

## ESTHETIC VALUES IN THE THEATRE

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The starting-point for this paper is the performance, its realisation and the result of a dramatic phenomenon, the making (the preparation as sign-combining, the making of the composition and growth) and the actualization of the final product before the audience (the so-called 'on-lookers', a word I don't like for its one-sidedness), both facets of the "execution" and the "implementation", following in this Nelson Goodman's distinction<sup>1</sup>, in the end the result of many intentions on various levels and the reception of it. I'm very well aware of the fact that there exists no single, no ideal system of notation that can take into account all the desiderata<sup>2</sup>. My paper remains in this respect a perusal, an investigation in the multitude of theatre models. I thereby accept that the intentions represented in my examples generate an esthetic operation. But if theatre can be associated with art and how and in which way remains a debate that will always be under discussion. Both the theatre makers as well as the theoreticians of the theatre are concerned in this question and have different points of view. And it will always be so, let's say from Aristoteles' *Poetics* to Lessing's *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, from François Hédelin's *Pratique de théâtre* to Coleridge's *Lectures on Shakespeare*, from Diderot's *Paradoxe sur le Comédien* to Stanislavski's *An Actor prepares*, from Brecht's *Schriften zum Theater* to Schechner's *Performance theories*... The theatre is and will always be a battlefield for subjective vitality, a confrontation of temperaments... It's my task to discover the elements of a common divisor in the forest of signs, symbols and meanings.

An essential difference to most of the other art forms is the plurimediality of the dramatic work of art<sup>3</sup>, the collectivity of the producing scheme from playwright to director, to the production manager, to the lighting director, to the scenic artist, to the actors and the public, to the collective reception of the audience. That

plurimediality already is a result of the multifaceted message, of the multitude of signs that reaches the spectator, because the theatre is so diverse as life itself, and by being so every time it generates different patterns, esthetic and other, according to the codes that are used, codes I call in the way Christian Metz states it "units which aspire to formalization"<sup>4</sup>.

The duality of the artistic manifestation as autonomous sign and the communication bearing testimony has brought Jan Mukaróvský to the conclusion that there is a dialectic evolution and shuttle movement in connection to reality<sup>5</sup>. The placing anew and reconstructing of the work of art is in this context called "historising" (a notion that comes from the reception esthetics). Art therefore can, even more than other phenomena, characterize the topics of an epoch. So also the theatre whether it lays claim to Art or not is, "die sinnfälligste Zusammenfassung der Kultur einer Zeit; nicht etwa in jeder einzelnen Aufführung, aber in seiner jeweiligen Gesamtheit"<sup>6</sup>. But the theatre is above all a one-off event, in itself not repeatable and therefore different from quite all other forms of art.<sup>7</sup> Lessing calls the art of the actor, transitorious<sup>8</sup>, Ben Hunningher tells that "the theatre only lives when the curtain is up"<sup>9</sup>. And therefore every representation, every photograph, film, television, video or oral testimony is only a semblance of (a) reality that is (or was) more complex and that can't be rendered by another medium, because it can only 'translate' and transfer by its own possibilities, technical abilities and limitations. What in a semiotic and Barthesian way of thinking is related to the "épaisseur de signes" of the theatre as to "une véritable polyphonie informationnelle"<sup>10</sup> as well as to the great mobility of the theatre sign.<sup>11</sup>

The living art remains our starting-point, the object of artistic ideologies of which a complete reconstruction is impossible because every form of art is bound to time and space.

*Ambiguity.* J. G. Bomhoff once called Shakespeare not only "poly-interpretable" but also "poly-realizable"<sup>12</sup>, which makes relative what one would call a performance faithful to the text. Especially in Germany this was presupposed by Lessing, Schlegel and Gundolf. Maurice Valency speaks about an "embarras de richesse" when analyzing Pinter's *Homecoming and Old Times*, *those plays are "superbly compliant vessels capable of accepting whatever we may have to deposit in them by way of meaning, precisely because in themselves they have only the form, but not the content of an idea."*<sup>13</sup> Tadeusz Kowzan is not the only and the first

one who pointed out the fundamental two-oneness of drama, a primary form of ambiguity<sup>14</sup>, and he tries to schematize this relation. From the viewpoint of practice this means "the text proposes, the stage disposes"<sup>15</sup>. With the acceptance of the actor and the director as possible independent creative theatre makers, the independency of the medium of the theatre has been fulfilled. Historically speaking this growth can be explained from a literary need : because of the realistic writer's use of more and more external (language, director's devices, etc.) as well as internal signs (esp. in the so-called 'undertext'), which supposed an interpretation and a placing, also the cancelling of stereotypic parts and with it the stencil writing of the bourgeois drama, the necessity of a 'mediator' became evident. He was the one who would interpret the new proposals of the playwright, who could place them in a context and who should manage the collaboration in respect of this involvement. The literary director was the result of this process, in a way an intermediary intellectual do-er, a man standing between the author and the (mostly unskilled) actors, but also a servant of the playwright. From the moment on that it became clear that many texts also obviously showed shortcomings (in structure, in building tension, for the substance, etc.), also when the growth of technicality in the western theatre (f.i. the use of electric light, the décor and the settings or their suggestion, the use of different materials for the making of the scenery and the costumes, the elaborated technique of acting, etc.) became more prominent, the faith of the practitioners in the art of the author declined, and the director became more independent. The belief in a self-supporting Art of the Theatre — remember Gordon Craig's pamphlet of 1905 ! — increased. With this self-confidence grew the knowledge that different interpretations could be possible, according to the one who was the real mediator between the public and the esthetic message. This evidently has to do with the ambiguity of dramatic texts that are characterized by a fundamental need for ostension, actualisation and independence. Therefore this ambiguity is not simply to be equalized with the metaphorical sign that is more bound to the written word and its cultural context<sup>16</sup>. The dramatic datum has the possibility of different fillings in at different moments or contexts of a different kind. The 'ambi-agere', being axed to two sides, having two or more meanings belongs essentially to the theatre. There is ambiguity in the relation between the playwright and the actor, between the actor and the director, between the author and the director, between the actor

