

Disinhibition of the public through happening-performance (IV.)

Steps to overcome the prejudicial condition of canonical art-reception: immobilism in traditional spectatorship, evicted from his part to be played in the poietic of the art-work and convicted to a "dead angle"- aesthetic –perspective

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Abstract: *The paper tackles the impact of the stage performance upon the public, the algorithm through which the theatrical event entered in the captivity of mass manipulation and the development of the dramatic concepts, aiming to decode the implied power relationship between scene and audience, thanks to the evolution of philosophical thinking from genuine skepticism to modern rationalism, from judgment of taste to critical judgment and social activism. Further, in the psychological key, the consequences of the dual division of the show space, the sociological markers in theatre architecture and the pattern of the Wagnerian scenic space were studied, allowing insights into the history of mentalities and into the pattern of art reception.*

Key-words: *scepticism, Aristotle, catharsis, chorus, protagonist, René Descartes, dubito, Eugène Ionescu, Augusto Boal, oppression.*

5. What Looks the Absence of a Return Path Like? The Intervention through the Performance Show as a Queer Environment

"[...] and what does it matter that there is just a pile of bones at the end of the road."

Robert Coover

Completing unwritten spaces in the critics and fumbling of psychology has been often attempted, in exposing the narrative types of the show judging by the angle

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from which their evolutions are monitored, exploring the resources of human intellect, incited either by the <document> art, or by art with nihilist highlights, by <action> art. To aspire to one of those, and – as the mimetic impulse dictates to us – to their careers (which means a “clarification” to many) means first to precisely unveil the meaning according to which the justification coordinates of the former find a grounded legitimation compared to the “polemic” ones, grounded by the other, then granting them the right to decide and acknowledge their fate. The art of the document is meant to remain stiff, while its opponent, the action art, denies the cultural institution of traditional value systems, and denying means going into a different direction. The document culture controls its tenure all the time, and the action culture never “corrects” its behaviour. In the avantgarde music of the second half of the 20th century, we can give an example for each orientation; Pierre Boulez fits into the former, and John Cage into the latter. The unknown cannot be identified from the outside toward the inside, as it will cause a certain clumsiness like this; frontal interaction with the unknown may cause “sea sickness”; it needs to boil *a priori* within the being in order to succeed in powerfully imposing its flame without causing burns. Perhaps that is why the satisfaction of a good majority of people is maximal when the unknown can be ignored or immobilised inside a pre-logical fence. Lucian Blaga highlights how magic – as a wavelength capable of capturing the supernatural, therefore the unknown – has vascularised the primitive thinking with the same ingredients of logical force as that of modern man: “Eventually, the primitive thinks neither according to a different logic than the civilised man, nor according to an embryo-state pre-logic, but in his thinking the idea of magic intervenes ceaselessly, at every step, which, if regarded separately, in itself, shows of course a multitude of paradoxical, irrational faces [...]. Primitive thinking cannot be accused of any functional lack as to its logic just because it operates so often with a concept that is irrational” (Blaga 2014, 209). We will understand that the primitive man cannot reorganise himself, hence he emanates a predisposition toward the document-type culture, and the modern man, even if he extracts his cognitive development from the same resource, feels the need to translate the basic material (the force of magic and the appearance of logic) into the present of the moment, to re-guide his experiences; modern man is constantly perfecting his “translation” by confronting it with the “original text” in order to extract its nuances again, in a different and subtle manner.

The primitive man’s clumsiness is the one pushing him toward a guidance, and this envisages fulfilling a commandment. One of the commandments with authority and power of seduction in the European culture – and which addresses him like a leitmotif – is: “You must visit the Louvre!” Creating the universe between four thick walls, in a space of the “bound people” – as Glaucon saw them when he

