle*" toward something else ("A way of life is a way to life," as Peter Brook put it in 1968).[40]

Clearly, then, there is "a double pull back and forth" to the PATH metaphors of both practitioners, whether oriented toward past or future, origin/s or development. What is more, neither one says much about the specific GOAL he might have in mind: prefacing his concepts with conditional terms, throughout – "*Towards* a Poor Theatre," "*On the Road to* Active Culture," "*Wandering Towards* a Theatre of Sources" – Grotowski would only ever admit to "indicat[ing] the passage, the direction" (indeed, this late formulation basically recapitulates his 1960s' idea of the "road to holiness": "without ever attaining it, we can nevertheless move [--] in that direction"). As for Kantor – his "Impossible" work of 1973, "float[ing] from 'nowhere' to 'nowhere," the Zero Theatre of 1963, implying no "ready-made 'zero' situation" but a "process leading *towards emptiness and* '*zero zones*'" – the way he would describe his "journey towards Theatre" betrays much the same silence, concerning practical conclusions, as did the well-chosen modifier *towards*, in the title of Grotowski's best-known book: according to Eugenio Barba, "it had to be stressed that it was not a question of an aesthetic, a technique, a system, but of something that was open, in motion: a process." In both cases, however, there is a sense in which this systematic refusal to specify the ultimate GOAL for the PATH – the preference of "process" over "product" – stands in stark contrast to "the official legend of the Long March of the Polish nation on the road to the People's Republic": in short, where "orthodox Marxist-Leninist discourse" specifically "conceptualized history in terms of a path to a fixed goal," it might just be

that the PATH-oriented metaphors of Grotowski and Kantor alike could be taken as something of a counter-metaphorical *answer* or *confrontation*, to or with, the Soviet model of the Utopian Marching Mission.[41] What remains to be discussed, in a rough conceptual outline at least, is what it was the two of them were actually aiming at.

Towards (defining two varieties of) a Poor Theatre

> [The] narrow living space of their box-like flats forced Poles to acquire furniture of an entirely new, specific type. Old, pre-war items, inherited from one's parents, proved – in view of their dimensions – absolutely useless. [--] [Finding items of miniature dimensions] called for month-long hunts in different parts of Poland. [--] Thus Poles searched for cleverly designed "wall units" [--] which would cover an entire wall from top to bottom in a tangle of shelves and cabinets. People went to great lengths to obtain "furniture units" [--], too, which they would put together in various configurations. (Leszek Dzięgiel)

If Tadeusz Kantor is to be believed, Jerzy Grotowski was but a common "thief" and a "swindler": it was he and he alone who had "invented" the ideas of "poor theatre" and "poor art," during the war, long before "the Italians" came up with their *arte povera*, let alone Grotowski with his notions of *teatr ubogi*. Zbigniew Osiński makes something of a case from the fact that Kantor consistently uses the word *biedny* instead of the *ubogi* that Grotowski prefers – the two translate synonymously, but I will return to their etymologies presently – and that he rather speaks of the poor *object* or the poor *reality*, more often at least, than of a poor *theatre*. What I find more interesting, however, is how the two presuppose a very different conceptual profile for the central notion of "poverty" – be it *bieda* or *ubóstwo* – and how each of these is not only coherent in itself, but consistent with the very "pauperization" of their native country (what we might call a *nie ma* ecology: "There isn't any"). As George Hyde elaborates, in a discussion on Grotowski, "[i]t would be simplistic to interpret [the poor theatre] as an image of Polish conditions," yet as he adds, "a desperate sort of improvisation was necessary for survival in a country where one had to use influence to obtain even a pot of paint or a bag of nails" – "there's no one like a Pole for making a virtue out of a necessity, or a bit of theatre out of a commonplace incident." While Leszek Dzięgiel, in his ethnological rendering of the "paradise in a concrete cage" that was Poland under "real socialism," frames the general mentality by a legion of ironic catch-phrases such as *the culture of shortage*, *humility training*, *pre-programmed poverty*, and *minimalism by design*, Norman Davies strikes the more tragical note in claiming that

"[t]he essence of Poland's modern experience was [simply] humiliation": people "stood in line for hours for their daily bread" as the country, "blessed with great natural resources, sank into a state of abject poverty unparalleled in Europe."[42]

Now, *sinking* into *abject* poverty is entirely understandable, and conceptually coherent with how Kantor seems to frame the matter: Poor is Down, and it is Cast Out (*ab-jected*) from the more fortunate circle of the Rich (*into* suggests, however, that it remains a CONTAINER). This is a poverty of the *lowlife* and of *uselessness*: the "poor object" is "wrenched" from the functional CONTAINER of Reality and left alone on its peripheries – a poverty in which the artistically CENTRAL altogether inhabits the culturally PERIPHERAL, a *degraded* reality that absorbs the prose of Bruno Schulz in a context where many a building was vertically compromised by the war – a poverty of *need*, as regards the etymology of *biedny*. Not for Grot: his is a poverty in which all that *remains* is the CENTRAL, the INTERNAL, and the "essential"; a poverty that has both the theatre and the actor "stripped" of what is merely PERIPHERAL or EXTERNAL to this alleged essence; a notion of being "poor" (*ubogi*) that connotes the notion of being "spiritually rich" – *bogaty*, "rich," maybe even "with God," *u Boga*, in the sense of "higher connection" (indeed, Ludwik Flaszen recounts that he and Grotowski first came across the notion in a Catholic newspaper discussing "poor" and "rich" resorts in the practice of the Church). When Grotowski considers the "literal action" of *cleansing*, he is interested in what can thus be "uncovered," when Kantor does the same, he is interested in what we have "pushed to the corners"; as far as "axes of reduction" go (if, that is, reduction is a notion somehow integral to that of poverty), what Kantor repeatedly ends up with are the PERIPHERAL, the BELOW, and the OUTSIDE, as opposed to the CENTRAL, the ABOVE, and the WITHIN that Grotowski seems to cherish. Whether or not these orientations reflect the domestic ecologies outlined by Dzięgiel, in epigraph – the "microscopic" furnishings he suggests "tell the onlooker more about these times of captive minds than many a scholarly treatise on political science" – they *will* also entail distinct strategies of making do, with objects and affordances.[43]

To conclude, the full value of such "conceptual profiles" as I have outlined in this chapter will only come through if the kinds of image-schematic structures I have proposed as central to how Jerzy Grotowski and Tadeusz Kantor *conceived of* their theatrical practices, could also be *directly perceived* in their performances and – through their "intermediary embodiment" in, say, perfomer-object interaction – also appeared to structure the variety of metaphors their *critics* have come up with, irre-

spective of whether they know the Polish language or not (many of them, alas, content to merely quote what the director tells them, in a handout). To fulfill a certain historiographical duty, the two following chapters will provide not only "ecologically informed" performance analyses of two of their major productions (*Akropolis*, in the 1968 version, and *Let the Artists Die!*, premiered in 1985) but also some longer perspectives over their work, including how much of it is very locally grounded in the city of Kraków and the abiding influence of Stanisław Wyspiański – in the Epilogue, the case is wrapped up by suggesting that prototypical notions of Grotowski's, being a "theatre of the actor" and Kantor's, a "theatre of objects," rather arise from the metonymical and metaphorical *afterlives* of their work, than from contemporary reviews of their specific productions (at least of the two analyzed here). For all their denials of speaking in "metaphors," in any case – insisting that what they say is "tangible and practical" (Grotowski) or indeed, the "TRUTH" (Kantor)[44] – the fact remains that from a cognitive point of view, how a practitioner conceives of her practice can only be as metaphorical as how the results of that practice are conceived of by her critics. The connecting link between these pre- and post-production abstractions is how they become *embodied in*, or *motivated by*, the very ecology of their *performance*.

4 GROTOWSKI AND THE "OBJECTIVITY" OF PERFORMANCE

Having now outlined the image-schematic contours, at least, of the kinds of concepts on which Jerzy Grotowski would rely in his *rhetoric* both "theatrical" and afterwards, there are several reasons to concentrate on one specific production of his, so as to examine its *embodiment* in a very specific "score" of performer-object interactions. Premiered in Opole in October 1962 – staged by Grotowski in cooperation with Józef Szajna – "to the words" of Stanisław Wyspiański from 1904 – *Akropolis* stands out as a watershed production on many scores: a "sum total" of the company's explorations so far, it was during the preparations for this very performance that Ludwik Flaszen first evinced the concept of the "poor theatre"; that the group started its practice of daily training no longer connected with rehearsals for a specific performance ("work on oneself"); and that the theatre officially identified its work with the scientifically contained research of a "Laboratory" (the appellation was first printed on its program for this very production). The first of Grotowski's four acknowledged "masterpieces" – along with *The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus*, *The Constant Prince*, and *Apocalypsis cum figuris* – it may well remain his best known, not least because it has been the only one readily available on video; in five slightly different "variants," it was performed both domestically (in Opole, Wrocław, Katowice, Poznań, Łódź, and Kraków – to meager acclaim) and internationally (in Edinburgh, Paris, Aix-en-Provence, and New York – to considerable acclaim) for nearly eight years, "set[ting] the style and tone," as Robert Findlay has it, "for much of the avant-garde experimentation of the late 1960s and early 1970s, both in Europe and in North America."[1]

So much for general praise: "the most formally stylized" of Grotowski's theatrical productions and "a little more open" in outline than the others, as two of his proponents have characterized the performance, what makes *Akropolis* relevant to our present concerns is its ultimate reliance on the actors' interplay with material objects. Whether or not this exactly made it "more open" to audiences otherwise "closed outside" by its unrelenting Polish language, never again would the material sphere be so strategically salient, in a Theatre Laboratory performance – but there is a catch: as I will proceed to demonstrate, there is a strong "ecological" strain to Grotowski's later thought which, in a Gibsonian analysis like mine, can be traced back to this early theatrical endeavour, already (hence, the "objectivity" of performance). As for such theo-

retical stakes as concern the limits of direct perception with respect to more abstract levels of cognitive elaboration, moreover, there is a complex blended interplay, to the production, between its "content" and its "form," that is, what Flaszen poetically calls the "verbal flesh" of Wyspiański's drama and the "viscera" of Grotowski and Szajna's stage setting: as my putative readership probably well knows, the former feeds on some central myths of European heritage, played out in the Wawel Cathedral in Kraków (a significant national CENTER, as suggested in the previous chapter), while the latter has them brutally transferred into a concentration camp – the "whole world," "a civilization of gas chambers"; the perceptual outline of the performance, the actor/characters' building of the oven in which they will be consumed, at the end.[2]

Twenty-nine at the time of the opening, what Grotowski based his interpretation on were two isolated phrases from the original author ("our Acropolis," from one of his letters, and "the cemetery of the tribes," of one brief occurrence in the playtext); his intention, once again, lay in *confronting* age-old values of humanity and civilization with contemporary experience, subjecting them to that "most bitter and ultimate trial" – as Józef Szajna suggested, eleven years his senior and an ex-inmate himself, it was "*Auschwitz* [that] is Poland's history now, not Wawel." On the one hand, national classics were being re-examined throughout the country: *Akropolis* itself had just been staged in Łódź in 1959 and would again in Kraków in 1966 (Kazimierz Dejmek and Mieczysław Kotlarczyk, the respective directors); on the other, the Grotowski/Szajna version would not have been without its political overtones, given the German history of both Opole and Wrocław, barely fifteen years away in 1962, and again the wave of antisemitic purges that swept through Communist Poland, itself, in 1968. What mattered to the censors, however, was merely that the production was based on a literary original they considered acceptable: "deconstruct[ing] the official rhetoric of 'martyrology'," as George Hyde suggests he was – the Party, "endlessly invoking" the War "as a backdrop to its monopoly of power" – it stands as testimony to Grotowski's tactical eye that he was nonetheless given permission to proceed with his endeavor.[3]

Not that Stanisław Wyspiański should have been the easiest author for the Soviet-fed leadership to approve of: the eminent painter, poet and playwright of Polish Symbolism and neo-Romanticism, his work had treated a host of anti-Russian events from the nation's history, beginning with the November 1830 uprising. In Austrian-ruled Kraków, he had had the freedom to do this without serious restrictions, yet when it came to *Akropolis*, the play was ultimately banned for his lifetime (1869-1907) and

was only produced in 1926. In hindsight, however, it appeared "detached" enough – let Flaszen summarize the original, as he does in one of his program notes:

> The time of action [--] is the night before the Resurrection Day: the scene is the Royal Castle – the Polish Acropolis – in Cracow. Figures come down from gobelins that decorate the walls of the cathedral, and statues revive. They perform various scenes from the Bible and from the epic of Homer: the quarrel of primogeniture between Jacob and Esau, the wooing and wedding of Jacob and Rachel, the struggle of Jacob and the Angel, the love of Paris and Helen of Troy. The drama closes on the resurrection of Christ-Apollo, [--] the triumphal procession in progress to the Redemption of both Poland and Europe.[4]

Now, while the above description betrays something of an affinity with what was discussed as the "Western Center," in the previous chapter – arguably, a sadness over the country's provincialism, only to be enhanced, come Grotowski's time and the Iron Curtain – and while the notion of stage characters as animated *artifacts* is endemic to my very subject matter, suffice it here to concentrate on the final sentence, concerning the resurrected Christ/Apollo. In the Grotowski/Szajna version, this "effigy of the nation's aspirations" was transformed into a corpse from the concentration camps (a headless dummy, as a stage object) – in Poland, especially, such an "interpretation" of such a classic drama could not but arouse controversy. At one extreme, there were those who regarded Grotowski's deconstructions of such repertoire as "offenses against national treasures," the Opole *Akropolis*, as "a parody of Wyspiański's masterpiece" in which the original "ceased to function even as a pretext" – at the other, the likes of Zbigniew Osiński who would pay attention to its "symphonic construction" to insist the staging was very *close* to Wyspiański, instead, if only on a "higher," structural level. As the theatre's principal spokesman, Ludwik Flaszen himself recognized *Akropolis* as being "the least faithful," among the company's productions, to its literary original; "[a]gainst appearances," however, he would emphasize that "not a word" had been added to Wyspiański – Grotowski's agenda was instead to *eliminate* "those parts of the text which [had no personal] importance" for the group – that it had only been "reassembled according to the needs of the staging," and again "by means of the theatre, not of literature." As he would reminisce in the late 1970s, "there *was* a script of sorts, although this script made no sense as a drama, because the whole structure was destroyed in it": in essence, the text was cut from several hours to some fifty-five minutes, the major structural alteration, that of reversing the order of Wyspiański's acts II and III (i.e., having the story of Jacob precede that of Troy).[5]

Regarding the production's reception abroad, however, none of this would have mattered much, given that most of its audiences would neither have known the play nor understood the language: while the stage action does afford contrasting interpretations as well, it is noteworthy that even such an esteemed and insightful commentator as Peter Brook would only delve into the concentration camp theme (the ethics of whose representation I of course cannot myself afford to dismiss) and how the proceedings, for him, had "the dangerous nature of a black mass." As opposed to the production's complex, nested blending not only of actors with characters but of character/prisoners with the mythical ones they themselves portray, non-Polish audiences and critics have been exceptionally prone *either* to "focus on the extreme discipline of [the] actors," *or* to "read into [their actions] things they have been told to see" – which brings us to the important question of whose word to count on. As Robert Findlay has noted, discussions of the production in English "are invariably general in dealing with Wyspiański's original," whilst those in Polish – Flaszen's included – assume the reader knows it in detail and "provide no specific clarification" (Osiński speaks of the "more informed and sophisticated perspective" and "much more intimate awareness" of Polish critics). Prior to outlining the "plot" of the performance in more detail, I therefore find it instructive to specify just where I stand with regard to previous scholarship, by way of briefly introducing some of my primary sources. Much of what I will propose has not been voiced in English, earlier, and I dare even make some "corrections" to what has (the received view, as it were); while Grotowski's own commentaries will by no means be dismissed, there is an effort to counterbalance his authority with a multiplicity of adjacent voices – collaborators and critics alike.[6]

As "direct" as the available evidence will get, the first set of sources consists in a full documentation of *Akropolis*, on film (produced for American television in 1968 by Lewis Freedman); its transcription by Bruno Chojak – the lead archivist of what presently is known as the Grotowski Institute, in Wrocław; and the text of Wyspiański's play. Apart from Freedman's occasional voiceovers to the film, these are all in Polish, and do benefit from extensive cross-referencing; on the purely textual side (my command of the language being mediocre at most, Wyspiański is famed for a very "original" one[7]), the ample commentaries of editor Ewa Miodońska-Brookes have been of much help in embedding Grotowski's scenes within their dramatic context. At the other end of the continuum, "not altogether satisfactory" as the TV version may be – filmed in three days, not in Wrocław but in a studio space "too large and too neu-

tral," at Twickenham – it nonetheless remains the closest we get to the actual production, in its fifth and final "variant." Given its "preoccupation with irrelevant close-ups" (we only get PARTS, not the WHOLE); the fact that the dialogue is "only summarily translated"; and indeed its being done in black and white, the film presents itself as an interesting case of what Philip Auslander has neatly dubbed the "performativity of performance documentation" – not in his specific sense, but in how all such choices affect the range of interpretations the document affords: compared to the actual text, the overdubbed "snippet[s] of Freedman's awestruck voice" are helpful at times, misleading at others, and most importantly, keep referring to the actors as "prisoners," thus foregrounding the "camp" frame. (On the same criteria, while Chojak's transcription is very delicate in describing the actors' bodies and especially the varying tones of their voices, it often does so at the expense of important scenic developments.)[8]

The second group of sources could loosely be identified as representing various kinds of criticism: the most accessible of these would surely be Ludwik Flaszen's description of the production, in *Towards a Poor Theatre*, the most thorough, the "retrospective view" Robert Findlay published in a 1984 issue of *Modern Drama*. Not without its minor mistakes and shortcuts – note, for example, how most of the dialogue he cites seems to arise directly from Freedman's voiceovers to the American TV version – Findlay's essay remains the most detailed English account to date, of the production and of much of the play, as well (notably, it is also the main source for James Slowiak and Jairo Cuesta's recent discussion, in their book on Grotowski for the Routledge *Performance Practitioners* series). For all their insight, on the other hand, Flaszen's "viewing regulations" seem profoundly implicated in the aforementioned "temptation," on the audience's part, to see in the performances "what [they] have been told to see": originally published in the theatre's program booklets, they often remained the sole source of information, especially for foreign viewers. Accordingly, much of my background detail is indebted to the most extensive discussion of the Laboratory *Akropolis*, in Polish: there is reason to believe that Zbigniew Osiński's symbolic/semiotic reading is akin, enough, to Grotowski's "intentions," although it surely goes well beyond what could ever have been directly perceived in the performance. As for voices actually *critical* of the work, I will be happy to resurrect some of the "bitchy assaults" (and not only for the sheer fun of their "excessive acidity") of American critic John Simon, say, rarely if ever quoted in the literature.[9]

Now two points, especially, should not be dismissed too lightly, as regards such criticism – the first pertains to the ostensible *subject matter* of Grotowski and Szajna's production. Concerned as he was not to "compromise[it] theatrically," it stands to reason that some would accuse Grotowski of "deplorable formalism": Eric Bentley called his "version of Auschwitz" "over-aesthetic and [--] distressingly abstract," being "of technical interest to theatre students" in contrast with the very real horrors of the holocaust, still fairly fresh in memory. Given my own subject matter, the latter point, specifically, deserves some contemplation – and I do not wish to revert to the rather mystical counter-argument that the performance "actualized the essence of the concentration camp in the here and now," as Slowiak and Cuesta paraphrase Brook. Hence, the final "group" of my sources consists of a collaborator and an inspirer, imprinted with first-hand experience of the very reality of Auschwitz, itself – their bodies, with camp numbers 18729 and 119 198: Józef Szajna (1922-2008) was to make an extensive career in the theatre and the fine arts alike, while Tadeusz Borowski (of the same age) had already taken his life in 1951. An early supporter of Grotowski's work, Szajna's contribution has often been devalued to that of an "ordinary designer" – of objects and costumes, much as his assignments in Auschwitz had ranged from construction detail and tailor workshops to the sorting of confiscated goods – yet Flaszen and Grotowski alike have deliberately highlighted his role as a "co-author": indeed, the first posters and programs would attribute the production (*realizacja*) of *Akropolis* to Józef Szajna and Jerzy Grotowski, in that order. Then again, while both would credit the "principal idea" to themselves, in retrospect (Szajna, arguing that Grotowski "found himself in [his] world" and only created "the purely textual side"), the textual side was definitely staged within the world of Borowski, the writer – the "icy detachment" of his ominous Auschwitz stories, as I hope to show, influencing the production in much more than the two lines of his verse usually quoted as its motto: "We'll leave behind us iron scrap / and the hollow, mocking laugh of generations."[10]

The second point – less gloomy for sure, yet of primary importance both theatrically and theoretically – brings us back again to the limits of perception: where critic Irving Wardle suggests that "the most helpful thing a reviewer can do" may be "to ignore all the commentaries and report literally on what happened between the actors" (resonant as this is with Grotowski's very "definition of theatre"), Timothy Wiles has explored the pros and cons of approaching Grotowski "from the bottom up" – concentrating on the "spectacular and visceral elements" of a given performance – or, con-

versely, of describing the work "from the top down," with a more literary emphasis on "intellectual elements such as action, theme, and character." In his own discussion of *Apocalypsis*, Wiles himself takes off with the first option, only to conclude that the spectacle "does not stand alone, or explain itself": to bring out "the coherence and wholeness of a work which is more than vocalized pantomime," he then proceeds to "describe the play's action a second time," thematically. My own approach is something of a combination of these two: even in the section soon to follow, with the very "plot points" of performer-object interaction in focus, the analysis of what we perceive remains *informed* by what is going on at the textual level. In short, the very "basic element in the [production's] sound-score" as it was, the sheer *amount* of Wyspiański's text the actors bash out demands that its conceptual input be taken seriously – and I am not the first to consider Grotowski's theatre "literature-oriented" rather than "non-verbal," as a popular misconception has it. By contrast, Bentley already calls him "too literary by half," having "read all European literature, and [not] forgotten nearly enough of it"; in *Akropolis*, Elizabeth Hardwick proposes "the very sound of the names of Jacob and Rachel and Helen gives coherence to the structure."[11]

While it remains questionable whether the kind of auditory invariants Hardwick refers to would have been picked up by most international spectators (due to considerable pronunciation differences), it *is* illuminating to briefly discuss here the kinds of literary clues provided for Polish-speakers: not for nothing does Eugenio Barba testify to having "reread [the text] word by word," with Grotowski and Flaszen, carefully "selecting and assembling the fragments to be used in the performance." As it stands, it is not altogether true that "not a word was added" to Wyspiański's play; beginning with minor details of its delivery, we find a host of small conventions (not there in the original) simply applied to keep the audience on track with the dialogue and the characters – these include: characters addressing each other by name (when in Wyspiański they do not); prefacing lines of dialogue with speaker information (one's own or one's partner's, sometimes elaborately, as in "Leah, sister of Rachel: …"); and replacing personal pronouns with proper names ("Helen with Paris," instead of the initial "her with her lover"). On a more inclusive level – wonder as one might how one is ever to get the basic idea, even – the whole commences with an effective "autocommentary," extracted from a letter of Wyspiański's in which he outlines the basic plot points of his play as it takes place in the Wawel Cathedral; later, the biblical act is introduced with a similar summary, now direct from the playtext (something of a hint at the holo-

caust context might be found in how "Jacob, the Israeli" turns into "Jacob, the Jew" in later variants of the production). As for the two phrases, "our Acropolis" and "the cemetery of the tribes," they can indeed be thought of as "focal points" or "slogans," as most discussions do, yet apart from their being "obsessively repeated" in the Prologue (again, *added* to Wyspiański's) they are *not* so "throughout the entire production" – as Dariusz Kosiński has also noted, its actual "refrain," in the sense of being repeated most often, would rather be the prayer from Wyspiański's first act, "When God arrives in the attire of a king" (mouthed therein by the figure of Clio).[12]

Before setting out to discuss the actual *ecology* of the production in more detail – in rough outline, the subsequent sections follow a general trajectory from objects, through actors and spectators, to possible "interpretations" – I will now proceed to describe its narrative outline as clearly as I can. Refraining, as yet, from specifying any of the material *objects* applied in its performance, the summary below is first and foremost to provide a solid point of reference for further discussion of specific scenes; schematic as it remains – reconstructed mainly on the basis of Findlay's description, Freedman's film, Chojak's transcription thereof, and Wyspiański's original drama – it makes use of a host of enigmatic conventions I may need to briefly explain. Hence: Roman numerals indicate acts, Arabic numbers indicate scenes; furnished with a plus sign, entries such as [II:4+] will later refer to the recurrent "interludes" thus marked; the naming of the acts is mine, their timing refers to the film version; the division of scenes is largely congruent with Wyspiański's and, to give an idea of the amount of editing, where he initially had them located will appear in superscripts – lastly, the italicized sections are only to indicate the most notable passages where the performance clearly deviates from the text (often this is a matter either of "what it looks like," or of how it has come to be discussed, beginning again with Freedman's voiceovers). To have this description "materially anchored" to the actors appearing in the film – more generally, in the final, "actors' version," co-directed by Ryszard Cieślak in 1967 – the box below will list them in order of appearance, likewise the "roles" they are to portray, act by act, together with some basic information about the latters' relations (not that obvious). "Blend" these who may – and a considerable cognitive feat it is – there is clearly much more to the casting than the two roles per actor with which they are credited in both the film version of *Akropolis*, and its program handouts.[13]

Table 1. The actors and their respective roles in the four acts of *Akropolis* (variant V)

	I	II	III	IV
Zygmunt Molik	**Prologue**	**Jacob** son of Isaac	**Priam** (Guard) King of Troy	**King David** the Harpist
Ryszard Cieślak	**Angel 1**	**Esau** his brother	**Hector** his son	
Antoni Jahołkowski	**Angel 2**	**Isaac** their father	(Guard)	
Rena Mirecka	**Woman** (Maiden)	**Rebecca** their mother	**Cassandra** (Page) Priam's daughter	
Zbigniew Cynkutis	**Angel 3**	**Laban** (Angel) her brother	**Paris** Priam's son	
Andrzej Paluchiewicz	**Lady**	**Rachel** his daughter	**Hecuba** Priam's wife	(Aurora)
Stanisław Scierski	**Clio**	**Leah** her sister	**Helen** /Sparta w/Paris	

I **WAWEL** (00:00)

(0) Prologue *summarizes the action of the play*: *monuments coming to life*, *stories of Jacob and Troy*, *Resurrection of Christ. Others mime individual moments as he speaks* (*coffin of St. Stanisław*; *Helen and Paris*; *the Resurrection*)
+ *violin*
Chorus chants Prologue / *repeats*: "*cemetery of the tribes*," "*our Akropolis*" / *ends*: "They are gone and the smoke rises in spirals"

1 [I:1]Angels 1 and 2 talk about coming to life and about suffering, their own and that of Christ, on the altar / *Cieślak and Jahołkowski find another corpse*
+ *work interlude*

2 [I:2]Woman and Angel 3 feel life rising in their bodies and experience erotic urges; paeans to hair and to love ("The veil will shelter us") / *Mirecka and Cynkutis*, *sorting the hair of the corpses* (one mention of "hair" in Wyspiański)
+ *work interlude*

3 [I:4]Angels 1 and 2 try to convince a statue of a Lady that she is alive and should be happy / *Cieślak and Jahołkowski brutally interrogate Paluchiewicz*
+ *work interlude*

4 [I:9]Clio, Muse of History, brings to life the statue of a young Maiden / *Scierski praying at an altar*, *Mirecka rapes him and dumps him*
+ *work interlude*

II **JACOB** (12:30)

1 III:1Isaac calls Esau; Jacob summarizes the basic plot points of his story (Act III in Wyspiański, cf. Genesis XXV-XXXIII – *here*, *devoid of final reconciliation*); Isaac tells Esau to go hunting before receiving his old father's final blessing

2 III:2Rebecca urges Jacob to deceive Isaac and receive the blessing instead

3 III:4Esau, on the field, sings a song for the hunt

4 III:6Isaac is deceived: gives his blessing to Jacob, Rebecca watches over
+ *work interlude*

5 III:7Esau claims his blessing, vows to kill Jacob as Isaac cannot help him / *Cieślak apparently kills Jahołkowski*
+ *violin*

6 III:8Rebecca tells Jacob to flee to her brother Laban
+ *work interlude*

7 III:9Burdened with guilt, Jacob dreams of angels ascending and descending a ladder to God (monologue, cf. Genesis XXVIII)

8 III:10The Angels address his torment / *lines divided for the remaining six*: *Cieślak* (*Esau*) *asks for* "mercy on his soul," *Scierski iterates his prayer as Clio* (in I:4)
+ *work interlude*
Jacob founds Bethel (monologue), meets one of Laban's herdsmen (*Cynkutis*)

9 III:12Laban asks Jacob to serve him, he agrees, for the hand of Rachel / *Molik and Cynkutis* (*from herdsman to Laban*) *fight over Rachel*, *Jacob kills his uncle*

10 III:11Jacob sings of his love for Rachel; the latter suggests going to her father, having dreamt of meeting a stranger who then would "become [her] husband"

11 III:12Marriage of Rachel and Jacob
+ *work interlude*

12 III:13Leah is substituted for Rachel, Jacob accuses her of cheating him and of coming to him on Laban's order / *Scierski* (*re*: *Clio's prayer*) *is beaten by Molik*
+ *work interlude*

13 III:22Jacob tells of growing old and returning to his homeland

14 III:24He wrestles with an Angel who identifies himself as "Necessity" / *Molik and Cynkutis* (cf. II:9); only reference in playtext to the "cemetery of the tribes"
+ *work interlude*, *crematorium completed*

(15) *Prisoners moan for the Sun* (the motif is from Wyspiański's act IV)

III **TROY** (34:57)

1 [II:1]Guard announces catching a spying crow, dedicates signs of spring to Helen and Paris / *Jahołkowski combining three characters*, *others mumble in such key phrases as* "*Fatherland*, *Troy*" (*Cieślak*); "*Paris and his Helen*" (*Cynkutis*)

2 [II:2]Guard acclaims Hector's courage, requests password as he enters; Hector asks when he is to die, then for Cassandra and the lovers; Page announces Priam

3 [II:3]Priam tells Hector that he will stay alive as long Achilles will not fight; Hector, the warrior, protests, goes to see his wife and children

4 [II:4]Page takes note of Paris and Helen; they speak of love and of getting to bed; Page sings a song of innocence / *Cynkutis and Scierski are scornfully laughed at by the others*, *the latter's lines again interspersed with his prayer as Clio*

5 [II:4]Hecuba dozing off, Paris and Helen advocate their youth and beauty; Priam chides them for vanity and for bringing misfortune to Troy; they retire for bed / *others keep laughing lasciviously*

6 [II:5]Page sings a song of virginity; Priam and Hecuba say final farewell to Hector + *violin*

Cassandra envisions the destruction of Troy, calls for her sisters the ravens to cover her / *final roll call of the prisoners*, *guttural sounds to allude the ravens*

IV **FINALE** (48:40)

1 [IV:1]King David the Harpist addresses God, recites the glorious past of his tribe: fighting Goliath, enduring Saul's hatred / *begins with Jacob's address* (II:13)

2 [IV:3]Aurora, goddess of Dawn, appeals to the Harpist on behalf of the people of Jordan / *Prior to this*, *the prisoners have quietly bidden farewell to one another*

3 [IV:4-6]Chorus appeals to the Harpist, he, to the Savior who is to redeem the Nation; Savior appears, *they sing* to the words of Apollo that conclude the play / The Savior *is a headless corpse*, *his words*, *recited by the* Chorus *as they chant their way into the crematorium – whence again the line from the* Prologue, "They are gone and the smoke rises in spirals"

Poor Theatre: Some Plot Points of Performer–Object Interaction

Stovepipes, wires, dummies, bathtubs, wheelbarrows: these were the sorts of things that would populate Józef Szajna's scenographies, throughout – from *The Empty Field* (1965) to "the rubbish dump of our civilization" in his best-known work, *Replika* (seven versions, 1971 to 1986) – and indeed they were crucial to what Flaszen calls their "poetic paraphrase of an extermination camp," in *Akropolis*. On one level, both Grotowski and Flaszen would emphasize their mundane, "completely 'untheatrical'" quality – questioning Szajna's "abstract" reputation, Grotowski points out they were "concrete objects," "very intentionally found [--] in flea markets and junk shops" – as well as their intentional affordances in the camp setting: in Flaszen's notes, the bathtub is "very pedestrian" while metonymically evoking "all the bathtubs in which human bodies were processed for the making of soap and leather"; likewise, the wheelbarrows are "tools for daily work" and "hearses for the transportation of the corpses." (In Szajna's own work thereafter, the latter would become a constant attribute not only of camp labor but of slavish attachment to being "conducted" by its very tools.) On another level, where Grotowski's key 1965 essay on poor theatre would relate such "[e]limination of plastic elements" with "a life of their own" to "the creation [--] of the most elementary and obvious objects" by the actors' activities, alone, it is acute, in the present context, that this *was* what the concept meant when Flaszen first introduced it, in his notes to *Akropolis*: the larger "metaphor" of the crematorium, "originat[ing] in the function of the stovepipes," each object was to "contribute not to the meaning but to the dynamics of the play," its "value," residing in its "multiple uses." Crucially, the English editions of Flaszen's commentary would shift the heading, "poor theatre," from a section on objects (now, "Props as dynamic orchestration") to that on acting, or omit his section headings, altogether – originally, what now begins, "The number of props is extremely limited," would translate more or less as follows:

> The poor theatre: to extract, using the smallest number of permanent elements – by way of magic transformations of things into others, by the multifunctional acting of objects – the maximum of effects. To create whole worlds, making use of whatever is within the reach of the hands.[14]

Then again, as actress Ewa Lubowiecka testifies, it was difficult for the actors to understand what they had at hand: to fathom what a Jew or a Pole would do in the camp, dealing as they were with times not as yet so distant ("less than twenty years"). As for

the general concept, what actor Maciej Prus remembers as having been the initial idea – populating the camp with "symbols of the twentieth century" – would give way to the prisoners' "indulg[ing] in daydreams" during the pauses in their work, engaging their objects like children, in grotesque juxtaposition with the brutality of their milieu. If, on Flaszen's principles, the "people and objects [--] gathered in the theatre" were to suffice for "any of the play's situations," the symbols mentioned by Prus ("Chaplin's Tramp, certainly, perhaps [Fellini's] Gelsomina") would accordingly be replaced by the seven actors, in their "anonymous" camp uniforms, together with the audience, seated on four sides of a large wooden chest, in the middle. On one level, thus – the "main commandment" for the proper CONTAINMENT of a poor theatre, being "not [to] introduce in the course of the action anything which is not there from the outset" – the action was framed by the central chest and the two wider platforms, depicted in Figure 2: as the "magnificent" Szajna just "didn't understand matters of theatrical space," the arrangement was provided by the theatre's architect Jerzy Gurawski, then in the army. (In the literature, these three areas have been compared to medieval "mansions," as in fact have the fairly detached "acts" of Wyspiański's play; in the performance, m2 and m3 might occasionally accentuate the divisions of its Jewish and Trojan households.) As for the *detached* objects, finally, with which the "wretches" were to "act, within their limitations, their own versions of the legends," the outset of the performance saw m1 piled high with rusted stovepipe, straight and bent, topped with a metal bathtub – postponing many key dramaturgies for later, the below will attempt to profile the earlier summary with the "plot points" of certain key objects, available from the start.[15]

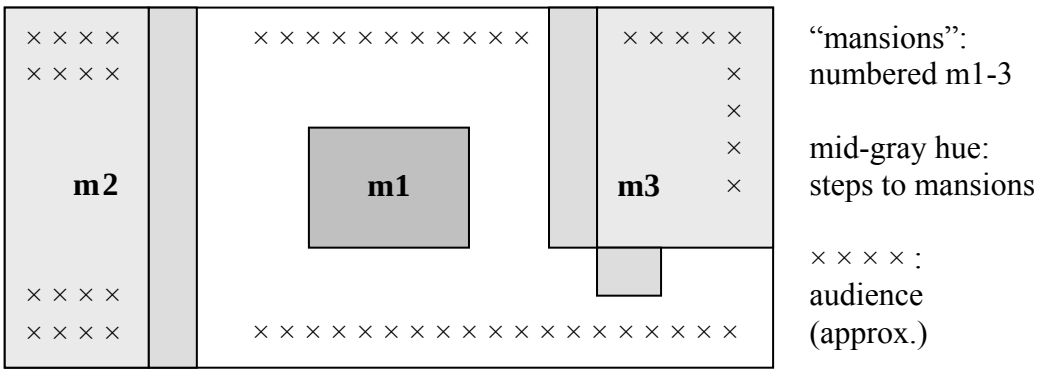

Figure 2. *Akropolis* from above: Jerzy Gurawski's "scenic architecture."

The action begins succinctly: actor Zygmunt Molik marches in, climbs on top of m1, and spews out the Prologue, standing upright in the bathtub. As he presents his violin [0+] and steps out of the tub, it is taken over by Mirecka and Scierski: hiding their heads within, they become an odd four-legged creature, swaying on the spot until [I:1+]. Here and later, conscious use is made of the *acoustic* affordances of the bathtub: sounded therein, it is the voices of these two actors that give special resonance to the opening Chorus [0], interspersed with "the cemetery of the tribes," and Cynkutis going, "Our Acropolis": "They come here on the day of sacrifice," "Only once a year," "They read the words of judgment," "They're gone and the smoke lingers on." By [I:4], the tub stands upright by m3, accompanied again by Scierski and Mirecka: back to back, the one recites prayers to its interior, urged by the other, to "throw away the book and [to] hold [her]" – within moments, Mirecka tips the tub over, diagonally to m3, and jumps on top: back to back, the one's head at the other's feet and Scierski, held prone beneath, the two tremble in convulsions suggesting either rape or romance. (An altar or a confessional, the bathtub here *could* also be related to the majestic coffin of the Polish eagle, behind the two Wawel figures Wyspiański decided to name Clio and Maiden, for this scene; likewise, there is something of the "coffin-maggot" mentioned in his opening poem for *Akropolis*, to the tub-creature evoked earlier.)[16]

As for the two wheelbarrows, they are introduced as soon as the other six actors stomp in, after Molik's first sentence of Prologue: carried in in two groups, they are first laid down on two sides of the tub on m1, then, equally, taken to work at [0+]. Beyond that, however, their full dramaturgical role only begins to emerge in Act II, when one of them is placed on m3: at first [II:2], it serves as a base for Rebecca and Jacob, the one (Mirecka) urging the other (Molik) to deceive his blind old father Isaac (Jahołkowski, only feet away at the other end of m3). As Esau/Cieślak finds out about this [II:5], he has Isaac/Jahołkowski supine on the wheelbarrow of which he is now in control; swearing to "kill Jacob [his] brother," he violently tips Jahołkowski over – to the bathtub, now on the wider step leading to m3, where it will remain throughout.[17]

Yet another line of action can be traced from [I:2] when Mirecka, having held a length of stovepipe upright for Cynkutis to nail down, starts chanting – "hair" – and the two take to caress a long piece of crumpled plastic (an important Szajna material, later) atop the rubble on m1 – now, spasmodically reciting, "to love, to love": sorting the hair of the dead, on one level, experiencing the joys of revival, on another. (While Wyspiański only mentions "hair," once, the configuration of the monument he is

evoking – a vertical column, a bent, long-haired Woman, and an Angel down below – is again not unlike that of the stovepipe, Mirecka, and Cynkutis just moments before.) The next that Cynkutis would engage the piece of plastic only comes in [II:9], now, as a tug-of-war on m2 over Rachel, between himself as Laban and Molik as Jacob: in flight from Esau (m3), the latter tramples his future father-in-law to death, any sense of patriarchal law, overridden by "the absolute demands of the right to survive." Singing of his love for Rachel [II:10] – her replies, mechanically recited by Paluchiewicz – Jacob/Molik then carries his hard-won property over to the rubble atop m1, whence, the train of plastic as its "veil," a bent piece of stovepipe now emerges as his "bride": where Elizabeth Hardwick finds it "almost impossible to recall either the scene or the little bit of plastic," the nuptial proceedings actually prove quite extensive [II:11]. Holding Rachel/pipe upright and the veil/plastic, to her neck/hinge, Jacob/Molik first leads his wedding procession over to m2 – the remaining five actors, chanting along and carrying the veil; Rachel/pipe, at this point, towering above the lot – then quickly, to m3, with the wheelbarrow and the bathtub as we left them in [II:5]: putting the stovepipe aside, he lays down atop his dead father in the tub (Isaac/Jahołkowski) and conducts a merry little "work interlude," on his violin. As this "wedding bed" of his comes to accommodate yet another figure, in [II:12] – Leah/Scierski – Jacob/Molik beats her/him with his bow, then jumps up to conduct the work more fiercely ahead.[18]

During the "long operatic oration" of Jacob's that follows in [II:13], another confrontation is already being prepared for Molik and Cynkutis: the latter, holding the wheelbarrow upright on the brink of m3, the former, twisting his trunk into its iron support and extending his arms to grab its handles – Cynkutis, settling within (head down and legs up), Molik, kneeling beneath and taking his weight upon his back. Mirroring their earlier tug-of-war over Rachel [II:9], the struggle that now ensues [II:14] is that between Jacob and the Angel – only the wheelbarrow, with its "angelic wings," affords no resolution: Angel/Cynkutis, banging his heavy clogs against its brim (just above his rival's head), Jacob/Molik, trying "to shake off his burden," the two remain "attached to the same instrument of torture" but crucially, are also *separated* thereby. In critic James Schevill's poetic elaboration (clearly inspired by Flaszen's), "[n]either can escape from the tool of their labor": "more sinister than a machine gun," the wheelbarrow is "alive, traveling, working, carrying, and when it stops, men die. They struggle with it, hit it, wrestle with it; it continues on its way inexorably." For Flaszen, however, the strife ends in "resigned agreement" as the Angel admits the name of

"Necessity": with a dull, thumping sound, his head now hits the floor five times as Molik, slowly and rhythmically, tilts the barrow backward and up – soon thereafter, all the actors are astir, moaning for the "sun" (Jahołkowski, only now off the bathtub), their "crematorium," ready and furnished for the more static Trojan act to take place.[19]

As opposed to the tight constriction of much of the above to the m3 end of the space, Act III revolves around two fairly detached pairs of figures: the royal couple Priam and Hecuba, on m2, Paris and Helen, eventually on m3 at the other end. In both cases, their postures stand out as more or less awkward: the latter two, sitting side by side at right angles – legs straight and torsoes erect – the final arrangement of the wheelbarrows is hardly evocative of royal "thrones": propped upright against the back wall, that of Hecuba/Paluchiewicz does afford something of a seat for her/him to keep dozing off on, yet Priam/Molik can only recline on the iron wheel of his, rested upside down on the floor as they both had been when introduced atop m1 at the start. In one sense, the isolation of Paris and Helen seems to have do with the "misfortune" their love has brought upon Troy – presaged when the same actors (Cynkutis and Scierski) strike a kissing pose upon one of the wheelbarrows when mentioned in the Prologue – in another, they are constantly sneered at because both of them are men. While readily related to the "monosexual community" of the concentration camp (in the wedding scene, Flaszen speaks of tenderness directed at "compensatory objects"), such nuance often comes down to mundane matters of personnel: where John Simon could deplore that Mirecka was as "homely" as the men, the first "variant" of *Akropolis* (though only performed thrice) did have Rachel, Leah, and Helen, alike, portrayed by women – only when Ewa Lubowieczka and then Maja Komorowska left the company did the female characters begin to afford being played by men and stovepipes.[20]

In any case, it does pay to conclude with a note on the actors' bodies as objects: with little resemblance to a "throne," the wheelbarrow on which Priam/Molik reclines on his back does afford the tilting back of his head and the bending up of his knees, both of which have appeared as recurrent themes, throughout. Kneewise, a similar bent has previously been taken by Jahołkowski and Cynkutis, in the wheelbarrow (as the Esau-molested Isaac and the Jacob-assaulted Angel, in II:5 and II:14) and again, by Cynkutis as the hair-caressing Angel [I:2] or, as the Jacob-trampled Laban [II:9]. Insofar as the head-tilt affords extending the throat and projecting the voice upward (cf. Scierski in I:4 and Mirecka e.g. in I:2 and III:6), the most notorious sounds thus

produced have been by Ryszard Cieślak, either as Hector atop the bathtub in [III:1], or earlier, as Esau: on the field [II:3], vowing to "kill Jacob" [5], haunting his dream [8]. The most graphic instance of *treating* a body as an object would surely be the scene in which two Angels try to convince a statue of a Lady that she is alive [I:3]: dragging a limp Paluchiewicz between them, then acrobatically vaulting him atop m3, Cieślak and Jahołkowski bounce his now stiff body back and forth, from one to the other, in a brutal interrogation over whether s/he has ever been "happy" – only to suspend him by his elbows and on tiptoe on one of the wires strung across the space. Apart from "tiptoes," finally – echoed when Esau/Cieślak [II:3] suspends himself on the ropes by his wrists, as if "gunned down while trying to climb the barbed wire" – many scenes would thematize the actors' arms and legs, as Findlay puts it, "cocked in such angular fashions that their bodies resembled pieces of stovepipe": legs mechanically marching (e.g. III:1 and 6) or gracefully stepping on the spot (e.g. the I:1 "tub-creature") – rather muscular arms and legs though they were, for concentration camp inmates.[21]

All in all, as Flaszen puts it, the actors and the scenography were not conceived of as "separate" but rather, would "penetrate" and "mutually transform" one another – much of the work's "disturbing quality," as Addison Bross suggests, emanating "from the inmates' pathetic acceptance of the crudest objects as focal points for meaningful human emotions," "the spectacle of human bodies in some unusual distortive relation with objects, [--] expressing such normal human experiences as love, lust, and hope." As for Grotowski's own commentaries, what the certain "artificiality" of this speaks to is a still considerable influence of Meyerholdian constructivism ("The construction was made of heating pipes") and especially of *biomechanics*, crystallized in the principle, "[o]ur whole body must adapt to every movement, however small" – witness his demand for expressing "contrasting impulses" with different parts of the body, "forming a miniature score for each" and also, of "be[ing] able to shift the spectator's attention" from one to the other, which Barba equates with "the skill of magicians." (In the performance, this could again be exemplified by the scene with Esau/Cieślak caught by the wires [II:3], his hands and fingers, fluttering as if dazzled by an electric current yet simultaneously evocative of the repeated textual motif of birds – in flight over the Biblical hunting field, or perhaps trapped within the Polish cathedral.) As for the concentration camp, the thesis would be that one "does not behave 'naturally'," in such circumstances: rather than inducing "the same gestures as when what [one] feels is only petty and unimportant" (as Borowski suggests, in his Auschwitz stories), for

Grotowski, "mortal danger" was to express itself in "rhythmically articulated signs." In *Akropolis*, accordingly, "everything [was] to be organized in a structured way," "composed, down to the smallest detail": "the movements, the songs, the stepping of the boots, the noises of the objects."[22] At the same time, however, something else was already underway in the actors' work; the next section will briefly zoom out to the larger trajectory of Grotowski's ideas on the affordances of "doing," in and of itself.