and the public, between the theatre and reality, etc. But this ambiguity fundamentally reflects dissymmetry, the essential motorial power for the dynamics of each other supplementing but also in some way contrasting forces, a dissymmetry which is the origin of a renewing vitality and creating risks<sup>17</sup>. Dissymmetry is before all the breaking through of linear structures in the theatre, in the defeating of expectancies. What supposes contradiction and surprise, a possible source for esthetic experience.

Umberto Eco points out in connection with Joyce that there exists an “ambiguité référentielle des signes qui ne peut être séparée de leur organisation esthétique, l'une et l'autre se soutiennent et se justifient mutuellement”.<sup>18</sup> The making of a work of art, and thus creating a performance, supposes a constructing an ‘esthetic idiolect’, a peculiar subjective language that breaks through ordinary communication, that is reorganising it and that establishes new rules.<sup>19</sup> This ambiguity is teleological and essential, constantly turning denotations to connotations and continuing this system of connotations in an infinite series. Therefore the esthetic experience in the theatre and elsewhere is combined with a broadening of the insights, the spectator becomes more and more aware of the many perspectives coming forth of the complex sign-system the theatre generates. He experiences reality from a different angle of vision, enriching his human insights, a process which demonstrates the essential catalytic function of the theatre in particular and perhaps of all art in general. This starts with the ambiguous position of the actor interpreting and analyzing a work of art he endows with his own personality<sup>20</sup>. The same ambiguity also offers more than one choice for the interpretation of the work of art on condition that it is credible and that it respects the rules of credibility.<sup>21</sup> And it belongs to the essence of the dramatic sign that it questions the how and the why of that sign without the answer lying upon the surface. Therefore art and the theatre are linked with auto-reflexivity for the attention it draws on its appearance and shape. To attain that necessary credibility in the ambiguity a consequent interaction should be composed, usually being the assignment of the dramatist as playwright and of the director as designer-modeller in the theatre. The dramatist builds the canvas that gives occasion to the play, to the performance. The director translates this scheme to the actors, he gives an interpretation to the signs and reshapes them with his collaborators into living images. Unless he installs with the actors and without an author a peculiar metaphorical language, unless the

actors fulfil the function of the author and that of the director by improvisational techniques. Ambiguity remains anyhow the esthetic cement, with expectations in presentia (offered by the playwright and the actor) and in absentia (which occur from different kinds of advance knowledge on account of a certain experience of theatre and life)<sup>22</sup>, in other words the inner life of the public as well as that of the theatre medium is addressed, for the sake of a satisfying of emotional needs in connection with desires eventually frustrations, a process generally occurring in fictional circumstances<sup>23</sup>.

The efficiency in the interaction comes about by the 'metaphorisation', in fact an externalizing, a projection on the outward level of what is meant in abstracto, a 'subjectivizing' and making lively of a regulated train of thought<sup>24</sup>. That rendered symbolic language consists of signs that are analogue c.q. analogous in respect to reality, because their efficiency is based on a net of similitudes and exclusions, of frequent interferences, of resemblances from register to register which replace the analytical knowledge.<sup>25</sup> In this way a play springs off between the possibilities of form and content of the message. In this way a second reality and an essential meta-communication is born, "the experience of the fictional tension is an attempt at alleviating the existential tension", "fictional situations causing a fictional tension which neutralizes the existential tension"<sup>26</sup>, the result of a creative act, raising a "forest of symbols".<sup>27</sup>

The ambiguity between metaphors and symbols is another question. Metaphors can harden and appear in different contexts, connotations can become denotata by habit, literal use can shut out the figurative<sup>28</sup>, ambiguity may literally become a splitting of the idea. Symbols are the replica of socio-dynamic systems, they show the characteristics of dynamic semantic systems which constantly can gain new meanings or loose them. Their application also mostly is for once and specific. Symbols are more closed, with different possibilities for application as sub-division of a Gestalt, of a world of symbols, synchronic and a-temporal<sup>29</sup>. Their use is typical liminoid, for the sake of the aim to be attained, of an image to be created, leased for the purpose, catalytically used.<sup>30</sup> Their ambiguity supposes a greater independence of the sign, the signifié has become more autonomous, the connotation(s) has/have fused to one appearance. This ambiguity is part of the puzzle the public should discover. The intended suggestion includes ambiguity. The theatre as illusionary world has more to do with symbols than with

metaphors. In literary language there exist no denotata, in the theatre they evidently exist, the word is *present*. The symbolic load of theatre acts qualifies them as a language.

