

# Athens Journal of Humanities & Arts



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# Athens Journal of Humanities & Arts

*Published by the Athens Institute for Education and Research (ATINER)*

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- Dr. Stephen Andrew Arbury, Head, [Arts & Culture Unit](#), ATINER, Professor of Art History & Director of the RU Art Museum, Radford University, USA.

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The current issue is the third of the tenth volume of the *Athens Journal of Humanities & Arts (AJHA)*, published by the *Arts, Humanities and Education Division* of ATINER.

Gregory T. Papanikos  
President  
ATINER



## Athens Institute for Education and Research

*A World Association of Academics and Researchers*

### 15<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference on Visual and Performing Arts 10-13 June 2024, Athens, Greece

The [Arts & Culture Unit](#) of ATINER is organizing its 15<sup>th</sup> Annual International Conference on Visual and Performing Arts, 10-13 June 2024, Athens, Greece sponsored by the [Athens Journal of Humanities & Arts](#). The aim of the conference is to bring together academics and researchers of visual and performing arts, and other related disciplines. You may participate as stream leader, presenter of one paper, chair of a session or observer. Please submit a proposal using the form available (<https://www.atiner.gr/2024/FORM-ART.doc>).

#### Academic Members Responsible for the Conference

- Dr. Stephen Andrew Arbury, Head, [Arts & Culture Unit](#), ATINER and Professor of Art History, Radford University, USA.
- 

#### Important Dates

- Abstract Submission: 7 November 2023
- Acceptance of Abstract: 4 Weeks after Submission
- Submission of Paper: 13 May 2024

#### Social and Educational Program

The Social Program Emphasizes the Educational Aspect of the Academic Meetings of Atiner.

- Greek Night Entertainment (This is the official dinner of the conference)
- Athens Sightseeing: Old and New-An Educational Urban Walk
- Social Dinner
- Mycenae Visit
- Exploration of the Aegean Islands
- Delphi Visit
- Ancient Corinth and Cape Sounion

#### Conference Fees

Conference fees vary from 400€ to 2000€  
Details can be found at: <https://www.atiner.gr/fees>



## Athens Institute for Education and Research

*A World Association of Academics and Researchers*

### 9<sup>th</sup> Annual International Symposium on Religion & Theology 27-30 May 2024, Athens, Greece

The [Humanities & Education Division](#) of ATINER is organizing its **9<sup>th</sup> Annual International Symposium on Religion & Theology, 27-30 May 2024, Athens, Greece**. The aim of the conference is to bring together academics and researchers of Religion, Theology and other related disciplines. You may participate as stream leader, presenter of one paper, chair of a session or observer. Please submit a proposal using the form available (<https://www.atiner.gr/2024/FORM-REL.doc>).

#### Important Dates

- Abstract Submission: **24 October 2023**
- Acceptance of Abstract: 4 Weeks after Submission
- Submission of Paper: **29 April 2024**

#### Academic Member Responsible for the Conference

- **Dr. William O'Meara**, Academic Member, ATINER & Professor, Department of Philosophy and Religion, James Madison University, USA.

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## The Need for Embodied Dramaturgy: The Laramie Project and Generation Z

By Carin Silkaitis\* & Zoe Rose Kriegler-Wenk‡

*20 years after the murder of Matthew Shepard, I introduced The Laramie Project to a group of undergraduate students. Observing cast members' first experience of the characters, a troubling lack of empathy to the complexity of this tragic story became apparent. Of primary concern was that decades of progress made towards LGBTQIA equality stripped this story of its relevance. Geographic and generational bias is natural and expected but ultimately requires a new dramaturgical approach. We offer reflections on the methodology developed to address this gap: an embodied dramaturgical approach to our pre-production work culminating in a full cast and crew research trip to Laramie, Wyoming. Through photos, video, soundscapes and observations, we illuminate the impacts of using a place-based, psycho-somatic sensory approach to dramaturgical research. This experience created physical and emotional transformation in the participants that can inform future dramaturgical work particularly for stories that are deeply unknown and unfamiliar to the cast and crew. Together, we found that stories like "The Laramie Project" continue to be relevant. Although progress has been great, the threat of anti-LGBTQIA violence is still very real for many people. Employing an embodied approach can enhance storytelling and empower further progress with the benefit of today's experience.*

### Introduction

"You [...] left him out there by himself, but he wasn't alone. [...] First he had the beautiful night sky and the same stars and the moon that we used to see through a telescope. Then he had the daylight and the sun to shine on him. And through it all he was breathing in the scent of pine trees from the snowy range. He heard the wind, the ever-present Wyoming wind, for the last time."<sup>1</sup>

Walking in the shoes of the perpetrators in Matthew Shepard's murder, tracing their paths through the grass and touching the iconic fence, had a deep and profound effect on our bodies. *This* fence: a national symbol of violence and hate. The same fence that Matthew was tied to for 18 hours, under that vast, pine-scented sky.

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1. Moisés Kaufman, and Members of Tectonic Theater Project, *The Laramie Project* (Dramatist Play Service, 2001), 84-85.



**Figure 1.** *Fence in Laramie Wyoming, 2018*

Source: original photo by Carin Silkaitis.

As theatre-makers we are drawn to stories that hold a mirror up to society. We look for material that reveals truths that push us to consider how we can build a more equitable, more just world. The sheer brutality of the murder of Matthew Shepard in Laramie Wyoming in 1998 focused international attention on homophobia and led to the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, which President Obama signed into law in October 2009. In the wake of intense national outrage, Tectonic Theater Project's Artistic Director Moisés Kaufman asked his company: What can we as theatre artists do as a response to this incident? Is theatre a medium that can contribute to the national dialogue on current events?