Work that Makes One Free: Theatrical Ecologies for the Enaction of Emptiness

> The company are dedicated to a saintly ideal of theatrical poverty – which means eliminating everything except the actor and the audience – but when a pair of property wheelbarrows went astray on the way from Leith [to Edinburgh] they cancelled the show. (Irving Wardle, *The Times*, August 24th 1968)
>
> Wanderer the road is your footsteps, nothing else; you lay down a path in walking. (Antonio Machado, cited by Francisco Varela, cited by Evan Thompson)

As first introduced by Ludwik Flaszen in 1962, then, the notion of "poor theatre" was originally about what Eugenio Barba dubs "the strictest autarchy" in props and staging – "a perfect definition" for the work on *Akropolis* which Jerzy Grotowski, three years on, would then turn into a "slogan" or a "battle cry" for a theatre centered on actor training and the actor-spectator relationship. Not that actors were earlier unimportant: fed by their then interest in a "theatre magic" enacted by the "actor-shaman," Flaszen's notes to *Akropolis* single out a "living man, the actor, [as] the creative force behind it all," and indeed, the company's practice of daily training, independent of rehearsals, already emerged during the preparations for this very production. What I would like to question, however, is the reduction of Grotowski's reduction – the poor theatre – to some such image of "wholeness" within "emptiness" that seeks to ground it in self-sufficient bodies, somehow just banging on within an "empty" space. On the one hand, in paraphrase of Phillip Zarrilli's more general discussion, to highlight the body as an essential "reality" is to assign the "self" as a "stable location": contrary to Grotowski's rhetoric of "wholeness," "[a] reified subjectivist notion of 'presence' is as complicit in a dualist metaphysics as is the Cartesian 'mind.'" On the other, for the action to be "organic," it was crucial for the group that it be "adapted to the space," not as an empty container but as "a living part of the performance": as Christopher Baugh testifies, the "poverty of [spatial] bareness" was subject to "deep aesthetic at-

tention," in regard to "size, shape, contour and, especially, surface and texture." Thus, when Grotowski required a white ceiling and a wooden floor, Barba would obediently adapt his black space at Odin Teatret accordingly; in 1969, Grotowski would shift his New York appearance to Greenwich Village, as the intended church in Brooklyn did not have removable pews. If, by now, he no longer spoke of "magic" but of the "total act," these brief considerations begin to hint at a different grounding for how it was to be achieved – something, though, that he would only name another ten years later.[23]

In 1979, in relation to the twentieth anniversary of the Theatre Laboratory, Grotowski described his then current work on the "Theatre of Sources" in terms of "two ecologies" (the "interhuman" and the "extrahuman") and two respective "blockages": "one within us – cut off energies, the other in front of us – blocked direct perception." Tracing the word *ecology* to its Greek root *oikos*, "home" or "house," he would situate "our first native home" not only in the surrounding world but in the organismic body, such that the two "walls" could effectively be seen as one: humanity, exiled from its "nature-given nest" by a "colonizing attitude" to world and body alike, an "ecological" condition could simply be described as one of being "not cut off," whether from inner energies or direct perception. In one sense, such an orientation can be seen as "challenging anthropocentric constructions of reality" for a growing awareness of "interaction and interconnection," engaging human and nonhuman elements alike – and perhaps, as Zbigniew Osiński suggests, it might just have been its very "anthropocentrism" that led Grotowski to abandon the theatre, in the first place. On the other hand, ideologies of the so-called "natural" environment seem as misleading, here, as those of "empty space": in the Theatre of Sources, apart from refraining from the use of such primal elements (fire, water) as had only elicited clichéd behavior, in his earlier Paratheatre projects, Grotowski would specifically "underline that [the ecological] aspect is the same whether we are in a natural environment or in an indoor space." While surely rooted in earlier ecology movements from the Romantics to the 1960s, then, Grotowski's "practical counterpart of ecological thinking" clearly bears analysis by the sort of ecological psychology outlined by J.J. Gibson: add his emphasis on "unblocking" *direct perception* by means of "dramatic techniques – dramatic in the sense of *drama* – action," and we are effectively dealing with the ongoing reciprocity of action and perception which, for Gibson, would define animal behavior beyond any dichotomies of nature and culture – or, for that matter, of theatre and non-theatre.[24]

Now in the most clear-cut sense, where Grotowski's rhetoric seems to concur with Gibson's would be in the way he sets "direct, primary perception" ("incredibly tangible," "organic," and "extremely simple") in opposition with "understanding" as "a function of the brain," or, as he puts it in the 1970s, the "programming" of "our intellectual computer" – important though it is that it function, lest people "may tumble or slip on a banana skin, on their way to what is essential." On one level, the danger with such "taming" or "domestication" of thought is to do with a *generalization* of perception, effected by imposed categories such that we only end up "juggling known things," perceiving "thoughts, and not facts," imposing a readymade "formula" on each tree, for example, that we encounter – the Gibsonian alternative being that what we directly perceive in a forest are not so much trees as their affordances. On another level, Grotowski's emphasis on direct perception could be related to a notion of "presence," not as a stable location but as a phenomenon of the here and now, unaffected by future goals or past experience: to "meet" the forest "as if for the first time," one should be neither "behind" nor "ahead" of oneself, but simply "where one is." In a different temporal scheme, finally, the kinds of rudimentary "source techniques" by which he sought to effect such "deconditioning of perception" were, however, to "precede" all "habitual" body techniques of "cultural differentiation"; if "an attempt at cognition" was involved, it was to be of "the most modest" sort, "almost transparent." Accordingly, just as the "ancient" body and brain he sought to find "within" may bear some resemblance to the "episodic," here-and-now kind of mindset Merlin Donald has traced in his speculations on human cognitive evolution, Grotowski's late slogan, "[k]nowledge is a matter of doing," seems very much in line with the contemporary understanding of cognition as embodied action – of the mind, beyond the computer metaphor, as only emerging from sensorimotor patterns of action and perception.[25]

Then again, to enable an unoccluded cycle of perception and action to emerge, the "doer" would have to simultaneously embody what Grotowski in the 1960s saw to be the "two complementary aspects" not only of the creative process but of "human nature": on the one hand, it was only technical *precision* that would afford psychophysical spontaneity, on the other, it was only the *conjunction* of these opposites that might afford the "wholeness" of the "total act" to come about – as he would phrase it in the 1990s, "[o]ne cannot work on oneself [--] if one is not inside something which is structured and can be repeated, which has a beginning a middle and an end." In one sense, then, these aspects of spontaneity and discipline often encourage metaphors of

an "inner" process, afforded, supported, and also protected by some "outer" structure: where Ryszard Cieślak would describe the actor's "score" as a "glass inside which a candle is burning," Thomas Richards and Mario Biagini now speak of "inner action," enabled by "solid landmarks" like "throwing out anchors" in a vast, unstable ocean. As for Grotowski himself, apart from sometimes relating the duality of process and form to that of Stanislavsky and Meyerhold, he might variously discuss its aspects as the subjective and the objective, the "organic" and the "artificial," the "animal" and its "harness," the domains of "instinct" and "consciousness," the "river" and the "river-banks" that create the "between" for the "stream of life" to "flow" – at the end of his career, as "art as vehicle" and the "permanent education" necessary to engage it. In another sense, however, he would insist that we only become "whole" when these two aspects "exist together – not as a union of two things, but as one unique thing"; blurring the duality of container and content, the way Richards puts it is that to "embody the craft" you need to "live inside it, and let it live inside you." (Not that the concentration on discipline was not considerable, in Grotowski's seminars: as Barba attests, some would head out shouting that "the time of concentration camps was over.")[26]

In any case, as far as the actual actions and artifacts are concerned that were to afford a psychophysical process or another, it was clear from the beginning that they were to be somehow "objective" and also verifiable: discussing "ritual," in the 1990s, Grotowski would specifically refer to what he termed its "objectivity," as a direct, precise impact of its elements "*on the body, the heart and the head of the doers*." In the 1960s, he might draw on such "laboratory" metaphors as the "microscope," and most famously, define the actor's role as a "surgeon's scalpel" or a "trampoline": with considerable licence, the former can be compared to the *organon* and the *yantra*, as the kinds of "precision instruments" evoked in his work on "Objective Drama," the latter, to his amusing definition of "Art as vehicle" as something "like a very primitive elevator" – a "kind of basket pulled by a cord, with which the doer lifts himself toward a more subtle energy" and what he merely terms a "*higher connection*," only to "descend and re-enter [with this new-found energy] into the density of the body." If there is some logical ambiguity, then, to the 1960s' notion of the "trampoline" as "an instrument with which to study what is hidden behind our everyday mask," the horizontal *outside–in* (in penetrating the mask) would eventually be accompanied by the image of *verticality*, as a "journey" upward and then down again (and surely there is a very muscular difference between engaging the trampoline and the basket). Yet here,

too, there is the confluence of the "here and now" with the "archaic," the "source," the "beginning" – of the spatial image of ascending, with that of "going back": on the one hand, the "performative artifacts" Grotowski studied were to affect perception directly, arouse a state of "vigilance," "help one to arrive into the moment"; on the other, they would always be "the outcome of very long practices," only such that maintained their psychophysical impact "across cultural and temporal divides."[27]

In a different sense, this interplay of presence and duration would also characterize Grotowski's understanding of an actor's "score," in a theatrical performance: according to Flaszen, it was quite specifically by the time of *Akropolis* that "roles," as "objective structures" in a text, began to be approached as "tools" for "self-analysis." What this means in terms of "presence," is that Grotowski would only focus on plays he found "necessary for certain actors," structuring what he called the textual montage so that they could directly "confront" it in the "here and now" of their own personal experience and historical context: if a scene did not afford this (as often happened in Wyspiański's play), it would simply be "dropped, thus changing the entire structure." What I mean by "duration" relates to the mastery of a set score of "physical actions," not only in their being "subject to our will" in a way that emotions are not – the late Stanislavskian premise for which there is some "measurable neurological evidence," as Rhonda Blair has shown – but in the sense that properly "personal" affordances may only emerge by way of prolonged engagement with the material, not as some fixed entity (after four years of performing *Akropolis*, Cieślak would estimate he had "about 80 per cent of it" properly "scored") but rather, as "a field of experiences." In cognitive terms, this resonates not only with Blair's neural approach to Stanislavsky – a "character," no longer an entity to embody "but a process to be explored and lived" – but especially with the ecological approach to cognition as *enaction*: a "history of structural coupling that brings forth a world"; "the laying down of a path in walking," with "no clear separation between path and footsteps," planning and performance. In Zarrilli's more nuanced account of the enactive approach, accordingly, the "score" is always "available" for the "doer/enactor" as "a horizon of possibilities" to inhabit as it happens and also, perhaps, as "a larger 'field' of experience" to enact over time.[28]

In the interhuman ecology, finally, physical actions in Grotowski's sense would always relate to "elements of contact" with some partner, "friendly or hostile" (be it but a prop or a costume), "past and possible," as concerns the work on "associations" – thus, Cieślak's score for *Akropolis* would include not only how his body was to lie

in the wheelbarrow but also, what he was to "think about from moment to moment." Again, this level of the work seems to bear comparison with Blair's neurocognitive approaches not only to memory, as a phenomenon of the *present* rather than the past ("*always* [a] physical reaction," for Grotowski) but also, with her cognitive scoring of "image-streams" that need not "make 'logical' or even 'biographical' sense" insofar as they have "psychophysical efficacy" in engaging the actor. In Grotowski's terms, accordingly, the point of associations was essentially to evoke the actor's "impulses," which again were to "precede physical actions, always," lest they be reduced to mere "gestures" or "activities" – as his word-play on "in/tension" and "in/pulse" suggests, the essence lies "inside," again, reaching out to some external other as a partner. To exemplify, even before its becoming his prime "instrument of verticality," Grotowski would treat the *voice* as a material organ, capable of expressing every impulse and of physically acting on objects: most importantly, however, it was by concentrating on the *echo* of her voice – in a dialogue of "give and take" with the floor, the walls, the ceiling – that the actor could be sensitized not so much to the vibratory affordances of her *body* (whatever "resonators" Grotowski had pointed out in the chest, the larynx, the belly, or the spine) but to the wider acoustic ec(h)ology of the room around. And this seems to be precisely the point: if, as Biagini puts it, inner action is schematically "inside" while "physical actions have their objectives outside," the prime objective is to discover "something inside [that] is not mine" – in a Buberian fashion, fullness is only to be attained in relation to a "Thou," not to the "It": "becoming I, I say You."[29]

To conclude on an "enactive" note, insofar as the term entails the *co-emergence* of a world and a mind rather than some "pre-existence" on either front, then perhaps in Grotowski's case, the "total act" might equal the enaction of a specific *emptiness*, within the "wholeness" of the given performance ecology, both inter- and extrahuman – in short, it is not so much the space but the "self" that is to become "empty." Given his early acquaintance with Eastern philosophy, this can be specifically related to the Buddhist notion of emptiness as *Sunyata*, a "non-duality" Barba suggests "can be attained through a *via negativa*, denying wordly categories" such that there is no division between subject and object, a self and a "non-self" one could set as a goal. Naïvely perhaps, Varela and colleagues relate this notion directly to their own discussion of *enaction*, set to avoid both objectivism and subjectivism, absolutism and nihilism: in their reading of Nāgārjuna's Middle Way, "everything is 'empty' of an independent existence," an "intrinsic nature" or "an identity that transcends its relations," for eve-

rything is "codependently originated" – enacted, brought forth over histories of coupling: "We are always constrained by the path we have laid down, but there is no ultimate ground to prescribe the steps that we take." Enactive cognition being *their* metaphor for this groundlessness, Grotowski and Richards tend to grow more poetic: "we arrive at something that precedes," for the "beginning" is "always present"; "The doer is doing, but [--] something else is doing the doer"; "your sense of 'what is my self' starts to change"; "I can only hope to hold on to this thread of 'now' and to let the instrument of my being be played like a flute by this wind of now"; "I myself and the *genus humanum*." More mundanely, to return to Zarrilli, "[a]cting according to an enactive paradigm is not in the first instance about meaning and representation": these "may present themselves to the viewer or critic," but only as "the result of the actor's immediate energetic engagement in the act of performance" – and in Grotowski's case, what the viewer would experience might often be something quite different.[30]

Exclusion and Implication: Spectators Within the "New Tower of Babel"

> Good evening, I'm Lewis Freedman and actually, I don't speak Polish. And it's possible that some of you don't either. (Introduction to *Akropolis* for television)
>
> The gentle and repetitive creak of the steps and platforms as the audience filed silently into the place of performance gave the sense that its members were combining to become part of a machine; that they were being initiated into a physical construct that reflected a process that had happened before, and now would happen again. (*The Constant Prince*, discussed by Christopher Baugh)

Turning now to the tangible ecology of the "here and now," as it was to emerge for the varied *audiences* at Teatr Laboratorium productions, Grotowski soon became deliberately wary of the "new [1960s] myth" of direct audience participation: "spatial relations [were] only important if they form[ed] an integral part of the structure of the production," the "essential concern," "finding the proper spectator-actor relationship for each type of performance and embodying the decision in physical arrangements." Thus, as Christopher Baugh suggests in a vivid description of a 1969 performance of *The Constant Prince*, in Manchester, the "enaction" of the "encounter" proper would be preceded by "another 'performance'" of "constructing the audience": grafted on the intense smell of untreated wood and the heat and odor of the lights, having "evidently been burning for some time," the "experiential impact on entering the space" sensitized the spectators not only to its material specificity but to "a powerful impres-

sion of 'earlier' events" – "that something would happen that had happened before." Beginning with "the purposeful way" they were directed in, "the performativity of the space was established in the [--] deliberate building of the audience in and around it" – a common feature to many reviews of the 1969 New York appearance, alike, being the way the church doorway was kept locked until the last minute, effectively guarded by two crew members, expressionless and formally dressed: "directed to sit penitently on steps outside the sanctuary," the audience's "anxiety became subdued hysteria," with rumors flying on how many would get in, "regardless of ticket possession." Once inside, many a critic would also delve into the spatial specificity of the church itself: "In the sudden blow of darkness that announced the end of each play, one could for a moment see the outside world filtered through the heavy reds and blues of the high, narrow church windows"; "it is as if Grotowski is saying through his choice of this environment that the church must share the blame for this vision of anti-Christ."[31]

As for the famous limitations on the number of spectators admitted, in any case (the spaces, "designed" for only as many as they could "truly contain"), even the more critical voices would grant that "*some* arbitrary figure" had to be named, given that the events were "planned as a whole: such and such actors to be seen by so and so many spectators from such and such an angle at such and such a distance." In contrast to the steep elevation and near exclusion of those watching *The Constant Prince* – "behind a wall," as if to witness "something prohibited," "much lower down" – the *Akropolis* audience would be "environmentally" scattered around the scenic architecture, shown in Figure 2, subject to multiple levels of emerging CONTAINMENT: at the start, they were already "enclosed" within a "network without exit," as Szajna had the whole room "wired up" with a crisscross structure of ropes strung above and across (reminiscent not only of the barbed wire of the concentration camp, but of the spider's web, entwining the cathedral pillars in Wyspiański's opening poem). At the end, in comparison, "the entire room was oppressed by the metal" which had "supplied a concrete motivation for the play": distributing the central pile of stovepipes among the spectators – hung on the ropes, nailed to the floor – the actors "include[d] them in the architecture of action," giving them "a sense of the pressure and congestion and limitation of space." Finally, apart from their subjection to the "threatening ubiquity" of the actors' bodies – moving in on them from all sides, "washing over" them yet leaving them physically intact (an aspect many a critic was quick to appreciate) – the audience would also be engulfed in "a concentration camp of sound": surrounded and

"penetrated" by everything from "inarticulate groans" to "the most sophisticated oratorical recitation," mixed in what Flaszen dubs "this new Tower of Babel, in the clash of foreign people and foreign languages meeting just before their extermination."[32]

In *Akropolis*, such intimate "mingling" of actors and spectators seems to have supported two quite conflicting sets of dramaturgical affordances: in one sense, the utter CONTAINMENT of its idle spectators (often from abroad) could imply a metonymical sort of complicity, on their PART, in the grim machinery under construction ("We don't belong to this secret camp world, but somehow we helped to shape it"); in another, such close proximity would afford an unexpected sense of exclusion, as the actors totally "ignore[d the audience], looking through them" as something "totally irrelevant" to their engagements. While critic Gordon Wickstrom would relate this to a "structural metaphor" he neatly dubs "the crisis-of-space" (reminding "at what close quarters we live, how narrowly we are missed or stricken by disaster or love"), the standard interpretation offered by Flaszen is of "two separate and mutually impenetrable worlds: those who have been initiated into ultimate experiences, and the outsiders who know only the everyday life; the dead and the living." As he continues, in various formulations, "there [could be] no understanding" between these two worlds: "outside of the circle of initiates," "these living who are always right against the dead" will only ever remain "the theatre audience who have not had these experiences." For all occasional confusion as to which is which (Grotowski himself, dubbing the spectators "incomprehensible to the actors – as the living cannot understand the dead"), the source of this imagery lies again in the prose of Tadeusz Borowski, the mere fact of survival, implicating the survivor: "We are not evoking evil irresponsibly or in vain, for we have now become a part of it"; "before the dead, the living are always right." (At first, his serial number over a million, the narrative "I" of his camp stories relates how "old numbers" look at such "million-plus fellows" as if "through dense fog"; later, "having learned to live on intimate terms with the crematoria," he himself looks at "civilians" "the way a scientist regards a layman, or the initiated an outsider.")[33]

In theatrical terms, this otherworldliness of the inmates was primarily engendered by their Szajna-made costumes, and what Flaszen calls their "organic masks" – though actually, the way his English translation situates this discussion under the rubric of "poor theatre" has been more hindrance than help to the understanding of either, given that such "masks" only ended up being used in the production of *Akropolis*. In both cases, the point of departure was an effort to *imply* a reality "too strong to

be expressed theatrically": thus, to deprive them of outward signs of gender, age, or social class – a dehumanization "which in the camp was embodied in those stripes" – Szajna would endow the actors with "a poetic version of the camp uniform" (Flaszen), consisting of short sackcloth garments with large holes, lined with fabric evocative of "torn flesh": "Heavy wooden shoes for the feet; for the heads, anonymous berets." For Findlay, however, what was "most distressingly confrontational" were the actors' "dead" eyes (for Simon, "there was not a moving, expressive face in the lot of them"): here, the main reason for having the actors make "masks" of their mere facial muscles was the disproportionate sentimentality of some, "pumping up" an excess of emotion – the model, a fragment of Rainer Maria Rilke describing "the erosive action of the wrinkles sculpting the human face" but also, actual photographs of inmates "ripe for the gas chamber" (as Borowski defines those called "Moslems," in Auschwitz). Then again – "stereotypes of the species," perhaps – it was not strictly the case that the actors thus became "completely identical beings," their grimaces and silhouettes "irrevocably fixed": a matter of "inner logic" rather than "exterior forms," on the one hand, the "organic masks" *would* be taken on and off, according to the occasion. On the other, as testified by the stark hues of brown, green, and blue that stand out in the sole fragment of color documentation surviving from 1963, neither were their burlap costumes (sacks for onions, potatoes, and sugar, according to Szajna) of quite such black-and-white anonymity as suggested by all extant photographs in circulation.[34]

On a more direct level, what seems to have enacted the jarring "exclusion" of foreign viewers, especially, would rather have been the overflow of "opaque detail," the multiplicity and simultaneity of rapid associations, some of which Flaszen admits would have been "hardly recognizable" even for a Polish spectator; metaphorically, to fully appreciate any performance moment one would have had to understand it not only in terms of related earlier ones, but also moments still to come. Where Grotowski discusses a visceral effect of "signs and sounds," comprehensible even if one didn't understand the language, many a critic could only detect a relentless, "ear-assaulting" sound-score of "unintelligible Polish," abounding in "infernal laughter" – an obscure text, delivered at "disorienting speed" and practically devoid of any "natural pauses." Where the "[e]limination of music [--] not produced by the actors" would afford the "orchestration" of "concrete music" (as it is called in the director's script) out of their clomping clogs and "clashing objects" – a "monotonous cacophony of [--] metal grating against metal, clanging of the hammers, creaking of the stovepipes" – such detail

as “the clear sound of an altar bell” at the wedding of Rachel and Jacob [II:11] could hardly be discerned were the viewer less than sensitized to the Catholic service (on stage, Mirecka here takes a few nails in her palm, then rattles them three times by m2). For many, what distanced them from Grotowski’s productions was their “huge gap” to “any common experience”: “They start on a note of intensity, and ascend from there with no relief”; “You are lost in atonality from beginning to end, unable to predict the next note, to find the phrases, discover the structure”; “the moments rush by” – as opposed to those for whom the program booklet “revealed enough” for them “to get on,” John Simon asserts that one could not actually “identify” any of the “scarecrows” whose mythical functions it describes. This in mind, he chooses to “reproduce some notes scribbled on [his] program during the performance,” to suggest “how it strikes one if one doesn’t speak Polish (as most of Grotowski’s admirers don’t)”:

> Prisoner bangs floor five times with head. [--] Soft singsong by woman prisoner at one end of acting area; antiphonal choir from others at far end. [--] Two men recite in low, croaking voices; woman interrupts with little pigeon cooings. Woman does weird pushups, dances around, tears at clothes, is bent double from time to time and ululates pathetically. [--] General screaming. All disappear through trap door, whence more chanting and a few words.[35]

On these grounds, Grotowski’s famous definition of theatre as an “encounter” might sound a bit wanting – only it was not about the audience, in the first place, but rather, about the *actors*’ encounters, with a text or the director, of and between themselves. As to his admittedly “élite” orientation of “not [being] concerned with just any audience, but a special one,” many have taken this to imply an essentially homogenous public (“a single body, one-half of the actor-audience pair”), pointing out that many photographs “demonstrate a more complex group than [such] rhetoric allows for.” For some critics, the “day-to-day things” on stage would already “involve the spectator by familiarity into a sense of participation,” for others, the very notion of being cast in a role (such as the *Akropolis* “living”) only served to “erect[] another barrier”: assuming a “cast relationship” of which some of the audience remained unaware, the actors might appear “possessed of a special knowledge which [the latter felt] denied.” Yet if all this was no help to the spectator, as Donald Richie suggests, but “enormous help to the actor” – “He needs a context badly and we are it” – there might just be a way this relates to “the seat of the montage” Grotowski would discuss, in the 1990s, *inner* or *outer*, whether residing in those who “do” or those who witness the doing. For the ac-

tor, the "score" was to be an "objective" tool for inner work ("character," a "public screen" to protect "his intimacy, his safety"), for the audience, "an objective set of actions and relationships" they were to perceive "from night to night" – maintaining the "flame" and "illuminated" thereby, a "glass container" for both to rely on. As for the director (set to "direct" both "ensembles"), his craft would mainly consist in "mak[ing] the montage in the spectator's perception," such that the majority would "capture" the same "story": stretching Grotowski's phrase, where this might just work is on a generic image-schematic level, "preceding cultural differentiation" in the range of metaphorical interpretations it was to afford for different individual spectators.[36]

"Outer Montage," or, Blending "Archetypes"

At this point, I step back from the complexities of reception, discussed above, and adopt the point of view of an average spectator of *Akropolis*, as the performance commences: whether or not she will pick the intended "slogans," "our Acropolis" and "cemetery of the tribes" (either from Flaszen's notes or as they are pronounced), and whether or not she knows anything about Wawel or Wyspiański, she *will* likely have "read or heard that the play is set in a concentration camp," and have some prior knowledge concerning its title – combine the two, and already her emergent idea of what is at hand might *resemble* what Grotowski had initially had in mind: this is about "the mechanism of Auschwitz in confrontation with past values." Acknowledging the certain "shift in [his] priorities" Eugenio Barba would notice by the late 1960s (poor theatre and the total act have already been touched on), the general strategy implicit in this formulation was fundamental to his initial conception of *Akropolis*, and will benefit from some cognitive analysis of its own: *confrontation*, for one, was for Grotowski "a 'trying out', a testing of whatever is a traditional value" – indeed the only possibility for a theatrical community with "no single faith" to "*identify* itself with." As to what was to be confronted, terms like *myth* and *archetype* have been used fairly freely and much interchangeably – by Grotowski and his commentators, alike – both in general discussions and in naming those specific to *Akropolis*: apart from its Biblical and Homeric "myths," the list of what have been suggested would include Wawel, Acropolis, Auschwitz, and Babel; "the cemetery of the tribes," "community," and "redemption." Reducing the latter (if only momentarily) to Acropolis and Auschwitz – the title and the setting of the production I suggested its average viewer would not

have been likely to miss – I will now proceed to discuss these "archetypes" and their "confrontation" in terms, again, of *image schemas* and *conceptual blending*.[37]

Indeed, what Barba points out as having distinguished Grotowski's "intervention in the texts" he directed (which he admits was "not new" to the twentieth century) was his "stubborn conviction that they contained an archetype." While both would equally relate the term and its siblings to such scientific and philosophical authorities of the time as Durkheim, Eliade, Lévi-Strauss, Mauss, or Nietzsche, their basic definitions of *myths* or *archetypes* (as "concentrations of human experiences [--] which are still actual for us today"; "whose very presence we feel in our blood"; as "primeval situations," "fundamental to the human condition") remain characteristically Jungian, in flavor: in the psychology of Carl G. Jung, the "dominants of the collective unconscious" he called archetypes would be "primordial patterns of human behaviour" – "deposits of mankind's typical reactions [--] to universal human situations." In turn, it is in this very *universality* of archetypes that Jung and his commentators can be seen as evoking a version of the "cognitive unconscious," as well: what relates the term to *image schemas*, first of all, is their identifying these "primordial images" as "axial systems" not yet filled with individual content; as being of "succint simplicity" and of relatively limited number, the "same in all cultures"; as taking forms both static and dynamic; as serving "psychic economy" and "the structural tendency to perceive in Gestalten" ("The figure needs no interpretation; it expounds its own meaning"). Add the distinction between *potential* and *actualized* archetypes – the *archetype-as-such*, beyond the reach of consciousness, and the *archetypal image*, "adapted to the individual situation" yet "unchanged in fundamental structure and meaning" (cf. Barba's example of "Prometheus and the Sacrificial Lamb correspond[ing] to the archetype of the individual sacrificed for the community") – and we also have an equivalent to the workings of *metaphor* (according to Jung himself, let it be noted, "archetypal content [--] expresses itself, first and foremost, in metaphors").[38] As it happens, this is an issue that Jungian psychiatrist Jean Knox has recently elaborated, at some length:

> Image schemas [--] seem to have certain key features that are similar to some of the ways in which Jung conceptualized archetypes. Whilst image schemas are without symbolic content in themselves, they provide a reliable scaffolding on which meaningful imagery and thought is organized and constructed [--]. The abstract pattern itself, the image schema, is never experienced directly, but acts as a foundation or ground plan that can be likened to the concept of the archetype-as-such. This provides the invisible scaffolding for a whole range of meta-

> phorical extensions that can be expressed in conscious imagery and language and that would therefore seem to correspond to the archetypal image. These metaphorical elaborations are always based on the gestalt of the image schema from which they are derived [--]; it is as though the concept of the archetype is itself a metaphorical elaboration of the concept of the image schema.[39]

Concerning the image-schematic profiles of an Acropolis or an Auschwitz, however – their "archetypal" aspects, if you will – the sorts of "mappings" thus prompted would not be of the merely unidirectional, metaphorical kind (with the one being understood in terms of the other, supposedly more concrete), but more complex blends demanding conceptual input from both: as for *Akropolis*, Jennifer Kumiega speaks of "layers of super-imposed reality – the theatrical reality/Auschwitz dead/the scenes of mythic re-enactment," Ludwik Flaszen, of "a sort of counterpoint pattern" in which "[t]he myth reality and the camp reality are in the state of mutual penetration." In the blending architecture, what enables such "penetration" is the input domains' *sharing* in some generic, image-schematic frames, which, however, may acquire quite conflicting *values and affordances*, within each specific domain – hence, the Grotowskite idea of "confrontation": as for *Akropolis*, Robert Findlay speaks of an "ironic inversion" of Wyspiański's values that "seems to have guided almost all of Grotowski's directorial choices"; Zbigniew Osiński, of "dialectical antinomy" and of "oxymoronic throught," characteristic of "Romantic irony"; Grotowski himself, of a "dialectic of apotheosis and derision" (evocative of his interest in Marx, Hegel, and Eastern philosophies) – finally, if only the archetypes were strong enough to "penetrate" the spectator's psyche, what would happen, according to Grotowski, was that her "life-mask cracks and falls away."[40] In more modest terms, perhaps, the blend thus conceived should develop *emergent structure* of its own, yet retain the schematic frames shared by all the specific domains that have been confronted in the process: directly embodied in the ecology of the production, those most important to the present case would again include CONTAINMENT and CENTER-PERIPHERY (and it is no coincidence that Bruce McConachie has elsewhere presented these as decisive for Greek tragedy) as well as VERTICALITY – the relevant expressions italicized, I begin by consulting this brief selection of basic dictionary definitions for the term, "acropolis":

> (1) *Elevated* part of the city, or the citadel, in Ancient Greece, especially the Athenian acropolis (from acro-, meaning *highest* or *topmost*, and polis, meaning city); (2) the citadel of a Greek city, placed at its *highest* point and *containing* the chief temples and buildings, as at Athens; (3) *Hill-top enclosure* found in

> classical Greek cities to give *protection* to the temple of the patron deity and, in early times, to the king's palace. The acropolis was the *nucleus* of a *community* living *outside* its walls, although it might provide *refuge* in times of danger.[41]

Now first, consider the above against the dismal characteristics of a death camp: while Wyspiański (in the Flaszen line of interpretation) conceived of "acropolis" as "the *highest point* of any specific civilization" – a "*sum total* of Western civilization's contributions to humanity," its *height*, *apex*, or *summit* – what we have at Auschwitz is its "necropolis": the "cemetery of the tribes," literalized. Dignity becomes degradation, the sacred mound – a burial ground: a neutrally VERTICAL opposition as this might appear, in the abstract, there is something distinctly unnerving about the sorts of values it evokes on a more specific level. The same with CENTER and PERIPHERY: while an element of CONCENTRATION is crucial to the understanding of Acropolis and Auschwitz, alike, it is based on ATTRACTION, in one, on COMPULSION, in the other – indeed, the latter can also be conceived of in centrifugal terms, both literally (the inmates, transported from their native surroundings to some peripheral no-man's land) and metaphorically: Flaszen, here, speaks of "fringes of experience to which we have been pushed by our twentieth century," Borowski, of his "voyage to the limit of a particular experience." Finally, as archetypal a CONTAINER as the Acropolis may be – of tradition and civilization, etc. – it might initially seem that the camp experience only embodied the *restraint* of this schema: the "cemetery" in the gas chambers ("communal death, disgusting and ugly"), "the pressure and congestion and limitation of space" – in *Akropolis*, "the whole world appears to be a concentration camp" (notably, Margaret Croyden's *ad hoc* evaluation has a near verbatim parallel in Borowski's prose). Nonetheless, there is also the *community within* this container – an "image of the whole species," for Flaszen – and indeed, a very real sense of the *shelter*, to their grim CONTAINMENT experience: in one of his short stories, Borowski "see[s] the camp as a haven of peace" – "It is true, others may be dying, but one is somehow still alive." "If any one thing moulded me," to quote Józef Szajna's respective testimony, "it wasn't martyrology [but] life in a precise community, the sense of union and trust."[42]

Next, consider how Wyspiański's play itself seems to work within the above parameters – though surely this is the sort of contextual knowledge only conditionally available to the average spectator of Grotowski's production. Begin with the setting: as he had it, the Wawel Hill in Kraków – the Castle and the Cathedral – can indeed be conceived of as the "Polish Acropolis," in the sense of its being a fortified citadel (a

physical CONTAINER) and the geographical dominant (in imposing VERTICALITY) of the royal city. The ancient seat of Polish kings during their Jagiellonian might – when the latter was indeed a capital of sorts, to much of Central Europe – "it expresses the concept of the center," as one Polish critic suggests; the play itself takes place *in and around* the Cathedral but is evocative, also, of such PERIPHERIES as are local to the city of Kraków and its history (e.g., through the "musical peals" of ambient church bells). At the same time – "one solid museum," as was the very Kraków of Wyspiański's day – this is essentially a mere *cemetery* of former glory, a CONTAINER of "Poland's ruined past" and national dignity; buried in the Cathedral crypt together with her kings, heroes, and spiritual leaders – crucially, the poets Mickiewicz and Słowacki, later also Marshal Piłsudski, yet to reappear in the Kantor chapter – this was something Wyspiański was determined to revive, around 1904. Once the Castle was vacated by the Austrian army, he was keen on completely redesigning the complex – notably, his restoration scheme was again called "Akropolis," and came with scores of new buildings including a gigantic amphitheatre. At the end of *Akropolis* the play, the whole begins to crumble, starting with the silver coffin of St. Stanisław which, having witnessed the very coronation of most of the mighty Polish kings mentioned above, still functions as a central shrine to the Nation's martyrdom.[43]

Then again, it is not only that the Polish CENTER that is Wawel be blended and identified with the European one that is the Acropolis: as the mere names of the roles may indicate (for an audience member well enough versed in European mythology), it also becomes the citadel of Troy; Mount Sinai; and the Temple of Jerusalem – the River Wisła in Kraków: the Jordan, or the Trojan Scamander. One way to think this, in the Wyspiański scenario, is as a PART-WHOLE simultaneity of divergent elements, evocative of his artistic "syncretism": confronting the museumlike inertia of his native Kraków with his classical education in Homer and in Greek tragedy, what better way to redeem the Polish PERIPHERY, as part of the European CENTER, than by fermenting her national history with elements of pan-European mythology? Apart from his including Greek gods as directly implicated in the 1830 Uprising, in *November Night* (*Noc listopadowa*, also of 1904), and his furnishing some quite anonymous memorial statues, in *Akropolis*, with such resonant names as Clio or Tempus, Wyspiański would deliberately accentuate the "syncretic" nature of Wawel itself: its Biblical and Homeric decorations, merged within layers of Gothic, Romanesque, Renaissance, and Baroque architecture; in short, he conceived of the Cathedral as an eclectic work of

art, *creative of itself* in what he presented as a moment of ahistorical standstill. (The politics of this inheres in how he chose to "resurrect" many a statue in danger of being neglected, in the concurrent restoration plans; the mythology, in how he has both Tempus and Clio, Time and History, physically exit the building in the first act.) His Wagnerian leanings aside – Wyspiański was a fervent proponent of just the sort of "unity" Grotowski would later defy as "Rich Theatre" – the notion of (PART-WHOLE) "autocreation" is very much there, in the latter's version of *Akropolis*, as well: Auschwitz, conceived of as the "new Tower of Babel" – a point of encounter for "all nations [--]: Greeks, Poles, Jews, French" – is *contingent on participation*, for its very existence (and in the theatre, as noted, this also entails that of the spectators).[44]

The other way to think the European mythology of *Akropolis*, finally, is as a grand-scale narrative – SOURCE, PATH, and GOAL – evoking not only "the very roots of European tradition" (what Grotowski would refer to as the "Mediterranean cradle") but "the progress of the human race" – "significant scenes of the life of mankind." (Notably, he himself would extend the past in question from that mostly of Poland, discussed in a 1968 interview, to include the "Greek and Hebrew history" of the whole of Europe, in its edited 1997 reprint.) On the one hand, materially anchored in the sculptures and wallhangings of Wawel, the chosen protagonists could only re-enact and confirm the CYCLES of their predetermined destinies: what we are presented with are contrasting attitudes – essentially, of the two pairs of brothers and of their parents: the heroism of Hector and the frivolity of Paris; the lethargy of Hecuba and the prospection of Priam; the defiance of Jacob and the submission of Esau; the credulity of Isaac and the cunning of Rebecca – and their respective outcomes: destruction for Troy, reconciliation for Jacob and Esau. (In Grotowski's version there is none, yet it makes good sense that he would reverse the order of these stories and prepare his finale with the fall of Troy – and of course, a certain "archetypal" logic does inhere in how the same actors would of necessity portray both families.) On the other hand, it has often been proposed that these be "persons whose struggles [have] determined who we are, who remain somehow present in us" – a stark irony of the 1962 production is that in Auschwitz, "[t]hese heroes who have created man's hopes [--] no longer have a shred of free will with which to act." In the prose of Tadeusz Borowski, "the Greeks" of the camp are reduced to "huge human insects," its "founding fathers," defined by their low serial number – what is most confrontational to the above narrative of human kind, however (and directly influential on Grotowski), is how he presents

Auschwitz as no exception to History but *as its very rule*.[45] "You know how much I used to like Plato," he writes to his fiancée in the women's barracks (and cf. Platonic *ideas* to Jungian *archetypes*), only to report having now figured out that "he lied":

> We are laying the foundation for some new, monstrous civilization. Only now do I realize what price was paid for building the ancient civilizations. The Egyptian pyramids, the temples, and Greek statues – what a hideous crime they were! [--] Antiquity – the tremendous concentration camp [--]! Antiquity – the conspiracy of free men against slaves! [--] For the things of this world are not a reflection of the ideal, but a product of human sweat, blood and hard labour. It is we who built the pyramids [and] hewed the marble for the temples [--], while they wrote dialogues and dramas, rationalized their intrigues by appeals in the name of the Fatherland, made wars over boundaries and democracies. We were filthy and died real deaths. They were 'aesthetic' and carried on subtle debates. [--] If the Germans win the war, what will the world know about us? [--] They will produce their own beauty, virtue and truth. They will produce religion. [A slightly different cutting appeared in the first Polish programs for *Akropolis*.][46]

Work that Makes One Free: The Great Day of Human Kind

Awakened for their "sole living hour," in the very first scene of Wyspiański's play, the Angels carrying the sarcophagus of St. Stanisław feel their bodies engulfed with "power" but also, aching from their perennial burden: "not stingy with toil" (as it is put in Freedman's voiceover), they address their "Lord" as "creator and executioner." In Grotowski and Szajna's staging, Wyspiański's scenes would expressly be enacted as "daydreams" amidst the back-breaking labor of the concentration camp – extending the notion of *spontaneity within discipline*, if you will, from actors to their blended stage identities. For some critics, "[this] approach to myth [was] both poetic and plausible," indeed one would proclaim, "[a]t Auschwitz it must have been like this – pity and terror calling forth ancient actions, or their ironic counterparts"; for John Simon, again, it was all "nonsense" for "if the prisoners were enacting visions that are supposed to fill them with hope [--], they would not portray them as ghastly travesties." On the one hand, insofar as many actor/inmates seem exhausted UNDER the tools of their daydreams in scenes such as the struggle of Jacob and the Angel [II:14], there is a sense in which the rigorous "work intervals," trained with Eugenio Barba and supposed to "waken" them to the grim reality of camp labor, rather appear to engage them in a liberating play – of building something UP amidst their mythical devastation: acrobatic routines [II:4+] and hopping exercises [II:12+] for moving the pipes about, rhythmic explorations of their acoustic affordances by fists, nails, and adjacent

metal [I:2+]. On the other hand, it does stand to reason that the performance as a whole analyzed what Szajna dubs a "welter of activity": "Morning to evening, one great day of mankind – from birth to death and from setting out to work to the work that kills you"; in Grotowski's words, the actors "did not play prisoners, they played what they were doing – people plunged into absurd work," "not even the real work of the exterminating camp," "oppressed by a detailed routine that was insupportable."[47]

Thus, where the inmates in Borowski are "laying the foundation for some new, monstrous civilization" with "the spade, the pickaxe and the crowbar," here, the "absurd civilization [--] of gas chambers" is constructed with a hammer, a box of nails, and the heap of stovepipes, evocative not only of chimneys at the crematoria, but of classical columns, whether at the Parthenon or at the Wawel Cathedral – beginning with Cieślak and Jahołkowski, as the Angels, hoisting two of them as their "burden" in [I:1]. In a sense (an irresponsibly grim analogy though this may be), the ultimate terror of the proceedings resides again in the actors' "holy" ethos of spontaneity and discipline, inadvertently replicating the futile promise of freedom inscribed in the cruel slogan, *Arbeit macht frei*: Where Grotowski notes that "[t]he mechanics of the camp were arranged for a specific goal and [that] they worked," Rick Matthews and others have directly related them to "Taylorist principles of 'scientific management'," "applied to the act of genocide" so as to maximize its "efficiency" (e.g., by dividing it into distinct stages of concentration, deportation, and incineration). What is more, "the 'workers' closest to the production of death" would have been Jews and other prisoners, "disposed of themselves when they were no longer able to carry out their jobs": according to Barba, Flaszen and Grotowski once "burst out laughing at [his] bewilderment" in their grim riddle as to who had built Auschwitz ("No, it was the Jews"). Apart from being erected by its inhabitants, finally, the participatory mechanics of the camp would assign to each the double part of *executioner and victim* – the mutual guilt Borowski calls for, in urging survivors to relate how they "shoved the 'Moslems' [--] into the oven," to stand out as "the ones who did this." Where Flaszen discusses "murderer and victim" as "their own torturers," Grotowski says he staged the "rules of the game: in order not to be a victim one must make a victim of someone else" – the essential "structure" of the camps, exposed by showing "no SS men [on stage], only prisoners who so organized the space that they must oppress each other to survive."[48]