The essential ambiguity, the difference between seeming and being, is a source of esthetic admiration, a conscious trick, a technique, a network of processes.<sup>31</sup> The artist i.c. the playwright, the director or the actor are makers of a fictive world. And even the most realistic theatre is bound to this, because every re-constructed reality is no more reality. And between appearances and reality there is tension. The confrontation of the objectivated fiction of art with the subjective world of feelings and thinking of the spectator intensifies the enigma of the art, whereby the questionings and the puzzle are much more important than a solution, with the crossing of expectations as a dynamic principle of creativity. The dramatic artist arouses curiosity, he hereby stimulates involvement. He informs and manipulates his audience, simulates and suggests, he lets make a guess and he constantly puts to the test the credulity of his public. Foreknowledge and expectations in absentia are continually crossed, then suddenly, another time slowly, the surprise being total and the unexpected more sweeping, then again slower and at a distance, the involvement being slighter and the ratio of the spectators gets a firmer grip on what is happening, the result being autonomous reflexion, laughing, malicious pleasure at the misfortunes of others, etc. The difference between comic and serious effects is structurally speaking in this context non-relevant.

Art is essentially surprise<sup>32</sup>, and the theatre can be so in many ways. Ambiguity is at the basis of it, an ambiguity that is more evident in the theatre because of the images of the theatre and the spoken (ev. sung) words are constantly giving occasion to it.

*Theatre as language.* The long lasting discussion about the fact that the work of art can be associated with the Saussurian term 'langue' ('langage')<sup>33</sup>, seems to me a rather futile dispute. Very often theoreticians seem to be so far remote from the reality of art, c.q. the theatre, that they have not enough insights in the phenomenon and the working of it. I agree with Lotman<sup>34</sup> and Dufrenne<sup>35</sup> that art is to be connected with language "comme un langage secondaire et l'oeuvre d'art, comme un texte dans ce langage."<sup>36</sup> Essentially 'the code' is in discussion here : "... il n'y a pas de métalangage pour l'art. Le code est bien un métalangage, mais il ne peut exprimer une sémantique générale: chaque oeuvre comporte sa propre sémantique, en sorte que toute traduction lui est inégale".<sup>37</sup> ... "La langue de

l'art n'est pas vraiment une langue: elle ne cesse d'inventer sa propre syntaxe".<sup>38</sup> Evidently there is no dialogue in a literal sense. Nevertheless there exists an interaction on a different level. This argument applies to communication theories. That interaction goes back to the whole context of the theatre as "anti-structure",<sup>39</sup> of liminality<sup>40</sup>, "the latent system of potential alternatives from which novelty will arise when contingencies in the normative system require it",<sup>41</sup> the reservoir of those codes which are at the basis of another system of behaviour. As to the theatre this is to be connected with the codes of the writer, the director, the actors and the public. The code of the author is linked with the artistic and the socio-linguistic mark of antilanguage as a metaphorical unity vs. everyday language as a "means of realization of a subjective reality not merely expressing it, but actively creating and maintaining it."<sup>42</sup> Antilanguage is a form of (social) reconstruction and the product of an antisociety, a marginal society. The *mise-en-scène* — the term "*régie*" is more compact and historically limited and easier to define<sup>43</sup> — is connected with the esthetic-ideologic system that supposes 'languages' that are united by the director (the '*metteur-en-scène*') into one complex: text interpretation, the conducting of the teamwork, the co-ordination between scenography and the direction, between artistic policy of a troupe, etc. can be a part of it. For the practice of the theatre the director is the most important originator of the metatext of the theatre, a text that can be written down, but that is not necessarily so. He reflects a vision of totality that starts from the product and that is unthinkable with the metatext of the spectator, of the reception. The director offers the key for the understanding of the signs of the performance, the public can participate in this representation thanks to this key. First comes the understanding and then the emotional participation. The metatext of the director is the system (or anti-system) (in a Saussurian sense the 'langue') that is at the basis of the esthetic experience. The text written by the author (the dramatic text) here is part of it, the real 'text' of the performance — just like the notion being interpreted by Lotman<sup>44</sup> — follows from the complex image the looker-on is confronted with. That image has, without any doubt, been constructed metaphorically, i.e. towards an image in the imagination, having in mind the limitations of space and time, but also those imposed by the language and the gestures that inevitably render a 'condensed' shape of reality. The players complete that subjective theatre objectivity with their subjectivity. They are the executers

(i.c. the makers) of the meta-text the theatre consists of. That meta-communicative function of the theatre (cfr. Roman Jakobson's 'metalinguistic'<sup>45</sup>) draws the attention to the relation between the communicative action and the 'code', i.e. the whole of conventions whereby we attribute to an utterance a communicative function. It can be limited and specific, just like in asides, prologues (cfr. the mediaeval theatre and Shakespeare), songs (like in Brecht's epic theatre), or a mimetic representation (in Witkiewicz's, in Teirlinck's plays f.i.), but can even be connected with the medium theatre, in fact a communication about reality in a 'theatre language'. That there is no question of interaction between the text and the reception (together a mega-text) is a one-sided statement.<sup>46</sup>