The next question is, of course, "How?" Tectonic's *The Laramie Project* is a striking example of theatrical activism by way of embodied approaches to research and composition. The play engages queer histories, and provides a foundation for intergenerational dialogue, site-specific research, and community engagement. Tectonic Theater Project accomplishes this by prioritizing the experiential aspects of performance research.

If a painter wants to learn to paint, they need to get into the studio and put paint to canvas. A sculptor has to acquire the physical materials and begin to sculpt. If we want to explore how the theatre, not simply *text*, is able to tell a story, then we have to create that story in the rehearsal room using all of the elements of the stage (lights, sound, architecture, costumes, props). Moisés Kaufman says, "this way it will carry within it the DNA of what's theatrical. If we



want to explore WHAT happens onstage – we must also examine *how* what happens onstage can be created.”<sup>2</sup>

Prior to in-studio experimentation, Tectonic is committed to active documentation and engagement with their source material. When company members went to Laramie, it was with open ears and a commitment to not only document, but truly embody the words of Laramie’s residents. This approach is not only beneficial to the artistic quality of the production, but actively communicates compassion towards those who have witnessed or experienced the trauma of Matthew Shepard’s murder. Given the prejudice lumped onto the town of Laramie in the wake of this tragedy, the pathway towards rebuilding connection and inviting dialogue can only grow from a foundation of reciprocal trust, respect and validation. Tectonic engaged with and documented the town sensorially and kinesthetically, in direct conversation with the people and the place. In the compositional phase of *The Laramie Project*, the creators avoided large scale rewrites, additions or fabrications, and focused instead on elevating the material gathered from the town itself.

It wasn’t until my third time directing *The Laramie Project* that I understood just how essential site-specific research is to the rehearsal process. This article will map the progression from my first engagement with the text of *The Laramie Project* through a twentieth anniversary production that revealed the importance of embodied dramaturgy in fostering intergenerational dialogue with regards to LGTBQA+ social histories.

The first time I directed the play, it was brand-new. I produced a staged reading with a few costume pieces, music stands, and sparse lighting shifts. We focused on the text. I wanted to highlight the story, the language, the many character shifts and the process. We delved deep into *how* to step into someone else’s voice and how to embody a number of different characters (10 or more) within the span of a few hours. We did this with a mix of Rudolf Laban’s Efforts<sup>3</sup> and Loyd Williamson’s<sup>4</sup> movement pedagogy focused on identifying weight, direction, speed and flow. In an attempt to avoid caricature and bring truthfulness to the piece, we dedicated a lot of time to table work and research into the people the play is based on.

My second journey into the pages of *The Laramie Project* began in 2007, when I realized I wanted to direct a 10th Anniversary production to commemorate Matthew Shepard’s death. I knew I wanted to keep the same “frame” for the play that Tectonic used; eight actors playing multiple roles and speaking in direct address to the audience. I invited Kelli Simpkins to our campus to do a “Moment

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2. Kaufman and Barbara Pitts McAdams, *Moment Work: Tectonic Theater Project’s Process of Devising Theater* (Vintage, 2018), 20.

3. Rudolf Laban was a dancer, choreographer, and theorist of expressionist dance.

4. Williamson technique is a movement pedagogy for actors based on a physical process of communication.

Workshop.” Kelli is a Chicago actor, Tectonic Theater Project ensemble member, and one of the original writers of *The Laramie Project*. The students responded to the workshop in incredibly dynamic ways. They were more confident in movement and gesture work. The room was alive with ideas!

In an attempt to embody the characters and differentiate between them, I combined our exploration of Moment Work<sup>5</sup> with a focus on the physical world of the play. This rehearsal process brought me one step closer to understanding the importance of bringing body and place into the dramaturgical conversation. I watched students come alive within their characters through physical and sensorial exploration, and by participating in workshops detailing Tectonic Theater Project’s compositional process. This embodied engagement unlocked key theatrical insight that could not have been gleaned from traditional dramaturgical research or rehearsal strategies.

In keeping with Tectonic’s focus on community engagement, we worked hard to engage *our* audience in a variety of ways. Student artists and I visited classrooms and we worked with our campus radio station to broadcast a variety of programming related to the play. We also collaborated with a number of other departments and hosted a campus-wide discussion with Kelli, who returned as part of our ongoing collaboration. The show and the discussion were extremely well-attended, with close to 400 people in the audience and at least 250 present for the post-show discussion.

That said, we also received some pushback. We ended up on a Westboro Baptist Church picket list, several students objected to content, one costumer quit the show because of the themes of the play, and many audience members walked out of the production. The show provoked strong responses, but I tried to make the controversy an opportunity for engaged learning by urging the students who remained on the project to consider what it means to have your art become a lightning rod for hatred. What do you do? How do you respond? The answer will likely be different for each person, but I believe the act of asking the questions together was its own pedagogy, one that pushed them to consider how they would handle such controversies in their own professional lives.

My first two experiences directing *The Laramie Project* were rich investigations of how to engage emotionally, physically and collectively with vulnerable and essential performance material. Those processes brought deep revelation and empathy to the text and strengthened my commitment to embodied research and community engagement. I was prepared to embark on a

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5. A moment, according to Tectonic, is a self-contained theatrical unit. “Moment Work” was coined by Tectonic to describe the process of creating these individual self-contained theatrical units. Then, the units can be sequenced together into, “theatrical phrases or sentences” that will eventually become a play: Kaufman and McAdams, *Moment Work: Tectonic Theater Project’s Process of Devising Theater*, 2018, 29.

similar process in 2018 when I directed the piece for a third time. But this time, something was different.