was addressing Socrates – and which prospers through the confidence in anti-adventure, makes the primitive man draw air into his chest with emotion and return (with resignation) to the example of the “restrained meaning”. Refusing the open view test, this thinking of primitive man, who draws thirstily from the cup of indoctrination, fails to complete his own causal past with a new set of idea combinations in any way, or to admit the impossibility to adapt to the fresh hour of history. Primitive man cultivates the same predispositions to dream “with a tied neck” of the ether of the underground cave, explained by Plato in the *Republic*, and he cannot interact in a different way to his own starting point, for instance, by registering the prison cosmos onto his retina. If I were to compare the walls of this prison to those between which the strict rules of military are written – which point into only one direction – I would not be wrong: “The military [is] a mass indoctrination tool, an immense school, with a fundamental curriculum based on the national essence. Soldiers were helping more often to gather the crops than exercising their prowess on the battlefield. Thus, armies were directed towards the inside, as most of the national armies were separated by enormous portions of territory from the armies of other nations.” (Kaplan 2014, 170).

5.1. Leyers released by the epitome of anti-adventure’s and adventure’s types of a show

Perhaps the civilised man – alias (post)modern man – is a candidate for the contest toward the exemplary adventure, which has no more taste for searching for the return path?

A monitoring of the axiological dynamics for the two categories of show (of the anti-adventure and of the adventure type) will always be attempted, and these will pervade human intelligence in a different manner. Each receptiveness slope will have its own tribune, moving the interpretation of their language up and down. One will be able to phenomenologically check the immediate influence these incite on the temperament, and research that behaviour reached by these categories of human beings. The singularities captured from their description may be considered from at least two reflection poles; a “lyrical” one, discovered in the Freudian motif of *passivity*, which comes through the irradiated features of the <document> type expression, and that of the *indiscipline* of the <performance>.

Comprised in a metaphor-key that suggests a feminine masochism dictated by a charm of letting oneself go (“[...] the excess of these collective representations [has] another source: the masculine contribution to the feminine masochism. “He shall rule over you” says the Genesis” (André Jacques 1997, 114), the vision grounded in the Freudian motif of passivity does not seem unripe. Treading the

anti-adventure, non-risk, gliding into primitivity path, this motif builds its own stage, its own show, and, statistically speaking, it will be described by a direction notebook filled with routine events. Maybe it befits to maintain prudence in the voyage on such a route; still, by tracing an axis with gradations at a certain scale, we look for a somehow paradoxical prohibition among the values of the traditional show: which raises the speed of letting oneself go into an attitude of potential disinhibition from the part of the audience and lower the speed of availability to a prospective 'queer' adventure – which can effervescently develop ideas in a (post)modern world. The connecting element to the audience that invokes the "sanctuary" narrative resides in the congruency of the two biographies borne on the arms of the scales: of the author who documents, and of the receptor who absorbs the document. The same comment also applies to the offensive audience, eager to raise the threshold, feed on the experiment, come away from the theorem to which it must involuntarily partake; and this audience – addicted to a different type of show ("We're here because we're queer" (Sullivan 2003, 5) – will mirror its biography in that of the performers (a biography where a different time is produced (less sacralised, sometimes despised), and which allows for cutting out different statements.

If we moved the Freudian reinterpretation exercise to a different angle, will we be able to say that that narrative space of absolute insecurity, of ex-centric art would be difficult to assimilate because it emanates virtues of virility and disobedience? From the half-obscure, half-confusing space of psychoanalysis, one would see that "in a world that distinguishes the "active population" and the others, it is not good to maintain a privileged relation to passivity" (André Jacques, quoted work, p. 114) precisely in order to acquire the sense of orientation and what presupposes the issue of the starting point: "The place in which I find myself, my actual 'here' is my starting point for my orientation in space. The starting point for orientation is the point from which the world unfolds." (Sara 2006, 545).

We can keep intact this space that mixes up scenarios; however, we also have to keep the link of re-orientation in the disorientation moments, to maintain our intelligence, being, and body at the centre even when we are contaminated by the need to understand the psychology of masses, of closed, half-open or open societies; to perfect this understanding in order to damp our own aggressiveness.