There exists an internal as well as an external theatre communication, the proportions being different according to the genre.<sup>47</sup> Bernard Beckermann distinguishes in this context different modes of interaction that go from 'reflection' (positive and negative) to 'proportion' and 'depth', i.e. from the identification of feelings to counterpoint, the comparing activity and reflex in connection to the own situation, depth in relation to the understanding that is won.<sup>48</sup> Wiebe Hogendoorn notices the essential indirect communication of the spectator, and that a receiver may be an emitter in a different context, that the exchange of messages gradually differs but not essentially.<sup>49</sup> As circumstances may require, the signs can become more abstract and the communication more difficult, even that it risks of being disturbed. If the communication runs in an appealing imagery (whether connected with language or not), that works surprisingly, then it has all chances that there will be a real interaction. The collaboration between the 'theatrical text' of the mise-en-scène and that of the productive spectator (reason and emotion assimilate the signs to a soloistic limit-text) is called by Julia Kristeva a 'signifying practice'<sup>50</sup>, it is realized by an assembled effort of the metatext of the performance and of the productive looker-on, in that way a productive intertextuality grows. Freud and Lacan pointed out that our ego (our conscious identity), when functioning normally, wants the suppression of some feelings and thoughts. In the same way the other text, the personal convictions and feelings of every individual of the public, is shoven away (suppressed as a textual repression) for the sake of the megatext, that responds to a collective experience. This process is the miracle of the theatrical experience, that stands firm for a short time. It supposes sensitiveness and sensibility for the metaphor. But the same

process is happening in the actor who "aus eigenem und von aussen Empfangenem baut eine ganze Welt poetischer Gestalten, lichter Ideen, die ewig(!) leben werden, für alle."<sup>51</sup>

*Actualisation and implementation.* That brings us again to the idea of implementation (in a broader context actualisation) in the theatre.<sup>52</sup> John Searle notices that : "A fictional story is a pretended representation of a state of affairs; but a play, that is, a play as performed, is not a pretended *representation* of a state of affairs but the pretended state of affairs itself",<sup>53</sup> which brings us again nearer to Aristoteles' distinction between the *diegesis* (the tale) and the *mimesis* (the immediate imitation). In the theatre the performance is essentially linked to a *here* and a *now* and the presence of the actor who speaks to us, i.e. with the active dialogue function, the deixis of it. It is the deixis of the dramatic context that points out the ostension and the actuality of the text. In a Saussurian way of thinking this puts the theatre in the context of the 'parole', that reveals the subjective character of the representation, in Benvenistes terminology we think of the "énonciation", the action whereby an utterance happens in a given context.<sup>54</sup>

"Acting is reacting", Lee Strasberg's formula that is reinterpreted by Dan W. Mullin as "acting is responding to imaginary stimuli to provide the audience with a "key for them to feel" or as Shakespeare might have put it — the crie for passion",<sup>55</sup>, confirms once more that the theatre is a stimulus and a catalyst. The credible actor prepares his part on the canvas of his "mémoire affective" (his stored memory as the shifting ground of image and action), he always brings a subjective interpretation of an objective datum and one should interpret Ionesco's words in this way that "theatre language can never be anything but theatre language".<sup>56</sup> And Shakespeare's ideal actor who *feels* his part does not conflict in fact with Molière's viewpoint that the actor *characterizes* the role. The accents have moved from feeling (cfr. the Stanislavski-type) to intellect (the Diderot-Brecht-type), but the better actor unites both possibilities in one person, that of the histrio, the intuitive player, and that of the 'hypokrites', the technician of the profession, talent as well as skill. The actors who appear to be natural actors however are often the most calculating and actors are not only what they are in a matter-of-fact way, in the first place they are what the public sees or wants to see in them. The effectiveness of the art of acting is dependent upon illusion, the peculiar source of esthetic experience, including therein what the public fancies that it sees which can be

something different from what is actually offered. That proves that ostension is an act present as well with the public as by the actor. The Bunraku puppet players suggest real actors, the public 'sees' real actors. An actor represents Othello, the looker-on notices a combination of Othello and a player as one unit.

In a broader sense this is to be connected with the projection of the self, the actualisation and the pattern of expectancy of the public. In a furthergoing thinking with the inner urge in each of us to come from identification to mythologizing, in this way that the imaginary world of the theatre becomes an independent world, a 'signifiant imaginaire' in Christian Metz' words, that demonstrates esthetic dimensions, because idealised and wrought to an independent idea. In a Lévi-Straussian way of thinking one can put that the *logique du sensible* becomes active. The one who mythologizes is working creatively, the myth being here "a chain of related concepts" (cfr. Barthes), the subjective datum of the actor (plus the playwright, the director and the scenograph, etc.) makes together with that of the spectator a new illusory reality, a new truth. For the public there is the connection with the seeking of the Lacanian mirror-effect, a "identification au sens plein que l'analyse donne à ce terme : à savoir la transformation produite chez le sujet quand il assume une image, — dont la prédestination à cet effet de phase est suffisamment indiquée par l'usage, dans la théorie, du terme antique *d'imago*".<sup>57</sup> A new intersubjectivity originates, "une image réfléchie", that indicates the domain of the theatre : the interpreter is influenced as much by the interpreter as by the object or the sign. The same connotations are shared by others, a shared consensus grows. The spectator becomes after being the creator of a "seelische Akustik" (Stanislavski) an architect of culture, the actor a stimulus for culture, a cultivator of values of the inner world.<sup>58</sup> The whole process of culture generating and again culture breaking intersubjectivity reflects an essential design for communication and stands fundamentally in the understanding that grows in the executing (via the public) of the communication (via the actor) and the interpretation of the messages that generate mutual understanding. The intersubjectivity of the theatre refers in the first instance to the action that is intended of taking part in each other's experiences within the identifiable limitations the initiated are familiarized with, a system of both cognitive as well as emotional elements.