Then again, Flaszen does refer to "rhythmical signals [--] given by the guards," the "wrecks" of inmates "stand[ing] up erect" at "each command"; in the perform-

ance, an "echo of the guards' whistles" would invariably be provided by the strident sound of a *violin*, set to accompany nearly every work interval. While it surely didn't turn him into an SS officer, the instrument did differentiate actor Zygmunt Molik enough for many English captions to dub him "the leader of the dying tribe"; as opposed to Flaszen's assertion of there being "no hero, no character set apart from the others," Molik would also play all the main figures, from the Prologue, through Jacob and Priam, to King David the Harpist (possibly a reflection of Wyspiański, the poet). Besides evoking the "orchestra scenario" of the camps – which Szajna suspects Grotowski could not have imagined on his own – what the violin generally afforded was a "grating, raspy, sentimental" background to the overall brutality: putting on his "organic mask," the basic leitmotiv Molik was to play over and over (whether slow and off-key [I:3+], fast and happy [II:11+], or in a minor key as in I:2+, I:4+, II:5+) was the interwar hit *Tango Milonga*, the "tango of our dreams" as regards its Polish lyrics. Vocally, flickers of life and spontaneity, even beauty, could be glimpsed in the many moments of the actors' breaking into song, be it slow and sorrowful, as during Jacob's guilt-ridden dream [II:7] – suggesting Jews by the Wall of Lamentation, for Flaszen; Jacob's "ladder," an important metaphor for Grotowski's later ideas of verticality – or wild and raucous, as with the ensuing marriage scene [II:11] in which the medieval wedding melody *Chmiel* was to initiate "a very authentic process" in the Polish actors. Soon thereafter, Molik would strike a steady, military rhythm on his violin [II:12+], then put it aside for the final frenzy of completing the crematorium [II:14+] – at the first apparent ending of the performance [II:15], the prisoners would moan upward for the sun, a theme recurring not only in Wyspiański's final act, but again in Borowski: the camp, "sealed off tight," he describes how all of the inmates "walk around naked," the heat becoming "unbearable," the sun, "hang[ing] directly over [their] heads."[49]

In a more pronounced reference to the SS, Act III would then commence with Jahołkowski becoming a Guard on the Trojan battlements: where Act II began on his leaning to an upright stovepipe (in grotesque evocation of the old Isaac and his cane), he would now march from pipe to pipe, evoking the church bells of Wyspiański's text by rhythmically tapping each with a nail, and the camp loudspeakers, by addressing his voice inside them, to announce the capturing of a "spy" – a "crow." For this act, the actors were to hide their arms within their burlap costumes, "transforming" them "in a *poor* manner" to suggest not only "prisoners fighting the cold" but the mutilated statues of antiquity ("Greek torsoes," in the script) and perhaps, the infirmity of hav-

ing “no hand” in their destinies after finishing the construction work – the “peculiar Polish schizophrenia” many compatriots have read into the dichotomy of apathy and action, evident in Wyspiański’s treatment of his Trojan and Biblical acts. Apart from a single return of the violin toward the end (a brief merry folk tune in III:6+), the most touching musical refrain would now be sung by Rena Mirecka as a Page [III:4], then as Cassandra [III:6], evoking the floating ice (“kra”) on the River Wisła – the crowing “kra kra” of her “raven” sisters, replaced by guttural sounds from the rest of the cast. At this point, they had already gathered for their “final roll call” atop m1, lined up in two ranks for a second premonition of the end: “their wretched faces at the level of the overhead ropes [--] re-creating the powerful image of death-camp prisoners behind barbed wire,” for Findlay, Cassandra’s feral prophecy of their extermination would soon give in to Molik, climbing on their shoulders as King David [IV:1], then, the lot of them collapsing into a general frenzy followed by their final farewells (Chojak relates these to the Hassidic service and the “intonation of former Jews,” respectively). Harking back to the musicality inherent not only to Wyspiański’s text, but to much of Grotowski’s later research, these liberating qualities of the song and the “daydream” could already be intuited in the way Molik had framed his summary Prologue, at the beginning – notably, his head amidst the ropes, his arms, hidden within his costume:

> PROLOGUE: I am reading scenes from *Akropolis*. I am pleased with them, and I have the impression that each scene has a breath of fresh air. [--] More fantastic and symbolic than any other play to date, this drama depicts the progress of the human race through its warlike and pastoral stages, with the power of song dominating throughout. [quoting Wyspiański’s letter to Adam Chmiel, then, an excerpt from Zenon Parvi’s review of the play on its first publication in 1904][50]

The Relativity of Morality, or, Resurrection in the Crematorium

> Action: the night of Resurrection at Wawel cathedral, our Acropolis. It starts with the angels, who have come down to the floor, carrying the coffin of St. Stanisław. [--] Conclusion: resurrected Christ the Savior comes down to the floor from the main altar. (Prologue, from Wyspiański’s letter to Chmiel)[51]

Delivered in between the two framing segments just cited, this succinct summary of Wyspiański’s play maps out a central axis not only of the drama, but, therein, of the longitudinal nave of the Wawel Cathedral: on the high altar, there is the solitary figure of Christ, suffering on the cross; high atop the organ loft at the opposite end, a minute golden statue of King David; between the two, the silver sarcophagus of Stanisław

Szczepanowski, patron saint of Poland, supported by four angel figures. (A symbol of slavery and death, in *Akropolis*, this is an emblem Wyspiański had also evoked in his *Bolesław the Bold*, named after the Polish king who presumably had the eleventh-century bishop slain and hacked to pieces – witness Polish "martyrdom."[52]) At the outset of the play, the angels come to life and set about reviving various figures from adjacent monuments, bearing witness to the silent suffering of the black Christ, on the altar; at its close, David, "the Harpist," summons up the Savior himself, who then appears in the radiant guise of Apollo, his golden chariot, crushing down the sarcophagus that stands in its path.[53] A symbolic shelter of tradition and of the past, the cathedral begins to crumble, and a new light arises – suggesting not only the biblical "resurrection": contrasting ideal values with real ones much as Grotowski would (Christian humanism with political repression), *Akropolis* has traditionally been read as "both a religious and a political statement to a then nonexistent Polish nation." As in his *Wyzwolenie* of the previous year (*Liberation*, 1903), Wyspiański identifies the cathedral as the sepulchre of both Christ and Poland, the castle, alluding to its Austrian invaders as much as to the ancient Polish kings whose tombs it contains: not implicit about the dual meaning of the key word *powstanie* (resurrection/insurrection), the finale has readily been related to the Romantic tradition of seeing Poland as the "Christ of Nations" – a peculiar blend of his contrasting roles as Martyr and Savior, here further blended with the Greek and Judaic variants of Apollo and King David.[54]

In the Grotowski/Szajna version, this focal dramaturgical trajectory is enacted by the one crucial stage object not as yet touched upon: before his first words of Prologue, Molik flings a limp, headless dummy across the central bathtub; when he mentions St. Stanisław, it is taken up by Cieślak and Jahołkowski, and over to m3 on their backs; on the reference to Christ's resurrection, they violently toss it down on the brink of said platform. In [I:1], now with stovepipes, the same actors engage the dummy as the Angels, Cieślak, slowly lifting it on the ball of his foot as he wonders whether he is alone and where his brother is (in Freedman's voiceover, "he says that wherever he steps is a grave"); once their attention shifts from their own suffering to that of Christ, in his "crown of thorns," they climb on top of m3 with the dummy again on their backs, stepping on the spot as the Mirecka/Scierski "tub-creature" by m1 (Freedman: "One body is not yet dead"). At the end of the scene, having noted that "he [Christ] is dying," Cieślak playfully suspends the dummy on one of the ropes like a piece of laundry – "a brutal and ironic image of Christ crucified on barbed

wire," echoed in the later suspensions of Paluchiewicz and Cieślak himself, as Lady [I:3] and Esau [II:3] – and there it will remain, as a constant background to the stories of Jacob, Paris and Helen, until taken up as the "Savior" at the end [IV:3]. While well prepared – the prayer, "When God arrives in the attire of a king," repeated by Scierski in all of his characters: Clio [I:4], Angel [II:8], Leah [II:12], Helen [III:4] – "'Our Akropolis', blind with hope, will not see the Resurrection of Christ-Apollo": as "no modern-day King David appeared to save the Jews," the Savior we "face again" in Auschwitz is "the faceless, frozen corpse of our humanity." To evoke Wyspiański's opening poem once more, David/Molik engages this *scarecrow-god* like "a priest lifting the chalice," as a grand procession emerges (cf. II:11) to circle the *altar-coffin* not coincidentally located by Jerzy Gurawski in the CENTER – a lullaby, changing into an Easter hymn, Apollo's words, to the "song of Wawel," Flaszen relates them to medieval "flagellants," their "ecstatic lament torn by screams and hysterical laughter":

> The procession circles around the huge box in the center of the room; hands stretch toward the Savior, eyes gaze adoringly. Some stumble, fall, stagger back to their feet and press forward around the Singer. [--] In a supreme ecstasy, the procession reaches the end of its peregrination. The Singer lets out a pious yell ["Follow me to the flames": not found in Wyspiański], opens a hole in the box, and crawls into it dragging after him the corpse of the Savior. The inmates follow him one by one, singing fanatically. They seem to throw themselves out of the world. When the last of the condemned men has disappeared [Mirecka], the lid of the box slams shut. The silence is very sudden; then after a while a calm, matter-of-fact voice is heard [Grotowski's, in the film, though Chojak identifies it as Cynkutis]. It says simply, "They are gone, and the smoke rises in spirals." The joyful delirium has found its fulfilment in the crematorium. The end.[55]

Now conventionally, these respective endings have been seen as decidedly antithetical – yet, as Colleen McQuillen has persuasively argued, there is a sense in which the "contrived convenience" of Wyspiański's "hyperbolically stagy ending" already seems ironic, in its "deus-ex-machina" overtones: fuelled by "historically unjustified optimism," "the Polish nation will overcome its oppression by means of a miracle." Accordingly, it can be argued that Grotowski's staging "only nudged Wyspiański's original concept" over, from its air of "sincere national piety" into "definitive irony": the "solemn sanctity of Easter," already compromised by the sexual urges many of the Act I statuary express on their revival ("power" and "strength"), the resurrection scene itself is infused "with the memory of profane earthly passion" as the Savior comes to identify himself by the very same words – on stage, he is ventriloquized by the rest of

the cast, in a shrill childlike voice, enchanted by the dummy held up by David/Molik. On the other hand, given the key theme of *animation* and its metonymical transitivity, from the Angels through Wawel itself to the body of Christ, the first act's impulses to live and to love – the struggle for which "goes on at its everyday pace," even in the concentration camp – do activate an affirmative archetype of Life, overcoming Death at Easter: *entering* and *filling* various statues, at the start, a process of burgeoning expansion comes to transcend the CONTAINMENT not only of their own graven forms but of the whole museal environment which engulfs them. In these terms, the very dramaturgy of Wyspiański's play can be seen as arising from the basic image schemas of CONTAINMENT – of its boundaries and peripheries, on the eve of Judgment Day – and VERTICALITY, implicit in the very etymology of "resurrection" (the Latin *re-surgere*, to "rise again"): as Osiński submits, "Wyspiański equipped *Akropolis* with a mythical *structure of ascending*, related directly to the myth of resurrection," Grotowski and Szajna, with one "*of descending*, based on the myths of death and sacrifice."[56]

How is it, then, with the "descent to salvation" at the end of the performance? On the one hand, the sense of CONTAINMENT is absolute: a final BOUNDARY between the actors and the audience, erected as the former disappear WITHIN the central chest (m1) and brutally cut the latter OUTSIDE, it was with *Akropolis* that Laboratory spectators began to leave their performances in silence, without the ceremony of applause. Whether this meant (as Flaszen and Grotowski propose) that they had ceased to be spectators, having witnessed an "objective fact," or whether they were simply "urged to hurry on," as many reviews suggest – given that all seven actors remained inside "the small airless box," "probably in some Yoga position to beat the pain" – this silence has since become something of a "Grotowski" convention, any deviation from which would be a "cop-out," as Peter Brook cautions in his TV introduction: "most people wear away, silent, because they have seen something, with their own eyes, that they would rather, much rather have heard about and not seen." In *Akropolis*, the closure is not only distinctly EMPTY of humanity, but oppressively FILLED with objects, outliving all human contact like the heaps of abandoned shoes Szajna would employ in his later Auschwitz images – stovepipes, all around; the wheelbarrows, on m2; the bathtub, on the step to m3: where Grotowski suggests he "didn't illustrate a crematorium" but "gave the spectators the association of fire," critic James Schevill would only sense "frozen images" of "human passions, love, freedom, and brotherhood." On the other hand, there is something disturbing to how this final image comes about –

the inmates *singing* their way to the crematorium, "clutching their outfits at the neck": where Sjazna relates this to their peeling off the "alien skin" he "imposed on the actor, constraining and obstructing [her] personal liberation," many near Grotowski speak of rigid "structure," here, giving over to "spontaneity," "trance," "liberation" – thirty years on, Grotowski himself relates this sequence to the axis of VERTICALITY, not as one of deadly *descent*, but as a tool for approaching *life*, "through ascending levels."[57]

Insofar as many critics have tried to delineate a Grotowskite understanding of *catharsis*, then, most have deduced it can only concern the actors themselves – those "martyrs burnt alive, still signalling to us from their stakes": as Timothy Wiles notes, Grotowski's version of Artaud's image would not only substitute his "victims," with the more Polish, *martyrs*, but specify that the signaling be directed at "us." Where Wiles's own rendering of the phenomenon has "artificial 'parts' and 'roles' [--] taken on, used up," and "cast off" by both parties to the theatrical encounter, others have seen the "psychological barrier" between the living and the dead, in *Akropolis*, as "an effective way of preventing conventional catharsis": the audience "would be relieved if a real contact could be established, a communion through pity," yet the actors only serve to "repulse or frighten," such that the spectator (in Grotowski's words) will not engage in "interminable applause, but [in] a special silence," full of "indignation, and even repugnance" – directed "not at [her]self but at the ['poor'] theatre." In short, there is "no peace," "no resolution" to be attained; in the Polish context, this aesthetic can again be derived from the Romantic archetypes of suffering and salvation, which Grotowski aimed to "confront" not only by his choice of repertory (be it a saintly individual or the whole cast, as in *Akropolis*, that was to be "sacrificed" on stage) but, as Kumiega notes, with "an artistic ethic that could itself be recognized as 'sacrificial' – the 'total act' of an actor before an audience." While deliberately "mocked," according to Flaszen (the point being that the idea of redemption by suffering is "ridiculous," "madness"), it is intriguing to note how the martyr imagery has also provoked rather conflicting comparisons of Grotowski's work, with that of Bertolt Brecht. Where Kumiega identifies in them a mutual *rejection* of cathartic "terror and pity," such as inhibits "real change," Jan Kott sees the *inevitability* of suffering, here, in direct opposition to "epic" theatre: "not sure" whether "Grotowski's metaphysics" implies a God, he is "certain that one must give up hope and renounce the possibility of revolt."[58]

Ultimately, then, the multiple "confrontations" enacted in the Grotowski/Szajna production of *Akropolis* can ever only afford multiple "interpretations": if the work of

Tadeusz Borowski entails the "cosmic inconsequentiality of their sacrifice," as Magda Romanska puts it, Józef Szajna would identify in his own "a strong affirmation of life" – surrounded by "*objects and conditions*," the actor either "wins" or "becomes another object"; shortly before his passing in June 2010, lead actor Zygmunt Molik would literally speak of the scenes being "organised" by "a theatre of prisoners." For Ludwik Flaszen, however, what the blending and elaboration of all the inverse image-schematic axiologies discussed were to add up to was something of an emergent, self-confrontational "call," to each spectator's "moral unconscious": "What would become of [her, were she] submitted to the supreme test? [--] Would [she too] become the victim of those collective myths created for mutual consolation?" Were it not for their foci on the inner and the outer "montage" (the actors and the spectators), the respective answers of Grotowski and Flaszen might appear less than compatible: in confronting "the great lofty values of Western civilization [--] to see if these past dreams are concrete and strong, or only abstractions," Grotowski finds the latter "not annihilated but reinforced," giving "weight and depth to the prisoners, for they feel themselves part of the collective past." For Flaszen, the "conclusion" of the piece was that "we can't understand such ultimate experiences," the "authentic situation" of not comprehending, forcing us to confront "the impurity of our 'pure' conscience": seeing how "self-comforting" our morality is, we "realize we cannot be with the person who is dying or suffering. This is the relativity of being honest."[59] Taking Meyerhold's dual machinery of Socialist Utopia and bourgeois jealousy to a grim, post-holocaustal mode, in short, the disturbing "confrontation" of actors and characters, in *Akropolis*, would afford an apotheosis of human agency – "holy" actors, engaging their stage ecology to enact an egoless here-and-now – blended with its utter negation in the extreme of twentieth-century brutality, "Taylorizing" anterior values out of existence.

5 PILLORIES TO BARRICADE: KANTOR'S INFERNAL ECOLOGIES

Generally, the theatrical work of Tadeusz Kantor is probably best remembered from his insistent personal presence, on stage, and from the insistent coupling of his actors with an imposing multitude of "poor" wooden objects, "machines," and contraptions, often deemed Dadaistic or Surrealistic, fused in a theatre of Memory and History. On both fronts, the 1985 "revue" *Let the Artists Die!* (*Niech sczezną artyści!*) stands out as extreme, and, as such, prototypical of Kantor's œuvre: "one of the most complex and self-referential" of his works, and his "last acknowledged masterpiece," as Noel Witts proposes, it is even more "dependent on the interaction of performer and object" than his previous creations,[1] and presents us with at least five different stage figures partly identifiable as its author. At the same time, *Artists* finds Kantor's career at a very different level of establishment than was Grotowski's, at the time of *Akropolis*: the third of his productions to gain an OBIE award at its New York appearance – after *The Dead Class* (*Umarła klasa*, 1975) and the 1980 *Wielopole, Wielopole* – the piece was an international coproduction, to begin with, premiered in Nuremberg under the auspices of banker/patron Karl Gerhardt Schmidt. Rehearsed, on and off, for three years (mostly in Kraków) and performed, worldwide, for five, it was preceded by three decades of work centered on Kantor's "Cricot 2" theatre (the last two, with more or less the same core group) and a host of artistic "stages" and manifestoes – though, at the time, most would only recognize the designation of this latest phase as the "Theatre of Death," *Artists*, as concluding something of a trilogy begun with his definitive international breakthrough with *The Dead Class*. Finally, the establishment of the "Cricoteka" archives in Kraków ensures that the documentation of Kantor's later work, in rehearsal and on tour, exceeds by far what remains of early Grotowski.

Apart from Kantor's own prolific writing and various video documentaries of his performances and rehearsals, then, my main sources include the work of Krzysztof Pleśniarowicz (which, for my uses, is more informative than the biased postmodernist analyses of Kantor translator Michal Kobialka) and the stunningly detailed 1995 dissertation Jeffrey Lawson has devoted to the very production I am to write about. Obedient to Kantor's own antipathy to "interpretation," however, most commentators tend to discuss his work as "an extrasemantic Mystery beyond the human order," penetrating "the collective subconscious" while "bereft of any logical, causal, or continuous

patterns," "any network of metaphorical connections" – as for *Artists*, Witts finds it in some ways "the most difficult of Kantor's pieces for a non-Polish audience," and is "content simply to watch the various images passing in front of one's eyes." Then again, Kantor often spoke of "elevating" his work to a "universal level," beyond mere "exhibitionism," "so that everybody [could] understand it": admittedly not Polish myself, I do share Małgorzata Sugiera's intuition that "the enthusiastic international response to performances so rooted in Kantor's biography and Polish-Jewish history and culture" reflects his "deliberate play with his audience's cognitive schemata and prototypes."[2] Accordingly, after brief introductory probes into Kantor's pervading themes of imagination and memory, and an extended description of what "happens," in *Artists*, the central sections of this chapter will discuss some of his pervading metaphors, as materially anchored not only in the performance, but in its rehearsals and in many previous productions – the argument being that some of Kantor's international appeal comes from his relentless drawing on metaphors that are *deeply conventional*, to Western culture: e.g., Life as a Journey, Memory as Storage. If the aim here is to tease out a fundamental *continuity* in Kantor's theoretical thought, the final section will then focus on some creative *tensions*, in the performance – the counterintuitive blending of conventional elements – that go into his deeply idiosyncratic staging of art, memory, and selfhood, much in line with notions of distributed cognition.

"Constructivism": Abstraction, Imagination, and the Poor Object of the Lowest Rank

> THE ELEMENTS OF ABSTRACTION – that is, the square, the triangle, the circle, the cube, the cone, the sphere, the straight line, the point, the concepts of space, tension, and movement – are all elements of drama. They can be defined by philosophical, human, and psychological categories [--] [and they] constitute the fabric of drama as interestingly as human conditions, conflicts, and misfortunes did in Greek tragedy. (Tadeusz Kantor: *The Milano Lessons*)

In his brief discussion of Kantor as a representative of what he terms "postdramatic" theatre, Hans-Thies Lehmann draws attention to how his work would unsettle the "dramatic" conception of the theatrical environment, as little more than "a frame and background to the *human* drama and the human figure" – such that "everything (and every *thing*) [only] revolves around human actions": as a visual artist, according to Lehmann, it was part of Kantor's "postdramatic gesture" to "de-dramatize" the hierarchy, "vital for drama," between human being and object. *Post* this or that, a suitable

point of departure for discussing Kantor's theatrical objects can indeed be traced in his dual sensibilities as both a theatre director and as a denizen of the fine arts – his "lifelong immersion in pictorial imagery" which Daniel Gerould has succinctly traced back to three distinct kinds of "iconographic sources": apart from a "personal and self-perpetuating" level of specific objects and activities that would recur throughout, across the different art forms he engaged, the specifically Polish and international types of inspiration can perhaps be related to how Kantor himself would admit to an ever-present "contradiction between Symbolism and abstract art," in his work.[3] Born during the First World War, and well educated in the arts, by the Second, he could freely exploit both "waves" of the international avantgardes, as they emerged in the 1920s and '30s, and the 1950s and '60s respectively: Constructivism and the Bauhaus; Dada and Surrealism; *art informel* and the Happening. Given his characteristic "corrections" to each of these movements, it is superfluous to name this section and the next one after Constructivism and Symbolism respectively – here and throughout, all the different "isms" will freely blend into one another – but rather, the point is to try and tease out an initial cognitive logic (despite all his denials of "psychology") to two of Kantor's key concerns: *imagination*, below, and *memory*, in what follows.

As to the visual and the theatrical in Kantor's "theoretical" writing, one of the places where the two converge most explicitly is in his 1986 *Milano Lessons*, briefly quoted at the opening of this section. A firm proponent of "Reality," since the Second World War, he now comes to quote lengthy sections from his "Nocturnal Notebook" of 1948, on the concepts of *abstraction* and *space* – defined as the "absence of an object," and the "UR-MATTER" of theatre, respectively. Teaching what he understands to be the heritage of Constructivism, for young theatre students ("IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT THE CONSTRUCTIVISTS' LESSON BE REMEMBERED"), Kantor thus reaches back to his very roots, in promoting what he then termed a dynamic "MULTISPACE," "charged with ENERGY," as opposed to the "mechanical [--] optical illusion" of past painting: in a language not unlike Gibson's, "[s]pace is not a passive receptacle in which objects and forms are posited" but itself "an OBJECT [of creation]" – figures and objects, a "function of space and its mutability," "TENSION," its "principal actor." "[C]ompressed into a flat surface," it is space, for Kantor, that "gives birth" to forms and objects, putting forth "various types of motion":

CIRCULAR MOTION,
around an axis posited vertically, horizontally, diagonally
in relation to the surface of the image… [--]
PENDULUM MOTION,
whose swinging –
losing
and regaining of momentum –
conditions expansion
and GROWTH of space.
MOTIONS OF MOVING [surfaces],
of *PUSHING* them together,
of *PULLING* them apart,
of covering and un-covering.
MOTIONS OF DESCENDING and ASCENDING.
MOTIONS OF MOVING [surfaces] apart until they disappear.
MOTIONS OF DRAWING them NEAR and PUSHING them AWAY.
SUDDENNESS and VELOCITY of these motions
create new aspects:
TENSION
and a change of SCALE.[4]

Transferred onto a theatrical stage, this spatial "abstraction" is then objectified, as we see the same general concepts physically implemented in performers and objects:

> In theatre, TENSION has similar characteristics and effects. It is created by the network of relations existing between the characters; by the position and direction of hands, legs, the whole body; by the distances that grow and diminish between the characters, … by the use of appropriate objects.[5]

Of course, the conceptual is only one aspect of Kantor's œuvre: his painting, for instance, had been exclusively figurative, since the mid-1970s. From a cognitive point of view, however, there is a discernible linkage between the two in the very *language* he applies: writing of space, for example, "that shrinks, expands, ascends, descends, loses its balance, draws near, and moves away," he comes to use explicitly the kind of *image-schematic* concepts that have already figured prominently in the work at hand. Somewhat artificial as it may be, to chart them out as if they were somehow separable – in context, they come in complex gestalts, superimposed and ever transforming – it is revelatory of Kantor's very *systematicity* as to the default "axiologies" proposed for the schemas in cognitive linguistics research: declaring, decade after decade, the "autonomy" of a work of art in its defying "the logic of everyday norms," or its "follow[ing] its own laws," materialized in its own "anatomy," he still has those norms *implied*, by way of systematic reversal. In a Kantoresque "anatomy" (whether bodily,

spatial, or cultural), schemas like DOWN, PERIPHERY, BACK, and OUT take categorical precedence over their "positively" valued counterparts such as UP, CENTER, FRONT, and IN – as already discussed in Chapter 3. When, in *The Milano Lessons*, he suggests that object and abstraction exist as "images" or photographic "shots" of each other in "different worlds," only to deny any difference between them a moment later, this is only in keeping with the "invariance principle" that presumably governs the workings of conceptual metaphor – or, with Gibson's perceptual point that "abstraction" comes down to "invariance detection across objects." In such terms, then, his claim that the elements of abstraction can be defined by "philosophical, human, and psychological categories," would appear a fairly straightforward matter of *metaphorical extension*, to such more "abstract" domains, from the material embodiment of their image-schematic invariants, for instance, in the interplay of actors and objects.[6]

Intriguingly, there is also a fairly straightforward sense in which these simple cognitive notions seem to clarify the "interchangeability of oppositions" Krzysztof Pleśniarowicz has recognized in Kantor's "self-commentaries": "the obverse and the reverse of the same coin," as he proposes, such grounding binaries as Illusion/Reality, Form/Matter, Death/Life, and Consciousness/Object would recur throughout. On the one hand, they are not provided any precise, logical definitions: liberal as with all his terminology, Kantor only seems to think in terms of oppositions "because he needs to define [--] the boundaries between which art takes place." On the other, these boundaries *do* often reflect the bipolar axiology of the image-schematic binaries just outlined: be it Illusion, Form, or Consciousness, what is metaphorically UP, IN, or CENTRAL, conventionally, belongs in Pleśniarowicz's reading "to the class of 'semiosis'," with its negative values of "'immobilisation' and inclusion in a conceptual system" (such that Form means "giving sense to matter," Death, to existence, Consciousness – to objects, understood as "cognitive challenges to man"). Conversely, what is DOWN, OUT, and PERIPHERAL, defines "the realm of mystery," not as some complete undoing of semantic relations, but rather as "a reduction of the '*signifié*' in comparison with the '*signifiant*'" – of the target, that is, in favor of the source: in terms that come close to defining the conceptual work of metaphor, Kantor argues the work of art should "present one realness via another one that is shockingly different," and that the spectator's imagination does have "the ability to move between these two worlds." Instead of having one domain *understood* in terms of its opposite, however, he would rather have them collide, or even evade one another: on the level of "meanings" (Kobialka

translates this as "the cognitive aspect of theatre"), he would always emphasize the *tension*, again, "between two separate and incompatible realities or objects," such that the "conjoining" of fiction and life, for instance, might in itself "create a completely NEW ARRANGEMENT" – in a mechanism more akin to conceptual blending.[7]

And here, importantly, Kantor's various "self-commentaries" already trace "a radical departure from the ideas of constructivism" – from its emphasis on "technology and mechanics" which, he insists, "collapsed definitely and irrevocably" with his 1944 underground production of *The Return of Odysseus*, by Stanisław Wyspiański. As opposed to the ideas of "Interpretation, Abstraction, and Construction," his newfound appeal was to "REALNESS," not as "an *expressive form*" but as "a *mode of thinking*" – "freed from the tired desire" of illustrating or symbolizing something else, yet by no means "neutral": where "abstraction" was defined as the "absence of an object," the object that "returned" during wartime would be "the simplest, the most primitive, old, marked by time, worn out by the fact of being used, POOR." In an interesting way, however, these twin characteristics of *reality* and *poverty* seem to retain a dialectic of chance and choice we can already trace in Kantor's early ideas about space/abstraction: on the one hand, just as the "UR-MATTER" of space should "give birth" to the "infinite variants of life," "independent of [the] artist," so should the poor object – "balanc[ing] between eternity and garbage" – reflect a "Reality of the Lowest Rank" that "precedes the shapes and forms of the everyday" (Lawson). On the other, just as the "TENSIONS" of space need, however, be "manipulated" by an artist, so the "singular characteristic" of poverty need be "given to" the real/found object, by an artistic gesture of "Annexing [its] Reality": in order for the "new arrangement" to emerge in which the object may arise to "this other domain of not-life" – of imagination and poetry, "the sphere of multiple meanings" – it "must be poor, next to the garbage," such that "the artist's genius endows it with the value of eternity."[8]

As for *poverty*, Kantor would admit adherence to "a certain cultural tradition" (that of Polish inter-war writer Bruno Schulz and his notion of "degraded reality"), but insist that his "discovery" of the concept was "many years ahead of [--] all imitative theatrical or terminological applications" such as, presumably, Jerzy Grotowski's ("it is important that the year [--] be remembered: 1944"). As for *reality*, he would relate the notion to another tradition he "fe[lt] a part of," but insist that its "great discovery had been forgotten" when, during the war, he and his actors "had the strength

only to grab the nearest thing, THE REAL OBJECT, and to call it a work of art!" In *The Milano Lessons*, he duly identifies this tradition, in the framework of abstraction:

> A DIFFERENT KIND OF OBJECT EMERGES, not the one to which artists offered their skills by studiously representing it in painting. There emerges an object that is WRENCHED FROM THE REALNESS OF LIFE, BEREFT OF THE LIFE FUNCTION THAT VEILED ITS ESSENCE, ITS OBJECTNESS.
> This happened in 1916 [*sic*].
> Marcel Duchamp did it.
> He stripped [the object] of all its aesthetic value.
> He called it "L'OBJET PRÊT."
> A pure object.
> One might say an ABSTRACT OBJECT.[9]

"Symbolism": Death and Memory, or, Repetition of the Readymade

In Tadeusz Kantor's artistic autobiography, then, "the ready-made or found object [was his] personal invention" because – "truly," as he smilingly puts it in a filmed interview with Denis Bablet – "I didn't know, you have to believe me." By the 1980s, in any case, he would apply these attributes to nearly everything he worked with, be it space, text, actors, or even "poor fragments of [his] own life": whether his own dead relatives, "traces" from literature, art, and history, or "versions" of himself at different ages, all of his stage "characters" would also bear the status of "ready-made objects." In his commentaries to *Artists*, notably, he would relate the word *found*, as such, "with the world of the DEAD, the world 'beyond'" – "purposeless, disinterested, [--] a pure WORK OF ART," as opposed to "implying any kind of discovery or search"; just as he would admit an *emotional* quality in "poorness" that was "foreign to dada," he would now relate his rejection of "the cold scaffolds of pure constructivism" to his early "sensitiv[ity] to the problem[s] of fate and death." This, then, can be seen as the definitive influence of Polish Symbolism on Kantor's art and work: extending, as he now would, the "tradition of Theatre of Death" to "the very beginning" of the performing arts, his main allegiance would always be to the medieval/modernist legacy of his native Kraków – to Wyspiański and to the "royal castle with the ghosts of Poland's kings" (indeed, he had sketched scenes for *Akropolis* as early as in 1932). Yet George Hyde suspects he "could never have done what Grotowski did, and stage a play in a death camp": instead of such "gross literalism," he would turn the "inescapable fact of mass extermination [--] into a huge metaphor, invoking the age-old inter-

action of the living and the dead, a rich source of images in both Catholic and Jewish culture" – and, Daniel Gerould would add, a central theme to Polish Symbolism.[10]

Now in Lehmann's postdramatic reading, it is of the essence that Kantor's theatre refuse "a dramatic representation of the all too 'dramatic' events that are [its] subject" ("torture, prison, war and death"): that death, "as the basis of experience" rather than its endpoint, is "not dramatically staged but ceremonially repeated." And indeed, having "invented" the Theatre of Death by 1975, Kantor wants to see *Let the Artists Die!*, ten years later, as if *structured* by the lowly act of "slow but inexorable dying," as opposed to the "violent, dramatic, spectacular act" or "punch line" as which he finds death, in the theatre, presented since "the Chinese and the Greeks"; the lack of a "unified plot" ("a condition of any DRAMA") has him dub the work, "a Revue." On the one hand, the way he would relate this gradual process not merely to death but to what he calls its "domain," implies a host of simple scenarios that go into defining the overall category, cognitively – withering, burial, departure; in short, as he had it on the first day of rehearsal, "the kinds of scenes that will elicit emotions in the public": as Bruce McConachie notes, "[e]ven Kantor's ceremonies center on events [--] and events, however partial and fragmented in performance, still evoke narrative expectations that spectators will witness with narrative schemas in mind." On the other hand, the way these schematic scenarios would be "repe[ated] to the point of sheer anguish" – a device Kantor directly relates to "the art of happening" – again has to do with his fundamental tenet of "eras[ing] from realness its life's function [and] meaning," its cause and effect, such that it may enter "the domain of thought and imagination" and stand forth as "An Autonomous Work Of Art": in the "Zero" and "Informel" theatres of the 1960s, repetition would have been one of the means which allowed objects and actors alike to become "objectless" stage matter, "negat[ing] the concept of form," "freed from [--] the laws of construction," "loosely connected and easy to mould."[11]

By the 1980s, however, "the most tangible reality" and thus, "the only material" Kantor found he could "work in," would have been *the past*, that which "has already taken place" (the present, all too "fluid"; the future, "a purely fictitious notion"). Not that this prime matter should not be subjected to the postdramatic device of repetition, in his newfound "Constructivism of the Emotions": instead of its creating dramatic action or "linear plots," "the real structure of our memory" would rather be delineated by the "pulsating rhythm" of *photographic plates* "which appear and disappear [--] until the image fades away, until… the tears fill the eyes." Now, as a metaphor of

storage, the photographic analogy is of course utterly conventional, predating even the invention of plastic film: as opposed to Kobialka's rather grandiose discussion of "a world governed by the [Kantor-created] Theory of Negatives," his specific reference is to the kinds of early 19th-century glass plates (*kliszy*) in which memory "impressions" lie motionless and "frozen – almost like metaphors but unlike narratives." As regards the *action of recollection*, on the other hand, the way he would now capitalize on their "transparency" and its affordances of having different frames "overlap" and "mix up," during performance – the dead past, merging with the present and the future, wreaking "serious trouble with history, moralilty and all possible conventions" – also seems to downplay the idea of permanent storage, for the kind of "constructive recategorization" found in more recent cognitive accounts of memory performance. Compressed into the "human scale" and "condensed time" of a theatrical stage, thus (to analyze their *mise-en-scène* in the framework of conceptual blending), the SUPERIMPOSITION of vast reaches of national and personal history would not go without "emergent structure," absent from any of them when taken as separate – and often enough these blends would be "materially anchored" in some stage object: as Lawson puts it, "each overlay provided a context and shape" that "entailed" and "influenced" those to come, in a process "by which matter was remembered into form."[12]

In the vocabulary of painting, again, such "montage-like layering" of different frames resonates with the kinds of "'dense' modernist spaces" Kantor's work has been related to, "full of cultural and artistic allusions and intertexts" in contrast to the "empty space" school of some Brook or Grotowski – hence, a late work such as *Let the Artists Die!* would be thoroughly saturated or "ghosted" by a host of readymade elements, not least from an already extensive artistic career of his own. On the one hand, Kantor would relate their emergence to the existence of "some peculiar mental frames," like "holes of different sizes and shapes" that only go to "accept" so many concepts and issues: "death, journey, army, childhood"; in this specific case, "the problems of prison, [--] and the concept of fame and glory." On the other hand – in line with the "accidental" blending of his memory negatives – he would stress the avantgarde ideal of *coincidence* (the "faithful companion" of matter) and claim that his work on a theatrical production always began with "random" and "useless" things from "logically incompatible" domains, such that "the real creation" only consisted in "finding the means to join them up." As for *Artists*, accordingly, his commentaries would deliberately highlight the "intervention" of chance, in regard to many of its key

elements (somewhat vitiated, perhaps, by the way he would often resort to reading aloud his notes, in interview): as but the most literal example of a "found" object and its Duchampian "correction," he would relate the central musical theme of the piece to a gramophone recording, chanced upon and sat upon, such that when he tried to play it, the music came out at half speed, one bit of melody, repeated over and over. When his patron in Nuremberg proposed he do something in his city, the one connection he "found" was a medieval sculptor who had also worked in his own, brutally punished for "financial irregularities" on his return: "unrelated" to the 450th anniversary of his death, the story of Wit Stwosz (Veit Stoss, in German) appealed to Kantor through its similarity to that of "the title" – here, in the paraphrase of critic Ross Wetzsteon:

> Tadeusz Kantor remembers the exact day he heard the phrase – March 5, 1982. A chic Paris party, artists, patrons, gallery owners. The conversation turned, as it invariably does, to a development project that would drive out the artists. When someone pointed out that it was the artists who'd enhanced the value of the neighborhood, a woman said, as someone invariably does, "Let the artists die!"[13]

The Performance: What Happens, and Initial Commentaries Thereupon

Both verbally and graphically, describing the general outline of *Let the Artists Die!* is a very different task from that set by *Akropolis* or *The Magnanimous Cuckold*. First, there is no coherent "script" or "partytura," in existence, only individual sheets that contain the few lines each actor was to repeat over and over – a lack I once faced with some frustration, before coming to terms with the principles of distributed cognition. Second, while Kantor did provide the piece with a poetic "Guide" to how he wanted it to be perceived, the classical five-act structure it imposes on the action is not altogether consistent with the CYCLES of its performance. (For Lawson, "one of the most provocative moments" in Kantor's theatre was indeed the "slow intrusion of an object or moment into the eye of a hurly-burly circle of activity and the consequent juxtapositions of stillness against movement, and of focus and intent against an almost pointless abandon." A moment of directed action, then again chaos, retreat, and – repeat.) Finally, in devoiding the performance of both "setting" and "action," the Guide harks back to Kantor's earlier ideas of Constructivist scenery, not as a matter of architecture (cf. Grotowski/Gurawski) but as an "organism" composed of "autonomous" PARTS; unlike the "mastodon" anatomy of *The Magnanimous Cuckold*, however, the poor room, here, is always on the verge of disintegration, "*without walls, ceiling or floor*!"

Accordingly, Figure 3 can provide no invariant map of objects or affordances; what it presents, instead, is how the performance space is outlined, by curtains, and the approximate tiling of its floor which apparently traveled with the group – in the discussion, the letters come to indicate the general choreography of actors and objects. Besides that, my aim is to describe the various "places" this space would embody, and to have done with most of the intertextual detective work, inevitable as regards the piece's Polish specifics (e.g. the continuous music that is a critical part of its texture). Based on a 1986 tv version of the performance, by Stanisław Zajączkowski, the description will use *italics*, when citing the English subtitles of its recent dvd release; "double" quotes, when citing Kantor; and 'single' quotes, for all other authors.[14]

Figure 3. The general layout of the space, and the actors in order of appearance. In Zajączkowski 2008, the timing of the "acts," as interpreted below, is as follows: [Act] I 0:07:12 – II 0:21:40 – III 0:42:27 – IV 1:01 – V 1:12 – End Credits 1:15:43.

Overture. The Room is dominated by a large wooden Door, sagging and beat-up, dead center in the black, upstage wall [a]. Outlined by black curtains, with a small escape stage right [i], it gives the impression of a "black hole," with only the barest vestiges of objects that might have been – all mounted on tiny caster wheels: a straw pallet or sickbed with a white sheet and a pillow [gn], three wooden side chairs one at its feet [d-i-n], a chair-like chamber-pot in the back corner [b], and five wobbly crosses fixed on wooden planks but 'tilted awry,'[15] the highest three at the head of the bed [b, c].

Kantor makes his appearance at the stage-right escape, and takes his seat on the side chair [i] in the vicinity of which he will linger throughout. Present on stage, as he has been in his productions since the 1967 *Water Hen* (*Kurka wodna*), it is only now

that he indicates as much in the Dramatis Personae – listed, therein, as "I – a Real Person, the Main Perpetrator of It All," often translated into "the Prime Mover."

The "first opening of the door" is then performed by the Caretaker (Stanisław Rychlicki), who, after a few staggering attempts at marching steps, lets in eight actors in tails and bowler hats, all in black: "those [who] see you to the place of eternal rest." Having taken some appropriate interest in the objects, they are focused around "the one who is being seen off": a ninth actor at the door (Bogdan Renczyński), identified as "The Late Mr. X," in English, and as "The Individual of Holy Memory," in Polish. The space now becomes what Lawson dubs 'a way station for the dead,' as the actors painstakingly rid Mr. X of his black costume and package him in bone-white traveling clothes, complete with a scarf and a black-brimmed hat. A Doctor appears (actress Mira Rychlicka, identified as the Greek deity Asklepios) to take the pulse of Mr. X, set on his rickety feet: *One, two, three*… throughout, s/he will be around "to confirm the cases of death," whether in Polish, German, French, Greek, Hebrew, or Yiddish.[16]

With the booming sounds of a funereal dirge, "the one who is departing sets off on a road unlike any other road in this world" – that is, commences a slow march straight toward the audience [a–y]. In an orderly row at the back [b-a-c], the escorting actors solemnly take off their hats; as Mr. X slowly continues off the side exit [y–i], they casually take theirs through the main door. Having stood at attention downstage left [t], the Caretaker rushes to gather Mr. X's initial clothes [b] and warily exits too.

Act I. No sooner has the door closed on the Caretaker than it admits in The Owner of a Cemetery Storeroom (Zbigniew Bednarczyk), "open[ing] his business at midnight as usual." Complaining about *misplaced crosses* and the *unmade bed*, he shifts one of the crosses over [b–c] and, part to Kantor part to himself, finds himself *ruined*; as he is about to sit on the bed, knocking "steps" are heard over the loudspeakers, as "the 'tenants' of the cemetery storeroom return from their night walks." The first to appear is an old "Garrulous Mum," in her funeral dress and veil (Lila Krasicka): clinging to her black umbrella, she skitters around mumbling litanies of her dead relatives, backed by a recorded echo on the loudspeakers and the occasional verbal nods of the Owner of the Storeroom. Trying to keep step with her, he goes about dusting her hat and dress before the Mum eventually takes her seat on the chair next to Kantor's [d].

The next to jump in are the signature twins of Kantor's company: the identical brothers Lesław and Wacław Janicki, with identical suits, moustaches, and bowlers.

LJ comes first, and starts coughing into his white handkerchief; as WJ appears at the door, he notes he is *already there* and deduces he *can leave then*; "surprised by his own 'absence'" – *Have I left?* – LJ then "goes in search of himself": the turn-taking play at entrance and exit goes on at accelerating speed, until LJ suddenly jumps into the bed, prepared, meanwhile, by the Owner who now covers him with the white sheet and proceeds to close the door at the other twin's behest. In the following "circus rehearsal of agony," the brother in bed becomes a "stubborn dead man": again at growing speed, his head nods down and pops back up, as the hats around go off and on again to the rhythm of *Now... not yet* (Mum only follows for a while, then gets bored and returns to her chair). At the end of it, the supine twin calls out for *the cart*: "In the hour of death you always evoke the image of your childhood days."

Thus, in comes "a pram, my little pram and I – When I Was Six": to the thudding sounds of the funereal dirge introduced in the Overture, the Owner lets in a small boy in a military cap and an oversized uniform (Michał Gorczyca), riding a wooden kiddie cart which he slowly operates all the way to the front of the stage [a–y] – only to retreat all the way back again. The Owner closes the door and, prompted by another call for *the cart* from the sitting twin, opens it anew: now, the boy is followed by a diminutive woman in a similar, lilac grey uniform (Maria Kantor), and by a swaying regiment of 'silvery generals in Polish four-cornered army caps' who then stumble and fall all over as he embarks on "playing [with his] little tin soldiers." As the boy regains his cart, the generals slowly regain formation; as the boy rides the cart to its earlier downstage spot [y], they jerkily march behind him in a row of eight, which, as it eventually opens up to the sides, reveals "the coffin glory" of their Leader: to a new, up-tempo military music, the woman who accompanied them earlier reappears at the door, now on 'the white-maned skeleton of an apocalyptic horse.'[17]

This, then, is "the theatre of History and Death," "*Theatrum Mortis et Gloriae*": set on a large iron frame on casters, the skeleton horse is pushed right behind the boy, frontally to the audience, such that the generals may now cheer their Leader on both sides of his charger – very much as a 'victory photo' for the audience. In a moment, however, they are again as if 'sucked out'[18] through the upstage door [l–a] which the Owner of the Cemetery Storeroom is already in position to close; the boy gets off his cart and leads the horse, with the Owner, to a profile alignment behind Mum [d-e].

Thus endowed with properties of a child's room and the 'killing fields'[19] alike, the space now regains its former identity as a sickroom for the dying: having remain-

ed in their respective corners throughout, the talking twin now goes up to Mum, to explain how one winter the one in bed *spat on the snow and saw a blood stain*. As the Doctor/Asklepios enters, he begins his story anew, cut short by the former suddenly asking his name – what follows is an accelerating semaphore of their hands, in answer and question, pointing now to the twin in bed, now to Kantor, now to the boy by the horse; of the Doctor beginning to realize that *this one is this one is this one*, running across the stage from one to the other, in order to take their pulse and to declare them dead (*one, two, three*). A small hiatus comes when the pointing twin finds himself pointing at himself, in surprise (*this is this?*) and the Doctor takes his pulse on his other wrist; in reclaiming his running activities, the Doctor then finds both Kantor and the recumbent twin gone and withdraws to the upstage door, "[t]o save his prestige."