We are guided by our ego all the time. The criticism and analogies around the social and political division come back, turn around in those windows through which we can look at the crises within coercive systems. To maintain one's position by acting through doing and undoing, keeping it like this, through the aptitudes of dissidence, seeing society on the stage, all these *synthesis*, socio-cultural reprisals, confronts more narratives that involve the political left and right in at least three

games (tactics) and three players: "Through its very dynamics, the Occident was raising the numbers of the unrooted, of the dissatisfied, and of all those who were imagining alternative solutions. It was a society, if one could call it like that, "half-open", already very different from the traditional "closed" communities, but yet far from the "open" societies from the liberal and democratic age. Hence, formidable tensions between the authoritarian and libertarian trends." (Boia 2013, 101).

We can get close to the negative of this photograph (with stripes of stark darkness) like to a reversed perspective, which an image transfers onto a phenomenon through a certain game tactics, and here I would stress the divergence emerging at the core of a topic which is not pale at all, which also comes back in our discussion with a certain substratum, and which is added to the question: "At what point does the world unfold?" (Sara 545). The differentiation between the lineal logic attributed to the god Apollo and the paradoxical logic of the "irrational eros" that was shaping the nature of Dionysus already crystallised a reaction-topic around which ideas whirl, and which has ambitiously advanced in the game culture – and, by extension, of the show with more tactile sides – without stopping Norman Brown, Friedrich Nietzsche, Johan Huizinga from the to-and-fro exercise of thinking. Apollo will continue to deal with the description of restriction, which the human mind got used to through taming, and Dionysus with the non-linear attractors that imply the refusal to accept frames and limits to human expression, the conviction to not give in to the emotional (quasi-conscious) attitude generated by the disguised realism of the document (to its magic). This perception – an incursion into the Dionysus comment – with roots in the imperative sense to not let fate in the hands of the tears of joy and of the soul nailed to the seat during a concert with Caruso, will set up the mind for that voyage of the unpredictable at sea, where the changes of the compass could involve "deviations of hundreds of miles at the terminus point" (Hawkins 293), and which will increase adrenaline at the same time. Deviations are identified here with the impossible that becomes possible, with the self-improvement of the mind, able to express what nobody expects, with that cumulative lead that will decisively influence and reform the blind authority, turned into a custom by a long-time practice in the artistic act.

The scepticism of the queer being toward the historic, documentative artistic act will glide towards interactive movements of the happening or performance type, as guided "deviation" actions, in a superposition of social, political, educational gestures; these are the artistic actions of the public space, where we find details about our private life, where we find the leitmotif of the daily running around of each of us, or the fight with the political opinions that overtake us, as self-reference is a queer philosophy or politics: "In different ways queer politics might therefore have implications for any area of social life" (Warner 1993, 5).

5.2. Performance and Happening as representations of the same whole

Entering the performance-type space (as an interlude of the happening) is not from spleen, nor condemned to the protocol of a guard or ceremony. Not connected to any safe recipe, with an overweight, it will not defend the cold and frightened conciseness of the typical pattern of fixed art. With the ADN of relativity and diversity, the happening is fit for perturbation, for infidelity to the tolerance towards any cult; as a show, it will pursue to escape the accolades of scholarly thinking and regulated virtues. The demarcation between the *ordo* – as a stiff depiction of the theatre play or the perfidious concert, without too much fuel, surrounded by an obsolete inspiration (we already mentioned Caruso and Andrea Bocelli) – and the new, “heretical” presentation, which explains human mentalities through a different science, placing them into corners of severe antitheses, is verified through a bundle of criteria of doubt, dichotomic, of non-alignment. We talk about a tone that does not give in to the absolute gravity of the prophesizing realism; it is that tone full of impiety, of a loaded gun. The pomp of over-shining, pedestal-like tradition is now replaced with the arrogance of the unstable cognitive representation. Focused on the non-linear specificity of conscience, the space of the happening is heterogeneous, alternative – often accessing the void, the restlessness; it breaks the picture that is panting to control the intellect of the others in a continuous running around, and to hold it responsible through a taming expectation.