*Identification.* Ed Tan distinguishes in his extensive article "Identifikatie : je moet er mee leven",<sup>59</sup> five factors that can define

the phenomenon of identification :

1. the attractivity of the character;
2. an observed similitude (for instance in sex and age);
3. the prominence of the characters (esp. as actor, as a headstrong person taking initiatives);
4. the difficulty of the part;
5. the theatrical structure.

Without any difficulty one can call the categories 4 and 5 esthetic and compositional facets of the play and play writing. They deal with syntagmatic, formal and external qualities of the performance, with the rite of the theatre. The three first factors can be connected with esthetic values, but they do not so necessarily. They are better described by the idea of 'empathy' and they belong in the first place to the imaginary field of the theatre experience, to the myth(s) of the theatre. They are related with the context, the recognition and the emotion wherein cognitive processes can play a mediating part. A viewpoint that goes back to Stotland<sup>60</sup>, and that refers undoubtedly to a parallel activity to the esthetic experience. It reflects communication involving participation in the other, "the reaching of self-consciousness through the other".<sup>61</sup>, a social function that is necessarily connected with identification. Freud in this context also speaks about a social sentiment. Lacan mentions an "identification continuée", because she is continued in every chain of reasoning (thus also in ordinary speech). Like Christian Metz proposes for the theatre : "Le spectateur, en somme, s'identifie à *lui-même*, à *lui-même* comme pur acte de perception (comme éveil, comme alerte); comme condition de possibilité du perçu et donc à une sorte de sujet transcendental, antérieur à tout *il y a*".<sup>62</sup> By means of the imaginary, ev. art and the mirror, the individual constructs his own personality by means of social aspects (the comparison) as well as esthetic (which suppose appreciation).

The crossing of expectations, of the automatisms in the course of dramatic events is connected with actualisation/implementation<sup>63</sup>, which supposes an equivalence between the story that is happening and the compositional aspects of the play and the performance. The set toward the message of the imaginary world of the theatre image can be associated with Roman Jakobson's idea of the poetical function of the language.<sup>64</sup> The theatre becomes more theatre and more art when keeping greater distance from the mimesis, when imitation is detached from the relation to reality and has become an independent action, unto the condensation of

the signs, not in that sense that every relation to reality gets lost, only so that the link to the internal life of the individual of this epoch remains lively, is actualised, the metaphoric rendering living her own independance and life. This means that the esthetic context is to be found in the first place in the density of the signs, the implementation in the internal social context. The theatre performance is only working when the interaction between both systems is activated. For the one kind of representations the accent lies on the first aspect; for the other kind it lies on the second.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Nelson Goodman, "Implementation of the Arts", in : *Communication & Cognition*, vol. 17, no 1 (1984), pp. 11–14. The notion "actualisation" is much better known in the theatre milieu and I therefore prefer this term to other notations. 'Actualisation' is an action, as may follow, both from the theatre maker as well from the spectator. The word 'ostension' is used by Wittgenstein (1953), Osolsobe (1970), Eco (1977) and Elam (1980), it esp. reflects the intuition character that is involved, i.e. from the viewpoint of the spectator. Jakobson (1960) and Halle (1961) use the word 'foregrounding' for this phenomenon in similar linguistic contexts (see also footnote 64). Elizabeth Burns (*Theatricality. A Study of Convention in the Theatre*, New York, 1972, p. 98 ff.) introduced the word 'authenticating' in a general sense.

<sup>2</sup> Patrice Pavis, *Languages of the Stage. Essays in the Semiology of Theatre*, New York, 1982, p. 115.

<sup>3</sup> Cfr. Ernest Hess-Lüttich, "Korpus, Kode und Kommunikation", in: *Kodikas/Code*, Tübingen, 1979, I. 3, p. 208.

<sup>4</sup> Christian Metz, *Le signifiant imaginaire. Psychanalyse et cinéma*, Paris, 1977 (10/18), p. 187 (règles de modification) and Christian Metz, "L'étude sémiologique du langage cinématographique", in : *Revue d'Esthétique* (Paris), 1973, p. 138.

<sup>5</sup> Jan Mukařovský, *Kapitel aus der Ästhetik*, Frankfurt am Main, 1970, pp. 146–147.