### *The Laramie Project and Generation Z*

20 years after the murder of Matthew Sheppard, I introduced the material to a group of undergraduates. As I listened to the cast read these characters, I was struck by the stereotypes they inadvertently presented. I noticed right away that they didn't seem to *feel* much for these people. As I continued to ask questions of my cast, I realized they thought very little of residents of some "hick town" who murdered a gay kid. They put on voices and opinions about the characters.

I attempted to break down some of these stereotypes in an open discussion with my cast. At the time the piece was created, Moisés Kauffman and the members of Tectonic Theater Project also noticed that media outlets portrayed Laramie as a town of rednecks and hillbillies. They realized that many people from outside Laramie thought that what happened to Shepard could happen in "a town like that," but it would *never* happen in a big metropolis or near a coast. When prompted to explore a perceived lack of emotional connection to the material, one of my cast members in 2018 said, "Everybody's queer now, so it's no big deal."

As educators and artists, we look forward to a reality in which physical and emotional violence is relegated to the past, and yet, it is easy to jump to privileged generalizations based on geographic location, socio-economic status and political affiliation. We begin to position our own liberal, urban perspectives in opposition to the perspectives of those who come from conservative or rural roots; thus creating a dichotomy that promotes an "either or" mindset instead of acknowledging a spectrum of experience and identity.

How do we celebrate significant progress in the acceptance of LGBTQA+ identities while simultaneously acknowledging that things are not better for everyone? How do we acknowledge that things are not better for everyone without perpetuating the narrative that all non-urban and non-liberal spaces are morally corrupt? The cast's ingrained geographic and generational bias was likely a natural result of their lived experiences, but this mindset does not necessarily do justice to the material or the methodology used to create and compose the piece.

I began to question if the story of Mathew Sheppard was relevant to the day-to-day experience of a young audience, but came to the conclusion that it is relevant specifically *because* it seemed far removed. This break, this jump, this distancing, is rich material for further theatrical investigation. Why? In the pursuit of what? Connection? Empathy? Family? Yes. Perhaps, the question is not, "Should we attempt to bridge this gap?" but "How?" When something seems

culturally distant, how do we connect with it? How do we create art that comes as much from the body and the heart as it does from the mind?

The first step is to work holistically: engage the body, train it to notice and be sensitive to external and internal stimuli. This requires dedication and trust in the process, along with the willingness to be vulnerable to the external world, and to engage fully with sensation. It was Guy Debord<sup>6</sup> who articulated a form of artistic and political research that began with wandering through a cityscape: "The *derive* may lack a clear destination but it is not without purpose. On the contrary the *derivateur* is conducting a psychogeographical investigation and is expected to return home having noticed the ways in which the areas traversed resonate with particular moods and ambiances."<sup>7</sup> Here, Debord emphasizes the importance of acknowledging the emotional and physical effects of noticing the geography through which the artist travels. To borrow wisdom from another knowledgeable artist, Gertrude Stein writes: "A walk is not where the door shows a light, a walk is where there is a request to describe a description. A walk is when a place is not to be exchanged."<sup>8</sup> Stein draws an essential link between the act of walking and the place in which the action of walking occurs. In order for a walk to earn its name, it must include an essential place and the inclination towards description and dialogue. John Berger sheds some light on our temporal relationship to place: "The events which take place in the field [...] acquire a special significance because they occur during the minute or two during which I am obliged to wait. It is as though these minutes fill a certain area of time which exactly fits the spatial area of the field. Time and space conjoin."<sup>9</sup> According to Berger, it is precisely the act of being physically present in the field and allowing time for embodied observation that causes the revelation of meaning and the unification of a previously disparate time and space.

To understand why something happened, you have to enter into conversation with that place. I decided right there at that first reading, **we were going to Laramie, Wyoming**. The cast was going to walk through the town, and talk with the people, walk through Shepard's final night in Laramie, sit at that fence, listen to the Wyoming wind and breathe in the night sky. I wanted them to take it all in, to engage themselves more deeply, so we might have a more genuinely intergenerational collaboration and achieve a nuanced production that respected the stakes of history.

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6. Guy Debord was a French Marxist theorist, artist and founding member of the Situationist International.

7. Debord as quoted in Merlin Coverley, *Psychogeography* (Pocket Essentials, 2006), 96.

8. Gertrude Stein, *Geography & Plays* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1993), 113.

9. John Berger, *About Looking "The Field"* (New York: Random House Inc., 1980), 200.



**Figure 2.** *Laramie Wyoming Population Sign, 2018*

Source: original photo by Carin Silkaitis.

### Site-Specific Research and Embodied Dramaturgy

We arrived in Laramie and the first person we encountered was a server at a local restaurant. She seemed as if she walked off the pages of *The Laramie Project*. She regaled us with stories, made fun of herself for being a “terrible server,” and told us that Laramie is “not that kind of place... you know... where people hate on people for being... you know... different.” We exchanged glances, realizing that this was nearly a direct quote from the play. We headed to the hotel, noticing that Big Sky Country was aptly named; it seemed as if the deep blue sky would swallow us whole.

We settled into the hotel and made plans for interviews, video work, photography, and exploration. There were 11 of us: eight actors, two faculty members, and our composer/sound designer. We made some preliminary contacts before we left: faculty members at the University of Wyoming and a dispatch officer at the police station. The residents of the town were welcoming and chatty. Everyone was wondering where we came from and why we were there. Everyone had an opinion about the event of Shepard’s death.