Like "the End of the World," in Kantor's typical flourish, the end of the act is marked by an "eschatological rush" as "a crazy delirium takes hold of bodies, arms, heads, legs": the boy and the little Leader joyfully dancing in their upstage corner, the twins doing weird exercises by their bed and with their hankerchiefs, the change of mood is introduced by a new musical theme – the Lumpenproletariat tango[20] – and a new group of actors. The little cart remains in its central downstage position [y].

At this point, there is already a host of historical, biographical, and literary influences to be noted – I will proceed in that order. First, as Pleśniarowicz points out, history is now represented by 'authentic figures,' 'for the first time' in Kantor's theatre: though only identified as "You Know Who" or as "The Man Whose Name Shall Not Be Mentioned Here" (obediently, Kobialka ever only dubs him 'a historical figure'), the Leader on his white charger is a forthcoming evocation of First Marshal and Chief of State Józef Piłsudski (1867–1935), 'the champion of modern Polish independence [--] buried with all the pomp of state in the crypt of Wawel Cathedral' (Norman Davies). If devoid of his signature moustache on stage, his identity is clearly evoked by the military march which always accompanies his entrances and 'which Poles will always associate with him': We, of the First Brigade (My pierwsza brygada) – of which what I have been calling the funereal dirge is actually a gloomy half-time rendering.[21]

The biographical level then links *Artists* directly to Kantor's prior production of *Wielopole, Wielopole* (1980): first, his father, portrayed as an army recruit therein, fought in Piłsudski's Polish Legions during World War I, never to return to his family (though he was only killed in Auschwitz in 1942, an incident only to be suggested in

Kantor's next production, *I Shall Never Return*, in 1988). Second, in parading himself "at the age of six" – this would have been in 1921 – Kantor evokes not only Piłsudski's then triumph against the Russians and his father's concurrent absence, but the death of the Priest/Grandpa that also figured prominently in *Wielopole*: it was from him that he claims to have gotten his dear kiddie cart for his birthday the year before. Finally, the way this death also seems to be evoked in Mum's mumblings (derived apparently from an extant letter) situates her as Kantor's own mother: Helena Berger would figure in all of his productions throughout the 1980s, this time, on the verge of her death, in black, as opposed to her dirty white wedding gown in *Wielopole*.[22]

Finally, apart from "I – the Real One" and "I – at the Age of Six," there are the Janicki twins: "I – the Dying One, a stage character," and "its Author, describing in it and through it his own self, his incurable illness, his own dying." Imaginings of Kantor, yes, these figures also allude to Polish inter-war novelist Zbigniew Uniłowski (1909–37) and the protagonist, Lucjan, in his now obscure novel *The Common Room* (*Wspólny pokój*, 1932): the lingering death of Lucjan in the novel, and that of his young author only years thereafter. While the Author's verbal descriptions of dying are only drawn from the very final chapter of the book (a couple of pages, further fragmented by the Janickis themselves), the Doctor/Asklepios does have the air of the 'provincial quack' figured therein – and a whole parade of further traces is introduced by the new characters that now burst in, echoing the literary bohemia of artists and students that surround/disturb Lucjan's dying in their shared, common room to let.[23]

Act II begins as the Doctor/Asklepios, remaining by the door, swings it open to admit a "Company of Travelling Comedians," about to engage in what Kantor implies is something of a play-within-a-play performance of "Let the Artists Die." Led by the former Caretaker (SR), this "circus cortege" is squarely identified with Kantor's own Cricot 2, inscribed on the "enormous crate" he pushes before him; to the sounds of the new proletarian tango, each of the actors proceeds to the central downstage spot [r] just behind the cart, does his or her bit of lines and/or business, and continues to the side exit [i] – only to reappear at the door [a] a moment later, and to do it all anew.

Each pushing or wearing their characteristic objects, or the "pillories of [their] everyday life," we thus come to witness a round of short review numbers performed by: a Sloven "washing his dirty feet" (Jan Książek); a Hanged Man singing arrogant songs (Roman Siwulak); a Cabaret Whore (Teresa Wełmińska); a Pimp "addicted to

card playing" (Lech Stangret); a Bigot who keeps calling, *Mother of God* (Ewa Janicka); and what appears to be a crossdressing Dishwasher (Zbigniew Bednarczyk).

Eventually, the upstage corners of the room [b and c] are taken over by the Comedians' large, wooden traveling crates – two more appear, inscribed "Nürnberg," and "Die Künstler sollen krepieren" – and as they begin to settle in, it becomes what Lawson dubs 'their hangout complete with its own Owner' (that of the Cemetery Storeroom, having become the Dishwasher): done with pushing the gallows of the Hanged Man, actor Andrzej Wełmiński collects two suitcases and a white towel, sees off the Doctor, closes the door, and takes to scrubbing whatever he comes across.

As opposed to its prior black bareness, the room now appears menacingly full: an "ASYLUM which at night gives shelter to beggars, bohemian artists, cutthroats," an "Inferno of Everyday Life" in which they "desperately try to piece together" their memories and identities – also, a Common Room in which the Author now finds many new ears for his story about the Dying One's *stomach functions*; in which Mum mumbles on, to the irritation of the Bigot (*she talks and talks... with the sick at home*); in which the Traveling Comedians go about their bits of business and – though generally grouped into two: the males on the side of Kantor and the warhorse, the females by the sickbed – anxiously shift themselves about 'in short arcs and semicircles.'[24]

In Lawson's favorite phrase, this 'hurly-burly of noise and movement' is then given focus by the sound of an accordion, as the Leader on his horse strikes up a cynical lullaby about his chestnut mare and a *kiss* he received *from Death but not from you* (O, mój rozmarynie; again, a popular soldier's song from World War I).[25] Routinely interrupted by the Comedians' "performance [of] 'Let the Artists Die'," the song is divided into two similarly emerging sections, then completed with the dirge as the generals once again stagger in, stumble and fall, only to gather around the Leader [d] and to proceed as a diagonal entourage downstage – "sweeping away" the Owner of the Hangout and the Author, seated on the former's suitcases by the cart [z], then again retreating, backwards, out of the door which the Caretaker then closes [r–a].

This part of the act is summed up by the Author: "They are gone like a dream."

The second part opens with "a spectacular Self-Portrait scene," acted out by the Author and the Dying One by the bed; eventually, they lie side by side under the white sheet, and there emerges a "second Circus Rehearsal of Agony" – now, with two heads going down and up, and a few more hats going off and on around them. Done with this, the Dying One notes the cart again, only slightly removed from its

downstage base from Act I, and stumbled over in the bustle of the Common Room; as Mum escorts him to take a closer look, he begins an "unsuccessful 'Driving Lesson'" while the Author, now in bed, tries to verbalize and demonstrate the act of operating it, in reminiscence of how the *crowds followed* him in *amazement and delight*.

Bit by bit, as the Author remembers he had *bare heels* and that he wore *shorts*, the Dying One takes off his shoes, socks, and pants (finding white shorts underneath) which Mum duly delivers to Kantor on the side; once the cart eludes his control and goes astray, all the same, they momentarily admit: *I forgot... it wasn't me...* but now Mum and "[t]he little Soldier come[] in handy." As the Six-Year-Old takes over, the Hangout Owner provides the Dying One with the commode that has been waiting in an upstage corner throughout [b], and the twins resume the forwards-back riding arm movements they have been rehearsing – each on his specific vehicle: the boy in the cart, one twin on the potty, one in his bed which the Owner now takes to shift about.

With the dirge, there gradually emerges "a Vicious Circle" of rolling objects, as every actor joins in to a general counterclockwise pattern of movement, taking over the entire downstage area: the boy, the twins, Mum, the Traveling Comedians; then, with their up-tempo march, the military entourage – "Theatrum Mortis et Gloriae." ("A significant metaphor in Polish art [and] life," the scene can be taken to refer not only to an eponymous symbolist painting by Jacek Malczewski from the late 1890s, but to the somnambulistic circle dance at the end of Wyspiański's *The Wedding*.)[26]

At the end, when all others have once again taken their exit through the upstage door (the potty-twin, having regained his clothes from Kantor during the last round), "[o]nly the bed of straw, the Author and the gallows stay behind" – the gallows [f] behind the bed [ry], again on a straight line from the door to downstage center. In a ferocious parody of Kantor's own trademark gestures, the Author makes his exit first: gets up, puts on a scarf, announces, "And That Is How Those 64 Years Have Passed." The act ends with one more of the Hanged Man's cynical refrains: *The moon's bright as a bell, this world can go to hell / For there's no longer any love left in my soul.*

Act III. The actors reclaim their objects and approximate positions: Mum, by Kantor; the Hanged Man and the Pimp/Gambler, stage right; the Bigot and the Dishwasher, by the Dying One's bed; the Author, resuming his chair and his story downstage left [ż]. To the Bigot's annoyance (*Holy Mary, there she is again*), the Cabaret Whore appears and shares the Dying One's bed – another 'turn-taking' of "Let the Artists Die" goes

on, until interrupted by the solemn sound of an organ. With the "ancient religious hymn," Holy God Holy Mighty (Święty Boże Święty Mocny), the Pimp lights a votive candle on his dive table; as the chanting proceeds (*From fire, famine, pest, and war deliver us, O Lord* / *From sudden and unlooked-for death deliver us, O Lord*), "[t]he only Door in this place [--] begins to move in our direction..." [a–f].[27]

In its new, menacing position, the door now opens to admit who used to be the Owner of the Hangout, in Act II (AW), and the Caretaker, in the Overture (SR): the former, now, a 'fin-de-siècle bohemian artist'[28] – black coat, cape, scarf, and hat – the latter, his wary Page, quick to deliver his suitcases downstage right [v]. A wooden cross under his arm, the Artist proceeds downstage [f–y], then collects the Cabaret Whore to dance the tango, off through the door, which his Page then quietly closes.

"A Guest 'from the other side'," this, then, is Kantor's "found character" from the 15th century, the Nuremberg-born sculptor, Wit Stwosz: identified in the program (as opposed to the other historical figure, Piłsudski), complete with a reproduction of his Gothic altarpiece at St. Mary's Basilica in Kraków, the sinister artist is just about to re-execute this "greatest masterpiece of his life," on stage. As the door opens anew, he is followed by two "Death Camp Killers," who solemnly push in seven wooden "Pillories"; to a pounding half-time rendering of another section from My pierwsza brygada, a disturbing scene commences in which the actors – one by one, at Stwosz's command – are put in the pillory, declared dead by the Doctor: the Pimp, the Author, the Sloven, the Hanged Man, the Dying One, the Dishwasher. Thus, the Altar is "transformed into a Prison Cell, a Torture Chamber, the 'roles' of the Apostles 'are played' by the den-goers"; after a funereal dance with Stwosz himself, leaving his cross to the Page, the Bigot "becomes [the] Mother of God."

No sooner has the Dormition of the Virgin been evoked than Stwosz and the Cabaret Whore again engage in their joyful tango, amidst the "martyrs" on the Altar; provided with clattering, skeletal wings by the executioners, the latter then retreats to the Author's chair, downstage left, Stwosz, to the opposite corner downstage right. One by one, the pilloried actors are drawn behind the door by the executioners; the last to go is the Bigot [y–a], and on the Doctor's exit, the Page again closes the door. To the sound of the hymn, Mum draws her chair downstage and sits down silent; with her at the center [y], Stwosz and his Page stage right [v], and the Whore stage left [ź], the door and the tango then burst out to reveal the "Mutiny of the Martyrs," as the "Convicted Artists" dance in, carrying the instruments of their torture on their backs.

Again in evocation of the symbolist painter Malczewski (as are the black wings on the Cabaret Whore), the counterclockwise cycle dance that emerges is identified as "Melancholy," complete as the Doctor and the executioners take to prancing along.[29] Once the tango gives in to the march and the cycle is joined in by the Generals and the charger – now led by the Lad and the Leader on foot – "the Angel of Death mounts [her] Horse": the Whore's transformation is completed with a black flag from one of the Generals, waving which, a couple of rounds on, she leads her retinue off the stage. As the door unobtrusively draws back in to its upstage wall [a], the rest of the actors stack their pillories in a pile at the front of the stage [qrs] and spread across – Mum, having returned to her base by Kantor, "only a Pile of pillars of martyrdom remains."

Act IV. As if nothing had happened, the actors reclaim their objects and positions, to "make their last efforts to survive." The first section then revolves around "the Poor Dishwasher's Love": resuming her litanies (*From morn till eve I slave and clean*. [--] *Poor, lonely woman*), she suddenly splashes her rag into her sink (*but that's enough!*), moves over to the Pimp/Gambler, and sits on his dive table in an attempt at seduction. As the latter only keeps bantering with his cards (*Ace in your face*), the Dishwasher is resolutely 'executed' into a grotesque, 'reclining sculpture,'[30] by Stwosz and his Page; only through his hand mirror does the Pimp realize she is dead, and while the Doctor confirms this (her hand, as if sculpted for taking her pulse), he advances to shoot himself in the head – bending over her sink, into which real water now starts to run.

With the dirge, in comes the Angel of Death/Cabaret Whore, on foot with her black banner, and claims the Dishwasher from her unwieldy position on the Pimp's table; once the Pimp has also been claimed by "[t]he one who [was] seen to the grave" in the Overture (BR, having then doubled as one of the Generals), the four gravely parade through the side exit [i] to the door [a] and again, the Dishwasher and the Pimp, already resuming their customary lines though now deprived of their objects. When they have gone, the culprit Page is also quick to exit, through the upstage door.

The second part of the act builds on the theme of "the Grapevine," or the tap-code, as the Asylum "inmates" now "feel the need to accommodate" the "prison cell" into which their "den" already turned "a long time ago." With the notable exceptions of Mum and the little Leader – who now has taken to reclining, apathetically, on the Dying One's mattress – each actor embarks on rapping and tapping on their character-

istic objects, on the sly, close to the floor, only to jump up in innocence when checked on, at the door, by the prior Caretaker/Page (SR, now a Prison Guard). In the end, the Angel of Death "erotically" entices everyone around the central pile of pillories; tempted along from the downstage corner, where he has remained throughout [v], Stwosz then silences them with a resolute hand gesture, presents a stick, and engages in a set of carefully sounded, rhythmic tappings across the woodwork. As the Master "sends his 'Message' out into the World" (and the tapping remains the only 'music' of this latter part of the act), 'loud and highly reverberated tappings' begin to be heard over the loudspeakers, 'transformed into the sound of [remote] bullet fire.'[31]

Act V then proceeds swiftly, as do most of Kantor's final acts in his Theatre of Death: to the bleak accompaniment of the second dirge rendering of My pierwsza brygada, the four large crates are spread out downstage, side by side, right behind the pillories. While the actors take to stacking all of their main objects on top of them – the gallows, the sink, the bed; the crosses, spread all over – and themselves climb atop the crates, the army section already stands in waiting, stage right: the Leader, the horse, the generals. At a gunshot from Stwosz, the military retinue is completed with their march music, and embarks on a counterclockwise parade around the collage thus formed – on the top, the actors now begin to fire fake rifles at the audience.

With Stwosz casually leaning on the central crate at floor level, his creation behind him is dominated by the Angel of Death waving her black banner, then finally, by the Late Mr. X, who emerges to raise his hands in victory, atop the Dishwasher's sink. Once the generals have gone – leaving only the skeleton charger behind, downstage right [o] – and once Mum has also been wheeled off on her chair by the Doctor, the actors simply climb down from their positions, and exit through the main door, one by one. The last to leave are Stwosz and Kantor: the one furtively tipping his hat toward the audience, the other briefly raising his hand by the main upstage door, which Stwosz then closes on the two of them (moments later, it will open again to admit the 'parade' of the curtain call). Kantor's sole "commentary" to this "act" reads as follows: "The Last Work of Master Veit Stoss: a Barricade! No comment!"

"Nothing But Marching On…": Metaphors of Journey, Departure, and Return

> I wanted to crush the mirror of the past. I knew it was impossible; my image was reflected in that mirror. Consciously I said "yes" to the past, and realized the past was not annihilated but reinforced. (Jerzy Grotowski)

> SIRENS: No one alive will ever return a second time to the land of his youth. Once youth has passed, it has passed never to return. [--] Limitless wanderings are your fate, your chains. (Stanisław Wyspiański: *The Return of Odysseus*)

Dying and the Journey: from the first stages of rehearsal, these were the central images around which Kantor wanted his new production to evolve and revolve. Both had accompanied him for a long time – his own artistic "Journey," by now, "clearly signposted" by the various names and manifestoes (Informel, Zero, Impossible…) with which he had provided its "different 'stages' and 'milestones'," along the way. In retrospect, his "'path' of youth" had led him "directly toward the wide road, well trodden by the revolutionary army": a firm proponent of the avantgarde – seen as the culturally PERIPHERAL, ever advancing for new territories – he would always proclaim his total "autonomy" from any "official" or "institutional" art forms. Come the Theatre of Death, however, and he would dub his beloved avantgarde a "mass movement," as well – a now "official freeway" he would exit to a "poor side street" leading to the cemetery: to "actions that are private, intimate, [--] shameful," as opposed to what he came to see as the "*official* History" of mass ideologies, wars, and crimes. On the one hand, then, Kantor understands "Life as a Journey and art as a journey": this is the founding "Idea" or "philosophical position" with which he has "identified" basically all of his work, since his happenings in the 1960s; on the other, it is only in keeping with this deeply conventional metaphor, that one of the most central images in *Artists* depicts Death As Departure – starting with the burial of "Late Mr. X" in the Overture. As Jeffrey Lawson notes, the scene recapitulates a central theme of "The Theatre of Death" manifesto, namely, the *avantgarde* emergence of the actor: that "SOMEONE who made the risky decision to BREAK with the ritualistic community." Advancing from "the common realm of customary and religious rituals, common ceremonies, and common people's activities," as described in the manifesto (abandoning the CENTRAL for the PERIPHERAL, as it were), the performance takes off with the Dear Departed, "setting off on his journey," "already 'on the other side'," as Kantor would phrase it:

He is going to travel
alone, left to himself,
destitute,
with nobody but himself to rely on. [--]
Nothing but marching on…[32]

In search of a scene, then, that would have his audiences "weep" as he gathered the vain nostalgia for lost childhood had, in *Wielopole, Wielopole*, Kantor decided he would now capitalize on the universality of "the burial." At one point in rehearsal, this "almost Symbolist scene" was to be interspersed throughout, with all of the actors ("since all the artists must die") taking turns at becoming the Dear Departed and joining in a burgeoning crowd of "marching on"; at another, the sole Mr. X would take his Departure on a railway platform, to the hissing sounds of a train taking off. While the throbbing engine would later give way to the funereal dirge, the key notion of *transition* – from one station to another, on a train; from life "here" to that "beyond," in death; perhaps to do with what Pleśniarowicz identifies as a typically Polish tradition "of not-solving, not-completing, the sphere 'between,' 'on the border,' 'near'" – was clearly evoked, in the performance, by a host of liminal figures that routinely "see you to the place of eternal rest": the Caretaker, identified in the notes with Charon, the mythical ferryman of the dead; the Doctor (at one point, the conductor of the train); the Angel of Death, tempting everyone along to join her grand parade. By far the most forthcoming evocation of the actual event of "burial" would, however, be enacted by the "friends and relatives" who escort the Dear Departed in the Overture: prior to taking off their hats in a solemn gesture "known from all cemeteries," they lift him up above their heads, and carefully shroud him in his burial clothing, until he is but a "packaged dummy," a "human *emballage*." Denoting "wrapping" or "packaging," with a sure dose of *collage* and *assemblage*, this is again one of the key words that had accompanied Kantor since the 1960s: a practice or a "ritual" he would relate to the act of "erasing" or "eliminating," in art – making an object "visible and meaningful" while defying all "esthetic" attempts to "possess" or "*represent*" it – but also, to the "exceedingly moving" human tendency to *conceal* what matters most: a bent that will not "surrender" even at death but "buries the dead [--] in coffins and graves."[33]

Deeply ingrained in the dynamics of CONTAINMENT, clearly, it is the transitory quality of Kantor's *emballages* that equally positions them on a metaphorical PATH or Journey, between, and perhaps devoid of, any definite SOURCE or GOAL: apart from

his long-standing *practice* of wrapping up people and objects, many of his paintings and happenings, since the 1960s, had focused on the actual *materials*, in themselves, related to such packaging or covering – umbrellas, bags, envelopes; "things that belied a history of being inherently servicable [--] at one point in time," as Jeff Lawson puts it, "only to be tossed [aside] once that usefulness was over." Identified with the "*objectless* matter" of his burial garments, then, the packaged Mr. X is obscured into another found object, "balanc[ing] between eternity and garbage"; PERIPHERAL to one reality (that of everyday functionality) while bordering on another, the theatricality of *emballage*, to paraphrase Alice Rayner, would lie in its utter sensitivity to *surfaces*, as opposed to the Aristotelian prejudice that dismisses the spectacle of appearances for the dramatic "substance" of action and character. On the one hand, such "exteriority" goes with Kantor's confessed "conviction," in "The Theatre of Death" manifesto, that *life* can only be expressed, in art, "through the *absence of life*, through an appeal to DEATH, through APPEARANCES, [--] EMPTINESS and the lack of a MESSAGE": in his own words, "it does not matter what [is inside]" the *emballage*. On the other – promoting now "the Material Shell of the world" as "the lowest state of being," dismissed by Platonic, essentialist philosophy – these late thoughts reflect the kind of "external realism" he had already proposed in the early 1940s: a realism that would stick to the *surfaces* of phenomena, "rather than go inside them," an almost "cynical" realism of "looking at surfaces 'from the side'." In his notes to *Artists*, accordingly, Kantor would rephrase the "metaphysical shock" related to the first appearance of the (dead) actor, in "The Theatre of Death," through the metaphor of "reflection":

> The man who for the first time saw himself bending over the still waters must have experienced an illumination. Against the advice of surrealists and dreamers – on no account should he go in and penetrate beneath the surface of the mirror. Remain in front of it! The REFLECTION itself is a wonder![34]

Now, what relates the mirror metaphor to those of Life as a Journey, lies in the interplay of past and future – BEHIND and AHEAD, in a conventional metaphor – on the surface of the looking-glass; what lies beyond, is for Kantor "AN EXTENSION OF REALITY [--] into the time of POETRY," of "our life *here* into the so-called eternity, where all patterns, rules, and dimensions cease to have any meaning." Not to be identified with "illusion" or "fiction," the reflection is to be taken as equally "real and substantial" as the "mundane" reality in which it has its roots – not a "mirror held up

to the reality of life," that is, but an "*answer* to reality," enacted by a neat image-schematic reversal: "moving ahead" towards the mirror, the narrative "I" of Kantor's program notes sees his reflection advancing for the "depths of infinity [he has] left behind," indeed he appears to be "walking forward BACK" – metaphorically, "plunging into the regions of the PAST" while moving "forward into the future." In line with his four incarnations, on stage, Kantor thus envisions a whole "procession marching on from the DEPTHS OF TIME": himself as "a barefooted boy in shorts," himself "in a school uniform," himself "with a romantic mop of hair" – up until the moment where he is standing before the mirror, alone, robbed of "all that variety and abundance" of profiles and silhouettes, "poor, crippled, reduced to a single *copy*." Well aware of its embodied grounding (the expression *ahead*, "indicated by one side of the body and the position of the face"), it is this concept of FRONTALITY, then, that Kantor would also deliberately highlight in the choreography of his production: while the notion of the "road" had already figured in many of his pieces, from 1967 onward, and was to be a grounding image in this one, it ended up evoked by little more than a slight opening of the space, toward the audience, and the obsessive procession of key figures and events, in a straight line from the BACK to the FRONT of the stage: the Late Mr. X, the cart, the military retinue, the door, Stwosz, the pillories, and on.[35]

A notion "pushed aside by those troupes marching *forward*, towards the *future*," then, what unfolded on stage was "a journey into the past, into the abyss of memory" – yet not only: on the "mysterious laws" of reflection and reversal, Kantor's dead past was to coincide with his dying future, the notion of Departure, with that of Return. By now, he would see his *œuvre* as a "whole procession" of the "dead" (that is, originating in "the realm of FICTION"), "returning into the world of the living" not as mere "shadows," but as tangible beings – "a *precedent* and a *prototype*" for the lot, established again by his 1944 production of *The Return of Odysseus*. The All Souls mythology aside, his appeal to the central themes of Wyspiański's play seems evident: the notion of homecoming, on the one hand – like that of the "Prodigal Son," not to one's "native land" but to the "birthplace" one "leave[s] in order to return in the end" – and the "tragic impossibility of [that] return," on the other. Initially, thus, it was the "exhausting journey" of Wit Stwosz, from Germany to Poland and back, that Kantor intended to focus on – a journey already related to his own happenings in 1968, when he put them on in Nuremberg, and not unlike Odysseus's, to his unattainable Ithaca: apart from scenes with the Angel of Death luring him back and his Mother telling him

not to go, in rehearsal, it is at "the doorstep of his parents' house," in the handout, that the old Master, "worn out by longing," has to "submit to [his] punishment." In the production, again, this failure to return was evoked by the externality of surfaces, as entailed by the realities of reflection, photography, and *emballage*: "bundled up" into an unrecognizable "something," as Kantor now remembered the appearance of his wartime Odysseus, Stwosz and the Late Mr. X were little more than the hats and scarves that wrapped them up – moreover, it was only the centrally seated who could witness a full-frontal procession of memory mirages: "from the side," one could not but notice the work of "the theatrical proletariat" behind the disclosed door frame.[36]

In these terms, then (as Kantor had phrased it in regard to the Constructivists' "Destruction of the 'Winter Palace' of Illusion"), the "True Stage" is to be found in the "BACK," behind the "façade" of "illusion," on its "Other Side," wherein resides the "*only true Theatre of Emotions*": "preserved" from "official and academic stultification" by whatever names he had chosen to call it in the meantime, he now finds the "Fairground Booth Stage" as having "always existed at the back of [his] mind." Thus, Act II would introduce one more "parade of characters who [had] traveled through [his] theatre and [his] paintings" and on, "from the depths of time": "Rejects, hanged-men, hangmen, prostitutes, the whole cortege of my Saint François Villon" – a "species" of "nomadic people [--] roaming outside society, [--] *sunken in the complicated anatomy of clothing, in the arcana of packages, bags, bundles, thongs, strings*." Starting again with his 1967 staging of *The Water Hen*, Kantor had called these creations of his "The Wanderers and their Luggage": on the notion of the *emballage*, this could equally refer to "their flaws, crimes, lovers, eccentricities, obsessions," or simply, to "the props of journeys" that had begun to appear in his paintings from the early 1960s. Having admitted that the road and the room alike could only be "set decoraction," accordingly, he wanted the "Reality" of *Let the Artists Die!* to spring from that of the fairground sideshow, and specifically, from the large wooden crates hauled by the Company of Traveling Comedians: while "it does not matter what [is inside]," it was once again on the slogan, "'omnia mea mecum porta' (all I have, I carry with me)" that the Wandering Artists could hope to appear self-contained and "autonomous." Their "journey," somewhat identified with what seemed an undending world tour of Kantor's own Cricot 2 (read backwards as *to cyrk*, with a slightly Polished spelling, the very name can be seen as referring to the circus), their performance was to be of the Lowest Rank of theatrical entertainment, indicated in the subtitle: "A Revue."[37]

First enacted in the Traveling Comedians' parade of small revue numbers, then, the most recurrent schema to orient the overall choreography of *Let the Artists Die!*, after the first act's emphasis on FRONT–BACK, would have been that of the CYCLE. On the one hand, it harks back to the "stubborn Repetition of Action" by which Kantor sought to enliven the "Dead Façades" of memory: repetition, as the "metaphysical side of illusion" and "an atavistic gesture of human beings, who at the beginning of their own history needed to affirm their identity." On the other, it evokes the touching "futility" of the "unending march" on which he began the very rehearsals – a specific image of Life as a Journey, a PATH devoid of SOURCE and GOAL: the "Vicious Circle" he'd identify as a "significant metaphor" not only in Polish art but "in life," as well. Beyond the Grand Parades of his own *Dead Class* (1975) and apparently already tested in his 1942 underground staging of Słowacki's *Balladyna*, this image can again be traced back to the turn-of-the-century heyday of Polish Symbolism – the somnambulistic circle dance of "stagnation and hopelessness" in the finale of Wyspiański's *The Wedding* (*Wesele*, 1901), and specifically, to two paintings by Jacek Malczewski which had already inspired Kantor during his preparations for *Wielopole, Wielopole*: *Melancholy* (1890-4), and the eponymous *Vicious Circle* (1895-7). Evoking a key theme in *Artists*, Daniel Gerould describes the "vortex of swirling human bodies," in the former, as "an image of the ages of man's life (a favorite symbolist motif), from childhood through maturity to old age, [--] as circles within circles enclose all within fixed boundaries of memory and tradition" – here, however, the broken CYCLES of endless music would always also situate "the dance of death as a circus parade," Kantor himself, as critic Ron Jenkins puts it, as "the ringmaster of a funereal vaudeville." The principle of movement was not unlike what Jan Kott dreamed up while dozing off in the rehearsals for *I Shall Never Return* (*Nigdy tu już nie powrócę*, 1988):

> The characters would appear and disappear like figures on Renaissance and baroque church or townhall clocks, where Death with a scythe often keeps company with saints and kings. Or as on ornate music boxes where the tiny figurines jerk and revolve to the same merry tune repeated over and over again. The doors open and close, the characters appear and disappear, but by the time the performance was half over, I already knew that the doors would finally close on all the characters and on Kantor's theater, never to open again.[38]

"In This Picture I Have to Remain": Metaphors of Shelter and Imprisonment

The "doors" did open one more time, in Kantor's very final, posthumous production, *Today Is My Birthday* (*Dziś są moje urodziny*, 1991) – now, however, they were situated within three large picture frames, "the world of illusion" in his "home on stage," whence different memories and characters would "fall [out] into the real world." In his series, *Further On, Nothing*…(*Dalej już nic*, 1988), he had already exhibited such works as "I Am Stepping Out of the Painting," or "In This Picture I Have to Remain." Apart from the upcoming production, these titles/decisions are evocative of a central tension over Kantor's career: much as he speaks of a Journey, it would always have to fit the "Poor Little Room of [his] Imagination" on stage – and indeed, the dynamics of CONTAINMENT have been implicit throughout the previous section. Besides the contained PATH of "marching on," in CYCLES, and the blending of surface and substance (the container and the contained) in the *emballage*, the notion of "reflection" would also denote for Kantor not only the "extension" of reality (a potential path beyond), but its "enclosing": reality "locked away as if in a prison, or lowered into the grave." On stage, this experiential duality of CONTAINMENT would often be embodied by the two metaphors, already delineated in Chapter 3: on the one hand, the "room" would be presented as a peripheral "inn" or an "asylum," giving Shelter to its inhabitants' exilic existence; on the other, it could take the constricting form of a Prison. While the latter metaphor is somewhat specific to *Artists*, the notion of duality reaches way back, through the *Water Hen* "poorhouse" ("half refuge, and half prison") to the wartime experience of performing in private apartments, under German occupation – and it would persist in *Today Is My Birthday*, as Kantor's voice, over the loudspeakers, would now situate him "not on stage but at the threshold," the audience "in front" of him and the stage "behind." Before examining the actual "room," thus, let us consider the nature of the BOUNDARY that sets off the INSIDE from the OUTSIDE, in the first place – most in/famously, again, evoked in the "Theatre of Death" manifesto:

> OPPOSITE those who remained on this side there stood a MAN DECEPTIVELY SIMILAR to them, yet [--] infinitely DISTANT, shockingly FOREIGN, as if DEAD, cut off by an invisible BARRIER – no less horrible and inconceivable, whose real meaning and THREAT appear to us only in DREAMS. As though in a blinding flash of lightning, they suddenly perceived a glaring, tragically circuslike IMAGE OF MAN, as if they had seen him FOR THE FIRST TIME, as if they had seen THEIR VERY SELVES.[39]

Suggesting, in *The Milano Lessons*, that "[t]he nature of drama is contained in this ALIENATION," Kantor is yet again referring to the object – "beyond reach of the human mind," "at the opposite pole of [--] consciousness" – yet an object (of art) is exactly what the Dead performer should become: "A painful but true DISTINCTION between the condition of an actor and that of a spectator" is that the former, "forced onto the stage," are "stripped of their 'dignity,' whereas spectators are not." Within the larger BOUNDARY of the proscenium arch, in the conventional theatre buildings in which Cricot 2 now usually performed, the primal gateway to the world "beyond" would invariably be marked out by the Door, from *Wielopole, Wielopole* onward – and so it has variously been in almost every culture, not only to "express" metaphors of transformation, as Nicole Boivin notes, but to physically help us conceive them. From ancient tragedy to farce and the sitcom, as Arnold Aronson has argued, the door embodies "a bulwark against the chaos that lurks just beyond": setting off "two separate spaces [for] the world seen and the world unseen; the known and the unknown; the tangible and the implied," he proposes it might just have been "the most profound technological and scenographic development in the history of theatre." In Kantor, however, the Door would always remain deeply ambiguous, its unspecified BEHIND, affording now threat and now shelter, on the "laws" of reflection and reversal: an "inferno" that is "inaccessible to our minds and concepts," at one moment (such that "the weak walls of our ROOM, of our everyday or linear time, will not save us"), "an open interior of our imagination," at another – a sphere, notably, Gaston Bachelard would also relate to "every corner [--] of secluded space in which we like to hide." In the end – the peripheral "antechamber," in *Wielopole*, accommodating events "which in some previous period were at the centre of the action," as Miklaszewski puts it – the doors served as the primal *fort-da* machine for the Ringmaster's ever recurring childhood memories: "Important events stand behind the doors; it is enough to open them…"[40]

Thus, the "room" that became the setting for *Wielopole, Wielopole*, in 1980 (defined as such for the first time, since the clandestine apartments of the 1940s), was specifically identified as the "room of [Kantor's] childhood": "the room that we keep constructing again and again and that keeps dying again and again," its "inhabitants," "continuously repeat[ing] all their movements and activities as if they were imprinted on a film negative shown interminably." Harking back to his early notions of space, "contracting and expanding," the "real structure" of recollection was thus defined by a "pulsating rhythm" – "an organic systole and diastole," in Hyde's translation – of ac-

tors an objects, events and memories, unfolding into the room and folding back up, to the space "BEHIND THE DOORS." In Aronson's terms, in short, what the door affords is "what we might now call a cinematic rhythm," in distinction from the processional rhythms of the "predoor" era, more sympathetic to metaphors of Journeying: it "marks a beginning and an end; it punctuates comings and goings" – in Kantor and elsewhere, it would often punctuate the very opening and closing of acts and scenes. As for the "new name" Kobialka proposes was only introduced in *Let the Artists Die!*, "the Storeroom of Memory" would again be a deeply conventional metaphor, dating from antiquity, and perfected by the medieval and Renaissance arts of memory: insofar as its prospect of "preserving" memories as stable "objects" to possess and control can be seen as abstracting and purifying them from the system of everyday functionality (to generalize on Jean Baudrillard's discussion of that of "collecting"), Milija Gluhovic is surely correct to see "vestiges of ancient mnemotechnics" in Kantor, as well. Then again, insofar as the *ars memoriae* was ultimately in the service of cognitive discipline, as John Sutton has it – scaffolding and CONTAINING the disorder of involuntary memory in baroque edifices of internalized memory rooms and palaces – the "dust-laden" "attic" or "junkroom" Kantor rather sought to "excavate" would again reflect the PERIPHERAL realm of the Lowest Rank, as described by Lawson:

> *Let the Artists Die* began in a storeroom that lies at the edge of a cemetery which, itself, lies at the edges of the living world. The riffraff company of Traveling Actors who occupied the room came from the edges of society. Scenic objects were made of materials that appeared to be recovered from refuse dumps. Kantor structured his production by way of the very chance and accident that rational society has striven to relegate to its periphery.[41]

At the beginning of the performance, then, Michal Kobialka would suggest (in 1993) the space "resembled both a childhood room and a cemetery" – and on the one hand, after rejecting the idea of the road, Kantor had indeed decided to focus on the graveyard, as another "unlikely" location, "in the wrong place" once situated "in the room." On the other, while the cemetery crosses introduced in *Wielopole* would indeed share the stage with mundane furniture (no sign of Kobialka's "night table," though), this conflict of INNER and OUTER was to be leveled by a surprising recourse to realism: instead of a graveyard, the space would become an adjacent shed, "tolerated by the church," its Owner, complaining that no one "buys wooden crosses these days." Later on, the storeroom would again turn into a nocturnal "asylum" for "Bohemian artists,"

blended with the "common room" inspired by Uniłowski – all in keeping with the sheltering affordances of CONTAINMENT, the *emballage* ("when we want to shelter and protect, to preserve, [--] to hide something deeply"), and Kantor's later definition of his "home on stage," as "a fort [that] defends itself" against a hostile external world. On the one hand, this "unlikely" place was to "accommodate" not only "the Marshal on horseback and all the generals" but "the greatest medieval work of art," such that whatever happened was to happen "in this very room and no other": "all of history," "condensed" into its confines, Kantor would increasingly identify his "poor room" with the constant background of the Greeks, "the temple of the ancient theater." On the other, the appearance of memory would again be compromised by the notion that the really Real (death and eternity, "absolute and pure") could only reside behind the doors: "contaminated" by liveness on stage, Kantor's memories could ever only be poorly impersonated by "suspect [--] day servants," "sneaking in" from the shady "rental service" of recollection – "A FLEA MARKET of lousy actors posturing like marionettes," "basely made up to resemble characters we often know and love."[42]

In a more poignant reversal of CONTAINMENT images still, the same notes in which the "tenants" of the Storeroom "offer shelter" to the Traveling Comedians would relate their entry to "the total destruction" of all "positive endeavours" – a band of "cursed artists" in the line of Villon or Rimbaud, they "break in from nowhere" to disrupt the Dying One's last moments in a Common Room ever less in control. The same applies to that of recollection: each photographic "overlay," as Lawson puts it, "an unbidden intrusion on [Kantor's] efforts to have one clear memory," the doors would open and close, throughout, admitting memories safe and familiar at first (Mum, the Six-Year-Old) yet ever more threatening, as it all went on – the "futility" of his attempts, nicely captured in Lawson's *précis*, "memory entails invasions." Not that "neither he nor the audience could know what was hidden behind the doors," as Kobialka suggests ("com[ing] in by himself," even the "found character" Wit Stwosz would do so perfectly on cue, performance after performance), the shape of the room was thus "constantly altered" by what "had been rendered invisible, erased, or killed": "resisting the fate of being repressed," as Ron Jenkins puts it, "the echoes of Auschwitz and other torturous visions" would "invade his memory with the mercilessness of the foreign soldiers who have been invading his country since he was a child." Signaling "the first time" that the room is "exposed to suffering and mutilation," in *Artists*, and to annihilate it by the "organs" of war, in *Today Is My Birthday*, the army or the

"PLATOON" had already been foregrounded in *Wielopole, Wielopole*, as "a distinct Species of Humanity, cut off from us Civilian Spectators by a barrier": an acute severance of contact, together with a haunting awareness of "confronting our own image" – a dead model for the live actor, such as the mannequin had been in *The Dead Class*. This time, looking for a concept "corresponding" to that of "burial," in life (conscription, in *Wielopole*), Kantor was to find it "in the idea of IMPRISONMENT":

> Prison… is an idea separated from life by an ALIEN, impenetrable barrier. It is so separate [from the world of the living] that if this blasphemous likeness is permitted, it will be able to shape THE WORK OF ART.[43]

In the performance, the work in question would be the massive altarpiece in Kraków's St. Mary's Basilica, created by Wit Stwosz between 1477 and 1489, to depict "the Dormition of the Virgin" in the midst of Apostles James, Matthew, Peter, and John – here, by yet another intruder, half way through, submitting the actors to the "pillory." For months on end in rehearsal, however, the notion of prison would rather be evoked not only by literal cages (as in *Dainty Shapes* or *Today is My Birthday*) but a wooden wardrobe: a specifically constructed one, replacing the one already used in *Wielopole*, it would also serve as the "train" on which the Late Mr. X was once to "depart." Thus, it was neither Stwosz nor the altar itself that Kantor admitted to any interest in; ceremonially opened every day before noon, what appealed to him in the enormous triptych was instead the fact that it "can be closed," on all those who "live within." Before the role was given over to Andrzej Wełmiński (with the concurrently different conception of "art as prison"), Stwosz was to be portrayed as a suspect "carpenter" from the "rental service" of memory, resorting for his altarpiece on what was "ready at hand in the shared room": the to-be Caretaker/Page/Prison Guard, actor Stanisław Rychlicki would fit all the others into the wardrobe, which, citing Lawson, was then "opened unceremoniously to reveal not saints but low-lifes, the same characters from the seamy edge of life that [had] long inhabited Kantor's wardrobes." Again, there had been many of them: "an important object in the Childhood Room" of *Wielopole*, the wardrobe had already appeared in 1957 and, most prominently, in various versions of Witkiewicz's *The Country House* – dropped onto a glacier (on a beach, in a train station…) in the happenings of 1969; "upsetting the hierarchy of actor and object," in 1961, by having the two "mixed together" within its "ludicrously tiny" interior. Yet

even then it could only become "solid" once "suddenly and inexplicably altered" by an act of isolation: "it only acquires its full and proper meaning when it is... closed!"[44]

Thus, we are back at the central tension on which this section began: the incessant oscillation, in Kantor's work, between such notions as illusion and reality, form and matter, death and life – the "closed work of art" and the process of making it. On the one hand, it was only with his *Dead Class* (and perhaps, with Jerzy Grotowski's decision to step altogether beyond the BOUNDARIES of theatre) that he would "return to the closed work," self-contained, as many of the key images, in *Let the Artists Die!*: the altar, behind its casing; "reality," in its "reflection," the Dead, in their graves. On the other, he remained acutely aware that "every boundary," reached on his artistic Journey, would in turn become "a closing in, that *form* is 'imprisonment'" and that "every freedom" (or Gombrowiczian "antiform") would freeze into mere convention. Harking back to his 1955 musings on "Informel" matter, "spilling over the frames of a work of art" as opposed to its being "enclosed" and "maybe: imprisoned," the 1988 painting from which a figure is "Stepping Out" has a puppet leg extend beyond it, while that in which he "Has to Remain" – only presents a withering corpse in a coffin. In his theatre pieces, "imprisoned" in their ever repeating gestures and later, in the photographic "plates" or "negatives" of Kantor's memory, his actors were always to "behave in a way imposed on them by the *reality of the space* and its characteristics": their actual reality aside (until 1975 most took place in the same Krzysztofory cellars), the very "choice" of such "real places" as a laundry or a cloakroom was deliberately used to restrict the range of affordances potentially available for performance. By the 1980s, however, the "Reality of Place" had itself become but another convention, "literal" and "burdensome," and given the kinds of international audiences Cricot 2 was drawing at the time, neither could that in *Let the Artists Die!* "become a real room" – searching for "a more ephemeral and discrete medium" for "Illusion," Kantor now re/turned to "the OBJECT. Autonomous, enclosed in itself. L'OBJET D'ART."[45]

Objects and Their Actors and Their Objects

> A HUMAN and an OBJECT. Two extreme poles. Almost enemies. If not enemies, they are strangers. A human desires to know the object, "touch" it, appropriate it. There must be a very close, almost biological symbiosis between an actor and an object. They cannot be separated. In the simplest case, the actor must attempt to do everything for the OBJECT to stay visible; in the most radical case the actor and the object must become one. I call this stage a BIO-OBJECT.