<sup>6</sup> Carl Niessen, *Handbuch der Theaterwissenschaft, I. Daseinsrecht*

*und Methode, Ursprung und Wert der dramatischen Kunst*, 1949, Emsdetten, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Cfr. H.H.J. de Leeuwe, "Wat is en wat wil de theaterwetenschap?", in: *Forum der Letteren* (Leiden), mei 1967, p. 21; Dietrich Steinbeck, "Das Problem der Seinsweise von Theater", in: *Einleitung in die Theorie und Systematik der Theaterwissenschaft*, Berlin, 1970, pp. 126 ff. a.o.

<sup>8</sup> Lessings Werke in Fünf Bänden, Band 3 (*Laokoon*), pp. 179–80; Band 4 (*Hamburgische Dramaturgie*), p. 10, Berlin u. Weimar, 1964.

<sup>9</sup> Ben Hunningher, *Een Eeuw Nederlands Toneel*, Amsterdam, 1949, p. 5.

<sup>10</sup> Roland Barthes, *Essais critiques*, Paris, 1964, pp. 258–9.

<sup>11</sup> Cfr. Petr Bogatyrev, "Les signes du théâtre", in: *Poétique* (Paris), 1971, pp. 517–530; Jindrich Hanzl, "La mobilité du signe théâtral", in: *Travail théâtral* (Lausanne), 4, 1971, pp. 12 ff.; Tadeusz Kowzan, *Littérature et spectacle*, Den Haag, Paris, Warszawa, 1975, pp. 208–9, a.o.

<sup>12</sup> J.G. Bomhoff, "Problemen der dramaturgie", in: *Forum der Letteren* (Den Haag), 1967, May, p. 78.

<sup>13</sup> Maurice Valency, "Some Observations on Art and Meaning in the Contemporary Drama", in: *Essays on Drama and Theatre. Liber Amicorum Benjamin Hunningher*, Amsterdam/Baarn, Antwerpen, 1973, p. 168.

<sup>14</sup> Cfr. Tadeusz Kowzan, *op. cit.*, pp. 75–76.

<sup>15</sup> Patrice Pavis, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

<sup>16</sup> Cfr. Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art*, o.c., pp. 70–71.

<sup>17</sup> Cfr. Roger Caillois, *Cohérences aventureuses*, Paris, 1976, pp. 197 ff, 219, 254–265, 280.

<sup>18</sup> Umberto Eco, *L'Oeuvre ouverte*, Paris, 1965, p. 59.

<sup>19</sup> Umberto Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics*, Bloomington/London, 1976, pp. 129 ff.; 262 ff. ("ambiguity must be defined as a mode of violating the rules of the code", U.E., 1976, o.c., p. 262), and "Thus art seems to be a way of interconnecting messages in order to produce a text in which: (a) many messages, on different levels and planes of the discourse, are ambiguously organized; (b) these ambiguities are not realized at random but follow a precise design; (c) both the normal and the ambiguous devices within a given

message exert a *contextual pressure* on both the normal and ambiguous devices within all the others; (d) the way in which the norms of a given system are offended by one message is *the same* as that in which the norms of other systems are offended by the various messages that they permit." (Umberto Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics*, o.c., 1977<sup>2</sup>, p. 271.

<sup>20</sup> Cfr. Patrice Pavis, *op. cit.*, p. 70 in the context of what Pavis calls 'the ambiguity of the *theatrical relationship*' ... "which is, concretely, the position of the spectator facing the stage and, arbitrarily, his effort to constitute meaning by his act of reception".

<sup>21</sup> Cfr. Umberto Eco, *La structure absente*, Paris, 1984<sup>2</sup>, p. 125.

<sup>22</sup> Just like in literature: cfr. J.P. Guépin, "Doorkruiste verwachtingen", in: *Controversen in de taal- en literatuurwetenschap*, Wassenaar, 1974, pp. 17–57 (18). The term 'crossed expectations' in *presentia* and *in absentia* comes from De Saussure (*Cours de linguistique générale*, Genève, 1915, II, 5, pp. 170 ff.).

<sup>23</sup> Cfr. S.O. Lesser, *Fiction and the unconscious*, Boston, 1957 and Helmut Gaus, *The Function of Fiction*, Gent, 1979, pp. 130–133.

<sup>24</sup> Cfr. Helmut Gaus, *op. cit.*, pp. 94 ff.

<sup>25</sup> Cfr. Roger Caillois, "La fertilité de l'ambigu", in: *Cohérences aventureuses*, o.c., pp. 184–192.

<sup>26</sup> Helmut Gaus, o.c., p. 132.

<sup>27</sup> Cfr. Victor Turner, *The Forest of Symbols. Aspects of Ndembu Ritual*, Ithaca, Cornell U.P., 1967.

<sup>28</sup> Cfr. Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art*, o.c., p. 70 ff.

<sup>29</sup> Cfr. Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, o.c., p. 22 ff.

<sup>30</sup> *Id.*, p. 53. I don't mention here Leach's distinction between metaphor and metonymy, metaphor being more appropriate to the *idea* of the theatre, because of its similarity to the world and theatre as *paradigma*, the *means* of theatre belonging more to metonymy through their contiguity (Edmund Leach, *Culture and Communication*, Cambridge, 1976). See also Roman Jakobson, "Two aspects of language and two types of aphasic disturbances", in: *Selected Writings*, II, 1956, pp. 239–59 and "The cardinal dichotomy of language", in: *Language. An enquiry into its meaning and function* (ed. by R. Anschen), New York, 1957.