It came time for us to travel outside of town to find the fence to which Shepard had been tied and left for dead. We were meeting Don, a University of Wyoming Professor, near the site. He lived one house over from the fence. We pulled over to the side of the road after encountering a large, angry sign scrawled

in red paint that read: "PRIVATE PROPERTY. DO NOT ENTER." We knew we were in the right place.

Soon a pickup truck pulled up alongside us. It was Don. He said his neighbors were tired of people coming to visit the site. He said, "It's been 20 years now... and they're still coming." He was excited that we were from Chicago. He invited us to follow him to his house. This man allowed us to come onto his private property, camp out for a day in his driveway, and even called his neighbors to get us access to the fence. His neighbor, "shotgun Larry," still owned the property and that fence, and, according to Don, he would shoot before asking questions. Needless to say, we were thankful we had permission.

We were also thankful we were able to spend time at the fence. It affected us deeply and profoundly. Our composer, Chris Kent, wrote an original song from the perspective of Matthew's mother, Judy Shepard. The lyrics swung seamlessly between imagery of the Wyoming landscape and Judy's journey from grief to hope. As a companion to the song, Chris recorded hours of the Wyoming wind. That particular sound, the sound of the wind that was so very powerful right at the fence, is something I will never forget:

*I see the same sky - you saw that night  
I hear the same Wyoming wind... howling  
Dust in my eyes - was the same dust in yours  
I cry the same way... you were crying<sup>10</sup>*



**Figure 3.** *Cast Member at the Fence, 2018*  
Source: original photo by Carin Silkaitis.

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10. Original lyrics by Chris Kent (2018).

In addition to the wind, there were smaller, subtler sounds that became essential to our aural exploration. Chris recorded a family of deer; first running parallel to the fence, then eating grass and moving over the landscape. These deer were remarkable, not only in their natural stature and grace, but also because of their constant presence across multiple visits to the fence.

When we first approached, one of my students noticed the deer right away: a beautiful, large family. As we got closer, the deer ran from us, but they didn't go far. They gave us space to explore the area surrounding the fence, but chose not to leave. There was something so perfect about their presence, as if they were watching over this sacred place. I made eye contact with several of them. We studied each other.

*You were the strong one - Fearless and bright  
A friend to all who - crossed your path  
You were a wanderer - gentle and kind  
A son and brother... a voice for these times<sup>11</sup>*



**Figure 4.** *Cast Member at the Fence, 2018*

Source: original photo by Carin Silkaitis.

The second time we visited the fence, there were only four of us. Two of my students' flights were delayed, so Chris and I took them back to the spot. The deer were there, but this time they didn't run as far. Chris was able to get much

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11. Original lyrics by Chris Kent (2018).

closer to them and record their movements in and out of the grass. It was magical: a spark of hope at the site of a tragedy.

*When the leaves make their fall  
I'm reminded... I'm reminded...  
To keep on*

*Keep me hopeful... keep me moving...  
Keep me hopeful... keep me movin', movin', movin'  
Keep me hopeful... keep me movin'<sup>12</sup>*



**Figure 5.** *Carin Silkaitis at the Fence, 2018*

Source: original photo by Chris Kent.

The wind, the deer, the trees and the birds; all sounds that would have accompanied Matthew's final hours on this earth: 18 hours to be exact. Listening to the landscape recordings, it was impossible to not imagine what it must have been like for Matthew, tied to that fence, with nature as his only companion.

*As the sun goes down  
I can almost... I can almost...  
Feel you here  
Cuz you are the stars  
That shine... that guide me home  
And you are the wind*

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12. Original Lyrics by Chris Kent (2018).



*That keeps me hopeful - keeps me moving*<sup>13</sup>



**Figure 6.** *Chris Kent Sings Their Original Song at the Fence, 2018*  
Source: original photo by Carin Silkaitis.

Chris' choice to compose lyrics from the perspective of Matthew's mother made the story personal, connecting the cosmic wonder of the Laramie landscape with a specific experience of loss and hope. A quote from Valeria Luiselli's novel, *Lost Children Archive*, comes to mind: "Conversations, in a family, become linguistic archaeology. [...] The question is, when, in the future, we dig into our intimate archive, replay our family tape, will it amount to a story? A soundscape?"<sup>14</sup> We cannot claim a biological place in the Shepard family, but it is a story that resonates, in the broader cultural sense, with a more global community. What were we doing in Laramie if not excavating an archival tape, replaying it through a harmony of new voices and asking ourselves, "How do we tell this story?" The inclusion of a soundscape in the final performance was simply essential.

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13. Original lyrics by Chris Kent (2018).

14. Valeria Luiselli, *Lost Children Archive* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2019).

Chris also recorded audio from the police station and the courthouse. They recorded the busy, work-day symphony of Poudre Valley Hospital and the bustling chatter of a local cafe. Creating music and recording sound throughout Laramie reminded us to take the time to pause and to *listen* to our surroundings. We found the emotional core of Laramie when we took the time to tune in with all of our senses. The deceptively simple task of embodied listening brought out the visceral, emotional core of Matthew's story. To borrow from Dr. Shrinkhla Sahai: "The theatre of sounds is an emotional, intimate, powerful theatre. It is the theatre of screams, whispers, words and silence."<sup>15</sup> I could not agree more. Suddenly our connection to the material was no longer stagnant, instead it ran rhythmically and intimately through our bodies.