In the performance of *Let the Artists Die!*, instead of the enclosing affordances of its casing, the Wit Stwosz altar was to be evoked by seven wooden "pillories" on wheeled platforms, inflicting on the actors "the convulsive poses" of its sculptures. While some of Kantor's drawings would have the pillories themselves replicate the gestural layout of the altar – some of them even named after specific apostles – on stage, six out of seven appeared as plain, vertical posts to attach on the actors' backs, affixed with small number plaques (suggestive of crucifixion) and with crude contraptions of ropes and pulleys with which to extend or isolate some bodily extremity. Not that she was the only one to have her "prior existence" as if visited upon, in this Dantesque scene of retribution – forcibly framed by the curve of his other knee, for example, the Sloven was made to "exhibit" the leg he had been scrubbing throughout – it was the Bigot's turning into the Mother of God (an appeal she last made at the beginning of the scene) that most directly evoked her sculptural counterpart: diagonally inclined, her "pillory" would force her to bend over, in the very pose depicted on the altar – completed by Stwosz himself, twisting a screw into the back of her neck, then pressing her hands together and pointing them down in prayer. Thus anchored in one specific part or "imprint," the whole of the altar was then only evoked by metonymical compression – a mechanism, importantly, Kantor would relate to childhood memory, more generally: "wholeness," "enclosed" in the past, its "negatives" could ever only preserve "*one trait* of characters, situations, incidents, places and times." On stage, moreover, any appeal to photographic realism or to long-term storage would be further challenged by the very objects in terms of whose affordances the staging of memory could only be enacted: the kiddie-cart as a prime example (at one point, it was to be physically "re-membered" from its separate parts), neither his "shorts" nor his "bare heels" could prevent it from affording but an obstacle to the Dying One's attempts at driving it, desperately out of ratio with the adult proportions of his body.[46]

While there would be little in terms of individual cognition, then, to be "distributed" or "extended" in Kantor's performances, neither would his stage figures reflect such simple blends of actor and character as McConachie discusses: rather, each was to consist of an actor, often of her past roles, traces of this or that "character," perhaps (painterly or literary), and most certainly of the limited array of objects "which they bear in their lives" – defined, in *Artists*, as the "Pillories of [their] everyday life." On the one hand, these objects provided each actor with a mobile "place" or "setting" of her own (their mobility, also related to the fluidity of staged memory), on the other, these "places" would themselves afford the enaction of different identities over Life's Journey, as Jeff Lawson puts it: "a kiddie cart for Kantor the child, a chair for Kantor the healthy, a bed for Kantor the sickly/dying, [--] and a cemetery cross for the dead." That the characters were named after their traits and activities rather than their objects – as in *The Dead Class*, in which one could not but perceive an Old Man in the WC, another with a Bicycle, or a Woman Behind a Window – did not prevent Kantor from reducing them to the "eternal places without which the actors could not exist": "the Dying One cannot keep dying without his bed, and the child only strolls about with the cart." Neither "stage pieces" nor "props," in short (in *The Milano Lessons*, Kantor notes "[t]here is something offensive in this name for the OBJECT"), the objects were to create "an indivisible whole with the actors," self-determining and autonomous, as opposed to representing some fictional content beyond their material confines. The term *bio-object* only introduced in 1980, the idea had again been variously embodied before – ranging from the compound "organism" of benches and pupils in *The Dead Class*, to such "unusual case[s] of absurd anatomy," in *Dainty Shapes and Hairy Apes* (1973), as A Man With a Wooden Board on His Back ("like a martyr crucified on himself") or another, with two Bicycle Wheels and "the consciousness of a vehicle."[47]

As these examples might suffice to attest, then, the metaphorical logic of Kantor's "bio-objects" works more or less the other way around from that of Meyerhold's "biomechanics": where the latter would address the biological organism in strictly mechanistic terms (as discussed in Chapter 2), the former, as George Hyde puts it, is only interested in objects insofar as they "participate in and express the organic." This general emphasis suffuses Kantor's own formulations: not a matter of "objectification," the bio-object spells an "almost biological association between an actor and an object" (Kobialka even translates this as "symbiosis") such that the two come to form "a single organism"; the "*real* content" and "matter" of a performance, funded by

what he calls its "inner life," the object is only "distinguished" by "living, vital organs of its own called ACTORS," "as if genetically connected with that object" – hence the descriptions of the *Dead Class* mannequins as "parasitic 'tumors'" on the live elders; of clothing, as "exposing its arteries, veins, organs, and diseases"; of pockets, as "ridiculous organs of the human instinct of preserving and memory." For one, the biological emphasis can be traced to the "incarnate misunderstandings" imagined by the Father figure in Bruno Schulz's "Treatise on Tailors' Dummies," so as to testify that "[t]here is no dead matter," that "lifelessness is only a disguise behind which hide unknown forms of life": "Who knows [--] how many suffering, crippled, fragmentary forms of life there are, such as [those] of chests and tables quickly nailed together, crucified timbers, silent martyrs to cruel human inventiveness?" As to the other key influence on *The Dead Class*, Witold Gombrowicz's images of alienated body parts reflect not only an aspect of Kantoresque "autonomy," but the hyperbolic exaggeration, in Mikhail Bakhtin's discussion of the *grotesque*, of all that "protrudes from the body, all that seeks to go out beyond the body's confines" and to fuse it with the world. In Kantor, the grotesque "bodily lower stratum" would also be deeply connected with a very specific object of the Lowest Rank, as summed up by Lawson:

> In the pantheon of everyday objects the chair would have to be the lowest because it is the most ignored, the most easily dismissed as inconsequential. It is also [--] intimately connected with [--] an act that rests the bottom, the "lowest" part of human anatomy, onto an object. [--] If a key moment in human evolutionary development was walking upright – that proud moment when we began "standing up" over all others – it was all belied each time a human being sat down and "exposed himself to ridicule: What was that verticality?"[48]

On the most "painterly" level, so to say, the blending of actors and objects would already be enacted by the "obsessive continuity" in color and material that has often been noted in Kantor's work: an impoverished palette of black, white, and grey – in a sense, "abstracted" from the full saturation of remembered past – with faded hues of brown or yellow that were to encompass every visual element on stage (himself included: a constant "bio-object" with his seemingly constant chair, Kantor rehearsed much of *Artists* in a light outfit, but returned to his usual black for performances). As for the objects themselves, their subjection to the cycles of all "living matter" was deliberately traced in an aesthetic of texture, time, and tactility, "ghosted by use, history, and abuse" (Alice Rayner): "in and of the hyporeal," in Lawson's favorite phrase, the

sensory appeal of the "water-worn, weather-grayed wood" of which they appeared to be made would in itself signal intertwining trajectories of history and biology. Finally, the material qualities and affordances of the objects would again inform the range of activities each actor could develop into the invariant "gestus" of her stage figure – while Lawson's choice of term may be misleading, Miklaszewski confirms the gestural elements of their performances were invariantly defined by exploring "the comic or serious aspects" of their relationships with their objects. Again, key to this process was the endless repetition of set activities or situations, which Kantor saw would not only deprive them of their meaning and motivation (cause and effect) but lend them "a stronger physical sense of being and a more precise definition." On the one hand, this was to eschew all psychological motivations linking actor to character – in an "autonomous" theatre, the two were to exist "in parallel" but never to converge; on the other, it was to situate the actor not "above" but "on the same level as the action" (*performing*, not *imitating*). The roots of it all lay not only in the Happening – in its alienating concentration on "found" objects and affordances: washing dishes, hats going off and on at the moment of death – but again, in the prose of Bruno Schulz:

> We are not concerned [--] with long-winded creations, with long-term beings. Our creatures will not be heroes of romances in many volumes. Their roles will be short, concise [--] – without a background. Sometimes, for one gesture, for one word alone, we shall make the effort to bring them to life [--] [providing them with] only one profile, one hand, one leg, the one limb needed for their role. It would be pedantic to bother about the other, unnecessary, leg. [--] We shall have this proud slogan as our aim: a different actor for each gesture.[49]

Then again, Kantor did have a decidedly long-term group of actors at his disposal – or, a few trained actors/puppeteers (Bednarczyk, the Rychlickis) among a variety of artists and painters, many of whom were also personally related (here: himself and Maria Stangret; the latter's nephew Lech; the Janicki twins, and Wacław's wife Ewa; the Rychlickis; and the Wełmińskis – Teresa and Andrzej, and also their son Mateusz, who played the Six-Year-Old on tour in 1988). Just as the constancy of his settings had him draw comparisons with ancient Greece, so would that of the crew now evoke Constructivist types and the *commedia dell'arte*: rather than "inventing new histories and characters," he would always use "[t]he same events, the same characters," with little distinction between actor and stage figure (himself, being "the one who found the twins, or the soldier or the prostitute"). On the one hand, he would keenly sketch

his actors in their daily lives, claiming to "love the *poetry* inside [--] each and every one"; on the other, drawing on the "pre-matter" of their essential "types" often meant concentrating on their "lowest" characteristics and lowering them even further (in any case, on a very essentializing kind of "psychology": when Mira Rychlicka attempted to portray Asklepios the Doctor as "some kind of a semi-god," he urged her to keep to her own character which was "absolutely Jewish"). On tour, actors could be replaced with cynical indifference – one could mention a curious attempt at having *two* Doctors on stage, or the elimination of the figure of Mum altogether, after Zbigniew Gostomski's poor stand-in for Lila Krasicka – yet during rehearsals, their "predispositions" could actually count significantly: apart from the very different conceptions of Stwosz and his altar, by Rychlicki and Wełmiński, feet and dishes alike would have been washed otherwise, by Wełmiński and Maria Kantor. As for improvisational freedom, Lawson even traces a general hierarchy from the least "bullied" fine artists (M. Kantor, the Janickis, Wełmiński, Siwulak) to actors, wives, Italians, and technicians: though he did get to double the Doctor, on tour, the "role" of Bogdan Renczyński, for example – then a young acting student, having previously trained with Grotowski – consisted of *marching*, either as one of the Generals, or as the staggering Mr. X.[50]

As for the specific "bio-objects" that were to emerge in rehearsal, rather than evoking ones from Kantor's past productions, as both Kobialka and Witts have it, many were distinctly anchored in the novel by Zbigniew Uniłowski, *The Common Room* (this "character" side of the blends will be indicated by slashes, below). Not that there were no "traces" of prior objects: as but the most memorable bio-object of the performance, the bathroom stall of the Hanged Man/Medical Student was directly evocative of previous "outhouses" in *The Shoemakers* and *The Dead Class*, yet as "the place of his suicide," his "foul lavatory" came blended with a menacing gallows' pole – the character, with actor Roman Siwulak's knack for "bawdy, cynical songs": a noose around his neck, each time he stood up to be seen, the pole arose behind him, only to thud back down once he again disappeared to sit down within. As for the text, rather than cohering as a drama or even dialogue, it consisted of set lines "reaching the limits of abstraction" again by means of endless repetition – Kantor's "informel" litanies of the 1960s (*kneading crushing splashing smearing*), most openly evoked by those of the Sloven/Philology Student (dripping scrubbing soaping), the Dishwasher/Teodozja (slaving cleaning washing), and the Pimp-Gambler (Ace in your face!). The object counterparts, here, consisting of a "vulgar Basin" for the Sloven's dirty feet, a

Sink for the Dishwasher's pots and pans, and a Dive Table for the Card Sharp, the Bigot was coupled with a Rosary and a Kneeling-Desk (affording a posture not unlike her "pillory" in the Altar scene), the Cabaret Whore/Miss Leopard, "with her Body" she would occasionally reveal within her black raincoat. Other figures only evoked by a "gestus" and a costume (surely not "anonymous," as in Meyerhold and Grotowski) would include the Doctor, the Leader and his Generals, and the Caretaker who was to "change his vocations as adroitly as a circus juggler" by changing his headgear.[51]

If the "domestic" bio-objects, finally, remained fairly stable throughout – the Author, Mum, and Kantor, constantly coupled to their chairs; the Dying One/Lucjan, to his bed and to his handkerchief; the Boy, with his cart (intended already for *Wielopole*, whence also the Platoon, here identified as "just the uniforms") – most of the others would literalize the fluctuating SUPERIMPOSITION of Kantor's "memory negatives," such that "every added or subtracted bit" of cloth and material, every change of object, would equally affect the dramatic "part" in question, turning them into "'things' that a player put on and took off with no more thought than that given to a coat or a hat." I quote Lawson once more, on the CYCLICAL turn-taking of the Traveling Comedians' performance of "Let the Artists Die," as it would go on and on:

> As the parade came into the room, each player stopped at down center stage, took on the few basic gestures comprising his or her gestus, spoke his one or two lines, and then summarily dropped that part to turn and leave the stage. [--] The Pimp played and bantered; the Hanged Man sang; the Dirty Fellow [i.e. the Sloven] washed; the Bigot kvetched; the Author tried to get in a few words edgewise; Mum started in with her litany; the Dishwasher complained.[52]

For all his biological metaphors, then, Kantor did not see the relationship of mind and matter as one of unity or metonymical "partnership" (Grotowski), but rather, as that of "[t]wo *alien* and *hostile* systems," reflecting a similar *duality* of extension and separation as did many of his metaphors for death (mirror, prison) – Bakhtin relates it to "the grotesque world of becoming": "never finished, never completed," the grotesque body "is continually built, created, and builds and creates another body." If the actors were "conditioned" by their objects, "their roles and activities derived from them," equally would the objects – "unreachable" to the human mind, at its "opposite pole" – become "derelict wrecks incapable of doing anything," without their actors: for Pleśniarowicz, the bio-object was therefore "not a permanent state, but rather a certain phase" in "a rhythm of objectivization (dying) and disobjectivization (coming to life), in the cycle

of each character's dependence upon and liberation from the 'Bio-Object' situation." What is more, "it was sometimes the 'object' side that dominated and sometimes the 'human'" – to extend Kobialka's metaphor, moreover, parasitic dominance is only one option, among the mutual affordances of "symbiosis": once an actor began to act on her own, she also deprived her object of the benefit of its "living organ." In *Artists*, Kantor would refer to his series, "Man bound up with objects," to imply the other side of such mutualism: "Wrenched by force from [their] objects, [the actors] remain drawn out in convulsive attitudes, and with the chains binding them to the pillory they turn, for a while, into the living carvings of the St. Mary's Church Altar" – before the pillory scene, thus, most of the actors would try and disappear in whatever hideouts their objects afforded (the Dying One, in his bed, the Hanged Man, within his Bath-room Stall), only to cry out in agony once severed from their counterparts. Carefully worked to appear heavy and old, the ecological relevance of the "pillories" – beside the signature look of the Lowest Rank – was that they were in fact hollow: apart from easy portability, this afforded the later "prison code" the sonic resonance needed for calling up the very different work of art Stwosz was to create, at the end.[53]

No Comment? The Grand Blends and "The Imperative of Contemptible Death"

To get at the founding themes of art, history, and identity, in *Let the Artists Die!* – blending together many of the conceptual and material tensions already addressed – consider the fable of "the nail," supposedly driven through the cheeks of the debt-ridden (historical) Wit Stwosz on his return to Nuremberg: "the only thing [he] could do nowhere else," it seemed for Kantor "an excellent illustration of the conflict between the artist and society," and "pretty unambiguous: artists are victims of society." Schematically, the title of the production thus simply reflects the familiar opposition between a CENTER of control, and the affordances of resistance on its PERIPHERIES: as opposed to "those who enjoy official recognition" (and it is not difficult to see here an implicit reference to Grotowski), "autonomous artists are relegated to outlaw status," "separated from society and left to 'die' among their own artistic creations." When Kantor tells of the Minister of Culture saying, "let the artists die," in 1948, this probably has to do with his own relegation from the public arena to mere design work, until 1956 (with his 1949 refusal of socialist realism and the consequent "freedoms" afforded by "the enclosed space of [his] studio"), yet the principle is equally evident in his "illegal" presence in his performances, always at the side of the stage, watching

over with a nervous countenance – indeed *embodying* not only the dividing line of life and art, but the image-schematic reversal of figuring the PERIPHERAL as CENTRAL. In *Artists*, however, the notion of resistance would equally be embodied by the decidedly political figure of "You Know Who," perhaps so named if indeed he was branded an "Enemy of Communism," in People's Poland: where Norman Davies suspects most Poles now "adored" Józef Piłsudski as "the last of Poland's leaders to defeat the Russians in battle," he was *the* leader of Kantor's "childhood dreams," the march of his Legions, here used as soundscape, "the unofficial national anthem of a free Poland." Even if they could not be performed publicly at the time, Piłsudski's philosophy of "either death or great glory" resounds throughout the lyrics of *My pierwsza brygada*:

Legiony to – żołnierska buta;	The legions stand for a soldier's pride.
Legiony to – ofiarny stos;	The legions stand for a martyr's fate.
Legiony to – żebracka nuta;	The legions stand for a beggar's song.
Legiony to – straceńów los,	The legions stand for a desperado's death.
My, Pierwsza Brygada,	We are the First Brigade.
Strzelecka Gromada,	A regiment of rapid fire.
Na Stos, rzuciliśmy,	We've put our lives at stake.
Swój życia los,	We've willed our fate.
Na stos, na stos.	We've cast ourselves on the pyre.[54]

Accordingly, the notions of "fame and glory" would become a central thematic concern in the performance, yet ironically, they could only be enacted in terms of the restricted affordances of Kantor's "poor room": asking "why, for example, artists will never attain the level of recognition attributed to generals," what he proposed was that "[t]he Fame and Glory of the past are recognisable only in a fragmentary form." On stage, the idea would be specifically embodied by You-Know-Who's skeleton horse: beside images of Piłsudski's glorious funeral of 1935, in Wawel Cathedral, and Kantor's earlier notions of flesh as but "a fragile and 'poetic' Emballage of the skeleton," it recalls his very similar 1962 design of Rocinante, for *Don Quixote*, and specifically, a famous sketch for a stained-glass window by Stanisław Wyspiański, depicting King Kazimierz the Great as "a skeleton with the remnants of his fame: a crown, a scepter, and an orb" – hence the association of fame and glory "with the concept of death." For all the Nazi "ghosting" of a similar You-Know-Who/Himmler/Maria Stangret, in *Wielopole*, what makes this figure glorious, all the same, is its blending with I-When-I-Was-Six, equally clad in his Legion uniform: to avoid "any grand equestrian statue," Kantor would not show "the marshal as he was, only a small boy and a tiny woman."

Beyond the mother-and-child coupling of the Boy and his Hero, however, there is a darker underside to the "tin soldiers" that always fulfil the latter's entourage of Death: reduced to their "silver" uniforms and to a mechanical step, "alien to human nature," their entrance signals the first time the room of memory is brutally invaded by forces of History. Like "a corps of ghosts of Hamlet's father," these "beribboned, bemedaled generals" have been related to the *sacrifice*, not only for Fame and Glory, but of the "thousands of Polish officers murdered by the NKVD at Katyń in 1940," compressed "into a grotesquely inadequate image" – Kantor himself, asking in his notes if this is "a parade of victors, or the funeral of the nation's fame?" (If indeed there is a blend of Piłsudski and Katyń, here, a grim irony of history would have it that with the Polish presidential tragedy of 2010, the Wawel Cathedral crypt now commemorates both.)[55]

At the same time, the specter of the "grand equestrian statue," along with other large-scale forms of artistic monument and public memorial, is decidedly downplayed by a markedly *domestic* setting for dying and remembrance – the "common room" in which the poor artists of Uniłowski's novel "dream of glory," the author himself (and this may explain his appeal to Kantor), "forgotten after the war [but] glorious before." In his last years, Kantor was to outspokenly oppose the "offical" history of mass movements, wars, and ideologies, with the "poor, trivial, ridiculously small and completely defenceless history of a single man's life, whoever he might be"; while the Caretaker, escorting Mr. X in the Overture to *Artists*, would sport a two-cornered hat like "those worn by officials at European state funerals," the verb *sczeznąć*, in its title, connotes a wasting death, like that of a dog caught in a trap and withering away. How this relates to the CENTER-PERIPHERY structuring of Kantor's reflections on art and death, can again be traced to his Zero Theatre method of "erasing," or "cleaning up": in *The Madman and the Nun* (*Wariat i zakonnica*, 1963), the principle was manifest in the actors' having to "fight from being pushed aside" by a "Machine of Destruction," and from *The Dead Class* on, he would cast Death herself (a beautiful young girl, in Polish Symbolism) as something of a lowlife cleaning woman, a charlady, a *Putzfrau*. A figure of the Lowest Rank, sneaking in by way of "low impersonation," she would certainly be performing "below zero" – with movements precise and mechanical, repeated hundreds of times – as opposed to the "punch line" tradition of theatrical death Kantor would now try to negate by letting his artists die "like dogs." In blending terminology (cf. Fauconnier and Turner on the "Grim Reaper"), the logic of this derives courtesy of many compounded conceptions: death is an event that makes someone

more important in the Kantorian hierarchy; the act of erasing makes something more important in art; and cleaning up is understood as erasing – so in the blend, the event of death is personified not only as a cleaning woman, but as the supreme artist.[56]

As another lowest-rank incarnation of Death, *Wielopole* found her embodied as a corpse-washing Widow of the Local Photographer; here, the same actress (Mira Rychlicka) was to engage in the pulse-taking routines of Doctor Asklepios, a function later technologized by her outsized stethoscope as Dr. Klein, in *Today Is My Birthday*. To follow through the delicate interplay, in *Artists*, between death, art, and objecthood (in the Cartesian sense of the "extended thing," subject to measurability), it could be proposed that the "artistic" ambitions of Death were now distributed across a variety of figures, engaging either the *mechanics* of bodies-as-objects – taking the pulse; imitating the measured step of the platoon; the childhood "art" of knocking down the toy soldiers – or the materiality of their *surfaces*: the Owners' inclination for dusting and scrubbing; the wrapping up of Mr. X, in the Overture, into the "disinterested" work of art that is the *emballage* ("a pitiful sign of its past glory," yet achieved by "a desperate act of heroism, invincible"). Add the exteriority and objecthood implied by the key notion of *reflection* – in Act IV, the Pimp only recognizes the Dishwasher as dead when he sees her image in his mirror – and the themes of art and death blend with that of selfhood, or, as Jan Kott puts it, of "biography as a graveyard": to emphasize its centrality, the key line, "And that is how those 64 years have passed," would often be delivered in the local language on tour. While the *duality* inherent to seeing one's Self in a mirror – in a prison, in a grave – works well with Kobialka's postmodern binaries of subject/object and Self/Other (in his next work, Kantor would objectify himself into a mannequin), the notion of a finished body in a finished outside world is as alien to theories of distributed selfhood as it is to the Bakhtinian *grotesque*: while "tied down to the same biography" as its Author, the "stubborn dead man" that is I-Dying keeps resisting any final unity with the bio-object/emballage of his death bed. Defining himself as "one and many," Kantor's identical twins here serve not only to trouble essentialist notions of selfhood (what if appearance *is* sufficient for identity?), but to present the Self, as well, as a Work of Art under construction. Even if one of them is but "a *portrait*, a *likeness*," the question arises "[w]hich of them is more real":

> If we make a step further on this road, it might happen that a smile will turn into a grimace; virtue, into a crime; and a whore, into a virgin. Because of those mysterious laws of reversibility, the imperative of contemptible death in the title

> refers to the artists. Fame and glory touch down in the hell of the bottomless social pit [--]. Art, the noblest of man's ideals, turns into a despicable chamber of torture, from which the artist's appeal to the world is tapped in a prison code.[57]

In one sense, then, the "Work of Art as Prison" blend, key to *Let the Artists Die!*, follows a similar inverse logic as does Kantor's prior aim of evoking Life through Death: reversing his reverse image in the Nuremberg "mirror" – the master artist of Kraków, publicly stigmatized by the nail – Stwosz comes to create art by means of torture. Not the medieval craftsman but a decadent sculptor, "Wyspiański's contemporary," the figure embodies not only Death (insofar as his task is "to create order, tidy things up") but yet another Self-Portrait of Kantor, himself – "*tout court, c'est moi*": something that actor Andrzej Wełmiński would also directly portray in his remaining productions, along with the Odysseus of 1944, and the "martyr" Vsevolod Meyerhold. On one level, imprisonment comes to define the "limitation or *enclosure*" inherent to "the situation of an artist," in terms of now familiar schemata of CONTAINMENT: "the work of art is not something open, something which leads to glory"; the prison, "nothing less than the existential condition of the actor, his very existence, his state of being." At the same time, however, Kantor sees it as "utterly alien" to "the nature of Man": as a "meticulously [--] structured model of history," and "undeniably a 'product' of civilization," "[t]he fact that 'prison' is set up against man, [--] established to crush free thoughts, happens to be one of the grimmest absurdities." For all the Taylorist Constructivism of the Death Camp Killers who execute Stwosz's commands, thus, there seems to be an aspect to his work that reflects the "official," relegating real artists "to outlaw status" – two decades earlier, Kantor had applied these very same terms to his staging of *The Madman and the Nun*, soon closed down by authorities, who took its sinister Destruction Machine to stand for themselves. Even if the very blending of art and torture is only enabled by the generic force-dynamics of agents and patients, active in both scenarios, Kantor himself seems utterly undecided as to which he is actually talking about: the English-language version of his "Guide," equipped with a reproduction of Stwosz's Kraków altarpiece, the original Polish associates the scene with "*bestiality* and *martyrdom*," stressing, "IT'S NOT ABOUT THE ALTAR!"[58]

On yet another level – as regards the commonplace notion of Kantor himself, as if "imprisoning" his actors in a prior design – some reviewers of *Artists* remained unclear "whether he [was] dictating their actions or serving as a stagehand," his "tiny, angular gestures," expressing "equal measures of tyranny and humility." For Kantor,

this would only have been the effect of a decidedly Symbolist influence: close enough to the Happening artist described by Michael Kirby – working to "turn the otherwise highly expressive human being" into "a mobile armature on which to hang a costume, have it make music, speak a line, or couple to an object" (Lawson) – he now based his "new interpretation" of his stage presence on the figure of the Author, in Aleksandr Blok's *The Fairground Booth*, which he had read and translated in his youth: "I let in a whole gang of people who, as soon as they're on stage, behave as if they're not taking any notice of my desires"; "put in the actors' hands," "impotent" and "helpless," "I can only look on and disapprove of what they're doing." While it was only with symbolism, according to Gerould, that "the physical presence of the artist in his own work" became even conceivable "in the supposedly objective form of drama," and while that of Kantor may well have been crucial to his performances – having long awaited to see one without him, critic Andrzej Żurowski would "unfortunately" have to admit a Kantor-free *Artists* was incomplete without his "directing the audience" – the post-prison "mutiny" scene was to directly reflect what Pleśniarowicz has discussed as a more general opposition, in Kantor's art, between the "National Pantheon" of symbolist images, and "the solitude and alienation of the artist" in their midst. The poses of Mum and Kantor, modeled after Death and the painter, in Malczewski's *Melancholy*, their solitary figures appeared decidedly separated from the dance of the "martyrs," flowing between them: "Claustrophic in its anxieties," as Gerould puts it, the painting "shows mankind isolated in dreams and the artist imprisoned in his art."[59]

Then again, Kantor himself found such isolated moments "insignificant," as opposed to the "message" that was "tapped in a prison code," at the end of Act IV: a "rhythmic tatoo" not unlike that on the "sheet-metal exhaust tubes" of *Akropolis*, as Lawson notes, yet one that here would eventually "erupt[] into an insurrection." What emerged of it was a "grand palimpsest of everything that had previously transpired," a collage of actors and objects similar to his other final acts, in the Theatre of Death – invariably accompanied with the proud pronouncement, "NO COMMENT!": where *Wielopole* had ended on a Last Supper image evocative of Leonardo, and the "huge, black 'emballage'" in *I Shall Never Return* would perhaps hark back to the Holocaust, *Let the Artists Die!* ended with the actors erecting a "barricade," essentially between themselves and the audience ("propelled by the imperative contained in the title"). If he had intended to have one in *Wielopole*, already, and indeed combined one with the skeleton Rocinante, in his 1962 sketches for *Don Quixote*, the scene in many ways

evokes the era when "there were Poles on every barricade, in Europe" (Davies): related to "the superiority of love and death over the ethos of history," by Kantor, the way the barricade would be VERTICALLY dominated by the Angel of Death/Cabaret Whore, with her black fairground banner of death or anarchy, has led most commentators to see in it a reference to Delacroix's 1830 painting, *Liberty Leading the People*. Then again, this was the year of the failed November Uprising against the Russians, and as Lawson points out, the general CYCLICITY of the events does suggest that the barricade, too, "could just as easily have been taken apart" and dispersed: relating Stwosz's "victory photograph" to that of the Paris Communards in 1871, and contrasting his emballaged anonymity to the latter being *exposed* by having thus posed, he presents the artist, again, as "letting the actors die so that he and his art could live." Yet at the same time, there is something affirmative to the *objects*, on the barricade, in the sense that they may "outlive our death" (like the skeleton), and afford "hold[ing] time still in material presence" – Jan Kott's example is specifically resonant, here:

> For all its fragility, a photographic print, a glossy picture of cardboard, endures longer than the human body. In vast stretches of the world and almost everywhere in Central Europe, this tiny scrap of paper has repeatedly proven itself to be more durable than brick and cement houses and their inhabitants.[60]

Accordingly, I wish to end this chapter on a more positive interpretation of Kantor's theatre than is often advanced. The "funeral monument" that his "barricade" may be, on one level – the Doctor, quietly placing wooden crosses as "mourning flowers" along its front – its "decadent" overtones rather hark back to the glorious birth of the *avantgarde* (which, as Lawson points out, Renato Poggioli indeed situates as "rising from the ashes of the military crushing of the Paris Commune") than to the epitome of technological modernity that is Auschwitz, in the Grotowski/Szajna *Akropolis*. Where at the end of the latter "They are gone, and the smoke rises in spirals," *Artists* concludes in "a ghastly homage to the spirit of resistance," "at the forefront of rebellion": as Kantor himself liked to see it, the barricade was "a stand against the stupidity and crime of power," "glory" and "victory," displaced from the sphere of life to that of art – most importantly, it was built "out of [the] harmless materials" of his poor room. One way to theorize this, with regard to the "readymade" object, is as a specific form of *social agency* (curious as it may sound, in Kantor's world) arising when CYCLES of imposed "use" are abandoned for *found affordances of resistance* – and as theorists

Mike Michael and Arthur Still have intriguingly argued, these can be contrasted with the Foucauldian notion of "power-knowledge," such that "freezes unruly objects through the exercise of discipline" and the imposition of categories. Given the latter's centrality to Michal Kobialka's discussion of Kantor (for example, he analyzes the "prison," in *Artists*, as simultaneously a "mechanism of discipline that create[s] docile bodies" and a "heterotopic space freed from the external order of things"), I wish to conclude by augmenting it with Michael and Still's political elaboration of Gibson: where Foucault provides "a detailed unravelling of the practical and disciplinary minutiae by which social affordances are forged," ecological activity essentially affords *transgression*, "in a realm of possibilities whose vast range is blurred by the disciplinary freezing of power-knowledge," "always threatening to disrupt [its] imperatives." Where "[d]isciplinary power *tells* us that a chair is for sitting on," there are always "latent" and "suppressed" affordances available to direct, ecological perception – to give an idea of the *ubiquity* of such "resources for resistance," even if not overtly engaged on the barricades, I end with a quote most evocative of *The Dead Class*:

> To be made to sit at a desk and face the teacher without fidgetting cannot take into account all forms of fidgetting that are possible. The scouring of the desk with fingernails, the squeaking of the chair frame [--], the marks left on the lino by the deft turn of the heel: these scurrilous activities utilize minute affordances that are some of the most dangerous enemies of power-knowledge.[61]

Epilogue. PERFORMING HUMANITY: TENSIONS AND CONTINUITIES

Let me begin this brief medley of closing thoughts with one final take on Kantor and Grotowski – having argued, throughout, that their work is prototypically related to "objects" and the "actor," respectively (matter and humanity), the merest sampling of international reviews seems to betray something of an opposite kind of interpretation. Contrary to Grotowski's humane reputation, first of all, contemporary discussions of *Akropolis* see it as "dramatiz[ing] the failure of humanism" (Margaret Croyden), portraying "humanity in such a condition of degradation that the humanity itself is flickering like a guttering candle" (Clive Barnes). Where Peter Brook traces in it a "quality of pure evil" ("something truly nasty, truly repellent"), Irving Wardle reports "an objective view of man as an animal much given to cruelty and easily destroyed"; finally, Elizabeth Hardwick relates its "only plot is suffering, blackness, desperation" – constant "torment, fear, mockery, persecution, submission" that "continues unto death." Of Kantor's theatre, by contrast, Italian critic Egidio Pani suggests "we can say anything but that it is a theatre of despair": endowed with the "ability to dream the nightmare of our century" (Frank Rich), his "paean to memory" in *Let the Artists Die!* is seen as "Mr. Kantor's last will and testament to Europe's faded glory," perhaps, but also, as critic Rosette C. Lamont continues, as "strongly political, a celebration of man's indomitable spirit of resistance, a tapped message to the Free World." Nor is the image of a Master Puppeteer exclusive to the power dynamics of Kantor's group: where Flaszen admits that Grotowski "really was a dictator," until about 1962, notions of his treating his actors "as puppets, pawns, objects" are much in line with his own early metaphors of domination and manipulation (say, on the masochistic and sadistic tendencies of the "courtesan actor" and the "producer souteneur"). For John Simon – and this has often been said of Kantor – Grotowski's theatre could only present "Grotowski," the "*ne varietur* uniform" of his black suit, "a cross between a secular priest and a hieratic IBM executive": "How can anyone who rehearses a production for over a year and watches each performance like a blinkered hawk speak of spontaneity?"[1]

No matter how grim Grotowski's productions, and no matter how humane those of Kantor, it remains, however, usually Grotowski who is prototypically conceived of as celebrating human potential, Kantor as treating his actors as "mere objects." On one level, this seems to have do with the traditional tension of *actors* and *characters* I

also related to conflicting interpretations of Meyerhold: whether we trace in Kantor's and Grotowski's stage objects *enabling affordances* or mere *imposing matter* depends on which we focus on – and most discussions tend to focus on the actors' condition. Second, there is a sense in which Western notions of "humanity" and "objecthood," conceived as if on a Great Chain of Being, themselves reflect the very same image schemas (INTERNAL/ABOVE/CENTRAL, vs. EXTERNAL/BELOW/PERIPHERAL) as I have argued were physically enacted or embodied in the two directors' theatrical ecologies. Finally, the ecological-enactive and cognitive-distributed emphases of my respective chapters on Grotowski and Kantor go with generally *metonymical* and *metaphorical* modes of authority I have variously framed in terms of "wholeness" and "duality," continuity and dissociation, co-dependence and autonomy – whether it is a question of mind and matter, specifically, or entails more general cognitive linguistic distinctions between metonymy and metaphor, as comprising one or two conceptual domains: when Grotowski discusses "physical actions" as "prolonged impulses," he explicitly opposes their organic unity to such partner-blind "gestures" and "activities" as Kantor sought to "wrench" from their everyday functionality by means of sheer repetition.[2] If, on the level of the prototypical conceptions I have discussed, both practitioners are easily reduced to the common metonymical denominator of their public personas, I now turn to consider how images of the "Kantoresque" and the "Grotowskian" partially reflect the object and human-centered *afterlives* of their activity, in the metaphorical and metonymical modes of practice and documentation that remain thereof.

Begin with Kantor: on his own intent, "the memory of the Cricot 2 Theatre" was to be embodied in his Cricoteka archives, "formally constituted to exist 'eternally'" (as of 1980) on the notion that "art must survive our life," in "the minds and the imagination of the coming generations" – the "institutional emballage" of his ideas, as Pleśniarowicz puts it, the Center was essentially conceived as a metaphor of memory. Apart from extensive video and photographic documentation of his work, together with his own writings, drawings, and designs, the collection comprises "several hundreds of objects and costumes" as well as "thousands of reviews, journals and books"; not that this is *all* that survives of his practice, there is certainly no single "heir" to his legacy (though some occasionally pose as such), nor did he do much to provide one. What he did provide were instructions for the "scientific" conservation of objects and costumes – many of his earlier ones, reconstructed in the 1980s since no one else had previously understood them as "works of art," to be preserved "in a museum!" – and

indeed, while the Cricoteka have since done much to publicize his actors as well, the majority of their output is still dedicated to cataloguing the core collection: in one of the more beautiful book-length compilations, a section on *Let the Artists Die!* has every cross and knocker used in the production carefully printed and indexed with proper museal descriptions, often in the form, "aged wood painted with acrylics." In geographical terms, the Center's many premises are now being augmented by a large-scale museum, under construction, Kantor's "poor room" – alternately that of *The Dead Class* or that of the 1944 *Return of Odysseus*, anachronistically rebuilt in a "Theatre of Death" style – on permanent display in the National Museum in Kraków; whether exhibited locally or worldwide, however, what makes his "Human Nature Reserve" *metaphorical*, is essentially the way it serves to *substitute* prior performance and cognition with their uncannily material remains. While there is a sense in which archaeological and artistic exhibits can be seen as "parts of (no longer functioning) minds," embodying "distributed personhood," those of Kantor are essentially defined by the *lack* thus indexed – the kiddie-cart, mounted with a mannequin of the Six-Year-Old; Stwosz, replaced by the emballage of his coat and hat; the Generals, now literally "just the uniforms," standing still on wooden supports of the Lowest Rank.[3]

In Grotowski's case, the tub and the pipes of *Akropolis*, say, would simply not "exhibit" to such effect, given their performative affordances (unlike those very intentionally crafted on Kantor's pillories) were ever only reciprocal to the specific actors who engaged them; while some replicas do exist in the wonderfully eclectic archives of Wrocław, both the "Institute," therein, and the Pontedera "Workcenter," in Italy, are much more concerned with craft and practice – indeed, it is often maintained that his "true legacy" is "found in the lives of the people with whom he worked." To get at the *metonymical* logic of this, we only need consider some key terms that keep recurring in Grot-speak, organized as they are in a neat hierarchy of contiguity and contact: first, the *dissemination* of his *influence* may have begun with his own early search for "kinsmen" to "receive [his] impulses," even from afar, but as people began to go "Grotowskian" on the slightest contact – as if by contagious magic: attending a workshop or even one of the actual performances in the 1960s – the terms of these terms proved as hard to control as the *semen* and the *influenza* at their root (for Schechner, Grotowski's influence works like "a rock dropped into a pond [that] causes concentric waves to expand outwards in ever-widening circles"). Another matter altogether is such *initiation* or *transmission* as he enacted one-on-one, behind closed doors: first, in

his private rehearsals for *The Constant Prince* (1965) with actor Ryszard Cieślak – the "utter opening" in which the two were "reborn," in and through each other – then later, with an apprentice of yet another order, over the 14-year "gestation" of what he accordingly renamed the Workcenter of Jerzy Grotowski and Thomas Richards. As the designated heir of Grotowski's legacy, Richards no longer thinks the work needs be as "protected and isolated," yet the legacy itself is treated with all due reverence: "adamantly and unambiguously singular," as Lisa Wolford maintains, what Grotowski wanted to pass on was "a tangible and practical thread" of embodied knowledge he himself had "received from other hands," whether "[b]y initiation, or by theft." Defining the "Teacher" as one "through whom the teaching is passing," he comes close to Jesper Sørensen's cognitive outline of "the genuine shaman," qualified as such by metonymic links that "facilitate a flow of essential qualities" and of "ritual efficacy" – "creating a line of descent, possibly all the way back to the mythic times in which the first ritual specialists were given or acquired a connection to the sacred domain."[4]

Apart from the Archive, the Museum, the Institute, and the Workcenter, finally, the prototypically object and human-centered conceptions of the two practitioners are bound to reflect wider epistemological concerns embedded in their chosen *modes* of address and dissemination: where Kantor is at home with the good old avantgarde genre of the *manifesto* – defined by "performative intervention and theatrical posing" in equal measure, as Martin Puchner has aptly argued – Richard Schechner dares suggest that Grotowski's utterances rather aspire to the Gospels ("words of the master are argued over, closely guarded, and released to the public only when deemed ready"). Keenly aware that whatever they left behind in textual form was bound to reach a far wider audience than ever attended their performances, both clearly sought to *control* their discursive legacies, by characteristic strategies of updating and backdating: while the "darker undertones" of Grotowski's editorial concerns have been widely discussed – in the more positive narrative, the precise conditions he often stipulated for the circulation and translation of his texts only betray his commitment to clarity – the way Kantor would endow his texts with the earliest possible dates is generally seen as once more reflecting "his need to be completely original and avantgarde," having "anticipated if not discovered many of the defining aspects of 20th-century art and theatre." What concerns me here, however, are rather the *communication frameworks* in which these discourses were embedded while their instigators were still there to control them: compared to the many filmed documentaries of Kantor, reading his essays out

loud in rehearsal or in interview, most of the texts attributed to Grotowski are actually transcriptions of his public appearances; more generally, where Kantor is thoroughly engaged in mechanical reproduction – the very notion of filming his work; photography, as a metaphor of memory; the repetitive records of his soundscape – Grotowski deliberately sought to counter the "second-hand" world of indirect perception, with direct one-to-one interaction/transmission, the Buberian *ich und du*: the oral tradition. To the extent that Bruce McConachie's discussion of photography and radio can be generalized across technological reproduction and oral culture, what he sees as their "reality effects" is in due agreement with my image-schematic outlines of Kantor and Grotowski: in brief, they go for "the materiality of history and the ideality of interior subjectivity," the solidity of objects and a desired CONTAINMENT of "authenticity."[5]

Then again, the crux of McConachie's interest in communication frameworks (owing e.g. to Tobin Nellhaus and Walter J. Ong) lies in how the cognitive effects of *culturally dominant* media may pertain to audience *perception and expectation* – and in the twenty-first century, those of print, photography, and the radio have surely given over to the televisual and to increasing doses, at least in more privileged parts of the Western world, of the digital (perhaps emerging as the current cultural dominant). Acknowledging my allegiance to a certain Eastern European tradition and to a certain "poor" aesthetic, throughout – shared by Meyerhold, Grotowski, and Kantor alike – the remaining sections of this Epilogue will take the test of addressing performance ecologies more "richly" engaged in the current mediatization of theatre and cognition; rather than pretend much expertise on new technologies, *per se*, what I will try to thematize is their experiential grounding in basic-level skills of perception and embodied interaction – indeed revisiting many issues already outlined in Chapter 1. Given how they seem to render fuzzy distinctions of space and action utterly insustainable, my tentative forays into the ecologies and metaphorical "archaeologies" of *liveness*, *virtuality*, and the *cyborg* will generally proceed from a spectatorial point of view to discussing affordances of first-hand engagement. Refraining from reductive either/or narratives of their either being *entirely* new or their only re-enacting the old in seductively new guises, what does seem to emerge as something of an invariant is a tension between ecological continuity and metaphorical polarization, very similar to those I have traced between performance and reception, in Kantor and Grotowski. Thus, the concluding section will address the specter of the "posthuman," not as a harbinger of some antihuman attitude, but as directly entailed by notions of distributed

cognition (extended/embedded/enactive) that I hope may afford modes of "performing humanity" within an *ecological ethic of engagement* – unbound by the Great Chain of Being as regards its ontologies dominance and detachment and their attendant anxieties, whether enacted in antitheatrical or antitechnological modes of prejudice.

Liveness and Theatricality: Image, Illusion, and Interaction

> We decided that 'Akropolis' was almost impossible to present on television. The others were *quite* impossible. [--] *We've* had to make the choice of what to look at in place of the one the spectator would make in the theater. [--] It's not elegantly done. It's as though we had grabbed something quickly as it passed by. It has great vitality. But I'm not very objective about it any more.
>
> No matter how much theatre expands and exploits its mechanical resources, it will remain technologically inferior to film and television. (Jerzy Grotowski)

In 2004 and 2005, the New York based Wooster Group presented versions of a piece entitled *Poor Theater: A Series of Simulacra*, partially based on the final minutes of the American TV version of the Grotowski/Szajna production of *Akropolis*. "Jockeying around a pair of microphones," the contemporary reviews tell us, the actors would "deftly recreate the video close-ups and shifts of camera angle," and "reproduce with split-second precision the gushing stream of anguished Polish" over their earpieces; regardless of its relatively dated technology of mikes, receivers, and monitors, such "televisual mise-en-scène" generally partakes of emerging genres Matthew Causey and Steve Dixon have called "cyber-theatre" and "digital performance," respectively. Then again, where the latter presents his category as "by and large the polar opposite" of Grotowski, in the sense of *via positiva* – being "by definition an additive process" – what the Wooster Group production rather seems to dramatize is the subtractive logic of "simulacra," as a postmodern reversal of Grotowski's rhetoric of inner essence: long before live actors appear, the audience watch them on a video, watching a video about the Polish actors; later on, their "simulation" of *Akropolis* only consists in animating those parts of their bodies they see on the "flat and partial image" of the video. In Poland, especially, the piece was received with a degree of hostility (and amnesia, it seems, concerning the earlier "sacrilege" of Grotowski's "confronting" Wyspiański with Auschwitz), yet for all his defenses of theatre – "as film and television encroach upon its domain" – the fact remains Grotowski himself had agreed on having his piece televised, to begin with, even with some enthusiasm, as my opening quote implies.