As shapers of the happening, Duchamp, Cage and Cunningham pushed their own guiding principle ahead, understanding that a “simple gesture” can be able to de-condition intellectual immobility. With the honesty and vigilance of maturity in granting a meaning to art, to its resources – even when it “stares into emptiness” –, they drew the attention to the possibility to expand the means of expressing art through an utopian imagination, of antinomy, of paradox, and activism. Running to “burn the witches”, to change the image of the formalism present in the noted, tabulated art, the three mentioned personalities, to whom others also adhered, polemised with the scholarly attitudes which were guarding the conscience of the spectator, of the receptor who gulps museum art or listens to salon music. By concerning themselves with reading psychological time in a different manner and “censoring” it differently, Duchamp, Cage and Cunningham planted in it fields of associations that point to a divided sensuousness and to a queer phenomenology; it is about that time in expansion, with a fourth dimension – of non-alignment insights – it is resting upon.

Instauration of the historically developed show in Western Europe as a cultural eye of an old tradition vehicles specificities and typical details destined to preserve the convention – in the way in which the condition of mimesis does not

surpass (for example) the reflection limit imposed by the intensely discussed world of the affect.

Leaving the biography that is stuck in evoking, and the “normal”, domestic view, the performance will unload the quicksilver of the contradictory unto the retina, as a statement where the inside melts with the outside. Without blocking the “life-body” of the being living in the show ritual – a body now presented by asperity and irregularities (so, without the knight’s “armour” and shield) – the performance closely follows representation modes of fragments of the real by intervention of the “excluded third party” that allows for re-grouping the perceptions. In the world of the performance, the plausibility of the body will start as a physical and psychological discourse; it is a discourse of underlying meanings, allowing for a representation of the angle that fixates the light on the immediate relation with the territory the body occupies; and this apart from its natural features, which dismantle the illusion and phantasy about its prince-like, chivalrous, festive look. The body no longer is a slogan-body, nor one triggered by mythology or the world of symbols). The performer’s body, the current through which it conveys here and now (see the performance as an axis in the vision of artist Marina Abramović) will speak about itself, and not about a scenery it is placed in; it will not compete in any tournament, but it will define – even through its own mutilation – the register of the social, political, cultural impiety it is living in at this very moment.

The performance show is firstly guided by the intentional objectivation conveyed by the performers’ bodies, and secondly by the multimedia climate it is produced in. It can take place on a corridor, in a public space (open or closed), or an unpretentious show hall. The performance will touch, by its own activism, the social coordinates of the time, will avoid prudishness in advancing the components of dissident, feminist (anarchist) nature, which it will lay before the receptor. The time of such a show, disinhibited, a queer time, will flow in a parallelism with already lived facts, both by the artist in his private life, and by the receptor. All of it makes sense in this society of the stage, in the metaphor of its execution, in its non-rigid message. The performer’s body will depict thus, by its attitude, reactions that pack messages which convey the idea of breaking a norm (imposed by the socio-political discourse); it acts in its vast mantle, examining and drawing attention to the acceptability or non-acceptance of a certain state of facts; the performer radically detaches himself from the mimetic depiction, without dedicating poems to the historical determinism anymore.

Cutting, reactionary to the weak points of the discourse turned on from the outside by recapitulation, the intervention co-ordinations – of performance type – consistently objectivise causal links with the freshly appeared, queer socio-cultural

counterpoint. The audacity of the game, oriented toward de-rigidisation and de-ceremonialisation of the individual's identity, its revival in the wake of the artistic and generally human expression ("Queer is so much more than an identity, it's an ethos, a practice, an economic system, another world-view. Play; that is wildness!" (Shepard 2010) will highlight the applying of an asepsis for the toolbox of sedentary contrasts, typical of the prudent message specific to the concert, theatre/ traditional show. Already discordant, in the performance the function of indoctrination turns to ashes; it will dissolve the latencies of sterility. The revival of the postmodern statement overturns the stiff prose in order to poke in the lit embers; through the inseparable relation of the performance – of the memory-body – with social diversity, with the bizarre of the political, with the sustaining pillars of the economical, the drastic, cascade-like annihilation of the categories of art and of the connections of subjective cultural practice has been set in motion. Therefore, that frame, gilded in rhetorical, monotypical argumentation, deformed, unable to demask the lack of perspective under the umbrella of which the acclaimed aesthetic justice was (is) being consumed, has been immediately suspended.