The cast member who played the doctor in charge of Matthew's case physically changed as he stood outside the red brick walls of the Poudre Valley hospital. We put him in a dress shirt and lab coat and videotaped his lines outside that hospital, as if we were giving a press conference. Doctors and nurses passed by on their lunch breaks and asked what we were doing. When I explained our dramaturgical research, their bodies took on the slump of quiet resignation and their voices took on the soft irritability of an unwelcome memory. They wished us the best and told us they would let security know why we were there. The exchange took place against the backdrop of sirens, the open and close of emergency room doors and the scattered conversation of doctors and nurses entering and exiting the building. The actor's body took on the weight of those lines as he stood in the very spot where Rulon Stacey told the entire world that Matthew succumbed to his injuries. It was in that spot that Stacey teared up when relaying Matthew's mother's words: "Go home, give your kids a hug, and don't let a day go by without telling them you love them."<sup>16</sup> It was this slip in emotional composure that prompted open hostility towards Rulon Stacey from a viewer who jumped at the opportunity to redefine empathy as weakness: "Do you cry like a baby on TV for all your patients or just the faggots?"<sup>17</sup>

Standing there, within the cacophony of daily life and sporadic tragedy, the actor, usually bubbly cheerful, began to cry too. At one point, an emotional family rushed into the hospital through the sliding doors. We stopped filming out of respect. We were trying to understand and embody a tragedy of the past, while these people were experiencing it in real time. However well-intentioned our dramaturgical process was, we were reminded of our distance from the event itself and the privilege that this distance inherently holds. We chose to come to Laramie to search for the emotional core of this play through sensorial interactions with

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15. Shrinkhla Sahai, "Exploring a Theatre of Sounds," in *Proceeding of Sound, Sight, Space and Play 2009 Postgraduate Symposium for the Creative Sonic Arts* (United Kingdom: De Montfort University Leicester, 6-8 May 2009).

16. *The Laramie Project* (2001), 69.

17. *The Laramie Project* (2001), 69.

the place. By showing up emotionally and physically, we found a bridge between a cast of Chicago-based undergraduates in 2018 and Laramie Wyoming in 1998. And still, bearing witness to an unknown family rushing through emergency room doors poked holes in our constructed memory and caused us pause. This was grief; fresh and fueled by the adrenaline of the unfathomable. Our proximity to this intimate outpouring of emotion, however brief, sunk heavily into our already weighted bodies. We would carry their story into our production in some small, intangible way, hoping to pay homage to their personal heartache with the same care we applied to the national debate sparked by Matthew's death.

Our trip to Laramie as an ensemble gave us the inkling of a process worth further exploration and reminded us of the importance of considering the actors' bodies in conversation with the place. The work of embodying the other is, in and of itself, a task of radical empathy; one that requires physical and sensorial immersion. This engaged artistic approach, most importantly, helped bridge the generational gap between my students and Mathew, and to feel the stakes of the tenuous, shaky social gains that the LGBTQIA+ community has made over the course of several decades.



**Figure 7.** *Twentieth Anniversary Production of The Laramie Project, North Central College, 2018*

Source: original photo by Carin Silkaitis.

### **Performance as a Platform for Intergenerational Dialogue**

When we performed our 2018 production of *The Laramie Project*, we repeated some of the forms of audience engagement we had used for the 2008 production: spreading campus-wide messaging about the play and offering myself or members of the cast for class visits. We also reached out to local high schools with

some success. An English teacher asked us to come perform a few pieces and talk with her class about the show. We brought Kelli Simpkins back to do an audience talk-back. Almost 100% of the audience members stayed for the discussion. That night, as a way of extending intergenerational pedagogy and mentorship, I invited my cast from 10 years ago to join the new cast in a long pre-show dinner and discussion. Five of the original eight cast members traveled to Naperville to join us. I wanted them to have the opportunity to talk about their respective experiences working on this production. We also invited the cast from 10 years ago to join Simpkins on stage for the talkback, and the audience had so many questions for the previous performers.

Listening to their perspective on performing this play was fascinating. They were quite moved watching the new cast, and they all reported how much *they* would have wanted to travel to Laramie to do that kind of embodied dramaturgical work. They also found themselves moved quite differently now that they were 10 years older. They spoke beautifully about what has changed in our world and what has remained the same (or, in some cases, gotten worse.) This kind of dialogue prompted an intergenerational connection that deepened student learning, alumni relationships, and the sensory and intellectual experiences of the community members. We need each other as much now as we did ten years ago, and we will continue to need each other in order to make meaningful progress towards a more just world.

In the words of our composer and sound designer:

*[...] you are the stars  
That shine... that guide me home  
And you are the wind  
That keeps me hopeful - keeps me moving.*<sup>18</sup>

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18. Original Lyrics by Chris Kent (2018).