That film and TV had emerged as the "dominant media" of imagination by the 1960s is well evidenced in Eric Bentley's admitting that his "non-theatre" as such had "many of the advantages of movie close-ups": as in the film and in its *Poor Theater* simulation, "[o]ne watches the play of wrinkle and muscle on your actors' bodies."[6]

Regarding the wider debate over the "live" and the "mediatized," one way to address the "air of a melodrama" Philip Auslander has identified when the former is "threatened, encroached upon, dominated, and contaminated by its insidious Other," is simply as an instance of cognitive *essentialism* – sneaking in whenever we perform such distinctions as go into understanding our Categories as Containers of features. In the domain of art criticism, take but the initial impulse of *differentiating* the arts, and soon enough we find our "medium-specific" understandings profoundly essentialized by modernist ideals of self-containment, self-sufficiency, and self-consciousness: predating Grotowski's "poor theatre" only marginally, theorist of American modernism Clement Greenberg made explicit the claim for discerning the "irreducible essence" of "art and the separate arts," by "eliminating" what is but "dispensable, unessential." In such a perspective, what Auslander discusses as mediatized performance betrays considerable continuities with the general "theatricality" of technology and stagecraft – whether metaphorized as clockwork, construction, or computer – the "prejudice" over which extends back to Aristotle: a notion of theatricality as "illusory, deceptive, exaggerated, artificial, or affected," in any case *derived* from and *corruptive* of some alleged essence, whether identified with reality, authenticity, literature, or liveness – an utter negation, defined by its "excess and its emptiness, its surplus as well as its lack." From the "clutter" of set and props, "distract[ing] attention" by "their very visibility" on the early modern stage, to that of onstage monitors in the twentieth century, much of antitheatrical writing has thus capitalized on the logic of OBJECTS and SURFACES: tangible forms, effectively *obstructing* such aesthetic "absorption" as Michael Fried famously came to value as the positive opposite of the "objecthood" of theatricality. While neither "ontologically given [nor] technologically determined," accordingly, neither is the notion of *liveness* a mere "artifact of mediatization," coextensive only "with the history of recording media," as Auslander has it: beyond essentialist claims, we might do well to address "the live" in terms of perception, interaction, and death.[7]

Perceptually, first, the specter of technological determinism is hardly evaded by reducing the ontologies of TV, film, and video, to what Auslander dubs the electronic, photographic, and magnetic ontologies of their underlying technologies – as if the

"transistors' binary logic" had "the slightest effect on audience experience." Neither is the perception of liveness quite explained by McConachie's union of mirror neurons with "intentional action," such that "imput[ing] intentions and agency" to the "flickering shadows" on film requires the use of a "Hypersensitive Agency Detective Device" – as if we primarily perceived the screen, and the only action was inside our heads. Rather, as Gibson suggests, what is important is "not the apparatus" but "the information it provides for our vision": characterized by "change of structure in the optic array" such that "contains information about other things than just the surface itself," he finds his ecological definition of the "progressive picture" broad enough to include (in 1979) not only film but TV, shadow play, and the "optical gadgets" of kinetic artists. Likewise, if the squabbles over the live and the *digital* often reflect what Dixon wittily calls "the yes-no, on-off, 0-1, love-hate relationship one establishes when working closely with a dualistic medium that is in itself conceived and programmed as binary," perception still remains primarily *analog* – "the surrogate visual array on the screen" (Joseph Anderson), primarily depicting "the appearances of objects and events," and thus ultimately capitalizing on our human attunement to basic-level categories. Insofar as basic "liveness" is specified by invariants of motion rather than appearance – self-initiated, contingent, and goal-directed, as set out in Chapter 1 – both animacy and agency are easily detected (a "hypersensitive" evolutionary adaptation or not), be it in filmed actors, puppets, cartoons, or the barest blips on a computer screen. Finally, the kind of liveness tracked by state-of-the-art motion-capture technologies in such influential dance pieces as Merce Cunningham's *BIPED* (1999) is abstracted from "articulation variables" not unlike those recognized in traditional puppetry – technologically, from "light-reflective body markers attached to the dancer's joints" such as had earlier been used to tease out the perceptual invariants of "biological motion."[8]

Now in terms of *interaction*, what this latter example already implies is ways of "staging the screen," in Greg Giesekam's phrase, beyond the simple substitution of "painted backdrops with film," and of live dynamics with that of "editing alone" – how the *enactive* nature of performative practices, as Chris Salter argues, radically differs not only from "the static objecthood of the visual arts" but from the representational emphasis of many (postmodern) discussions of technology, such that tend to reduce it to *media* technology, with an exclusively ocular focus on projected images. In other words, just as we should resist dated "computer" metaphors of mind and cognition, neither should we let the generally audiovisual output of digital intervention

blind us to the intricate ecologies of sensorimotor engagement that go into its enactment – from the roving presence of "live-feed" cameramen (easily accepted as equally "invisible" as the black-clad, prop-adjusting *kurogo* of traditional Japanese theatre) to the gradual smartening up and interconnection of props and objects, in increasingly "intelligent performance environment[s]." While such forms of distributed cognition still rely on notions of "pervasive" or "ubiquitous" *computing*, they do afford a delicate interplay between performers, immediately engaging varieties of sensor technology embedded in their clothing or environment – whether sensitive to position, touch, movement, voice, sound, pitch, or emotion – and contingent affordances of thus animating virtual avatars, "triggering image and sound databanks for projections, or activating stage machinery in some manner." At one extreme, sensors may silently track heartbeat or brain activity, at another, they may refer us to "our well-developed intuitions about physical objects to interact with the virtual/informational realm," as Andy Clark rounds up the idea of "tangible" computing: "to take digital abstractions and data-flows and make them as solid and manipulable as rocks and stones." Whatever the "ratio" between performers, objects, and images, accordingly, their dynamic interaction can well be imagined on a spatiotemporal axis of "distance," as does Stephen Kaplin – his examples running from an initial unity of actor and role, through masks, puppets, shadow theatre, and stop animation, to real-time motion capture:

> Makeup and costume, prosthetic devices, wigs and body extensions help to a degree, but eventually the performing object reaches the limits of the human body's anatomy and must begin to emerge with a physical presence of its own. [--] [As the] distance between the performer and the object widens, the amount of technology needed to bridge the gap increases. [--] Rod puppets use a direct, mechanical linkage [--]. The computer-generated avatar becomes a sort of virtual body mask or diving suit, which allows the actor to inhabit the digital environment [--], performing as though from inside the object [again. But] although the cyber-puppeteer is capable of wondrous feats of real-time animation, a small army of technicians and programmers is required to run the system [--].[9]

Then again, for all the networks of distributed agency that go into its production, what a familiar strand of antitheatrical prejudice often has us *perceive* in technologized performance is something of a one-on-one combat *for* agency and dominance, the fear and fascination over which I have tried to trace with regard to more mundane objects. In short, the more indirect the metonymical link between the two becomes, the easier it is to metaphorically construe the causal situation not as one of performers actively

animating objects or images (as per Kaplin), but of their rather being "machined by the machines-for-acting they appear to operate," as I earlier cited Bill Worthen regarding *The Magnanimous Cuckold* – with Meyerhold's piece as an early example, this dual perspective seems indeed inherent to the one aspect of "liveness" that does (in its present implications) appear historically contingent on the possibility of mediation: the notion of "real-time" interaction. Partaking of a longer lineage of "virtual reality," the prehistory of the concept can well be traced "from illusion to immersion," in the sense that before the technological affordances emerged for its becoming a distinct category, its mechanics had already been well rehearsed by such magicians of the stage as the Czech Josef Svoboda, in his Laterna Magika: while introducing new sensibilities of "liveness" in the coordination of actors and film, his strand of "real-time" engagement would, however, detract from its expected "spontaneity" to the extent that it still "depend[ed] on pre-recorded footage and well-rehearsed execution." On the one hand, such developments arouse "concerns that the performer will be reduced to the role of puppet," her agency somehow compromised by "pre-recorded technology which tends to set a pace to which the live performer must yield" – on the other, as the abiding tourist appeal of such pieces as Svoboda's 1977 *Wonderful Circus* attests, "crossing the celluloid divide" may also be perceived as a performance of virtuosity.[10] The same for *Poor Theater*: in one sense, performing in time to the Grotowski footage can be seen as definitively constraining the actors' agency, in another, it is a skill in itself, the very agility of which rather goes to affirm their liveness and presence.

With this last scenario, finally, we come to "the most material manner of marking the live" Matthew Causey argues "Auslander's dynamic materialism overlooks": "what Taduesz [*sic*] Kantor calls 'the revelatory message from the realm of death.'" If there is a sense in which the ontology of *photography* partakes in that of "death," as Kantor and Roland Barthes have proposed, a vague feeling of such correlation sometimes seems to accompany our perceptions of filmed actors, as well, specifically when we know or sense that their images have already outlived their referents (cf. object constancy): the medium itself, enacting a Cartesian polarization of two worlds, once "in the can" (McConachie) such early actors may at times appear un-cannily "similar to us, yet at the same time infinitely foreign, beyond an impassable barrier" (Kantor). A case in point could again be Svoboda's *Wonderful Circus*: beside its charmingly dated technology and sexual politics, the impression Greg Giesekam admits that the show "has become something of a museum piece" is surely reinforced by a striking

contrast between live actors and a filmed background essentially shot in the 1970s – the two, merging and diverging to enact the life story of two clowns in pursuit of love. "By the end their wigs have gone grey, their outfits are tatty," as "huge close-ups of their faces flank the central canvas on either side": looking upon their live-on-stage counterparts of 2008, say, the original actors of 1977 strike me, at least, as "glaring" and "circus-like" much in the sense that Kantor describes in "The Theatre of Death." Likewise, some reviews of *Poor Theater* articulate a sense of Grotowski's work as already cut off, as part of a history from which present viewers are "forever exiled": "the absence of things past that inheres in every presence," "resonat[ing] throughout the performance," Stephen Bottoms goes on to wonder if theatre is "ever truly an experience of presence, or [if we are] just chasing ghosts? (Alas, poor theatre...)." In the very closing scene of the piece, the finale of *Akropolis* emerges again, now cross-cut with the cowboy antics of a Hollywood Western – and I cite Kermit Dunkelberg:

> For a few, frenetic minutes, the actors rapidly switch back and forth between American Western and Polish apocalypse. The procession snakes toward the audience, past the first row. A trap door in the aisle of the second row of seating is lifted aside, and the actors in *Poor Theater*, like the actors in *Akropolis* now playing on the monitors, disappear through the narrow aperture, closing the lid after them. [--] We hear the voice of the English narrator of the *Akropolis* video: "*They went. And only the smoke remains*."
>
> Only the smoke. Or only a video.[11]

Enacting Identities: On Cyber-CONTAINMENT and Extended Biomechanics

Historically, the above sense of "two worlds" has of course been afforded by a variety of technologies prior to film, from perspective scenery to darkened auditoria. In this section, I will briefly discuss how it plays out in notions of *cyborgs* and *cyberspace*: while etymologically related to "cybernetics," as the more environment-involving predecessor of cognitive science, the way in which they are addressed tends to betray a CONTAINMENT rhetoric more akin to competing views of "information processing." As Steve Dixon puts it, discourses on cyberculture generally invoke Cartesian divisions of "body and mind, and the polarities of absence and presence, real and virtual" – be it with images of *inclusion* or *immersion* "inside information," or with "Wild West" metaphors of "digital pioneers," as "settlers and cowboys" at the "new frontier" of cyberspace (even as it "quickly [turned out] colonized and overpopulated"). More crucially, they often come with a Cyber-Cartesian rhetoric of *disembodiment* that "privileges informational pattern over material instantiation," as N. Katherine Hayles

puts it in her historical account of "how information lost its body": "a new variation on an ancient game," often enacted at the computer screen, "in which disembodied information becomes the ultimate Platonic Form" and human physicality is reduced to a derivative, secondary status, at most – an utter *disengagement* of mind from matter. The other way around (INSIDE OUT/OUTSIDE IN), the entrenched image of the *cyborg* consists of an "electronically penetrated" body, in Andy Clark's colorful language, "dramatically transformed" by invasive technologies of neural prostheses or implants: "the full line of Terminator fashion accessories," "consummated deep within." Few have enacted this image more explicitly than Stelarc, "the cyborgic performance artist par excellence" as per Dixon, "jerking spasmodically and involuntarily in response to electrical impulses sent along the Internet," like a "manipulable mannequin": allowing what he dubs "extended, external and virtual nervous system[s]," by way of "inverse motion capture," invade, parasitize, and contaminate aspects of his biological body (and note how a similar rhetoric plays in to the liveness debate, discussed above).[12]

To approach these issues from the perspective of direct, first-person engagement – in contrast to the somewhat spectatorial, third-person point of view adopted in the previous section – there is, of course, a variety of degrees to the openness of interaction afforded by various kinds of interface: textual, graphic, embodied. In short, it is one thing to have my word processor kindly suggest that it provide me with "driving instructions," when I discuss the Buddhist "Middle Way" in the Grotowski chapter, quite another to be able to virtually fly through a 3D model of Lyubov Popova's construction for *The Magnanimous Cuckold*, on the same computer screen – insofar as a "medium" affords perception, movement, or exploration, in Gibson's terminology (air and water, as his prime examples), much of the "openness" of interaction comes down to the kinds of virtual affordances different media enable us to explore. In these terms, manipulating the *Cuckold* model is surely more open an experience than that of a static movie spectator – with "visual kinesthesis" yet "helpless to intervene" – but it remains on a crude level of finger/mouse interaction, with onscreen icons, that only affords exhilarating visual displays utterly detached from sensorimotor performance. With more advanced interfaces, experiences of *virtual reality* surely gain in ecological validity – and many industrial applications, as in aviation and the military, bear a direct lineage to Gibson's early work on the psychology of perception – but tend to remain exclusively ocular: entailing "the first redefinition of perspective since the Renaissance," perhaps, devices such as the "head mounted display" often merely "empha-

size the Cartesian mind-body split," as Dixon notes, given that the user's experience only corresponds to her head movements. As for the *virtual body*, by the same token, he insists it remains "an inherently theatrical entity": "The dislocation and fragmentation of the body in digital performance is an aesthetic praxis which deconstructive critics have hungrily grasped and mythologized" – the "emperor's new clothes" of digital embodiment, "hung up in a wardrobe of theoretical self-deception, as the too-solid flesh of the sweating performer lumbers exhaustedly to the theater bar."[13]

Then again, as both Dixon and Chris Salter recount in their major histories of technological performance, the 1990s euphoria over "all things digital" is already subsiding for a renewed focus on "embodiment, situatedness, presence, and materiality." In terms of CONTAINMENT, overlapping notions of *ubiquitous* or *tangible* computing, or *augmented* reality, have emerged as the outright "opposite of virtual reality": for Mark Weiser, "[w]here virtual reality puts people inside a computer-generated world, ubiquitous computing forces the computer to live out here in the world with people," essentially *adding* new layers of meaning and functionality, therein. Accordingly, as Andy Clark relates, some now speak "not of Virtual Reality but of Real Virtuality," deliberately blurring the boundaries of physical and informational space; rather than "invest very heavily in the virtual/physical divide," he envisions that "next-generation human minds" will rather "focus on activity and engagement, seeing both the virtual and the physical as interpenetrating arenas for motion, perception and action." Here, then, would be a properly *ecological* utopia of performer-technology entanglement: the resistant opacity, all too familiar from generations of "In-Your-Face Technology," replaced with transparent, embodied interfaces only fitted to skills and capacities that come "naturally" – "poise[d] for easy use and deployment as and when required." In his discussion of the sensory and motor affordances of *telepresence* and *telerobotics* (as distributed technologies for performance at a distance), he admits that the slightest delay "can rapidly torpedo any sense of ongoing physical interaction," yet insists that "our sense of self, place, and potential" alike are "malleable constructs," based on current affordances of action, engagement, and intervention. (Alva Noë would speak of sensorimotor contingencies, investing "all presence" with an element of the "virtual.") To the extent that your sense of limits and location does reflect that of direct control, as Clark argues, one of his examples resonates well with my initial image of sitting at the computer – "confined to a hospital bed," your world seems to shrink to the radius of your arms; "Add a buzzer to summon a nurse and you feel a tad more liberated."[14]

Cutting to Clark's cognitive case, then, he suggests we humans are essentially *natural-born cyborgs*: where the word "once conjured visions of wires and implants," he argues "the use of such penetrative technologies is inessential" and only derives from "our metabolically based obsession" with "the ancient biological skin-bag." Not that embodiment were not key to his vision of extended cognition: for Clark, all the above technologies merely speak to "the crucial importance of touch, motion, and intervention," feelings of disembodiment only arising "when we are digitally immersed but lack the full spectrum of rich, real-time feedback that body and world provide." Rather, "embodiment is essential but negotiable" – "linking the conception of the self to a conception of whatever matrix of factors we experience as being under our direct control [--] makes ample room for truly hybrid biotechnological selves," yet not in the sense of disembodied intelligence: instead of there being "some informationally constituted *user* relative to whom all the rest is just *tools*," it is "*tools all the way down*." In the cognitive case, specifically, what he argues that "really matters" is just the "constant two-way traffic between biological wetware" and the "mindware upgrades" provided by various "tools, media, props, and technologies" – in short, the experienced *fluidity* of biotechnological integration, whether "with full implant technologies or with well-designed nonpenetrative modes of personal augmentation" that "simply bypass, rather than penetrate, the old biological borders of skin and skull":

> The very best of these resources are not so much used as incorporated into the user herself. They fall into place as aspects of the thinking process. They have the power to transform our sense of self, of location, of embodiment, and of our own mental capacities. They impact who, what and where we are.[15]

Here, then, we have our CONTAINMENT configuration turned inside out once more – metaphors of *invasion*, replaced with ones of *extension*, the history of which again extends well beyond McLuhan's roads, wheels, clocks, and telephones: consider only the transparent affordances of the hammer "at hand," evoked by Heidegger, or those of the blind man's cane, regarded as a proper part of his being both in the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty and in the Cybernetics of Gregory Bateson. Coined in the 1950s from a Greek word related to "governing" or "the art of the steersman," the latter enterprise again extends both backward and in to the present: a key predecessor to enactive notions of cognition, the Russian lineage of Cybernetics crucially derives from Aleksei Gastev's work on *biomechanics* – a core aspect of which is recapituled

in Norbert Wiener's dictum, "we have modified our environment so radically that we must now modify ourselves in order to exist in this new environment." The crucial feature of our "basic *human* nature," as Clark argues it is, many notions of cyborgic extension thus tend to have it turn us into something else: specifically, as Dixon notes, key representatives of cyborg performance (Stelarc) and discourse (Donna Haraway) "frequently dramatize a return to nature and the animal." To draw together a number of issues by now discussed, consider but the range of modified embodiments that have historically been available for *horses* "to exist," on stage: at one end of the spectrum – beyond Kantor's skeleton and Svoboda's circus stunts on film – it is quite conceivable for modern-day motion-capture technologies to virtually convert a human performer's movements into those of equine biomechanics. At another end, such specifics can well be enacted in virtuoso modes of solo mime and trio puppetry – as by Jean-Louis Barrault or in the recent hit *War Horse* – though perhaps less so, in the tradition of having two actors hop about in a horse costume (the backside of which may just count among the least grateful "parts" in the history of theatrical casting). On stage and off, what remains crucial is not to let your chosen technology blind you to the rest of your ecology: having fiercely banged at the door of the farm building in Brzezinka, as a horse anxious to run "free in the forest," Theatre of Sources collaborator Jairo Cuesta recounts how Grotowski would later ask him why he didn't just open the door then.[16]

But of course, these are not your prototypical examples of cyborg performance: where one "familiar refrain" has it that spectacles, cars, and pacemakers "have already rendered us cyborgs," the term was only coined in 1960, when the demands of astronautics seemed to "invite[] man to take an active part in his own biological evolution" – as Clark again puts it, "one pacemaker doth not a Terminator make." Accordingly, artists like Stelarc treat the body as an "obsolete," post-evolutionary object of design, the overall genre of what Dixon calls *metal performance*, articulating "deep-seated fears and fascinations associated with machinic embodiments" – characterized by "the humanization of machines and the dehumanization (or 'machinization') of humans," to be sure, but also, by what he calls "a camp aesthetic sensibility." On the one hand, bodily adaptation may well affect cognitive performance: as N. Katherine Hayles puts it, if we *did* have "significantly different physiological structures, for example exoskeletons rather than endoskeletons or unilateral rather than bilateral symmetries, the schema[s] underlying pervasive metaphoric networks would also be radically altered." As it stands, on the other hand (or rather, on its six pneumatically motored legs), the

"exoskeleton" Stelarc has actually explored rather belies the exaggerated theatricality Dixon finds inherent to the ilk of "zoomorphic robots," of which it is a pronouncedly jerky, stiff-jointed specimen: a poor fit, surely, in any struggle for ecological survival. Even as its extra-daily biomechanics clearly afford him an altered relationship to his environment (ostensibly, reconfiguring his bipedal human gait to that of an insect), where deeper issues of embodiment and cognition are concerned, *Exoskeleton* (1998) remains a hi-yet-clumsy-tech bio-object more prone to detract than benefit, from efficient performativity on either front – in Dixon's terms, it "constitutes a monumental piece of metallic camp," "with no conscious camp irony whatsoever":

> a large and imposing six-legged [--] robot that Stelarc stands on top of, on a rotating turntable. He wears an extended robotic left arm, and moves around the space, his body swinging from side to side as he controls the robot's spiderlike walking movements via computer-translated arm gestures [--]. In increasing the body's physical strength, metal simultaneously increases its strength of gravitational pull [--] toward the earth. Stelarc's *Exoskelton* [*sic*] weighs 600 kilograms and we certainly do not see him floating off into cyber (or any other) space.[17]

Always Already: The Human "Post" and the Ethics of Engagement

In this Epilogue, I have only been able to hint at the variety of performance ecologies that a diverse spectrum of new technology presently affords; to have them embedded in the wider trajectory of my study, I now propose three interweaving observations. On an ecological approach, first, the very notion of "technology" only emerges as an essentially fuzzy category, graded along prototypical and less obvious instances from the simplest of props and tools to the most elaborate of virtual realities: given "the artifice of separating nature and culture," as Nicole Boivin suggests, "the realms of technology and environment become difficult to differentiate." Second, what could be dubbed an *anti-technological prejudice* in debates over liveness and mediation, say, seems to reflect much the same set of modernist anxieties – "fear and fascination," as I have put it, over agency, dominance, and displacement – with which an *antitheatrical* prejudice has suffused dualist approaches to the interplay of actors and objects: the family resemblance between these two kinds of "techno-worries," as philosopher Don Ihde might put it, is well evidenced in his proposal that our human "reality" can only ever be undone by its "virtual" counterpart "if theater can replace actual life." Third, if some of these developments come with visions of a *cyborg* or *posthuman* future – which again "evokes terror and excites pleasure," to cite N. Katherine Hayles – it is to

be noted that their advocates often only admit to addressing what we *already are*: just as "we have never been modern," according to Bruno Latour, Hayles asserts "we have always been posthuman"; for Donna Haraway, it is our cyborg ontology that "gives us our politics," and for Andy Clark, we are *natural-born* cyborgs: primed "to create, co-opt, annex, and exploit nonbiological props and scaffoldings," as "part and parcel" of extended minds "distributed across brain, body, and world." Tracing their "cognitive fossil trail" over a procession of potent cognitive technologies, from speech and text through print to the present, Clark argues "[t]he very things that sometimes seem most post-human [--] reflect nothing so much as their thoroughly human source," and that "new technologies merely dramatize our oldest puzzles (prosthetics and telepresence are just walking sticks and shouting, cyberspace is just one more place to be)."[18]

In these terms, the posthuman as theorized by Hayles "does not really mean the end of humanity" as much as it "signals instead the end of a certain conception of the human" – one "that may have applied, at best, to that fraction of humanity who had the wealth, power, and leisure to conceptualize themselves as autonomous beings exercising their will through individual agency and choice." As Matthew Causey relates, strands of posthumanism can already be discerned in Nietzsche, Freud, and Marx, countering notions of liberal humanism "which tend to essentialize categories of gender and race, defer difference and construct a *family of man* as the centre of all things" – or, in terms elaborated in the present work, to posit the human "post" as if at the apex of a Great Chain of Being, capable not only of Acropolis but of Auschwitz. For feminist critics like Haraway, Hayles, and Rosi Braidotti, what is to be deconstructed is an historical notion of the liberal humanist subject, constructed as a white European male and thoroughly entwined with "projects of domination and oppression"; in the posthuman as articulated by Hayles, by contrast, individual agency is complicated by notions of *distributed cognition* (her argument evokes both Varela and Hutchins), "the imperialist project of subduing nature," by the affordances of "dynamic partnership." In Braidotti's reading, likewise, Haraway's emphasis on "situated knowledges" posits the "primacy of *relations* over substances," her discussion of the *cyborg*, effectively disrupting traditional categories "linked to patriarchal, oedipal familial narratives": e.g. subject/object, nature/culture, human/machine, human/animal, animate/inanimate. Much as this has in common with my ecological perspective – and with Chris Salter's recent project of complicating the "human-centered approach" of performance studies with notions of "generalized performativity" – Braidotti's crucial point is that "the

function of figurations such as the cyborg [--] is not abstract but, rather, political": that the notion of the posthuman enables a "post-anthropocentric politics," encompassing "not only other species but also the sustainability of our planet as a whole."[19]

Keeping to issues already drafted in Chapter 1, however, the main problem to tackle may not reside in the notion of anthropocentrism, *per se* (in Clark's scheme, extended cognition remains "organism centered" even as it is not "organism bound") but rather, in adopting a *spectatorial* stance toward the rest of our cognitive ecology: the kind of "looking-on" Baz Kershaw has noted "tends to turn 'nature' – plant, animal, human – into spectacle and then, too often, commodity." Indeed, as he continues, if ever there was an "ecological basis for any anti-theatrical 'prejudice' in the twenty-first century," it might begin with how the very *creation of spectatorship* serves to detach the agent from "ecological engagement": insofar as this "may be *the* cultural process most necessary to the production of a 'nature' [--] that separates 'us' from 'our' environment," then perhaps the theatre "may be seen as the social institution that has most quintessentially modelled the abstraction of humans in the 'natural world'." To the extent that this concerns the use of *theatrical objects*, the most "human-scale," "basic-level" engagement with their onstage affordances may still entail a form of "embodied essentialism" that neglects the role of cultural context in the enaction of meaning: as Eve Sweetser suggests, "we can be deluded by the lack of an obvious language barrier into thinking that nonlinguistic art is much more universal than it is." (For Avigal and Rimmon-Kenan, cited in Chapter 1, notions like Grotowski's poor theatre come "coupled with a militant social ideology," "totalitarian in the extreme," in how their "total rejection of the [spectator's] semantic habits" ultimately turns the semiotic "resemantization" of stage objects into their utter "desemantization": "a plate is a plate, why out of all things pick a plate – to designate a plane?!") More crucially to Kershaw's argument, Tim Ingold sees *ecocentric* and *anthropocentric* positions alike as caught up in an interplay of engagement and detachment, involvement and separation – *both* of them, he suggests, presupposing "a global perspective" in which the world is essentially "presented as a spectacle," and life only appears to be lived upon its "outer surface [--] rather than from an experiential centre within it":[20]

> Since we are human, the world around us must necessarily be anthropocentric: this, in itself, implies no lack of participation, nor does it entail an instrumental attitude. Indeed it is decidedly odd that the term 'anthropocentrism' should have been adopted to denote an attitude that [--] *withdraws* human life from active

> participation in the environment. [--] For once humanity is placed on the outside, *surrounding* the global environment, then the environment – now surrounded rather than surrounding – no longer holds any place for human beings.

To conclude with a few final takes on what an *ecological ethics of engagement* might look like (utopian as it may remain), what Hayles argues is "at stake" in her notion of the posthuman is "nothing less than what it means to be human": while some of its current versions may "point toward the antihuman and the apocalyptic," she insists the concept can also "be conducive to the long-range survival of humans and of the other life-forms, biological and artificial, with whom we share the planet and ourselves." For Kershaw, the "small ways" in which *theatre and performance ecology* might contribute to what he calls "a new ecological sanity," include "embrac[ing] the agency of environments" such that we may better appreciate our own ecological role, as well, as "acting *in* [the world] rather than *on* it." In Lakoff and Johnson's elaborations of a "philosophy in the flesh," finally, the "art of our lives" entails "an ethical relationship to the physical world" they even discuss as "an ecological spirituality": "an understanding that nature is not inanimate and less than human, but animated and more than human" – "part of our being," rather than "a collection of things that we encounter." For Johnson, accordingly, spiritual ideals of what he calls "vertical transcendence" (of "ris[ing] above" our "human finitude") should give way to more *horizontal* configurations, "of ourselves as part of a broader human and more-than-human ongoing process in which change, creativity, and growth of meaning" are rather enacted in the local "struggles and joys" of "our humanity-interacting-with-our-world."[21] All in all, what such "organism centered," posthuman ethics of "horizontal transcendence" all entails is replacing *dualistic* metaphors – of mind over matter, on a Great Chain of Being – with generally *ecological* ones, of coupling, engagement, and reciprocity: in the more mundane context of the theatre, this may simply mean that we refrain from defending very essentialized boundaries between actors and objects, liveness and technology. In the big picture, what I hope to have demonstrated is not only how a variety of worlds and identities (human or post) have been enacted, in key performances of the past, but also some of the potentially empowering affordances of ecological cognitive science, for *performing humanities* – across divisions of theory and practice – in academia.

NOTES

Introduction

[1] Apart from their own writing, key sources on the three practitioners – in English – would include Rudnitsky 1981, Braun 1995, and Pitches 2006 – for Meyerhold; Kumiega 1985, Schechner & Wolford (eds.) 2001, and Flaszen 2010 – for Grotowski; and Lawson 1995, Pleśniarowicz 2004, and Miklasewski 2002 – for Kantor. As for smaller introductory textbooks, the concise account of Meyerhold (Pitches 2003) in Routledge's *Performance Practitioners* series has more recently been accompanied with ones on both Grotowski (Slowiak & Cuesta 2007) and Kantor (Witts 2010) – the former, an englightened analysis by two of his former collaborators, the latter, abounding in mistakes well beyond the systematic misspelling of some Polish names. (As for Kobialka 2009, the most comprehensive volume of late as it is on Kantor, the more critical reader might regard a good half of it as something of an autoplagiarism of Kantor 1993, edited, translated, and "with a critical study" by Michal Kobialka.)

[2] Bell 2001: 5; Candlin & Guins 2009: 4

[3] Candlin & Guins 2009: 4; Sofer 2003: xiii, vii – also Boivin 2008; Malafouris & Renfrew 2010: 4

[4] Jurkowski 1988: 42; Flaszen 2002: 75 ("spirals")

[5] Saltz 2007: ix – in the main paragraph, Malafouris & Renfrew 2010: 1; States 1985

[6] McConachie & Hart 2006: 15

[7] Reinelt 2007: 8 ("abstraction and materiality," cited from Pavis 2003: 18); McConachie 1994: 118-9; Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 13 ("common sense")

[8] Johnson 2007: x, xii-xiii; in brief, see also Johnson 2008

[9] McConachie 2003; Nellhaus 2006: 83 ("re-embodied"), 2010. For basic accounts of metaphor theory, in cognitive linguistics, see Lakoff 2006; Lakoff & Johnson 1999, 2003; and Kövecses 2002.

[10] See Lakoff & Johnson 2003: 25-32, 264 ("ontological"); 1999: 72 (love metaphors)

[11] On ideology and worldview, see e.g. Zarrilli 2002: 9; Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 511

[12] Lakoff 1987: 267, 272-3; Johnson 1987: 23, 29, 126; 2005: 16, 19-21. For further discussion, see e.g. Hampe (ed.) 2005; Johnson 2007: Chapter 7 (esp. 144); and Oakley 2007. As the Greek roots of the word suggest, there has been a fair amount of writing about *schemas* as "generic knowledge structures," from Immanuel Kant to Jean Piaget and on; in the cognitive linguistic tradition, I will spell their names in SMALL CAPITALS, throughout, and prefer the plural *schemas* over the Greek *schemata*.

[13] McConachie 1994: 116 (cf. Johnson's listing of basic image schemas in 1987: 126); Nellhaus 2006: 76; 2010; Cienki 2005 (gesture); Johnson 2007: 135; Lakoff 1987: 274-5 (CENTER-PERIPHERY)

[14] See e.g. Lakoff & Johnson 2003: 35-40 ("associations," p. 39); Steen 2005; Dirven & Pörings, eds., 2003 (including a reprint and discussion of Jakobson); Kövecses 2002: 143-62

[15] Honzl 1976: 77; Sofer 2003: viii, 20-21, 25-7; on kinds of metonymy, see again Kövecses 2002

[16] Sofer 2003: 16-17; Boivin 2008: 20-21; Erickson 1995: 207

[17] For a more nuanced history, see especially Thompson 2007: 3-15

[18] Malafouris & Renfrew 2010: 4

[19] Kershaw 2007: 34, 16

[20] Worrall 1973: 16; Leach 1989: 104

Chapter 1

[1] Pavis 1996: *s.v.* "object"; 2003: 15-6; Avigal & Rimmon-Kenan 1981: 13; Gibson 1982: 405

[2] Veltruský 1964: 85-90 (my italics); Sofer 2003: 9-10

[3] Veltruský 1964: 88 ("fore"), 1983: 108 (Zich); Ihde 2002: 3. On Freud and Bergson, see e.g. www-rohan.sdsu.edu/~amtower/uncanny.html and www.gutenberg.org/files/4352/4352-h/4352-h.htm.

[4] Veltruský 1983: 87 ("fundamental"), 1964: 91 ("social," "horizons"); Geertz 1983: 59

[5] Lovejoy 1971: vii; Lakoff & Turner 1989: 160-213 (esp. 166-73, cf. Kövecses 2002: 124-7). The epigraphs for this section are from Sofer 2003: v, Hornborg 2006: 21, and Slingerland 2008: 9.

[6] Veltruský 1964: 85-9, cf. Sofer 2003: 9; the definition of personification is Jan Mukařovský's.

[7] Sofer 2003: v (including "prejudice" quote); Shershow 1995: 9-10, 14-5, 19-22, *et passim*.; Garner 1994: 90, 101; Carlson 2002: 243, 246

[8] Veltruský 1964: 87; Lakoff & Turner 1989: 209-11; McConachie 1993: 35 ("selfish passions," with reference to Roach 1985). Cf. Johnson 2007: 7, 153, *et passim*.; Luke 1995: 185; Costall 1995: 467; Knappett 2005: 4-6, 35; and also Lakoff & Johnson 2003: 14-21, for an early account of "orientational metaphors" on the vertical axis (e.g. more/less, good/bad, control/subjection, life/death).

[9] Heft 2001: 353; Foucault 1989: xxv, 421-2; Latour 1995: 10-15; Heft 2007: 1-3; Costall 1995: 467-8 (cf. Costall & Dreier 2006: 1); Slingerland 2008: 3-4, 9. See also Hornborg 2006: 21, 27-8; Knappett 2005: 30-1; Malafouris 2004: 53-4; as well as McConachie 2006: x (on C.P. Snow's early discussion of the "two cultures") and Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 393-5 (on the "Cartesian Theatre" metaphor).

[10] Costall 1995: 476; Heft 2007: 1; Ingold 2000: 213-5, 2006a: 16; Ihde 1993: 41, 124-5 ("standing reserve" being Martin Heidegger's expression); Lakoff & Turner 1989: 208-13; cf. Luke 1995: 184-6.

[11] Latour 1995: 10, 12; Noë 2009: 51 (maturation); Ingold 2006: 264-8, 278-9; 2000a: 211-2, 216; 2004: 317-8; Lakoff & Turner 1989: 211 (industrialization); Veltruský 1964: 91. See also Preece 2005: 28-31; Lovejoy 1971: 242ff.; and Bateson 2000: 344, 455-6.

[12] Lakoff & Turner 1989: 213; Johnson 2007: 6; Ingold 1996: 176-7; 2004: 317-8, 321, 324, 332, 336; 2006a: 17 (see also Stoczkowski 2002: 73-5, for Classical and Christian accounts of "uprightness"). For all his influence on the present work, it should be noted that Ingold's approach is avowedly *non*-cognitive; however, this has to do with his intentionally narrow definition of cognitive science. It can be argued that he kind developed here is utterly congruent with his line of ecological anthropology.

[13] Hornborg 2006: 29; Lakoff & Turner 1989: 203-4, 210, 212; Veltruský 1983: 87; 1964: 91; Elam 2002: 14; Garner 1994: 91, 101. On the "fascism" of the Natural Order metaphor ("repugnant" when mapped onto Moral Order), see Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 303-4.

[14] Lakoff & Turner 1989: 212; Ingold 2006a: 19; Malafouris 2004: 54 ("ontological tidiness"); Veltruský 1964: 87, 90-1

[15] Johnson 2007: 153

[16] Pavis 1998: s.v. *object*; McAuley 2002: 176; Veltruský 1964: 91; Boyer & Barrett 2005: 98. The epigraph at the beginning of this section cites Veltruský 1964: 83 and 87.

[17] Mandler 2004; 2005: 141-2; 1992: 595-6; 2007: 203. For a nice demonstration of Michotte's (1963) experiments, see http://cogweb.ucla.edu/Discourse/Narrative/michotte-demo.swf (May 10th 2011).

[18] Veltruský 1964: 84, 88; Mandler 2007: 191-2, 210-11; 2005: 143-5 (also on computer displays); Barrett 2005: 205-6 ("agency cues"); Crane 2001: 20-2.

[19] Mandler 2005: 148-50; Leslie 1994: 124, 132-4 (cf. Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 36); Johnson 1987: 42-8; Talmy 1988, reprinted in 2000 Vol. I: 409-70; Veltruský 1964: 87; Sørensen 2007: 42

[20] Veltruský 1964: 87, cf. Ingold 2006a: 12, Mandler 2007: 210. On the Categories as Containers metaphor, see Lakoff & Johnson 1999: e.g. 20, 51, 341, 380-2.

[21] For general references, see Gelman 2003 (development), Atran 1990 (anthropology), MITECS, *s.v.* "essentialism" (by S. Gelman), Roach 1985, Barrett 2001: 9-11 ("essentializability"), and Mithen 2003: 50-5; see also Zunshine 2006 (esp. 102-5), for a good briefing in the context of theatre studies. On humans, see also Boyer & Barrett 2005: 105; on objects, see Barrett 2001: 17-8, and Keil *et al.* 2007.

[22] Gelman 2003: 8; Zunshine 2006: 105; Guthrie 2002: e.g. 47-8, 56-8 ("Promiscuous Teleology" etc., within an intriguing cognitive discussion on animism); Ingold 2006: 279 (and also 2000a: 279, 288). For further criticisms, see Mithen 2003: 42-60, Hogan 2003: 191-217, and Heft 2001: 335-7; for an exciting positive overview, see indeed *Mapping the Mind* (Hirschfeld & Gelman, eds., 1994). While my use of "cognitive models" and "folk theories" draws on Lakoff 1987 and Lakoff & Johnson 1999, respectively, see also MITECS, *s.v.* "domain specificity" (by S. Gelman).

[23] Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 363; Mithen 2003: 57; Mandler 2000: 69; McConachie 2008: 65ff.; Sørensen 2007: 39; Boyer & Barrett 2005: 101-4 ("index" p. 102), 109-10, 112 (quoted at end) – note however the "innateness" Mandler claims for her own notion of "perceptual meaning analysis" (e.g. 2007: 210). In my cultural reading, McConachie's concession that the mind "can certainly accommodate the semiotician" (2008: 222 n. 74) could then also read that it can accommodate the Theorist of Mind – implying though this does a Carterian sort of distinction between self and surroundings. (For critics such as Costall *et al.* [2006: 166], the very notion of "mind-reading" stands out as "the *reductio ad absurdum* of cognitivism"; for a book-length critique of ToM, see Leudar & Costall, eds., 2009.) As to less moderate evolutionary psychologists, look to Leda Cosmides, John Tooby, and Steven Pinker.

[24] Avigal and Rimmon-Kenan 1981: 12-3; Pfister 1991: 271-2; Veltruský 1964: 87; Sofer 2003: vi, 12, 29. On classical categories, see e.g. Palmer 1999: 417; Lakoff 1987: 166; Taylor 1989: 22-4.

[25] Palmer 1999: 417-8; Rosch 1978: 28-30, 35-7; Lakoff 1987: 12-3, 40-6; Taylor 1989: 40-6, 51-4. On the categorization of *art*, see Sweetser 2003; for overall introductions, see indeed Lakoff 1987 (still the most extensive to date), Taylor 1989, and the earlier, first-hand summary in Rosch 1978.

[26] McConachie 2008: 84; Sugiera 2002: 232; Sofer 2003: 12; Swettenham 2006: 220-1. On creativity, see Hogan 2003: 75 and 79, on performing objects, Proschan (ed.) 1983: 3-5 and Tillis 1992: 79-80.

[27] Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 27-30; Lakoff 1987: 34, 46-7, 70 ("fit" and relevance); Taylor 1989: 46-51; Rosch 1978: 28-35; see also MITECS, *s.v.* "categorization" (by D. L. Medin and C. Aguilar).

[28] McConachie 2008: 60-2; [Hotinen 2003: 52]; Anderson 1996: 51-2; Avigal & Rimmon-Kenan 1981: 21; Veltruský 1964: 88; Sofer 2003; Neisser 1987: 14 (form and function).

[29] Keil *et al.* 2007: 237-8, 243 (my italics, cf. Boyer & Barrett 2005: 102-3); Rosch 1978: 43-6 and 1999: 74. On contextual, ad hoc, and thematic categories, see especially Rosch 1999 and Fivush 1987.

[30] Meyerhold 1969: 72; Elam 2002: 7; Rokem 1988: 283; Pickering 2005: 181 (*s.v.* "properties"); States 1985: 43; Costall & Dreier 2006: 7, 10-11; Johnson 2007: 10, 75, 88.

[31] Neisser 1987: 22; Johnson 2007: 93; Lakoff 1987: 51, 1987a: 64-5; Sofer 2003: 12; Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 17; Rosch 1996: 23 (mind and world as "codefining poles of experiences and actions").

[32] Veltruský 1964: 86-8; Sofer 2003: 9-10; McAuley 2003: 179, citing Jousse from his *L'Anthropologie du geste* (Gallimard, Paris 1974): 61. Koffka is cited from Gibson 1986: 138 (cf. Koffka 1935: 7, 353); the epigraphs for this section are from Veltruský 1983: 87, and Gibson 1986: 127. As Gibson's noun has since found its way into the *OED*, for instance, it curious how Baz Kershaw, in *Theatre Ecology*, only refers the term to a dictionary definition of the verb, with no mention of its originator (2007: 18).

[33] Costall 2007: 56; de Laplante 2004: 273, 263 (on the domain of ecology); Ingold 2000a: 289; Gibson 1986: 8. On "interaction," see e.g. Johnson 2007: 118, note 2, and Costall 1995: 475.

[34] Gibson 1986: 127-8, 140-1, *et passim*.; see also Gibson 1982: 405

[35] Heft 1989: 22; Turvey & Shaw 1999: 107; Gibson 1986: 16-18, 116, 128; 1982: 407-8

[36] Gibson 1982: 411; Heft 2003: 173-6 (constraints); 1989: 3, 6 ("environmental counterpart"); Knappett 2005: 49; Clarke 2005: 37-8; on "what things can *mean*," see also Costall 2006: 19, 24

[37] Gibson 1986: 182ff. *et passim*. ("coperception"); Heft 1989: esp. 10, 18-19; Zarrilli 2007: 646. For a book-length "ecological approach" to perceptual learning and development, see Gibson & Pick 2000.

[38] Veltruský 1964: 87; Sofer 2003: 12; McAuley 2003: 176 (things becoming objects); Rokem 1988: 278; Gibson 1986: 134; Anderson 1996: 50-1; Gibson 1975; Palmer 1999: 411 (lack of words)

[39] Gibson 1986: 138-9, 143; Norman 1988; Tomasello 1999; Heft 2001: 345; Palmer 1999: 411-13; Costall 2006: 23-4. See also Heft 1989: 17-18; Costall 1995: esp. 471-2; and Knappett 2005: 47-50, 58.

[40] Tomasello 1999: 154, 157-60, 166; Szokolszky 2006: 68 (cited), 81-3; Costall & Dreier 2006: 4; Gibson 1986: 139

[41] Dreyfus 1992: 66-9; Garner 1994: 2-3 (cf. "always already"); Heft 2001: 342; Ihde 1993: 40-1; Johnson 2007: 46-7 (cf. Varela *et al.* 1991: 148); Gibson 1986: e.g. 212. In Gallagher & Zahavi 2008, notably, affordances and phenomenological "readiness-to-hand" are discussed largely interchangeably.

[42] Gibson 1986: 16ff., 135; Reed 1996: 28, 97 (behavior, cited); E. Gibson & Pick 2000: 160 (agency); E. Gibson 2000: e.g. 46; Mandler 2000: e.g. 72 (cf. for example 2005: 141)

[43] Johnson 1987: 45, 47; Gibson 127 ("for good or ill"). On the issue of emphasis, see e.g. de Laplante 2004: 275; Heft 2001: 365; and Clarke 2005: 22-4.

[44] Guthrie 2002: 56-8; Boyer 2002: 70-2 (cf. 2001: 60-5, 142-8); Mithen 2003: 58; Veltruský 1964: 91 (see also Zunshine 2006: 119-20 n. 11)

[45] Clark 2003: 79-83, 87 (objects to manipulate, cf. 1997: 210); Johnson 2007: 90, 117 ("theater of the mind"); Lakoff and Turner 1989: 204-5. The linguistic examples are inspired by Guthrie 2002: 59 and 45 ("telling a message," quoted from Walter Burkert, *Creation of the Sacred*, Harvard UP 1996, p. 160) and Turner 1996: 20-2, 26; see also Costall 1995: 476, and Zunshine 2006: 105.

[46] Boyer 2002: 71; Kimmel 2005: 302 (relationship examples); Lakoff 2006: 195 (basic-level examples), 231 ("generations" and "realizations"); Johnson 2007: 154 ("embodied interactions"), 2003: 96-9 (inconsistency of source domains), Lakoff & Johnson 2003: 252-7 ("Metaphors for Metaphor")

[47] Kövecses 2002: 123 ("metaphor systems"); Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 177ff. (causation and event structure); States 1985: 66-8; Sørensen 2007: 57 (journey/attraction); Johnson 1987: 126 ("object")

[48] Zarrilli 2007: 635; McConachie 2003; Nellhaus 2006: 89; Lutterbie 2006: 149, 154, 163 (cf. McConachie & Hart 2006: 13); Heft 2001: 352-4 ("self-contained individual"); Zarrilli 2002: 10, 13, 16

[49] McConachie 2008: 42-4 (also 47-50); McConachie & Hart 2006: 18-20. Most citations in the paragraph are from Fauconnier & Turner 2002: 40-50 (basic terminology), 266-7 (theatrical examples),

312, 322-4 (achieving "human scale"). See also Grady *et al.* 1999 (blending and metaphor), Veltruský 1983: 90-1 (bunraku), and David Herman 2009, "Networks as Niches: A Response to Mark Turner," retrieved May 10th 2011 from http://onthehuman.org/2009/08/the-scope-of-human-thought/.