<sup>31</sup> Roman Jakobson deals in this context with a 'defeated expectan-

cy (a crossing of the poetic function) and about the referential function in the work of art (cfr. Roman Jakobson, *Selected Writings*, III, The Hague, Paris, New York, 1981, p. 42). Also compare with Michael Riffaterre, "Describing Poetic Structures: Two Approaches to Baudelaire's 'Les Chats'", in: *Yale French Studies*, Oct. 1966, pp. 200–242 (238).

<sup>32</sup>This statement is more heard off with the Russian formalists, but we should not forget Apollinaire's belief that : "C'est par la surprise, par la place importante qu'il fait à la surprise que l'esprit nouveau se distingue de tous les mouvements artistiques et littéraires qui l'ont précédé". (Guillaume Apollinaire, "L'Esprit nouveau et les Poètes", in: *L'Art Poétique*, Paris, 1956, p. 487. This statement was made in 1917).

<sup>33</sup>Cfr. Georges Mounin, *Introduction à la sémiologie*, Paris, 1970, pp. 87–94; Keir Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, o.c., pp. 48–49; Edmund Leach, *Culture and Communication*, o.c.; Erving Goffman, *Frame Analysis*, Cambridge, 1974, pp. 127–130, etc.

<sup>34</sup>Cfr. Iouri Lotman, *La structure du texte artistique*, Paris, 1973, p. 33 ff.

<sup>35</sup>Mikel Dufrenne, *Esthétique et Philosophie*, I, Paris, 1980, p. 79 ff.

<sup>36</sup>*Id.*, p. 36 ff.: "Un langage secondaire" then would be : "les structures de communication qui se superposent au niveau linguistique naturel" (le mythe, la religion).

<sup>37</sup>Some definitions i.c. with the code : a. "The device which assures that a given (electric) signal produces a given mechanical message, and this elicits a given response" (Umberto Eco, *A Theory of Semiotics*, o.c., p. 33); b. "Un code en tant que "langue" est une somme de notions, identifiées à la compétence du locuteur pour des raisons de facilité, mais composées en fait par la somme des compétences individuelles constituant le code comme convention collective. Le code en tant que "langue" est donc un réseau complexe de sous-codes et de règles combinatoires qui vabien au-delà de notions comme 'grammaire': c'est un hyper-code qui relie des sous-codes différents, certains forts et stables comme les appariements dénotatifs, d'autres faibles et éphémères comme les appariements connotatifs périphériques." (Umberto Eco, *La Structure absente*, o.c., p. 111); c. "Un code peut exprimer une sémantique générale: chaque

oeuvre comporte un métalangage, mais il ne peut exprimer sa propre sémantique en sorte que toute traduction lui est inégale. Et surtout ce métalangage n'existe pas pour l'artiste, l'œuvre peut être réfléchie par d'autres, elle ne peut se réfléchir elle-même.” (Mikel Dufrenne, *Esthétique et Philosophie*, I, o.c., p. 101); d. “A code is what allows a unit from the syntactic system. That is to say, it is an ensemble of *correlational* rules governing the formation of sign-relationships.” (Keir Elam, *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, o.c., p. 50); Keir Elam makes a distinction between codes, over-coding and theatrical subcodes; there are three types of codes: *theatre codes* (that make it possible to understand according the norms of the performance), *drama codes* (or dramatic codes i.e. with the structure of the drama) and *cultural codes* (i.e. with the cultural and the ideologic background of what is performed); e. for Lotman practically every system of communication is a code (cfr. also E.M. Thompson, “Jurij Lotman's literary theory and its context”, in: *Slavic and East European Journal* (London), XXI, 2, p. 231); f. “un code est un moyen de transmission” (Pierre Guiraud, *La Sémiologie*, Paris, 1977<sup>3</sup> (*Que Sais-je ?*, nr. 1421), p. 9); “un système clos et figé de règles explicites, préétablies, impératives d'une part” (Pierre Guiraud, *Etudes de linguistique appliquée*, vol. 2, Paris, 1963, pp. 37–38); h. “des moyens de présentation de l'information sous forme utilisable pour la transmission par un canal de liaison” (Moreau, *Mathématiques et description des plans, du contenu et de l'expression*, document hectographié, Colloque de mathématiques appliquées, Facultés des Sciences de Caen, 17 mars 1961, p. 3). Some authors warned against the impression of precision and systematisation of the use of the word ‘code’ (G. Kurz, “Warnung vor dem Wörtchen ‘Kode’, in: *Linguistik u. Didaktik*, München), VII (1976), pp. 154–166 and P.F. Schmitz, “De code-mode in de literatuurwetenschap”, in: *Forum der Letteren* (Leiden), XXI (1980), 4, pp. 283–295.

<sup>38</sup> Mikel Dufrenne, o.c., p. 101.

<sup>39</sup> Cfr. Marshall McLuhan's viewpoint in “The relation between environment and anti-environment”, in: *University of Windsor Review*, Autumn 1966 and Berger en Luckmann, *The social construction of reality*, 1966 and C. Lévi-Strauss' *La pensée sauvage*, o.c., p. 276.

<sup>40</sup> Cfr. Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre*, o.c., p. 20 ff.