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## Rohde's Theory of Relationship between the Novel and Rhetoric and the Problem of Evaluating the Entire Corpus of Post-Classical Greek Literature

By Ranko Kozić\*

*The one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the first publication of Rohde's monograph on the Greek novel is drawing near, affording a welcome occasion to raise the big question as to what remains of it today, all the more so since the ancient novel, due to his classical work, has become a major area of research. The aforesaid monograph, considered to be one of the greatest scientific achievements of the nineteenth century, can be justifiably used as a litmus test for ascertaining how efficient the methods hitherto employed were or, in other words, whether we are entitled to speak of continuous progress in research or the opposite is true. Finally, the questions raised in the monograph will turn out to be more important than the results obtained by the author, in so far as the latter, based on his unfinished theses, proved to be very harmful to evaluating both the Greek novel and the entire corpus of post-classical Greek literature. In this paper we focus our attention on two major questions raised by the author such as division of the third type of narration in the rhetorical manuals of classical antiquity and the nature of rhetoric, as expressed in the writings of the major exponents of the Second Sophistic so as to be in a position to point to the way out of aporia, with the preliminary remark that we shall not be able to get a full picture of the Greek novel until the two remaining big questions posed by the author, namely the role played by both Tyche and women in the mentioned genre, are fully answered.*

### Introduction

In many respects, Rohde's famous monograph *Der griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer*<sup>1</sup> can be regarded as a classic example of what is referred to as a scientific work par excellence because, among other things, some of its key theses, such as the one on the relationship between the novel and the so-called sophistic rhetoric,<sup>2</sup> seemed to have stood the test of time for almost a century and a half since they first saw the light of day—a fact which clearly demonstrated their relevance<sup>3</sup> for the present research. That's one of the reasons why in the eyes of

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1. The first edition appeared in 1876 with a second one ensuing in 1900; the third, with an important appendix by W. Schmid, was printed in 1914 and reprinted in 1960. Hereinafter referred to as Rohde, *Der griechische Roman*.

2. What is referred to here is the third chapter entitled *Die griechische Sophistik der Kaiserzeit* (310-387).

3. Rohde's theory of relationship between the novel and rhetoric was regarded by none other than Eduard Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa, von VI. Jahrhundert v. Chr. bis in die*

many Rohde's theoretical construct assumed characteristics of a structure of colossal proportions, erected on solid foundations and built of earthquake resistant and explosion proof materials so as to be well-equipped to take the full brunt of shock waves<sup>4</sup> without suffering greater damage.

Two starting points of Rohde's theory, as reflected in his theses on both the division of narration ('statement of facts') in the grammatical and rhetorical manuals and the stylistic tendencies expressing themselves in the period of the Second Sophistic (quite rightly deemed crucial for our understanding of the Greek novel), might justifiably be regarded as a kind of fuse added in the foundations and walls of his theoretical construct.

While confronted with Rohde's comprehensive approach to the phenomenon, as testified by his evident effort to supplement the already wide range of primary sources with complementary material borrowed from the field of archeology, ethnology, history of art and painting, we cannot shake off the feeling that he carried out a detailed and thorough analysis of the phenomenon which, for precisely this reason, assumed characteristics of the mentioned monumental edifice with its huge, imposing blocks, seemingly in perfect harmony with each other.

The problem arose when small, "despised" details with the destructive power of dynamite came into play, as a result of which Rohde's theoretical construct, no matter how reliable its starting points were, was levelled to the ground, with only one of its cornerstones having,<sup>5</sup> as commonly accepted, remained in place as something to be reckoned with in future research. Before giving our due consideration to the mentioned cornerstone, we shall, because of the complexity inherently present in the methodological approach to the phenomenon, first concentrate on the detail due to which Rohde's attempt to shed light on *drama* and *plasma* as a genre-designation<sup>6</sup> of the Greek novel by using evidence found in

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*Zeit der Renaissance* (Stuttgart und Leipzig: Teubner, 1915), 275 as almost flawless: "Ich brauche darauf (sc. das Inhaltliche der Deklamationen) nicht näher einzugehen, da alle in Betracht kommenden Einzelheiten besonders von Rohde mit solcher Meisterschaft dargestellt und zu einem großen Bilde zusammengefaßt sind, daß ich nichts hinzufügen habe."

4. Metaphor borrowed from Giuseppe Giangrande, "On the Origins of the Greek Romance: The Birth of a Literary Form," *Eranos* 60 (1962), 132.

5. That was not, as asserted by Giangrande in his excellent study "On the Origins of the Greek Romance", 125, Alexandrian love elegy.

6. Appearing for the first time in the mid Byzantine period (9th century) or, to be more precise, in Photius' *Bibliotheca*, only to reappear for the second and the last time three centuries later in Makrembolites' novel *Hysmine and Hysminias*, a genre-designation that was otherwise equated with the so-called fictional, or rather realistic narrative in all the technical manuals of late antiquity. On other terms such as *dramatikōn* (*dramatikón*), *σύνταγμα dramaticόν* (*syntagma dramaticón*), *ἑρωτικῶν δραμάτων ὑπόθεσις* (*erotikōn dramátōn hypóthesis*) used by Photius as the genre terms see Erwin Rohde, *Der griechische*



the ancient theory of narration and, above all, in the definition of its third type in Cicero<sup>7</sup> and the author of *Rhetorica ad Herennium*<sup>8</sup> was doomed to end in failure.

From a technical point of view Rohde got into trouble by losing sight of the key fact that strong evidence concerning both the origins and poetics of the Greek novel could be found in the complicated division of the third type of narrative as expressed in the works of the mentioned Latin authors, only if all instances of the use of *drama* and *plasma* in the Greek novel as well as in the writings of the exponents of the Second Sophistic<sup>9</sup> were subjected to some kind of hermeneutical analysis. Some of the essential meanings of the above-mentioned genre-designations, such as *subject-matter of myth, symbol, aetion, aenigma, concept (conchetto), metamorphic states of mind and body, every type of reversal*, especially that characterized by a *happy ending* could have been deciphered only in this way and thus enable us to draw the conclusion that no fewer than three types of subdivision, otherwise based on the criteria of (1) veracity of what is narrated,<sup>10</sup> (2) narrating person<sup>11</sup>

*Roman*, 376, n. 1 and Carl Werner Müller, "Chariton von Aphrodisias und die Theorie des Romans in der Antike," *Antike und Abendland* 22 (1976): 115-136.