[50] Hutchins 2005, Sinha 2005: 1537 ("mentalist and individualist assumptions"); Veltruský 1964: 84, 1983: 70, 104-6, 112-3; States 1985: 46, 67, 143, 148-9; Noë 2009: 65, 69

[51] Veltruský 1964: 83, 91; 1983: 87; Johnson 2007: 67; Sofer 2003, v. On reciprocal causality, see Heft 1989: 6, 10; on the fuzzy boundaries of agency, see Knappett 2005: 11-2, 15-6, 22-3, 29-30, 62, 85; and Knappett & Malafouris (eds., 2008): ix–xiii (from their "Introduction").

[52] Knappett 2005: 28; Veltruský 1964: 83, 88; Gell 1998: 20-2. Bruno Latour, *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies* (Harvard UP 1999): 176ff., is discussed in Knappett 2005: 30-1, and in Knappett & Malafouris (eds.) 2008: xi-xii, whence also the citations at the end of the paragraph. Regarding the "confusion" Bruce McConachie expressed on this point, in his perceptive pre-reviewer's statement, suffice it here to note that such ideas are not only fairly standard in the sociological Actor-Network Theory (Law & Hassard 1999) that cognitive archaeologists and theorists of "material agency" often draw on, but also largely conguent with notions of posthumanity briefly addressed in my Epilogue. In the former context, Gell's anthropological work is treated as something of a classic, and if he is reproached for something it is not for "overstatement" but rather, for having still "shied away from the notion that things themselves could have agency" (Boivin 2008: 140). Another way to frame the matter could be through what theorists of "extended cognition" (cf. later and Menary, ed., 2010) discuss as the *coupling-consitution fallacy*: in agential terms, the argument would be that rather than merely inflicting causal *influence* on human agency, the body and world alike are partly constitutive thereof – again, without attenuating the location of *intentionality*, nor suggesting that internal and external processes (while functionally "on a par" with one another) need be of the same ultimate *kind*.

[53] States 1985: 42-3; Brecht 1992: 231; McAuley 2003: 180-2, 202; Rokem 1988: 275; McLuhan 2003: 7, 250; Ingold 2004: 323. Ingold's humble thesis is that "the boot and the chair establish a technological foundation for the separation of thought from action and of mind from body" (*ibid.*); Rokem quotes Fitzgerald from his *Barbarian Beds. The Origin of the Chair in China* (Canberra–London 1965), 3-4.

[54] Gibson 1986: 128-30; Veltruský 1964: 88 ("imaginary props"), 91; 1983: 70, 85, 87; Nellhaus 2006: 77; Johnson 2007: xiii, 13, 147, 152, 155 (cf. Thompson 2007: 13). *The Ecological Theatre and Evolutionary Play* is the title of a 1965 monograph by G. E. Hutchinson (Yale UP, New Haven).

[55] Johnson 2007: 175; Clark 2003: 4-6, 27, 136-7, 189-90; 2004: 169, 180; Noë 2009: xii, xiv, 43, 48, 65. On the 1990s as the "decade of the brain," see Hardy-Vallée & Payette 2008: 1; Blair is cited from her "Cognitive Neuroscience and Acting" (*The Drama Review* 53:4, Winter 2009: 93).

[56] Mithen 2003: 17-32, 2004: 167-8; Clark 2004: 174-6

[57] Sheets-Johnstone 1999: 359; Clark 2004: 178; Mithen & Parsons 2008 (brain as cultural artefact); Ingold 2006: 271 (cf. Boivin 2008: 192); Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 90; Clark 2008: 138; Sutton 2002 (cf. Malafouris & Renfrew, eds., 2010); Hutchins 2010. Apart from the perceptive historical overview in Hutchins, the reader with further interest in these developments and their relationships might also wish to consult Kiverstein & Clark 2009, Menary 2010, Rowlands 2010, Shapiro 2011, and Wheeler 2005 – also, Menary (ed.) 2010, on the "extended mind," and Stewart *et al.* (eds.) 2010, on "enaction."

[58] Donald 1991; Zarrilli *et al.* 2010; Hardy-Vallée & Payette 2008: 2-3; Robbins & Aydede 2008: 3 (local and global); Boivin 2008: 47; Heft 2001: 369; Noë 2009: xiii; Sutton 2006: 238, 2008

[59] Hutchins 1995: xiv, 354; 2008: 2011; 2010; Clark 2008: xvii-xviii, 137; 2003: 75-7 (artistic and academic cognition, see also Sutton 2002); Noë 2009: 49; Ingold 2000: 3-5; Robbins & Aydede 2008: 8

[60] Zarrilli 2007: 638; Thompson 2007: 158. The major quotes in the section are from Varela *et al.* 1991: 9, 202, 206, 213, 275 (note 38); Catherine Graham is cited from her "Editorial" for *Canadian Theatre Review* 109 on "The Body," Winter 2002 (http://www.utpjournals.com/ctr/ctr109.html).

[61] Johnson 2007: 121-2, 145-6; Costall 2006: 16, 2007a: 109-11, 120; Noë 2004: 22; Hutchins 2008: 2017 ("routinely," also "human performances"); 2010; 1995: 355, 363-7 (see also the summary in Thompson 2007: 7-9); Clark 2003: 68-9 ("own best model" cited from roboticist Rodney Brooks); Noë 2009: 19-24 (brain scans, p. 24 cited); McConachie 2008: 4; Varela *et al.* 1991: 172

[62] Hutchins 1995: 355; Boivin 2008: 81 ("preclude"), 155-8, 166, 168, 176 (master and slave, technological determinism and social constructionism); Ingold 2000: 3 ("separate but complementary"); Knappett 2005: 9, 11, 24, 62; Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 93 ("rejects"); Johnson 2007: 20-1 (noting the influence of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and John Dewey, cf. Costall 2006: 16-7); Mazlish 1989: 41-2 ("chain" to "web"); Kimmel 2001: 450-2 (avoiding "Great Chain" metaphysics)

[63] Clark 2008: 63-4 (Tribble); 138-9 ("joints," "apt"); Hutchins 2010; Sutton 2008; Tribble 2005. For a book-length discussion, I warmly recommend Tribble 2011.

Chapter 2

[1] The quotes are from Meyerhold 1969: 205 ("simplest objects"); Conrad 1998: 240; Simons 1971: 84 (Alpers); and Worthen 1994: 14. The epigraph for the chapter is from Law 1982: 64-6.

[2] Crommelynck 2006 (p. 107 cited). On the plot and its "remote[ness] from the concerns of the Revolution," see also Law 1982: 62-3; on the production's mixed reviews and on their "polarization of the narratives of the play and of the stage set," see e.g. Barris 1999: 41-2.

[3] Meyerhold 1969: 204; McConachie 2003: ix, 23, 25-6; 2001: 585 ("gradually eliminates"); Nellhaus 2006: 76, 83, 92; Freeman 1995: 689, 693; 1996: 293 ("candidate"); on "worldview," see also Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 511.

[4] McConachie 2001: 583 ("assuming"); Johnson 2007: 135, 170-1; 1987: 29. On McConachie's later distinction between image schemas and "cognitive concepts," see 2008: 37, 214 n. 30, 234 n. 2.

[5] Lakoff 1987: 215-6; Gibson 1966: 286; Lakoff & Johnson 2003: 13; Lakoff 2006: 205

[6] Gibson 1986: 128-30; 1966: 26; Costall 2007: 75; Reed 1996: 18, 41-3; on enaction as "mutual specification," see Varela *et al.* 1991: 198, *et passim.*

[7] Heft 2001: 339ff; Donald 2001; Hutchins 1995: xvi; 2005 ("cognitive artifacts"); Sinha 2005: 1537-8, 1542-3 (on Wittgenstein, 1542 n. 4); Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 90

[8] Neisser 1976: xii, 20-4. For some of the more important "cross-references" that already seem to be much on the rise, see e.g. Núñez & Freeman (eds.) 1999, and more lately Shapiro 2011.

[9] Heft 1988; the Meyerhold quote in the epigraph is cited in Schmidt 1981: xii

[10] Popova 1922, quoted/translated in Sarabianov & Adaskina 1990: 217, 378; Gibson 1982: 415; Braun 1986: 172. For ambiguity in translation, compare Popova's account as presented in Law & Gordon (1981: n.p.) and in Sarabianov & Adaskina (1990: 378). For right and left, compare Law's (1982) point of view to Erast Garin's, as translated in Schmidt (1981: 35) and Hoover (1988: 126). On the "gallery," compare Law 1982: 64 and Piette 1996: 439; Ilyinsky 1973 is quoted/translated in Schmidt 1981: 28.

[11] Kiebuzinska 1988: 59; Worrall 1973: 21; Meyerhold 1969: 173; Gibson 1986: 34, 44 ("meaning"), 136; Costall 2006: 15. For similar accounts implicitly stressing affordances over abstraction, see Leach 1989: 97, Honzl 1976: 78-9, and Sarabianov & Adaskina 1990: 217; for the latter half of the paragraph, see e.g. Law 1982: 63, 69; Piette 1996: 437; Leach 1989: 96; Rudnitsky 1981: 290, 293.

[12] Rudnitsky 1981: 290-1; Sarabianov & Adaskina 1990: 378; Meyerhold 1969: 198

[13] For example, search #914 at http://www.glopad.org (Global Performing Arts Database). Further reference to images available on this website will be made in the form 'GloPAD ID #[number].'

[14] Leach 1989: 89 ("conceal things"); Law 1982: 67, 69 (examples of occlusion). Ilyinsky's 1973 account is translated in Schmidt 1981: 30-32; see also Erast Garin's recollections, p. 35-6.

[15] Law 1982: 64; Piette 1996: 439; Sarabianov & Adaskina 1990: 250-1 ("processed"); Gibson 1986: 39, 132. For relevant images, see e.g. GloPAD IDs #891, #892, #913.

[16] Rudnitsky 1981: 290, 292, 306; Law 1982: 63-7, 69, 77, 81, 83-4; Schmidt 1981: 35-6 (Erast Garin); Sarabianov & Adaskina 1990: 379 (Popova); Braun 1995: 178; Gibson 1986: 34, 39-40; 133. For images, see GloPAD IDs #898, #908, and #912.

[17] Leach 1989: 97 (propeller); Law 1982: 69-71, 84; Meyerhold 1969: 197-8; Braun 1986: 172; Worrall 1973: 24, 27-8; Rudnitsky 1981: 290 ("meaningless"), 306, 308; Leach 1989: 106, Piette 1996: 442

[18] Pearson & Shanks 2001; the "student of Meyerhold's," Arkady Pozdnev (1922), is cited/translated in Law & Gordon 1996: 150. Relevant images include GloPAD IDs #887, #888, #909 (uses of bench), #893, #898 and #916 (gestures and postures afforded by the set).

[19] Costall 2006: 19 ("what things can *mean*"); Pitches 2006: 27; Meyerhold 1969: 199; for some of the general and early uses quoted, see www.oed.com, s.v. *biomechanics*

[20] Pitches 2006: 26-7, 57; Zarrilli *et al.* 2010: 376-8 (McConachie, cf. Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 270-4); Kiebuzinska 1988: 57 (Law); Worrall 1973: 16 ("rebellion"); Kiaer 2005: 7, 30-4; Arvatov 1997: 126

[21] Meyerhold 1969: 204 ("trash," "bare"), 206 ("concealed behind"); Hoover 1988: 126 (Garin, "tossed out"); Kiebuzinska 1988: 33 ("confines of tradition"), 57 (Popova, "in vain"), 60 ("hypnosis"); Worrall 1973: 14 ("appearances"), 21 ("equivalents"), 23 ("accumulation of centuries"); Leach 1989: 91 (theatricality, cf. Rudnitsky 1981: 291), 108 ("could not hide"); Schmidt 1981: 29 (Ilyinsky, "jealousy itself"); on Gastev and Russianness, see Stites 1989: 161 and Vaingurt 2008: 210, 220.

[22] Lakoff 1987: 273-4; Meyerhold 1969: 201 ("acting cycle"), 203 ("resound"); Leach 2004: 82 ("whole body"); Schmidt 1981: 40 (Garin on "coordination," cf. Leach 1989: 69); Pitches 2007: 97; Golub 2004: 203. Basilov's 1935 account is translated in Law & Gordon 1996, p. 153-4 cited.

[23] Worrall 1973: 14-5; Fischer-Lichte 2002: 289; Lodder 1985: 174 ("completely Constructivist"); Stites 1989: 158; Rabinbach 1990 ("human motor"); Meyerhold 1969: 200 ("approaching")

[24] Pitches 2006: 54, 60 (cf. Braun 1995: 176); Law & Gordon 1996: 150 ("*natural* possibilities," proposed by Arkady Pozdnev in 1922); Gibson 1986: 135; Ingold 1996: 175-6, 180; 2000: 291-2, 375-6; 2000a: 284; 2006: 271 ("changing embodiment"), 274-5

[25] Pitches 2006: 26ff., 54 ff.; Meyerhold 1969: 199; Gordon 1974: 76 (William James); Blair 2008: 36-7 (Antonio Damasio); Rudnitsky 1981: 295 (affordances of external technique); Roach 1985: 198; Rosch 1996: 5-7. The epigraph for this section is from Gibson 1986: 225.

[26] Roach 1998: 22-3, 1985: 202; Meyerhold 1969: 199-201 (cf. Gordon 1974: 78, Simons 1971: 72, and Hoover 1974: 314 on "building socialism"); Hutchins 1995: 371; Costall 2007: 55-64

[27] Gibson 1986: 149; Costall 2007: 55, 66, 69, 75; Reed 1987: 147; Gibson & Pick 2000: 16

[28] Noë 2004: 1, 105, 101-2, 78, 85, 106, 87-8, 92, 32-3, 94, 99

[29] Gibson 1986: 3, 10ff., 33ff. *et passim.* (layouts and events), 34, 39-41, 133-5 (attached and detached objects), 100 ("empty space"), 223 (movement and perception, quoted at the beginning); Fischer-Lichte 1992: 15, 101-10 (p. 107 quoted); Noë 2004: 73; Sofer 2003: 16; Massey 1994: 263

[30] States 1985: 50; Worrall 1973: 28; Gibson 1986: e.g. 16-8; Hall 1966 (e.g. 97-104, 108); Zarrilli 2007: 644, 646; Noë 2004: 106; Ingold 1996: 176-7; 2000a: 293 ("fluency"); 2006: 274

[31] McKenzie 2001: e.g. 61 (cited), 64, 66; Taylor 1964: 7, 140; Ingold 2000: 329-30; Rogers 2003: 359 ("core"); Meyerhold 1969: 198; Manovich 1995; Shotter 1987. The epigraph to this section is from Norman 1999: 149.

[32] Pitches 2006: 28; Rabinbach 1990: 2, 51-2; Meyerhold 1969: 197; Arvatov 1997: 121-2; Ingold 2000: 289, 295, 311, 333

[33] Pitches 2006: 25-6 ("Model T" quote from p. 25); Law & Gordon 1996: 150 ("right angles," Arkady Pozdnev 1922); Meyerhold 1969: 197-9 ("maximum use," "one hour"); Ingold 2000: 323, 326-8 (Mumford and "clockwork regimen," p 328); Rabinbach 1990: 239, 272, 368 ("deus ex machina," note 4); Stites 1989: 156-7 *et passim.* (League of Time); Kirsh 1995: 38, 43-5. On the abstraction of time, see e.g. Ihde 1993: 57-60 and Clark 2003: 40ff.; on the Time is Money metaphor, see e.g. Lakoff & Johnson 2003: 7-9 and Lakoff 2006: 230 (relation to industrial revolution).

[34] Meyerhold 1969: 198; Pitches 2006: 72-4; Law & Gordon 1996: 148-50 ("theatrical Taylorism": translations of a 1922 exchange between Ippolit Sokolov and Arkady Pozdnev); Ingold 2000: 289, 303-4; Vaingurt 2008: 213, 221-2 (quoting "best mechanism" from Gastev)

[35] Clark 2003: 202 n. 9 ("scaffolding," cf. 1997: 45-7, 194ff., and Hutchins 2010); Stites 1989: 153 ("social engineering"); Meyerhold 1969: 200 ("new man," "compulsory"); Gordon 1974: 76 (Gastev); Arvatov 1997: 126; Kiaer 2005: 1, 37-8; Ingold 1996: 179 (also 2000a: 290-2; 2000: 332)

[36] Worrall 1973: 16 ("rebellion," see also Golub 2004: 196); Tribble 2005: 146-7 (also Tribble 2011); Law 1982: 67-9 ("mimed"); Pitches 2007: 98-103 (on the études and improvisation, also 2006: 72, 77)

[37] Tribble 2005: 135; Pitches 2007: 102; Rudnitsky 1981: 307 (Gvozdev); Worrall 1973: 22; Hoover 1974: 102 (curriculum); Roach 1998: 25 (cf. McKenzie 2001: 63). On the "work clothes," see also the original accounts translated in Schmidt 1981: 39-40, and Law & Gordon 1996: 150, 153.

[38] Meyerhold 1969: 198; Roach 1985: 203; Pitches 2006: 63-4; Manovich 1995 (see also Shotter 2003, McKenzie 2001: 82); Schmidt 1981: 28 (Ilyinsky); Law 1982: 86; Hutchins 1995: 224 (cf. Tribble 2005: 142, 153-4); Law & Gordon 1996: 149 ("emotional reaction")

[39] Donald 2006: 4; Gordon 1974: 77; Leach 1989: 133 (cf. Worrall 1973: 34); Rudnitsky 1981: 308 (Tretyakov: my italics); Fischer-Lichte 2002: 293 ("new man"); Pitches 2006: 56 ("footnote)", 73-4 (Shklovsky, Pavlov, and stoniness), 82-3 (homogeneity and polarization)

[40] Garbarini & Adenzato 2004 (mirror neurons); Garner 1994: 3, 36; Pitches 2006: 81; Meyerhold 1969: 199; McConachie & Hart 2006: 20; McConachie 2003: 19 (cf. Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 93)

[41] McConachie 2007: 564; Cook 2007: 590-1; Damasio & Meyer 2008; Clarke 2005: 20 (suspension), Johnson 2007: 74-5; Garner 1994: 33 (on Drew Leder); Gibson 1982: 418

[42] Varela *et al.* 1991: 149; Sauter 2000: 6-8; Clarke 2005: 45-6, 203-4. On the "montage of attractions," see e.g. Leach 2004: 89; on the ecological grounding on film, see Anderson 1996.

[43] Lakoff 1990; 2006: 199; Neisser 1976: 23; Hampe 2005 (ed., "state-of-the-art"); Johnson 2005: 27

[44] Johnson 2007: 135 ("couplings"); 1987: 22 (entailments); Gibson 1986: 310-1; Evans 2010: 47

[45] Johnson 1987: 208-9 (levels); Lakoff 1987: 279, 271 (containment); Clausner 2005: 103 (the "other" account); McConachie 2001, 2003; Dewell 2005: 374-5 (diagrams, cf. Johnson 22-3, Lakoff 453)

[46] Gibson 1986: 34; Dewell 2005: 379; Mandler 1992: 591; Johnson 1987: 208 ("form itself"); 2007: 144; Gibson 1982: 178; Johnson & Lakoff 2002: 248 (cf. Clausner 2005: 101-3, and Zlatev 2005: 323)

[47] Gibson 1986: 247-9, 258 (for some of the cited examples, see McArthur & Baron 1983: 216, 221-3; Dent-Read & Szokolszky 1993: 234); Kimmel 2005; Hart 2006: 42-3; Neisser 1976: 63

[48] Rohrer 2005: 169; Hart 2006: 43

[49] Neisser 1976: 20-1; Gibbs 2005: 131; Kimmel 2005; Lakoff 2006: 154, 167; McConachie 2003: 23; Gibson 1986: 238, 246, 249; Gell 1998: 167 ("style," cf. Clarke 2005: 35-6)

[50] Lakoff 1990; Johnson 2007: 108, 165; Dent-Read & Szokolszky 1993: 227, 238-40 (on Fauconnier & Turner's notion of the "generic" space, in conceptual blending, see e.g. 2002: 41)

[51] Sell 1996: 44, 46; Rudnitsky 1981: 309 (Lunacharsky); Golub 2004: 194-5 ("vowelless revolution")

[52] Worrall 1973: 32-4, my italics for image-schematic formulations

[53] Worrall 1973: 22-4, 27-8 (mill example), 32 ("inner workings"); Golub 2004: 189

[54] Leach 1989: 74 ("rooted"); Schmidt 1981: xiii ("overtones"); Piette 1996: 438 ("topical"); Fischer-Lichte 2002: 293 ("relationships"); Meyerhold 1969: 184 (Edward Braun on "the odd distinguishing mark"); Kiebuzinska 1988: 56 ("specificity"); Leach 2000: 42 (on set roles and action-functions); Rudnitsky 1981: 306 ("simpleton"); Worrall 1973: 16 ("Naturalist habit"), 19 (type roles); Braun 1995: 183-4 ("ridiculed," quoting Boris Alpers); McConachie 2010: 376, 378-80 (also "self-contained")

[55] Rudnitsky 1981: 305-6 ("motive force," "tragicomic victim"); Leach 1989: 129 ("key idea," cf. 2004: 85, 90); Sell 1996: 48 ("misogyny," cf. 59 n. 46 on Stella's fetishization); Golub 2004: 189 ("adultery"); Crommelynck 2006: e.g. 9, 36-8, 40, 57-8, 64-5, 77-8, 92, 101-7

[56] Piette 1996: 444 ("Pirandellian"); Crommelynck 2006: 40 ("confession enough," cf. Erast Garin's description of the scene in Schmidt 1981: 36-7); Freeman 1995: 695; McConachie 2003; Worrall 1973: 24 ("sensibility," "kinetically signaled," coordination with jealousy); Braun 1995: 184 (Boris Alpers on rolling the eyes, cf. Worrall 1973: 29 who also sees it as a parody of "Othello's fit"); Law 1982: 71

[57] Golub 2004: 183; Rudnitsky 1981: 308 ("anklebone"); Schmidt 1981: 29-30 (translation of Ilyinsky, including "more innocent"); Simons 1971: 84 (the Meyerhold quote); Pitches 2006: 66 ("erased")

Chapter 3

[1] E.g., Kantor 1993: 199; Grotowski 2002: 23. For readable overviews of Kantor and Grotowski, see Pleśniarowicz 2004 and Slowiak & Cuesta 2007; for more polemic accounts of their "politics," e.g., Grotowski 1980: 40; 2002: 51-3; Findlay 2001: 180; Halczak (ed.) 1987: 21 (review by Rosana Torres); Halczak (ed.) 1989: 139-40 (interview by Piero Del Giudice). The Kott quote is from Kuharski 2002: 115 (see also Barba 1999: 43, footnote 11), those of Western criticism and "Polishness," from Kuharski 1999: 11-2. Kazimierz Braun is quoted from 1996: 126-8.

[2] Davies 2001: viii, 139, 392 (see also xv, 36, 154). Epitomizing the issue of mentality, this volume is structured around the notion of cultural "legacies" the author chooses to trace from the Communist period backwards – those of "humiliation," "defeat," "disenchantment," "spiritual mastery," and "ancient culture" – so as to foreground "the past in Poland's present"; characteristic of Davies's "Romantic" tonality is his calling Poland "the new Golgotha," during the Second World War (56), or the nineteenth century, "the Babylonian Captivity" or "the Sojourn in the Wilderness" (138). Of course, Davies's work is not without its critics (e.g., Kulczycki 1987); the only explicitly cognitive linguistic accounts of Polish politics and society I have come across have been related to more contemporary issues such as the EU, or the newspaper coverage of Communism, "ten years after."

[3] Davies 2001: 113, 138, 177, 216, 380-1, 406; 2005 ("cosmic morality play" owes to George Hyde). For a more extended cognitive account of the body politic metaphor, see e.g. Chilton 1996a: 197-8.

[4] Chilton 1996: 49, 58, 71, 73-4; Davies 2001: 351-2; Kimmel 2005: 304-6; Dzięgiel 1998

[5] Davies 2001: 148; Chilton 1996; McConachie 2003. That the latter had "never heard" of the former (personal email, Sep 24th 2007) can be seen as making the American Cold War case even stronger.

[6] Contrary to what the English version of *Towards a Poor Theatre* tells us, then, Wrocław is *not* "the cultural capital of the Polish *Eastern* Territories" (Grotowski 2002: 9, my italics). On the history of the city, see Davies & Moorhouse 2002: especially 407-99 (p. 438 and 467, quoted); on the resettlement schemes more generally, see Davies 2001: 69-71 (p. 89, quoted). See also Braun 1996: ix, 12, 43 – on the concurrent mass importation of "socrealist" drama – and Chilton 1996: 72, 99, 126-7, 134. The epigrah to this section is quoted in Zarycki 2004: 608; cf. e.g. Davies 2001: 330.

[7] Kantor 1993: 23, 112; Grotowski 2002: 19, 21. Note the boundary-related etymology of *transgression*, from the Latin *trans-* "across" + *gradi* (pp. *gressus*) "to walk, go"; hence, the Polish *transgresja* (in Grotowski) and its more native equivalent, *przekraczanie* (in Kantor). According to Barba 1999: 42, "[o]ne of Grotowski's reasons for ceasing to do theatre was the fact that theatrical performance no longer satisfied his need for transgression."

[8] Kantor 1993: 113; Grotowski 1980: 34; 2002: 19, 41, 55; Kumiega 1985: 100. On the paradox of Grotowski alternately locating the "essence" of theatre to the actor, alone, *or* to the actor–spectator relationship, see Mitter 1998: 99-100, and cf. Grotowski 2002: 15, 19, 32, 175. While there is considerable fluctuation to the "openness" of his later projects, some pragmatic remarks in *Towards* are indicative of the centrality of CONTAINMENT to his very practice: obliged to "compulsory presence in the place of work," not only are the actors denied the *bringing in* of any "elements of private life," but of *taking out* and "exploit[ing] privately anything connected with the creative act" (2002: 241, 259, 261).

[9] Grotowski 2002: 9, 15, 19, 27, 51, 129; Kantor 1993: 23, 71-5, 79, 201, 209; Flaszen 2002: 75, as quoted in Burzyński & Osiński 1979: 32-3; Kantor [2005/1985: 35]. Given how Pleśniarowicz relates Kantor's imagination to a "sphere of the 'in-between,' the 'borderline,' the 'approximate'," typical of Polish tradition beyond the mere avant-garde (1995: 223), it is not exceptional that he comes to apply as if *mirror image metaphors* when negotiating the INSIDES and OUTSIDES of, say, the "poor object": to *reveal* its essential "objectness," for example, it is to be "*void* of any life function" as well as "bereft of its *externalities*" (1993: 74, 210-1, my italics). The etymology of "elimination" (Polish *wyeliminowanie*) relates to boundaries of containers through the Latin *ex limine*, "off the threshold."

[10] Barba 1999: 25, 33; Braun 1996: ix, 3, 9, 41-2, 70; Davies 2001: 7, 30, 34, 66, 77, 86, 92; Mach 2000; Dzięgiel 1998: 15, 22, 154, 284

[11] Davies 2001: 7, 30-1, 48-9; Dzięgiel 1998: 26, 50, 59-60, 193, 237, 240, 260, 282

[12] Kantor 1993: 113, 149, 151 (cf. Pleśniarowicz 1994: 47-8); Flaszen 2002: 63, as quoted in Burzyński & Osiński 1979: 32; Grotowski 2002: 16, 34, 36, 129, 180 ("flora and fauna" being Franz Marijnen's expression), 209, 238-42; Kumiega 1985: 228 ("dungeon" quote); Milling & Ley 2001: 129 (criticism of Grotowski); Barba 1999: 38-9; Flaszen interviewed in Forsythe 1978 (see e.g. 310, 315, 321-2, 326-7). On the most mundane level, what Grotowski counted among the actor's "barriers" was anything that would "hinder" or "hamper" her voice and movement – from a closed larynx, through crossed arms, to excessive clothing (2002: 147, 184, 192).

[13] Grotowski 2002: 21, 131; 2001: 294-5; Kantor 1993: 129-30, 202; Kantor quoted in Pleśniarowicz 1994: 17; interviewed in Del Giudice 1989: 139. On *The Head and the Wall* see Kumiega 1985: 7, Barba 1999: 19, and Flaszen, interviewed in Forsythe 1978: 305-7. Grotowski's attachment to the concept of "freedom" notwithstanding (cf. Kumiega 1985: 218), Elizabeth Hardwick does have a point in noting a "feeling of prison," both in his works "and in the theories surrounding them" (1984: 138).

[14] Braun 1996: 9, 126-9; Dzięgiel 1998: 17, 22, 33, 43, 53, 240-1, 247; Davies 2001: 27, 172 and 218 (quoted), 229, 301, 406; Chilton 1996: 124, 129, 135; Zarycki 2004: 610, 626; Mach 2000. "Festung Breslau" refers to the future Wrocław's status as a Nazi "fortress" which, at the close of World War II, continued to defend itself even beyond the capital Berlin (see Davies & Moorhouse 2002: 16-37).

[15] Braun 1996: 5-6, 17, 67, 93, 100, 105-6, 109, 111, 114; Davies 2001: 51, 134, 335, 340, 406 – my italics throughout.

[16] Davies 2001: 154 (my italics); cf. Braun 1996: 9, Hyde 1992: 216 ("closet drama"), 1988: 719

[17] Milling & Ley 2001: 119, 121, 134; Innes 1993: 166; Filipowicz 2001: 405 ("verbal masks"); Schechner 2001: 117, 464, 475-6; Barba 1999: 45 ("Laboratory"); Kantor 2009: 488-9 ("policed"); 1993: 164 ("fortress" etc.), 81 ("Emballage"); Grotowski 1995: 130 ("inside"); 2002: 37 ("hidden")

[18] Grotowski 2002: 16, 34-5, 39, 255-7; 2001: 220, 223; Schechner & Hoffman 2001: 40 ("formless"); Fumaroli 2001: 109 ("protect"); Kantor 1993: 37, 47, 79, 91, 135, 166-7, 210 ("bereft": originally, whole sentence in capitals), 230, 238; Forsythe 1978: 309 (safety); Barba 1999: 39

[19] Chilton 1996: 51, 63; McConachie 2003: 9, 12, 16-18 (cf. Johnson 1987: 22, Lakoff 1987: 272); Barba 1999: 25, 110 (cf. Braun 1996: 131); Davies 2001: 6-7, 38-9, 43-6, 52

[20] Braun 1996: 32, 40, 66-9, 96 (Solidarity); Tymicki [aka Braun] 1986: 19-20, 22-3, 45 (parades etc.); Davies 2001: 7, 33, 93; Dzięgiel 1998: 41 (appearance); Podgórecki 1994: 72 ("facade self"). For more on Grotowski's political activities and situatedness, look for Baumrin (forthcoming) 2011.

[21] Kantor 1993: 35, 112; Grotowski 2002: 15 ("core"); Barba 2001: 81 ("shelter"); Kumiega 1985: 148 ("alienated"); Hyde 1992: 188-9; Barba 1999: 97 ("innermost"); Kantor 1990: 101 ("species"); 1993: 158 ("façades": original in capitals); Pleśniarowicz 2004: 234-5 ("suspect," etc.)

[22] Chilton 1996: 100-1, 132; Deane 1995: 637, 640 (cf. Johnson 1987: 125; Lakoff 1987: 274-5); Davies 2001: 27, 36 ("spider": my italics), 134; Dzięgiel 1998: 155-6; Zarycki 2000, 2004; Mach 2000

[23] Zarycki 2004: 620, 624-5; Dzięgiel 1998: 229-33, 255; Davies & Moorhouse 2002: 455; Braun 1996: 29-30, 44, 62, 67-8, 129-31

[24] Deane 1995: 639; Schechner 2001: 485 ("circle"); Forsythe 1978: 325 ("pale"); Erickson 1998: 13, 54; Filipowicz 2001: 406 ("ex-centric"); Kumiega 1985: 159 ("areas of art"); Grotowski 2002: 27

[25] Grotowski 2001: 377

[26] Kantor 1993: 76, 110-11, 149; Kobialka 1993: 322-3; Kantor 2009: 241-2 (translation quoted from Lawson 1995: 99); 1990: 113 ("behind the door"); Miklaszewski 2002: 74 ("previous period")

[27] Jenkins 1986: 11. In *The Poetics of Space*, Bachelard reflects on how "every corner in a house, every angle in a room, every inch of secluded space in which we like to hide, or withdraw into ourselves, is a symbol of solitude for the imagination; [--] it is the germ of a room, or of a house" (1994: 137).

[28] Chilton 1996: 54-5, 60, 99-100; Deane 1995: 634-6; Dzięgiel 1998: 17, 33-5 (queuing), 258-9; Davies 2001: 12, 47, 146, 184-5; Törnquist Plewa 1992 (wheel of fortune); Schechner & Hoffman 1968: 40 (cf. 2001: 49, "consequences" omitted); Kantor 1985; Hyde 1992: 194-5

[29] Kantor 1993: 69, 142-4 ("repetition of action": originally in capitals), 213; Miklaszewski 2002: 104 ("main characteristic"); Lawson 1995: 254; Pleśniarowicz 2004: 182; Deane 1995: 627 (quoted from an analysis on Yeats's poem *The Second Coming*)

[30] Grotowski 2002: 16, 193, 244; 1995: 131 ("details"); 1980: 35 (emblem); Schechner & Hoffman 2001: 38, 42; Richards 1995: 34 ("repeat"), 94-5 ("in/pulse"); Mitter 1998: 82; Schechner 2001: 490-1

[31] Chilton 1996: 55, 61, 81, 141-2; Davies 2001: 7, 14, 22; Braun 1996: 54 (everlasting friendship); Dzięgiel 1998: 179-95 (mountains), 226-8, 244 (housing)

[32] Davies 2001: 32, 35-6 (the long quote, my italics); Chilton 1996: 55, 101; Strassoldo 1980: 31-2 ("pyramidal hierarchy"), 35, 39 ("flow down," my italics); Szczepański 1970: 48

[33] Wierzbicka 1992: 102; Davies 2001: 176-7, 192-3, 277; Mach 2000; Braun 1996: 6-7; Grotowski 2002: 43, 57, 131, 256; 2001: 379; Wolford 1996: 78 ("drag down": cites James Slowiak); Richards 1995: 91 ("general"); Forsythe 1978: 306, 323 (Flaszen) – my italics, throughout

[34] Grotowski 1995: 121, 124-5, 134; 2002: 37 ("trampolin"); 2001: 300 ("vigilant," "to stand") – see also Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 56, 116; Schechner 2001: 482-3, 492 ("archeology")

[35] Kantor 1993: 27 ("raised above": my italics), 59-61 (Zero Theatre), 114 (scale of Death), 146-7 ("re-incarnation": originally with italics, cf. e.g. Miklaszewski 2002: 75); Pleśniarowicz 2004: 152-3; Lawson 1995: 28, 32, 119; Lakoff & Johnson 2003: 14-21

[36] Kantor 1993: 59 ("pushed aside"); Sawa 1990: 65-6 ("poverty," "degraded," "Polish")

[37] Chilton 1996a: 199 (cf. Johnson 1987: 113-17); Davies & Moorhouse 2002: 412, 447; Davies 2001: 195 ("Perfection"); 239 ("Freedom"); Wierzbicka 1997: 148-52 (*wolność*), 177-9 (*ojczyzna*)

[38] Chilton 1996: 52; Davies 2001: 2 (Stalin's "cow" metaphor)

[39] Wolford 2001: 6 ("sole thread"); Grotowski 2002: 17, 133 (*via negativa*), 245 ("result"); 2001: 223 (disarmament), 379 ("behind us"); 1995: 124 ("approach"), 134 ("itinerary"); Kumiega 1985: 225-6 (goal) / Miklaszewski 2002: 102 ("same thing"); 106 (creativity); Kantor 1993: 32 ("Further On"), 130 ("situation") 136 (labeling "stages"), 154 ("expedition"), 208 ("conquered") – my italics throughout

[40] Kantor 1993: 110 ("side streets") 145 ("*transition*"), 156 ("pushed aside"), 167 ("*official*"), 209 ("discoveries"); Pleśniarowicz 2004: 112 ("unending"); Miklaszewski 2002: 104 ("most proximate"); Sawa 1990: 67 ("most tangible") / Grotowski 2008: 33 (Stanislavsky, cf. Richards 1995: 105), 35 ("own path"); 1995: 118-21 ("chain," "links," "prolongation"); 2002: 12 (Brook, "vehicle"); 17 ("beginning of this road"); Schechner & Hoffman 2001: 42 ("conducted"); Kumiega 1985: 100, 227-30 ("ahead/behind," "starting point," "the beginning") – my italics only in quotes of Grotowski

[41] Schechner 2001: 159 ("double pull"); Innes 1993: 166 ("conditional"); Grotowski 1995: 125 (indicating "passage"), 2002: 43 ("road to holiness"); Kantor 1993: 60 ("Zero": italicized phrase originally in capitals), 136 ("journey towards Theatre"), 234 (the word "nowhere," originally in capitals); Barba 1999: 99 ("towards"); Davies 2001: 277 ("official"); Chilton 1996: 53 ("orthodox")

[42] Osiński [1998: 284-8]; Pleśniarowicz 2004: 155 ("povera"); Hyde 1992: 187; 1999; Dzięgiel 1998: 17-18, 237; Davies 2001: xii ("pauperization"), 23 ("abject"), 53 ("stood in line"), 54 ("humiliation"). The epigraph for this section is from Dzięgiel 1998: 242-3.

[43] Dzięgiel 1998: 242; on "cleansing," see Grotowski 2001: 218-21, and Kantor 1993: 67. Flaszen is quoted in Osiński [1998: 286, citing *Teatr* 10/1994: 8], and the etymology of *ubogi*, briefly addressed in Wiles 1980: 146 (though note that the *u Boga* association is apparently more explicit in Russian).

[44] Grotowski 2001: 219; Kantor 2009: 489; on Kraków and Wyspiański, see also Osiński [1998: 328]

Chapter 4

[1] E.g., Barba 1999: 30, 40, 45-46; Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 100; Schechner 2001: 25; Osiński [1972: 206-7]; Findlay 1984: 2, 18. In a sense, as some would argue, a "step" toward poor theatre had already been taken in the company's previous staging of *Kordian*, after Słowacki (Wójtowicz [2004: 84], 267).

[2] Kumiega 1985: 59 ("stylized"); Hardwick 1984: 132 ("open"); Orządała [2002: 135-6]; Flaszen 2002: 61, 64 [2007: 57, 60 – the Polish original does not mention "gas chambers," at this point]

[3] Kumiega 1985: 59-60 ("cemetery" misrepresented as originating in the letter as well); Croyden 2001: 84-5 ("trial"); Howard & Łubienski 1989: 249 (Szajna); Milling & Ley 2001: 121; Osiński [1972: 171]; Turner 2004: 4 (Eugenio Barba on the censors); Hyde 1992: 187

[4] Flaszen 1967; Miłosz 1983: 355; Davies 2001: 203; Findlay 1984: 2. While Wyspiański has been characterized as comparable in significance to Yeats, in Ireland, O'Neill, in America, or Maeterlinck, in Belgium (Gordon Craig acknowledged him among the few true "artists of the theatre"), his political ambitions should probably not be overestimated; however, his "symbolism" was not of an individualis-

tic variety but firmly embedded in social circumstance (e.g. Miłosz 1983: 354-5). As for the "ban" of *Akropolis*, it seems to have been a matter of his personal relations with the Kraków theatre, and is represented by some critics – e.g. Osiński [1972: 170] – as a deliberate "withdrawal," on his own part.

[5] Miłosz 1983: 353 and Hardwick 1984: 131 (provincialism); Terlecki 1983: 109-114; Kumiega 1985: 65 ("effigy"); Tymicki 1986: 20 ("offenses"); Osiński [1972: 199-200, 205-6]; Flaszen 2002: 61 [2007: 57]; Flaszen [2006: 51]; Forsythe 1978: 318-9 ("script of sorts"); Schechner & Hoffman 2001: 54 (agenda to eliminate). "In a personal conversation almost 30 years later," according to Slowiak and Cuesta (2007: 90), Flaszen however "stated that he felt *Akropolis* was a masterpiece in editing and in its faithfulness to the spirit of the original"; as for Wyspiański's "musicality," apart from its abundance of short stanzas and refrains of all kinds, the first edition of *Akropolis* came out accompanied by a musical *score* by young composer Bolesław Raczyński (Krzyżanowski 1978: 511-2).

[6] Brook 2009: 16; Findlay 1984: 2 (focus on discipline), 18, 19-20 (n. 6 on discussions in English and Polish, cf. Romanska 2009: 223); Wardle 1969: IIIc ("told to see"); Osiński 1986: 8-9. During the company's 1969 visit to New York, as Richard Schechner testifies, Grotowski himself "felt that too much focus was on him and not enough on his collaborators" (2001: 496 n. 4); in English, at least, the most extensive of his own discussions on *Akropolis* are to be found in the interviews by Croyden (2001) and Schechner & Hoffmann (1968, 2001).

[7] Apart from his referring the biblical act, in *Akropolis*, "nearly verbatim" to a sixteenth-century translation of the Old Testament by Jakub Wujek (Terlecki 1983: 110, Findlay 1984: 3), Wyspiański's Polish is recognized as being "oddly complicated" and "sometimes bizarre," among his compatriots, as well – abounding as it does with "awkward archaisms and neologisms, [--] syntactical mistakes and slips, [--] exclamation marks and all sorts of abreviations" (Krzyżanowski 1978: 511-2).

[8] Freedman (prod.) 1971; Chojak [n.d.]; Wyspiański [1985] – Findlay 1984: 18 ("not altogether satisfactory"); Schechner 2001: 496 n. 3 ("too neutral"); Gould 1969: 91 ("irrelevant close-ups"); Bross 1983: 16 ("summarily translated"); Simon 1969: D21 ("awestruck voice"); Auslander 2006. As for Miodońska-Brookes's editorship of Wyspiański [1985], due respect should also be paid to the volume's black-and-white photographs – for refreshing my own memories of the Wawel Cathedral, as well as for helping identify many a scene in the play; as for the film, I am grateful to Owen Daly for providing me with a dvd copy of my own, after years of occasionally watching it at the Wrocław archive (originally recorded by PBL, or the Public Broadcast Laboratory, in 1968, and directed by James MacTaggart, I will identify the film by its producer Lewis Freedman and its 1971 distributor, Arthur C. Cantor). Apart from Freedman's, the latter comes with a famous introduction by Peter Brook, "more a barrier than a bridge," however, according to Richard Schechner (2001: 496 n. 3); in the eyes of witty critic John Simon, "the look and tone" of the former is "of someone whose eyes had just seen the coming of either the Messiah or the invaders from Mars, but was not yet quite sure which," while the "pregnant pauses" of the latter count among "the most expensive quarter hours of dead air ever televised" (1969: D21).

[9] Flaszen 2002 [2007]; Findlay 1984; Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 100-12; Osiński [1972]; Simon 1969, 1970 – Kumiega 1985: 29 ("viewing regulations," on an earlier production); Wardle 1968: 18 ("told to see," cf. Romanska 2009: 224); Kinsolving 1969: D21 ("acidity," "assaults"). According to Eugenio Barba, the editing and translation of *Towards a Poor Theatre* was "an arduous and complicated project," during which many a phrase "acquired a different meaning or [became] quite simply meaningless" as Grotowski "meticulously checked every single word" – as it happens, he did not speak English at that point (1999: 98). Whether or not this applies to Flaszen's article, the difference between its Polish and English editions is considerable; Kolankiewicz [2007] is quite helpful in pointing out the major structural alterations and missing fragments, although of course his editorial supplement to Grotowski [2007] is prone to dismiss the "translation" of such nuances as conceptual metaphors.

[10] Kumiega 1985: 63; Bentley 2001: 166; Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 116; Borowski 1992; Romanska 2009; Kott 1992: 19, 24. On Szajna, see Schechner 2001: 25, 496 n. 4; Howard & Łubienski 1989: 249 (crediting himself); Ahrne 2009: 225 (Grotowski crediting himself); Flaszen [2007: 52] ("co-author"); and http://www.worldandi.com/newhome/public/2003/july/arpub2.asp (Auschwitz assignments).

[11] Wardle 1969: IIIc; Wiles 1980: 150 ("literature-oriented," quoting Andrzej Wirth), 160-1; Wickstrom 1970: 108 ("sound-score"); Kumiega 1985: 79; Bentley 2001: 168; Hardwick 1984: 134-5

[12] Barba 1999: 47; Wyspiański [1985]: *passim*. cf. Chojak [n.d.]: *passim*.; Osiński [1972: 177]; Findlay 1984: 8-11; Kumiega 1985: 60 ("focal points"); Burzyński & Osiński 1979: 32 ("slogans"); Grodzicki 1979: 48 ("throughout"); Kosiński [2007: 426]. On the Jacob issue, cf. Chojak [n.d.: 1] with Osiński [1972: 214, note 28], quoting the same fragment from an earlier director's copy of Grotowki's (see also his much later comment of *Akropolis* and the "Jewish nation," in Ahrne 2009: 226).

[13] The most problematic of these to pinpoint is clearly the central role of actor Zygmunt Molik: while Osiński [1972] may variably refer to him as *Harpist* or *Choryphaios* or both together (commensurate with the latter, my "Prologue" in the first act is faulty but more intelligible), the Polish program calls him simply *Jacob-Priam*, to which the English version and the film add his being the "chief" or the "leader" of the "tribe" – in *Towards a Poor Theatre*, he is captioned as "Jacob, the harpist, leader of the dying tribe" (Grotowski 2002: 69; note that the "harpist" should refer to King David). With minor differences, the other "roles" are usually listed as *Rebecca-Cassandra*, *Isaac-Guard*, *Esau-Hector*, *Angel-Paris* (*Laban-Paris* in Polish), and *Leah-Helen*; uncredited elsewhere, the film mentions Andzrej Paluchiewicz as "member of the tribe." Prior to the cast I will mostly discuss, a number of actors had performed in the production – Ewa Lubowiecka, Maja Komorowska, Maciej Prus, Andrzej Bielski, Mieczysław Janowski, Gaston Kulig, and Czesław Wojtała – indeed to the extent that its famous "variants" often arose from mere changes in personnel [Osiński 1972: 209 n. 7; 220-1 n. 82].