Artistic demonstrations like "Queer Political Performance and Protest" concentrate through their message on freeing the individual self out of its corset, on the iconoclast attitude of the performers' group, who do not need to hide under a certain shelter anymore. Embodying this type of resistance, expressed through text, sound, lights, dance, multimedia devices, draw attention – by an accessible placement of the message – to authoritarianism, to political conflicts generated by social dispersion or by discriminating rejection of barely tolerated social groups (homosexuals, transgender individuals, homeless people, drug addicts, people with AIDS), to political and social separation struggles. To unwind the queer essence through the show every time – directed by the leitmotif <we live and protest for our rights> – irrigates through a live voice and widens the frontiers of collective subconsciousness, for which the signs of discouragement that are present in the relation with society turn into a voice of salvation, reflecting rapports with a new "aesthetics" (that involves the politics of un-limitation, creativity, granting a chance, comprised within the <queer> paradigm).

In this motivated state of being awake (opposed to the mute initiative which the system of the "traditional show" institutes through fetish, indoctrination and dogmatic captivation), the line of the magical power of the psychology of fairy-tales is discovered, where the hero with superpowers does not appear as alienated from everyday life, from his dignity, from the presence of situation combinations dominated by the economic and political in his vicinity: "between everyday life and fairy-tale there are [...] certain passage steps, which makes the fairy-tale reflect everyday life [...]" (Propp 1970, 110). The logic of the supernatural hero is the logic of trials. The breath of the performance, profiling the crisis of inner space and freedom, has

as a guide the inner breath of the subconscious, expressed through the intact instinct of *peregrination* – understood as a representation of the rambling of the soul (souls) beyond the grave (cf. quoted work, p. 110) – and the key we read this restlessness (escaping) in, namely as the “salt” of activism and dissidence, captures affinities with rendering the spirit of a fairy-tale, where the disaster is first presented “and then getting the supernatural aid that helps the hero put an end to it (by breaking the law (n.n)).” (ibid., p. 111). Social resistance in real-life contemporaneity is also represented by the fight of the archetypical hero, who, instead of taking refuge in the climate of his lack of purpose, shakes himself off – together with his winged horse – the burden of the subordination scheme; we glimpse this parallelism from another example, too: “usually (in the morphology of the fairy-tale (n.n.)) the disaster is presented in the beginning, and then leaving from home [...]” (ibid., p. 111). By correlating the superposed times both in the performer’s and the (happening or performance) show’s evolution, we will broaden the frame of the discussion; we will talk of “leaving from home” not like of a whim, but a psychological attractor mechanism which comes with a new phenomenal and essential parameter: the personal aspiration in reforming the hero’s “civic” rights. With a firm touch of intensity in the voice we may assert that, like a consequent emerged from a unique matrix of existential nature, <queer> “anomalies” interpenetrate the immanence of the fairy-tale pattern in a clarifying manner, manifesting a functional relevance beyond noise or effect; what do I mean by that? That through their evolutive path, the anomalies incorporated into a meta-signification are re-telling the <fairy-tale> again and again – a fairy-tale which always contains a ramified present: for the *modus ponens*, and for the *modus tollens*.

The performance adds a layer, in simultaneity with the continuous living of the present time, expanding the surface of the social dynamic model by its communication medium – and this with its time form. It is a support for the inner life and for triggering certain (perhaps even extreme) effect-experiences that are defined for the moment among the happenings of life. It tests, like an arrow tip, cases of generally-human inadaptation, by an interactive triggering of possible worlds and dispersing those inclinations toward “[...] theatrical expressions of protest” (“filled with countless theatrical expressions of protest.” see: Shepard, quoted work, *Introduction*, p. 1). Dominated by lit torches, by visual effects that shake up the magic, widening the mix of both abstract and ludic contours, of cinematographic ones, it re-objectivates – next to social murmuring and street activism – the contours of the public space, the dust of ill-reputed city districts and the marijuana grains spread over mysterious corners. The judgement of the performers, keeping the finger on the gun cock, pushes the aesthetic toward the nothingness, as their unwillingness to be reintegrated into a state of <non-resistant> receptivity is given by the attitude towards racism, globalisation, slogan, discrimination, which will all show – also through the performance – the noise of social dissonance

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