<sup>41</sup> Brian Sutton Smith, “Games of Order and Disorder”, in: *Ame-*

*rican Anthropological Association Meetings*, Toronto, Dec. 1, 1972 (Symposium on Forms of Symbolic Inversion).

<sup>42</sup> Cfr. M.A.K. Halliday, *Language as social semiotic. The social interpretation of language and meaning*, London, 1978, p. 172 ff.

<sup>43</sup> Crr. A. Veinstein, *La mise en scène théâtrale et sa condition esthétique*, Paris, 1968<sup>2</sup>, pp. 9—16, pp. 345—350.

<sup>44</sup> Iouri Lotman, *op. cit.*, p. 390.

<sup>45</sup> Roman Jakobson, "Linguistics and Poetics", in *Thomas A. Sebeok* (ed.), *Style in Language*, Cambridge, Mass., 1960, pp. 350—377 and the application on the language of drama and theatre in: Manfred Pfister, *Das Drama. Theorie und Analyse*, München, 1977, pp. 151—168.

<sup>46</sup> Cfr. Georges Mounin, *op. cit.*, 1970, pp. 87—94. I agree of course with Mounin in that the language of the theatre should not be studied by means of linguistic methods only.

<sup>47</sup> Cfr. Manfred Pfister, *op. cit.*, pp. 20—21 ("das innere Kommunikationssystem") and passim. For rhetoric and authentic signals in the theatre : Elizabeth Burns, o.c., pp. 40 ff. See also Francis Ferguson, *The Idea of a Theater*, Princeton U.P., 1949, p. 11 and R. Fieguth, "Zur Rezeptionslenkung bei narrativen und dramatischen Werken", in: *Sprache im technischen Zeitalter* (Stuttgart), 43, 1973, pp. 186—201 (191 ff.).

<sup>48</sup> Cfr. Bernard Beckermann, *Dynamics of Drama. Theory and Method of Analysis*, New York, 1979, pp. 28—30.

<sup>49</sup> Cfr. W(iebe) Hogendoorn, "toneel en communicatie", in: *Tijdschrift voor Theaterwetenschap* (Amsterdam), no 8, February 1981, pp. 21—21 (24—25).

<sup>50</sup> Cfr. b.o. Julia Kristeva, *Seimeiotikè. Recherches pour une sémanalyse*, Paris, 1969, pp. 14—15 ('la pratique signifiante'), pp. 52—58, 68—70, 97—112, 135—136, 183—184, 226 ('typologie des pratiques signifiantes').

<sup>51</sup> Constantin Stanislavski, *Die Arbeit des Schauspielers an sich selbst*, Tl. 1, Berlin, 1961, p. 220.

<sup>52</sup> Cfr. the beginning of my article, p.

<sup>53</sup> John Searle, "The Logic of Fictional Discourse", in: *New Literary History*, 6, 1975, p. 328.

<sup>54</sup> Emile Benveniste, *Problems of General Linguistics*, Miami UP,

1970<sup>2</sup>, pp. 237 ff.

<sup>55</sup>Cfr. Dan W. Mullin, "Acting is Reacting", in: *Tulane Drame Review*, Vol. 5 (1961), no 3, pp. 152—159.

<sup>56</sup>Eugene Ionesco, "Discovering the Theatre", in: *Tulane Drame Review*, Vol. 4, no 1, p. 15.

<sup>57</sup>Jacques Lacan, "Le stade du miroir comme formateur de la fonction du Je", in: *Ecrits I*, Paris, 1966, p. 90.

<sup>58</sup>Cfr. Ernest Becker, "The Inner World. Introduction to the Birth Tragedy. Socialization: The Creation of the Inner World, in: *The Birth and Death of Meaning*, (Harmondsworth), 1971<sup>2</sup>, pp. 39—63. About intersubjectivity see b.o. J. Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests*, Chicago, 1972 and M. van Schoor, *Bestaanskommunikasie*, Bloemfontein, 1977.

<sup>59</sup>Ed Tan, "identifikatie: 'je moet er mee leven'", in: *Tijdschrift voor Theaterwetenschap* (Amsterdam), no 4, May 1980, pp. 42—60.

<sup>60</sup>E. Stottland, K.E. Jr. Matthews, S.E. Sherman, R.O. Hanson, B.Z. Richardson, *Empathy, Fantasy and Helping*, Beverly Hills, London, (1978).

<sup>61</sup>G.H. Mead, *Mind, Self and Society*, Chicago, 1934, p. 253.

<sup>62</sup>Christian Metz, *Le signifiant imaginaire*, o.c., p. 69.

<sup>63</sup>Cfr. my first lines and the notion "foregrounding" in connection with linguistics and the Prague school: "By foregrounding we mean the use of the devices of the language in such a way that this use itself attracts attention and is perceived as uncommon as deprived of automatization, as deautomized (...)", tr. of Klaus Baumgärtner, "Der methodische Stand einer linguistischen Poetik", in: Jens Ihwe (Hrsg.), *Literaturwissenschaft und Linguistik*, Band II, 2, p. 381.

<sup>64</sup>Cfr. Roman Jakobson, "Closing statements: Linguistics and Poetics", in: *Style in Language* (ed. Th. Sebeok), New York, 1960, pp. 350—377.