[14] Flaszen [2007: 64] (compare to the new translation in Flaszen 2010: 93, to those in Burzyński & Osiński 1979: 33, and Kumiega 1985: 62); 2002: 63, 75-6; Schechner & Hoffman 2001: 52 ("concrete"); Grotowski 2002: 21 (elimination); Barba 1999: 30 (Flaszen). On Szajna, see e.g. Żurowski 1989: 238, Howard & Łubienski 1989: 251, 255 ("rubbish dump"); Tomaczyk-Watrak [1985: 27-8].

[15] Wójtowicz [2004: 209, 240 – Lubowiecz and Prus]; Flaszen 2002: 64, 73, 75-6 (cf. also Kumiega 1985: 61-2). On the "mansions," in Grotowski and Wyspiański, see Osiński [1972: 182-3] and Terlecki 1983: 114; on Gurawski's comments on Szajna, see Gurawski [1991: 56]; Osiński [1998: 135].

[16] Findlay 1984: 8-11 (opening chorus, "throw away"); Wyspiański [1985: 4] and Osiński [1972: 185] ("coffin-maggot")

[17] Findlay 1984: 8, 12

[18] Findlay 1984: 6, 10, 13; Żurowski 1989: 238; Hardwick 1984: 133; Flaszen 2002: 73 ("demands")

[19] Findlay 1984: 13; Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 103-4 ("wings"); Bross 1983: 17; Schevill 1973: 298; Flaszen 2002: 73, 1967 ("resigned")

[20] Flaszen 74-5 ("monosexual," "compensatory," "thrones"); Simon 1969: D21. On the female cast, see esp. Osiński [1972: 197, 220-1 n. 82] and Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 104; as Lisa Wolford notes, "[a] feminist critic might construct an interesting analysis of *Akropolis*, in which female characters were represented by male actors and inanimate objects" (1996: 198-9 n. 10).

[21] Findlay 1984: 7 ("cocked"), 10 ("happy"); Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 108 ("gunned down")

[22] Flaszen [2007: 52]; Bross 1983: 16-17; Schechner & Hoffman 2001: 51 ("construction"); Grotowski 2002: 17-8 ("signs," cf. 2001: 377), 39 ("miniature score"), 77, 139, 141, 144-5, 193 ("adapt"); Barba 2001: 80; Borowski 1992: 94; Ahrne 2009: 227 ("composed"). On the bird motif, see Findlay 1984: 12-14; Osiński [1972: 184-5].

[23] Barba 1999: 30, 98-9, 103; Flaszen 2002: 76; Zarrilli 2002: 15; Forsythe 1978: 310 ("organic"); Baugh 2005: 193-5. The epigraphs for this section are from Wardle 1968: 18, and Thompson 2007: 13.

[24] Grotowski 1980: 33, 36-7, 39; 2001: 259 ("cut off," "indoor space"); Kumiega 1985: 229-30; Wolford 1996: 148-51 ("anthropocentric," in a discussion of Jairo Cuesta's work on "Performance Ecology," in the New World Performance Laboratory); Attisani 2008: 78 (quoting Osiński)

[25] Kumiega 1985: 195, 203 ("direct"), 223 ("computer"), 225-7, 229 ("taming"); Grotowski 2002: 235, 245 ("juggling"); 2001: 259, 261, 267-8, 298, 376 ("doing"); 2008: 37 ("domestication"); Donald 1991

[26] Grotowski 2002: 125, 209-10; 1995: 129-30; 2001: 224, 300; 2008: 36-7; Schechner 1994: 52 (citing Cieślak from 1970); Biagini 2008: 164, 173; Shevtsova 2009: 355 (Richards); Barba 1999: 95

[27] Grotowski 2002: 37 (scalpel and trampolin), 118, 131; 1995: 122 ("objectivity"), 124-5, 130, 134 ("vehicle," "verticality"); 2001: 300-1 (*organon* and *yantra*, "outcome"); Ahrne 2009: 228 ("density"); also Wolford 2001: 285-6; 1996: 31, 115-6 ("performative artifacts"); Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 48-9, 78; Shevtsova 2009: 340, 338 (Richards and Biagini on "going back" to "arrive into the moment")

[28] Forsythe 1978: 322 (Flaszen), 328 ("field of experiences"); Schechner & Hoffman 2001: 46 ("necessary for certain actors"), 54-5; Grotowski 2008: 33-4 (physical actions, cf. Richards 1995: e.g. 13, 61, 103); Schechner 1994: 52 (citing Cieślak from 1970); Blair 2008: 52, 69, 76; Varela *et al.* 1991: 9, 206; Thompson 2007: 13 ("laying down a path in walking"), 166, 180; Zarrilli 2007: 645-7

[29] Grotowski 2002: 128, 192, 225-6; 1995: 127 ("verticality"); 2008: 37 ("past and possible"); Barba 2001: 77 ("friendly or hostile"); Schechner 1994: 52 (citing Cieślak from 1970); Blair 2006: 177, 180 (cf. 2008: 74-5, 81); Richards 1995: 94-6 ("in/pulse," "in/tension"); Shevtsova 2009: 345-6 (Biagini); Salata 2008: 117 (Buber). On Grotowski's work on voice, see Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 144-50; Campo with Molik 2010; and e.g. Grotowski 2002: 35-6, 166, 169, 176, 184, 197, 231.

[30] Barba 1999: 49 (cf. also Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 97); Varela *et al.* 1991: 214, 220-1, 224-5, 238; Kumiega 1985: 228; Shevtsova 2009: 357 (Richards); Grotowski 2008: 36; Zarrilli 2007: 647

[31] Fumaroli 2001: 112-13 ("new myth"); Grotowski 2002: 20; Baugh 2005: 194-6; Wickstrom 1970: 107-8 ("anxiety"); Hardwick 1984: 127 ("blow"); Schevill 1973: 300 ("anti-Christ"). The epigraphs for this section are from Brook 2009: 14 (Freedman), and Baugh 2005: 194.

[32] Fumaroli 2001: 112 ("truly contain"); Bentley 2001: 169-70 ("such a distance"); Schechner & Hoffman 2001: 52-3 (*Constant Prince*); 1968: 42 ("oppressed"); Howard & Łubienski 1989: 249 (Szajna); Wójtowicz 2004: 267 ("without exit"); Osiński [1972: 184] and Findlay 1984: 6 (spider's web); Grotowski 2002: 20 ("architecture," "congestion"), 147; Kerr 2001: 152-3 (intact); Schevill 1973: 300 ("concentration camp of sound"); Flaszen 2002: 63, 76-7 (Babel, "concrete motivation")

[33] Schevill 1973: 296 ("don't belong"); Grotowski 2002: 20 ("looking through"); Wickstrom 1970: 108; Flaszen 1967; 2002: 63 (also quoted from Kumiega 1985: 61, and Forsythe 1978: 309); Schechner & Hoffman 2001: 52 (Grotowski); Borowski 1992: 99, 104, 111-13 (cf. Barba 1999: 38)

[34] Flaszen 2002: 64, 77 ("stereotypes"); Schechner & Hoffman 2001: 51 ("too strong"); Howard & Łubienski 1989: 249, 251 (Szajna); Findlay 1984: 8; Simon 1969: D21; Kumiega 1985: 118 ("out of proportion"); Barba 1995: 151; 1999: 56, 122 n. 25 (Rilke); Borowski 1992: 32; Richards 1995: 25-6 (Rilke, "inner logic"); Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 104-5. The color fragment can presently be found also on YouTube by searching "Jerzy Grotowski i Teatr Laboratorium."

[35] Simon 1970: 513-14 (including "ear-assaulting," "infernal laughter"); 1969: D21 ("could not identify"); Forsythe 1978: 316-7 ("hardly recognizable"); Findlay 1984: 18; Wiles 1980: 170-1; Grotowski 2002: 21 ("elimination," "clashing objects"), 52 ("signs and sounds"); Wickstrom 1970: 108 ("unintelligible," "revealed enough"); Hardwick 1984: 128 ("atonality"), 133 ("rush by"), 136-8 ("disorienting," "opaque detail"); Flaszen 2002: 74-5 ("altar bell," "cacophony"); Wardle 1969: IIIc ("huge gap")

[36] Kumiega 1985: 149-50 ("encounter"); Grotowski 2002: 40-1 ("élite"); Milling & Ley 2001: 131 ("more complex"); Barnes 1969: 40 ("participation"); Wiles 1980: 150, 154-5 ("barrier," "denied"); Richie 2001: 150; Grotowski 1995: 120, 122, 124 ("montage"); Richards 1995: 98 ("screen," "safety"); Schechner 1994: 51-2 (Cieślak: "flame," "night to night"); Taviani 2001: 204 ("glass container" for both); Barba 1999: 27 (the two "ensembles," cf. Kumiega 1985: 36-7, and Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 93)

[37] Schevill 1973: 296 ("read or heard"); Croyden 2001: 85 ("mechanism"); Barba 1999: 98-9 ("shift"); Grotowski 2002: 23, 121-2; Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 58-9, 86; Kosiński [2007: 426]; Kalemba-Kasprzak 1996: 59

[38] Barba 1999: 27, 39; Barba & Flaszen 1965: 174; Grotowski 2002: 22, 24, 42, 55; Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 58-9; Jacobi 1962: 10, 39-40, 43-6 (presentation and quotations of Jung, cf. also Auslander 1997: 15 and 24, on Grotowski); Barba 2001: 74-5

[39] Knox 2004: 9-10, 2003. Note that Knox's is not an *ad hoc* observation of terminological coincidence, but a "contemporary developmental model for archetypes" which, instead of positing notions of genetic innateness, recognizes the latter as "emergent pattern[s] of relationship" – e.g., "there may be no such thing as an archetypal mother but [--] there is an image schema of containment" (2003: 67-8).

[40] Kumiega 1985: 61; Flaszen 2002: 61; 1967; Findlay 1984: 4-5, 8; Osiński [1972: 174-6] (cf. Kalemba-Kasprzak 1996: 58); Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 91; Kumiega 1985: 38, 130 ("penetrate"); Grotowski 2002: 23 – cf. also Mond-Kozłowska 2006: 99. The phrase, "dialectic of apotheosis and derision," derives from Polish critic Tadeusz Kudliński.

[41] Quoted sections refer to (1) *A Dictionary of Architecture and Landscape Architecture*, James Stevens Curl 2006; (2) *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Art Terms*, Michael Clarke 2001; and (3) *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Archaeology*, Timothy Darvill 2002 respectively; all were accessed through Oxford Reference Online, Oxford University Press, at the University of Tampere on April 3rd 2008. For McConachie on schemas for Greek theatre, see Zarrilli *et al.* 2010: 88-96, esp. 95.

[42] Flaszen 2002: 61-2 ("highest point," my italics), 73; Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 86, 100 ("summit," "sum total"); Croyden 1974: 149 ("apex"); Fortier 2003: 77 ("necropolis"); Wardle 1968: 18 (dignity and degradation); Flaszen [2006: 51] ("fringes," cf. Kumiega 1985: 59); Kott 1992a: 25 (Borowski); Grotowski 2002: 20 ("congestion"); Croyden 2001: 84-5; Borowski 1992: 44 ("ugly"), 48 ("haven"), 143, 168 ("whole world"); Howard & Łubienski 1989: 251 (Szajna). Note the VERTICAL etymology of *sum total* (Polish *summa*), from the Latin f. *summus*, "highest."

[43] E.g., Flaszen 1967; Barnes 1969: 40; Kalemba-Kasprzak 1996: 51-3 ("center"); Findlay 1984: 2; Terlecki 1983: 110-1 ("peals"); Miłosz 1983: 353 ("museum"); Schechner & Hoffman 1968: 41 ("ruined past"); Krzyżanowski 1978: 505-6, 511; Mond-Kozłowska 2006: 98. While Wyspiański's reconstruction designs for Wawel – drafted with Polish architect Władysław Ekielski – might have been but "unrealistic dreams in a poor country" (Krzyżanowski 1978: 558), an impressive model of his "Wawel-Akropolis" is now on permanent display in the Wyspiański Museum of present-day Kraków; of the *theatrical productions* actually mounted in the Wawel Castle courtyard, of special resonance to Grotowski would have been Juliusz Osterwa's 1933 version of *The Constant Prince* (Braun 2003: 133).

[44] Kalemba-Kasprzak 1996: 52-3; Krzyżanowski 1978: 505-6, 510; Miłosz 1983: 352-3, 355, 358; Terlecki 1983: 109-10, 112-3, 115; Mond-Kozłowska 2006: 98; Hardwick 1984: 131; Braun 2003: 133; Miodońska-Brookes [1985: XVII, XXII, and XXXII ff. on "autocreation"]; Flaszen 2002: 77 ("Babel"); Schechner & Hoffman 1968: 41 ("all nations"). Notably, Wyspiański's Wagnerism was directly influenced by Adam Mickiewicz's vision of the "Slavic drama," as well, "combin[ing] all the elements of national poetry – lyricism, discussion of current problems, historical images – into a blended unity" (Miłosz 1983: 352-4); as Elżbieta Kalemba-Kasprzak suggests (1996: 55-6), not only is "the principle of gothic cathedrals" being repeated in the play – "every part speaks of the whole but is not identical with it since it participates in developing this entirety" – but also, "perverse[ly]," in Grotowski's adaptation: "space, here, does not allow itself to be separated from subjective action."

[45] Flaszen 2002: 62 ("roots"); 1967 ("mankind"); [2006: 51]; Findlay 1984: 9 ("progress"); Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 83 ("Mediterranean cradle"); Terlecki 1983: 112-4; Braun 2003: 135; Kalemba-Kasprzak 1996: 52; Bross 1983: 16 ("present in us"); Schevill 1973: 298 ("shred of free will"); Borowski 1992: 31, 35, 40-1, 55, 99, 107; Kott 1992a: 25. On the Grotowski interview, compare Schechner & Hoffman 2001: 50, with its first edition from 1968 (p. 41).

[46] Borowski 1992: 131-2; cf. also the faint allusion, in Flaszen (2002: 64), on the inmates "build[ing] an absurd civilization," and the version quoted in Barba 1999: 38.

[47] Findlay 1984: 10 ("stingy"); Flaszen 2002: 73 ("daydreams"); Wardle 1968: 18 ("poetic and plausible"); Wickstrom 1970: 108 ("must have been"); Simon 1970: 513; Kumiega 1985: 60-1 (Barba); Howard & Łubienski 1989: 249 (Szajna); Schechner & Hoffman 1968: 43 (Grotowski, cf. 2001: 52)

[48] Borowski 1992: 131; Flaszen 2002: 63-4 ("absurd," "own torturers"); Osiński [1972: 184] (columns); Croyden 2001: 85 ("mechanics"); Matthews 2006: 129-30; Barba 1999: 30; Kott 1992a: 21-2 (Borowski); Schechner & Hoffman 1968: 42 (Grotowski, cf. 2001: 51)

[49] Flaszen 2002: 64, 74-5; Howard & Łubienski 1989: 249 (Szajna); Schechner & Hoffman 2001: 52 ("authentic process"); Borowski 1992: 29, 34, 57, 37; see also Findlay 1984: 9, 13, and Chojak [n.d.]. *Tango Milonga*, composed by Jerzy Petersburski, is internationally better known as *Oh, Donna Clara.*

[50] Findlay 1984: 8-9 (indented), 13-5, 18; Grotowski 2002: 21 ("poor manner"); Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 107-10 ("fighting the cold"); Romanska 2009: 229 ("schizophrenia"); Flaszen 2002: 74 (Cassandra); Chojak [n.d.]; Ahrne 2009: 228 (Grotowski on the "sung" quality of his early performances)

[51] Findlay 1984: 8-9; see also Osiński [1972: 177]

[52] The legendary site of this is known as *Skałka*, or "Little Rock," as is yet another drama Wyspiański devoted to the subject in 1906 (*Bolesław Śmiały* was published in 1903); as it happens, the site contains a church devoted to St. Stanisław, which again contains the crypt which contains Wyspiański's tomb.

[53] Wyspiański's stage directions are rather elusive, here, only referring to a "groaning" sound from the direction of the sarcophagus [1985: 215]; Robert Findlay relates this to "the release of the Polish eagle alluded to in Act I," where – according to his otherwise fine summary – "[i]t is only the eagle in [St. Stanisław's] half-opened coffin, symbolizing the partitioned Poland, that should not be awakened, for the time is not yet ripe for an uprising" (1984: 3-4). Evocative and quite to the point as this is, not only does Findlay confuse the opening scene with Grotowski's version – the coffin is not "*carried into* the cathedral," by the angels (ibid.: 3, my italics) – but the monument itself, with an altogether different one, devoted to eighteenth-century bishop Kajetan Sołtyk (cf. Wyspiański [1985]: images 2 and 8).

[54] Krzyżanowski 1978: 510-11; Mond-Kozłowska 2006: 98; Findlay 1984: 2-4 (statement to nation, p. 2); Braun 2003: 135; Croyden 1974: 141-2, 148-9; McQuillen 2009. For the sake of clarity, the huge complex known as "Wawel" consists of both the cathedral and the castle which seem to appear rather interchangeably in the references; his enthusiasm over the Romantic theme of Poland's resurrection ostensibly clear-cut, in his conclusion to *Akropolis*, Wyspiański should however be credited for his "disdain for Romantic *politics*," especially for the idea of "national salvation through suffering" (Davies 2001: 184, 203; my italics). To quote the most recent inhabitant of the crypt mentioned in note 52, Czesław Miłosz reminds the title of *Liberation* "denotes not a political upheaval, but an act of triumph over the Polish morbid infatuation with martyrdom" (1983: 357); together with his best-known play, *Wesele* (*The Wedding*, 1901), the three have often been discussed as an ideological trilogy.

[55] Flaszen 2002: 75 (also "flagellants," "ecstatic"); 62 ("blind with hope"), 74 ("chalice"); Findlay 1984: 8-10 ("barbed wire"); McQuillen 2009 ("modern-day King David"); Schevill 1973: 299 ("frozen"); Wyspiański [1985: 3-4, 215-18]; Osiński [1972: 183-5]; Chojak [n.d.] (corrects carrol to lullaby)

[56] McQuillen 2009; Terlecki 1983: 111-13; Flaszen 2002: 64 ("everyday pace"); Osiński [1972: 175] (translated in Kalemba-Kasprzak 1996: 56)

[57] Grotowski 2002: 72 ("descent to salvation," in caption 14); 2008: 25-6 ("objective fact"); Forsythe 1978: 309, 318 (Flaszen); Hardwick 1984: 128, 133 ("urged to hurry"); Wickstrom 1970: 108 ("Yoga position"); Findlay 1984: 17; Brook 2009: 18, 24; Schechner & Hoffman 2001: 51 ("association of fire"); Schevill 1973: 297-8 ("frozen images"); Simon 1970: 514 ("clutching"); Howard & Łubienski 1989: 248, 251 (Szajna); Ahrne 2009: 227-8 ("ascending levels")

[58] Grotowski 2002: 125 ("martyrs"), 44 ("repugnance"); Wiles 1980: 133, 156; Kumiega 1985: 61, 97, 141; Hardwick 1984: 136 ("no resolution"); Forsythe 1978: 311-2 ("ridiculous"); Kott 2001: 138-9

[59] Romanska 2009: 233; Howard & Łubienski 1989: 258, 256 (Szajna); Campo with Molik 2010: 131; Croyden 2001: 84-5, 87 (Grotowski); Forsythe 1978: 309 (Flaszen)

Chapter 5

[1] Witts 2010: 82, 25

[2] Pleśniarowicz 2004: 255-6, 293 ("extrasemantic," etc.); Kobialka 1993: 343 ("bereft"); Witts 2010: 79; Sugiera 2002: 233. Kantor's notions of his "universality" are cited from two interviews in Halczak 1989 (p. 71 unspecified and 133, by Remo Binosi). As for Lawson 1995, it is to be noted that this work is not available in book form, being over a thousand pages in length with all its appendices and the 600-page bibliography the author has had the energy to compile; I personally accessed it on microfilm.

[3] Lehmann 2006: 73; Gerould 1995: 175; Pleśniarowicz 2004: 163 ("contradiction"). The epigraph for this section being from Kantor 1993: 209, it is to be *NOTED* that I will only follow his idiosyncratic spelling approximately, oftentimes reducing CAPITALIZED SENTENCES, say, to Capitalized Initials.

[4] Kantor 1993: 209-10, 216-18, 228 (217-18, indented); what Kobialka translates as the "Night Notebook" contains much the same material (in Kantor 2009: 106-9), only replacing the 1993 "hyperspace" with the more correct, "multi-space" – cf. Kantor [2000: 121-5; 2005: 49-52].

[5] Kantor 1993: 218

[6] Kantor 1993: 218, 228, 236, 215 [cf. 2005: 49 for my modified translation], 209; Gibson 1986: 249. On the "axiological" or "plus–minus" parameter of image schemas, see Krzeszowski 1993 (esp. 325).

[7] Pleśniarowicz 2004: 152-3; Kantor 1993: 239, 41 [cf. 2000: 77]; 2009: 335

[8] Kantor 1993: 71ff. ("annexing"), 74 ("poor," "collapsed"), 79 ("balancing"), 98 ("mode of thinking"), 216-18 ("give birth," "manipulated"); 2009: 10-11 ("singular"), 261 ("tired desire"), 332 ("not-life"), 364-5 ("poetry"), 403 ("Interpretation, Abstraction"); Lawson 1995: 32; Bablet 2006 ("genius")

[9] Kantor 1993: 210-11 (indented); Sawa 1990: 66 ("tradition," "part of"); Pleśniarowicz 2004: 155 ("years ahead"); Kantor 1993: 120 ("remembered"), 211 ("forgotten," "strength only to grab")

[10] Bablet 2006; Eruli 2004 ("fragments"); Kantor 1985a ("found," cf. Miklaszewski 2002: 117); 1993: 260 ("foreign to dada"); 2009: 330 ("fate and death"); Sawa 1990: 66 ("tradition of Theatre of Death"); Pleśniarowicz 1994: 11 ("royal castle," *Akropolis*); Hyde 1992: 193-4; Gerould 1995: 175-6

[11] Lehmann 2006: 71-2; Kantor 1985a ("inexorable," "domain," "revue," "happening"); 2009: 405 ("erasing," "autonomous"); 1993: 49, 53, 55 ("objectless" etc.); Miklaszewski 2002: 113-14 ("punch line," "sheer anguish"); Lawson 1995: 279 ("elicit emotions"); McConachie 2008: 167

[12] Sawa 1990: 67 ("most tangible"); Kantor 2009: 228 ("taken place"); 1993: 143-4, 159 (structure of memory); 1985 ("serious trouble"); Kobialka 1986: 180 ("linear plots"); 1993: 345 ("Theory of Negatives"); Pleśniarowicz 1994: 48 (*kliszy*, see also Draaisma 2000: 119ff., for photographic metaphors of memory); McConachie 2008: 33 ("constructive recategorization"); Lawson 1995: 46, 51, 62

[13] Wetzsteon 1985: 48; Miklaszewski 2002: 63 n. 2 (George Hyde on "montage-like layering"); Kantor 1985a ("mental frames," "incompatible," "financial irregularities"); 2009: 135 ("faithful companion"); Kobialka 1986: 181 ("holes" accepting concepts); Bablet 2006 ("real creation") Pleśniarowicz 2004: 256 (chance, cf. Miklaszewski 2002: 119 and Lawson 1995: 260 on the gramophone recording)

[14] Lawson 1995: 254; Kantor 1985 ("walls, ceiling or floor"); [Osiński 2001: 111] (extensive quote of Kantor on constructivism and the "mastodon" anatomy of Popova's *Cuckold* setting). If not otherwise noted, all Kantor quotes in the description are from his program handouts (1985, 1985a). On distributed cognition in this sort of sense, I warmly recommend Tribble 2011.

[15] Lawson 1995: 185

[16] Lawson 1995: 40 (“way station”), 284 n. 6 (languages)

[17] Pleśniarowicz 2004: 248 (“silvery generals”); Lamont 1985: H4 (“white-maned skeleton”). While translated as a *pram*, in the program, I will refer to the vehicle here introduced as a *cart* – neither quite conveys the nature of the contraption, propeled by pushing and pulling a T-shaped lever horizontally back and forth. The Polish *wózeczek* is a diminutive of *wózek* and again of *wóz*, the connotations receding from pram, trolley, cart, and wagon, to a bare generic vehicle; the most ingenious solution proposed by my ever generous language consultant, Virginia Mattila, would be a *manually operated quad bike*.

[18] Lawson 1995: 278

[19] Lawson 1995: 40

[20] Lawson 1995: 266

[21] Pleśniarowicz 2004: 249; Kobialka 2009: 305; Davies 2001: 118-19; Miklaszewski 2002: 125 (“always associate”); Lawson 1995: 258-64 (“My pierwsza brygada”)

[22] Lawson 1995: 47, 236-7 (letter); on the Priest and the kiddie cart, see Halczak (ed.) 2008: 25-6

[23] Lawson 1995: 231-5 (Uniłowski); Miklaszewski 2002: 121 (“provincial quack”)

[24] Lawson 1995: 208

[25] Lawson 1995: 264-6

[26] See e.g. Gerould 1995: 179, 184; Pleśniarowicz 2004: 38, 262

[27] Lawson 1995: 274ff. (“turn-taking”), 251 (“votive candle”)

[28] Gerould 1995: 182

[29] See e.g. Gerould 1995: 179, on Malczewski and “Melancholy”

[30] Lawson 1995: 210

[31] Lawson 1995: 268-9 (“music,” “tappings”); Jenkins 1986: 11 (“bullet fire”)

[32] Kantor 1993: 151 (indented), 111 (“side street”), 113 (“SOMEONE”), 167 (“official history”), 257 (“well trodden”); 2009: 195 (“art as a journey”); Miklaszewski 2002: 102-3 (“signposted,” “philosophical”); Pleśniarowicz 2004: 112 (“identified”); Lawson 1995: 141 (dying and journey), 146 (“recapitulates”). The epigraphs are from Croyden 2001: 85 (Grotowski) and Wyspiański 1966: 65-6.

[33] Sapija 2006, Lawson 1995: 279 (“weep,” “burial”), 145 (train); Bablet 2006, [1993] (“symbolist,” “packaged dummy”); Pleśniarowicz 1994: 47 (“not-solving”), 23 (“human *emballage*”); du Vignal [1985] (“relatives,” “all cemeteries”); Kantor 1985 (“eternal rest”); 1993: 26-8, 66-7, 72, 77

[34] Kantor 1985a; 1993: 35 (“external realism”), 53, 79, 112-3 (Theatre of Death), 153 (“reflection”); 2009: 18 (“does not matter what”); Lawson 1995: 118; Rayner 2006: 97-8

[35] Kantor 1985, 1985a; 1993: 154, 199 (“answer”); Kobialka 1986: 180 (“eternity”); Bablet [1993]

[36] Kantor 1993: 155-6 (“pushed aside”), 145 (“procession,” “prototype”), 35 (“side”), 135 (“proletariat”); 2009: 15 (“bundled up”), 18 (Nuremberg), 329 (impossibility of return), 344 (“shadows”); 1985a (Stwosz); Kobialka 2009: 303 (“abyss”); Miklaszewski 2002: 104 (“birthplace”), Lawson 1995: 249 (mother); Pleśniarowicz 2004: 254 (dead past and dying future)

[37] Kantor 1993: 135-7 (“Fairground Booth Stage”); 2009: 18 (“does not matter what”), 20 (“parade”), 24 (“rejects”), 347 (“luggage,” “flaws,” “omnia mea”); 1985 (“depths of time”); Pleśniarowicz 1994: 23-5 (“species,” “props,” “world tour”); Bablet 2006 (“set decoraction”); Lawson 1995: 116 (revue)

[38] Kott 1992: 44; Kantor 1993: 143 (“façades”) 2009: 403 (“metaphysical”); 1985 (“vicious circle”); Lawson 1995: 279 (“futility”), 286 n. 11 (*Wielopole*); Pleśniarowicz 2004: 38 (parades); Gerould 1995: 177-9 (“vortex”), 184 (“stagnation”); Jenkins 1986: 10

[39] Kantor 1993: 113 (“very selves,” indented), 153 (“enclosing”), 198 (“world of illusion”); Kobialka 1993: 373 (“home on stage”), 375 (“at the threshold”); Halczak 1989: 206ff. (titles/decisions); Pleśniarowicz 2004: 178 (“half refuge”), Lawson 1995: 212 n. 3 (occupation)

[40] Kantor 1993: 25 (“opposite pole”), 143 (“weak walls,” “open interior,” “enough to open”), 214 (“alienation”), 238 (spectators), 261 (“inaccessible”); Boivin 2008: 54-5; Aronson 2005: 52-4; Bachelard 1994: 137; Miklaszewski 2002: 74

[41] Lawson 1995: 102 (indented), 199 (“contracting and expanding”); Miklaszewski 2002: 74 (room); Kantor 1993: 126 (“attic”), 142-4 (memory); 1990: 159 (“systole”); Aronson 2005: 53, 56; Kobialka 2009: 303; Baudrillard 2005: 91ff.; Gluhovic 2005; Sutton 2010: 210-11

[42] Kobialka 1993: 341 (“resembled”), 373 (“defends”); Sapija 2006 (“unlikely,” to “accommodate”); du Vignal [1985] (“tolerated”); Kantor 1985 (“asylum”); 1993: 81 (“shelter and protect”), 146-7 (“absolute,” “contaminated,” “sneaking in”); 1990: 110 (“this very room”), 136 (“flea market”); Jenkins 1986: 7 (“all of history,” “condensed”), Lawson 1995: 104 (“temple”); Pleśniarowicz 2004: 234-5 (“suspect,” “rental service,” “basely made up”)

[43] Kantor 1993: 151 (indented), 196 (“organs”); 1985, 1985a (most quotes in the paragraph); 1990: 101, 103 (platoon, conscription); Lawson 1995: 46-8, 50 (invasions), 147 (models), 244-5; Kobialka 1986: 178 (“cursed artists”); 1993: 341 (“altered”), 345-6 (“erased”); Jenkins 1986: 11, 6

[44] Lawson 1995: 241-3 (Stwosz), 144-5 (wardrobe), 247-51 (“opened unceremoniously,” p. 248-9); Bablet 2006 (“can be closed”); Sapija 2006 (“carpenter”); Pleśniarowicz 2004: 156 (“hierarchy”); Kantor 2009: 160-1 (“ludicrously tiny”), 165, 171-2, 360-3 (“mixed,” “closed”), 378 (“childhood room”)

[45] Pleśniarowicz 1994: 17 (“every boundary”), 26 (“closed work”); 2004: 163 (“every freedom”); Miłosz 1983: 434 (“antiform”); Lawson 1995: 7, 317; Kantor 1993: 149 (“imposed”); 1985a (“real room”); 2009: 133 (“spilling over”), 276 (“imprisoned”), 358-9 (object, cf. translation in 1990: 157-8)

[46] Miklaszewski 2002: 118 (“convulsive”); Lawson 1995: 57-8, 63-4, 187, 252, 257; Hyde 1992: 201 (Dante); Kantor 1993: 183ff. (“imprint”); 2009: 194 (“wholeness,” “enclosed”); Pleśniarowicz 2004: 242 (“one trait”). The epigraph for this section is from Kantor 1993: 240.

[47] Kantor 1985 (“pillories”); 2009: 359 (“props”); 1990: 158 (“indivisible whole”); 1993: 240 (“offensive”), 101-2 (“anatomy,” “martyr,” “vehicle”); Pleśniarowicz 2004: 208 (“organism”), 233 (mobility of memory); Lawson 1995: 105 *et passim.* (“place,” “setting”); du Vignal [1985] (“eternal”)

[48] Lawson 1995: 189, cf. Kantor 2009: 333-4 (chair and verticality); Hyde 1990: 9; Skiba-Lickel [1995: 53] (“objectification”); Kantor 1993: 123 (“arteries”), 240 (“symbiosis”), cf. [2005: 70]; 1990: 158 (“vital organs”), cf. 2009: 359 (“inner life”), 243 (“tumors”); Pleśniarowicz 1994: 23 (“ridiculous”); Schulz 1988: 44, 40, 46; Klassowicz 1979: 107 (Gombrowicz); Bakhtin 1984: 316-7, 325

[49] Schulz 1988: 41; du Vignal 1987: 125 (“obsessive continuity”); Grodzicki 1979: 117 (“living matter”); Rayner 2006: 94; Lawson 1995: 34, 130ff.; Miklaszewski 1999; 2002: 11 (“on the same level”); Kantor 1993: 213 (“precise definition”); Kobialka 1993: 391 n. 17 (“autonomous,” “in parallel”)

[50] Eruli 2004 (“sketching,” “cynical”); Halczak (ed.) 1989: 134 (“same events,” in an interview with Remo Binosi); Bablet 2006 (“found the twins”); Kobialka 2009: 306 (“poetry”); Kantor 1993: 231 (“pre-matter” of “types”); Lawson 1995: 158-66 (“lowest”), 179 (improvisational freedom); Skiba-Lickel [1995: 84] (Rychlicka), [160] (Renczyński and Grotowski); Janiccy [2000: 214, 232, 238, 260]

[51] Kobialka 1993: 341; Witts 2010: 80; Kantor 2009: 253 ("outhouse"), 256 ("abstraction"), 134 ("informel"); 1985 ("vocations" etc.); Lawson 1995: 60, 139 ("bawdy"), 209, 266-7; Janiccy [2000: 179]

[52] Lawson 1995: 145, 274 (indented); also 194, 59-60 (*Wielopole*), 129, 229

[53] Kantor 1993: 345 ("alien"), 25 ("unreachable," "opposite pole"); 2009: 359; Bakhtin 1984: 308, 317; Pleśniarowicz 2004: 181-2, 190; Miklaszewski 2002: 118 ("bound up"); Lawson 1995: 175-6

[54] Davies 2001: 211 (the lyrics and "death or glory" quote); 133 ("adored"); Miklaszewski 2002: 111 ("unambiguous"), 127 n. 1 ("Enemy of Communism"); Kobialka 1986: 178 ("outlaw status"); Kantor 1993: 203 ("enclosed space"), 168 ("childhood dreams"); 1985a ("nowhere else"); Lawson 1995: 15-16 ("illegal," cf. Klossowicz 1986: 112); Witts 2010: 80; Lamont 1985: H20 ("national anthem")

[55] Kobialka 1986: 179 ("fame and glory," "remnants"); Miklaszewski 2002: 119 ("fragmentary"); Kantor 2009: 456 ("poor room"); 1993: 28 ("fragile" emballage), 190 ("alien to human nature"); 1985 (tin soldiers, parade or funeral); König (ed.) 1999: 11 (Rocinante, image 2); Lamont 1985: H4 ("equestrian statue"); Gussow 1985 ("corps of ghosts") Lamont H4 ("beribboned, bemedaled"); Hyde 1988: 729 ("grotesquely inadequate"); Pleśniarowicz 2004: 248, 255 (Katyń, cf. Gluhovic 2005 and forthcoming). The tragedy here refers to the death of president Lech Kaczyński and his retinue of over eighty in April 2010, in a plain crash on their way to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Katyń massacre; that Kaczyński and the first lady were buried in Wawel caused considerable controversy in Poland.

[56] Hallam & Hockey 2001; Bablet [1993] ("dream of glory"); 2006 ("glorious before"); Halczak (ed.) 1989: 176 ("ridiculously small," in an interview with Philippe du Vignal); Lamont 1985: H20 ("state funerals"); Lawson 1995: 25 (*sczeznąć*); Kantor 1993: 66-7 ("erasing"), 46 ("pushed aside"); Miklaszewski 2002: 34 (*Putzfrau*), 114 ("punch line"); Fauconnier and Turner 2002: 292-5, 302-3

[57] Kantor 1993: 155 (indented); 2009: 18 ("disinterested"), 155 ("pitiful sign"), 14 ("act of heroism"); 1985 ("stubborn," "likeness"); 1985a ("tied down"); Kott 1992: 53; Kobialka 1993 (e.g. 312, 327, 347-9, 352, 361-2); Bakhtin 1984: 321; Lamont 1985: H4 ("one and many"); Zunshine 2006 (essentialism)

[58] Sapija 2006 ("Wyspiański's contemporary"); Bablet 2006 ("not something open"); Miklaszewski 2002: 123 ("tidy things up"), 117 ("existential condition, "utterly alien"); Kantor 1993: 129 ("situation of an artist"), 150 ("model of history"), 66 ("outlaw status"); Kobialka 2009: 300-1 ("bestiality and martyrdom"); Lawson 1995: 357 ("not about the altar") 241 (Nuremberg), 490 (*The Madman and the Nun*, cf. Jenkins 1986: 8). "*Tout court, c'est moi*," appears in one of Kantor's sketches of Stwosz, to be found e.g. at http://malarze.com/obraz.php?id=874 (checked May 10th 2011).

[59] Jenkins 1986: 5 ("stagehand"), 6 (Blok, "impotent"); Lawson 1995: 86 (Kirby), 322 ("mobile armature"), 257 (Mum and Malczewski); Eruli 2004 ("new interpretation"); Żurowski [1986]; Pleśniarowicz 2004: 288 (1994: 50-1); Gerould 1995: 177, 179

[60] Kott 1984: 160; Kobialka 1986: 181 ("tapped in a prison code"); Jenkins 1986: 11 ("insurrection"); Kantor 1993: 69 (black emballage); Miklaszewski 2002: 127 (propelled by imperative); König (ed.) 1999: 10 (Rocinante, image 1); Davies 2001: 146; Pleśniarowicz 2004: 262 (Holocaust), 249 ("superiority of love and death"); Gerould 1995: 179, 186; Witts 2010: 82; Lawson 1995: 51 ("palimpsest"), 60-1 (barricade for *Wielopole*), 278-9, 281-2 (Paris Communards), 288 n. 16 ("rhythmic tatoo"); du Vignal 1987: 124 ("outlive our death"), Rayner 2006: 82 ("holding time still")

[61] Michael & Still 1992: 882 – in the paragraph, 873, 876, 878, 881-3; Lawson 1995: 185 ("mourning flowers"), 285-6 n. 10 ("decadents," Poggioli); Jenkins 1986: 11 ("homage," "forefront"); Halczak (ed.) 1989: 61 ("stupidity and crime," "harmless materials": interview by Giuseppe Rocca); 168 ("victory": interview by Catalina Serra); Lamont 1985: H4 ("glory"); Kobialka 1993: 349 (cf. 2009: 311)

Epilogue

[1] Croyden 1974: 149; Barnes 1969: 40, Brook 2009: 16; Wardle 1968: 24; Hardwick 1984: 129, 136, 139; Halczak (ed.) 1986: 45 (Pani); Halczak (ed.) 1989: 147 (Rich, cf. Rich 1985: L/C17); Lamont 1985: H20; Forsythe 1978: 324-5 (Flaszen, cf. Kumiega 1985: 219); Braun 1986: 232 ("pawns"); Grotowski 2002: 48 ("courtesan actor", "producer souteneur"); Simon 1970: 511, 516-17

[2] See e.g. Richards 1995: 74, 95; Biagini 2008: 159-60

[3] Kantor 1994: 24 ("memory"); [2005: 433ff.] ("scientific," "museum," etc.); 1985 ("uniforms"); Miklaszewski 2002: 88 ("constituted" to "survive"); Pleśniarowicz 2004: 294; Halczak & Renczyński [eds., 2007] (the more beautiful book-length compilation); Lawson 1995: 317 (anachronism); Wheeler 2010: 29 (parts of minds); Gell 1998: 232ff. (personhood). Please also consult www.cricoteka.pl.

[4] Slowiak & Cuesta 2007: 166 ("true legacy"); Schechner 2001: xxvii; Wolford 1996: 191 (Richards); Wolford Wylam 2008: 138 ("gestation," "singular"), 134 ("other hands"); Grotowski 2008: 32 ("kinsmen"); 2002: 25 ("utter opening"); 2001: 376 ("theft," "teaching"); Sørensen 2007: 66. For the Wrocław center, consult www.grotowski-institute.art.pl; parts of the *Akropolis* set were also exhibited at the British Grotowski Conference, held at the University of Kent, Canterbury, 11-14 June 2009.

[5] Puchner 2005: 5; Schechner 2008: 7; 2001: 466 ("oral tradition"), 472 ("dark side," cf. Wolford Wylam 2008); Lawson 1996: 150 ("avantgarde"); McConachie 2003: 30ff. (longer quote from p. 38)

[6] Dunkelberg 2005: 47, Bottoms 2004: 694 (*Poor Theater*); Causey 2006: 48ff.; Dixon 2007: 28; Bentley 2001: 168. The epigraphs are from Shivas 1968: D5, and Grotowski 2002: 19 ("encroach," p. 27).

[7] Auslander 1999: 41-2 ("contaminated"), 51-2 ("determined"); Postlewait & Davis 2003: 4 ("surplus," "affected"); Gil Harris & Korda 2002: 4-8, 11 ("clutter" p. 5); Fried 1980, 2003 (Greenberg is quoted from p. 183 n. 4, see also Kaye 1994: 24-35); Causey 2006: 16 ("artifact of mediatization")

[8] Auslander 1999: 43-4; Nellhaus 2010: 7 ("transistor"); McConachie 2010a: 30, 37-8; Gibson 1986: 292-3, 302; Dixon 2007: 139, 187ff. (*BIPED*); Anderson 1996: 51-2; Tillis 2001: 175 ("articulation variables"); for an early ecologically oriented study of biological motion, see Johansson 1973.

[9] Kaplin 2001: 22-5; Giesekam 2007: 246; Salter 2010: xxi, xxvi-vii, xxxiv-v; Dixon 2007: 203 ("intelligent"); Causey 2006: 49 ("triggering," cf. McKinney & Butterworth 2009: 141); Clark 2003: 49

[10] Worthen 1994: 14; Dixon 2007: 40, 363 (on Oliver Grau's *Virtual Art: From Illusion to Immersion*, MIT 2003); McKinney & Butterworth 2009: 140-2 (Svoboda); Giesekam 2007: 11 ("celluloid divide")

[11] Dunkelberg 2005: 54 (including "exiled," quoted from critic Piotr Gruszyński); Causey 2006: 7, 16, 56ff.; McConachie 2010: 30; Kantor 1993: 114, 116; Giesekam 2007: 59-61; Bottoms 2004: 693-4

[12] Hutchins 2010; Dixon 2007: 258, 364, 160, 462 (metaphors); 266-7, 312 (Stelarc); Hayles 1999: 2, 13-14 (cf. Knappett 2004: 43); Clark 2003: 28, 22; Broadhurst 2007: 93-4 (Stelarc quotes)

[13] Gibson 1986: 16-19 ("medium"), 295 ("helpless"); Dixon 2007: 364, 372, 212, 215. On kinds and degrees of "interaction," see Dourish 2001: 1-23 and Dixon 2007: 19-20, 560ff.; as for the 3D model of the *Cuckold* set, courtesy of The Gertrude Stein Repertory Theatre, there was a time when it could be downloaded at http://www.glopad.org/pi/en/record/digdoc/3139, but it doesn't seem to work any more.

[14] Dixon 2007: 176 *et passim.*; Salter 2010: xxi; Clark 2003: 52-6, 36-7, 41, 106, 33, 89-90; Noë 2009: 83. Weiser is quoted from http://sandbox.xerox.com/ubicomp/ (checked May 10th 2011).

[15] Clark 2003: 198; for the prior paragraph, see also 10, 24, 28, 114, 131, 192, 194

[16] Ihde 2002: 7 (phenomenology); Dixon 2007: 149-50 (Bateson), 305 (McLuhan), 147 (cybernetics), 277 (Wiener), 272 ("return"), 296 (Haraway); Vaingurt 2008: 213 n. 17 (Gastev); Clark 2003: 198. Barrault's famous horse mime was already witnessed by Artaud and would still, in Grotowski's 1975

"University of Research"; *War Horse* opened in London's National Theatre in 2007 and is remarkable, here, especially for the contribution of Handspring Puppet Company; Cuesta is cited on the basis of his appearance in the British Grotowski Conference, 14 June 2009, at the University of Kent, Canterbury.

[17] Dixon 2007: 319-21 (indented), 13-14, 273, 305, 316-18; Clark 2003: 13 ("active part," cited from "Cyborgs and Space" by Manfred Clynes and Nathan Kline), 16 (Terminator); Hayles 1999: 206

[18] Boivin 2008: 178; Ihde 2002: 3, 11; Hayles 1999: 4, 291 (the reference to Latour 1995 is her own); Haraway 1991: 150; Clark 2003: 31-3, 4, 6, 8

[19] Hayles 1999: 286, 4-5, 84, 288; Causey 2006: 52; Salter 2009: 30, 2010: xxix; Braidotti 2006: 198-200 (my italics) and Braidotti forthcoming (a monograph by the title, *The Posthuman*).

[20] Ingold 2000: 218 (indented), 215-16; Clark 2008: 139 ("organism centered"); Kershaw 2007: 303, 306, 309-11; Sweetser 2003; Avigal & Rimmon-Kenan 1981: 22-3

[21] Hayles 1999: 288, 291; Kershaw 2007: 317-18; Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 566; Johnson 2007: 281-3

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