7. Cicero, *On Invention*, 1, 27. It should be noted that the third type of narrative was conceived as a convenient practice, or rather exercise for handling the other two types, such as (1) setting forth the facts before a law court and (2) the so-called incidental narrative in a trial, more advantageously in actual causes.

8. Anonymus, *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1976), 1, 12.

9. See Ranko Kozić, "Drama, plasma e màqoj nei romanzi di Achille Tazio e del Macrembolita e i fondamenti filosofici del genere," *Classica et Christiana* 11 (2016): 123-178, and Kozić, "Die Gattungsbezeichnung 'drama' und der Symbolismus in Makrembolites' Roman," *Classica et Christiana* 13 (2018): 63-148. If our name appears more often here, this is because our attention was focused on certain aspects of literary works, overlooked in previous research on the subject.

10. Karl Barwick, "Die Gliederung der Narratio in der rhetorischen Theorie und ihre Bedeutung für die Geschichte des antiken Romans," *Hermes* 63 (1928): 282 noticed two of them, namely subdivisions based on criteria of veracity of what is narrated [(1) *fabula* = *màqoj* (narrative neither true nor probable), (2) *historia* = *fstor...a* (an account of exploits actually performed) and (3) *argumentum* = *dramatikÒn* or *plasmatikÒn* (an account of imaginary exploits, which yet could have occurred)] and narrating person (*genus in personis positum* = *kat' prÒswpa*), whereas the remaining subdivision, i.e. third one, based on the criterion of ending such as a happy outcome (*iucundo exitu rerum*), was detected by Kozić, "Drama, plasma e màqoj nei romanzi di Achille Tazio e del Macrembolita e i fondamenti filosofici del genere," 2016, 123-178, namely a subdivision in which the key elements of both the plot and poetics of the Greek novel, such as never-ending reversals of fortune (*fortuna commutatione*) as well as metamorphic states of mind and body such as austerity and gentleness, hope and fear (*festiuitas ... confecta ex animorum dissimilitudine, grauitate lenitate, spe metu*), also found their reflection. Failing to observe this third type of subdivision was the reason behind the decision taken by almost all scholars to return to Rohde's unfinished theses, which in turn led to a distancing from his right attitude towards the theory of narration found in the mentioned works of the two Latin authors

and (3) the nature of the ending, were completely fused to each other in the complicated division of the third type of narration, or rather narrative in the above-mentioned Latin authors—something that sheds light on the phenomenon of a happy ending in the plot of the Greek novel, a phenomenon that was regarded by Rohde as some kind of brutal, unpoetic element,<sup>12</sup> due to which the Greek novel, it seemed to him, deserves to be placed at the lowest level on the scale of values, even beneath naive and puerile fairy tales.<sup>13</sup> This can be explained by the fact that he did not have the slightest idea of how this type of a happy ending might also be deeply founded on Plato's concept of happiness understood as εὐδαιμον...α (*eudaimonía*),<sup>14</sup> as expressed at the very end of the myth of the winged chariot in the *Phaedrus*,<sup>15</sup> with polar opposite feelings such as *man...α* (sc. *erotic manía*) and *swfrosÚnh* (*sophrosýne* - *continence*) continuously alternating and complementing each other in the soul of the lover and his beloved<sup>16</sup>—something

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and rightly regarded by him as a fundamental starting point in every attempt aimed at deciphering both the origins and poetics of the novel. The studies of the Greek novel thus ended up getting caught in a vicious circle, as implicitly acknowledged by both Barwick, "Die Gliederung der Narratio in der rhetorischen Theorie," 1928, 287 and Carl Werner Müller, "Chariton von Aphrodisias und die Theorie des Romans in der Antike," 1976, 116, who adopted Rohde's theses, highly disputable though they were, as the only way out of this impasse.

11. This type of subdivision (*genus in personis positum* = *kat' pròswpa*) is also threefold depending on who narrates: the author himself (*genus enarratiuum*), or characters acting on the stage (*genus imitatiuum*) or both the author and the characters (*genus commune*), and as such essentially based on Plato's subdivision of poetry in the *Republic* (329c).

12. *Der griechische Roman*, 307: "... schwächere Dichter tuen vielleicht ganz recht, wenn sie, der oben erwähnten Brutalität ausweichend, ihre Dichtungen nach dem Prinzip der sog. poetischen Gerechtigkeit anlegen, welche nichts anderes ist als eine Sanktionierung jenes Glaubens an die kausale Verknüpfung zweier so völlig geschiedener Dinge, wie sittliche Güte und irdisches Glück sind".

13. *Ibid.*: "In voller Unschuld lebt dieses höchst unwirkliche Prinzip freilich nur im Märchen, welchem (ganz im Unterschied vom Mythos) dieser kindliche Optimismus wesentlich und überall eigen ist".

14. Cf. Friedemann Buddensieck, "Eudaimonie/Glückseligkeit," in *Platon-Lexikon: Begriffswörterbuch zu Platon und der platonischen Tradition* (ed.) Christian Schäfer (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007). With regard to the fact that we encounter emblematic concepts of Plato's philosophy widely applied in Makrembolites' novel in the form of barely visible symbols, we can, it seems, rightly assume that the third subtype of division within the third type of narration is, like the other two, also of Platonic origin. However, in Augusto Rostagni's famous study, *Aristotele e l'aristotelismo nella storia dell'estetica antica: origini, significato e svolgimento della Poetica* (Torino: Bottega d'Erasmus, 1955), 223 the mentioned subtype of division was, despite all this, closely associated with Theophrastus and the Peripatetic tradition.

15. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 255e.

16. The plot of the Greek novel could rightly be regarded as a specific "palingenesis" of the old Platonic myth of the winged chariot, simply due to the fact that the roles

that in the mentioned context was regarded as a guarantee of their happy and blissful life in this world, and, on a purely methodological level, had its tangible parallel with *man...a* (*manía*) and *lŌgoj* (*lógos*) woven into one harmonious and indivisible whole in Plato's own oeuvre.<sup>17</sup>

Only in this way, i.e., on condition that the above-mentioned requirements were fulfilled and the Platonic origin of the subdivisions of the third type of narration noticed, can we fully understand quite an uncommon and at first sight somewhat strange definition of what is called *dramatikŌn* (*dramatikŌn* = *argumentum*) in 11th century Byzantine rhetoric or, to be more precise, in Doxapatres' *Homelias in Aphthonium*,<sup>18</sup> where the above-mentioned type of narrative is characterized as an adaptation of the subject-matter of poetry aimed at meeting the needs of prose composition in the schools of rhetoric. This was, as will be seen shortly, the definition that, contrary to all expectations, led us without, so to speak, any margin of error to unravelling the riddle called the origins of the Greek novel and its poetics, only on condition that light has previously been shed on the relationship between the *subject-matter of poetry*, or rather *myth* and Plato's style and method.

Thus, all the prerequisites were fulfilled for focusing our attention on the only cornerstone of Rohde's monumental edifice seemingly spared from the blast and still believed to be worth preserving. What we are referring to are his theses on the relationship between the novel and sophisticated rhetoric which many thought were, as an obvious result, protected from all types of shockwave in the future; until, that is, another small, "despised" detail of enormous destructive potential found in Lucian's implicit poetics came into play.

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assigned to the protagonists of the Greek novel are reminiscent of those played by the dark and white horse in the mentioned famous myth.

17. See Giovanni Reale, *Platone, Fedro: introduzione, traduzione, note e apparati* (Milano: Bompiani, 2000), 231, n. 132.

18. In Christianus Walz, *Rhetores Graeci* (Tübingen: J. G. Cotta, 1834), vol. 2, 201, 10: ... æj toj poihtikoj ;rmŌzonta m£lista dr£masi. What is noteworthy is that in Doxapatres' definition *dramatikon* has essentially the same meaning as *argumentum* in Roman rhetoric, namely *subject-matter of poetry*, which was, unfortunately, largely ignored in previous research on the subject. See Charlton Lewis-Charles Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), s.v. *argumentum* as well as *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* s.v. *argumentum: materia poetarum aliorumque qui fabulas fingunt ... materia comoediarum et tragoediarum*. On importance of poetry for education of an orator cf. Philostratus, *Lives of the Sophists*, 539 where Polemo is represented as saying that "the works of prose writers needed to be brought out by armfuls, but the works of poets by the wagon-load."

## Lucian's Self-Interpretation as the Implicit Poetics of all Authors of the Second Sophistic

Contrary to all expectations, the sudden appearance of the *subject-matter of poetry* in Doxapatres' definition of *dramatikon* had a higher purpose exceeding by far the one usually associated with the expressiveness of a poetic word,<sup>19</sup> as can be inferred indirectly from Lucian's three canons of both distinguished authors and exemplary works of art appearing in his dialogues the *Dance (De saltatione)*,<sup>20</sup> *Lexiphanes*<sup>21</sup> and *Essays in Portraiture (Imagines)*,<sup>22</sup> which could rightly be regarded as the three instances of self-interpretation to be applied to all the other major exponents of the Second Sophistic as well.<sup>23</sup> We can fully grasp the meaning of the expression *subject-matter of poetry* in Doxapatres' definition only after having ascertained whether there are constants in the mentioned canons. And the results are the following: Homer and Hesiod referred to as the best poets,<sup>24</sup> tragedy and comedy<sup>25</sup> (as far as the latter is concerned Lucian seems to have had in mind that of Aristophanes), Plato and Socrates as the protagonist of his dialogues. Thus, Plato's name appears in a very indicative context, where a close relationship has been established between his work and that of the authors interested in the subject-matter of poetry or, in other words, *myth*. This can be explained by his apparent aspiration to visualize mythical patterns when his concept essentially determined by *logos* cannot be developed any further, and this very conceptualization

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19. Cf. Lucian, *Charon or the Inspectors (Contemplantes)*, 7 where Homer's poetic word is represented as being even capable of provoking storms on the peaceful waters of the river of the dead as soon as it is uttered by the author on the boat of Charon.

20. *Dance*, 60-61, where Homer and Hesiod along with the best poets, especially those characterized as tragic, are referred to as canonical. The lack of mention of Plato's name in Lucian's writing can be explained by the fact that it is essentially based on the doctrine of the parts of soul as expressed in the fourth book of the *Republic*, 439d-440e and explicitly mentioned by the author himself (70).

21. 22.

22. *Essays in Portraiture*, 6, 7, 8 and 17.

23. Unlike the mentioned exponents of the Second Sophistic who desperately tried to disguise key elements of their poetics, Lucian made them publicly known in the canons referred to above, which is why he was not even mentioned in Philostratus' register of the sophists. This explains in the best way possible why his writings are of inestimable value for our understanding of the new sophistic.

24. It is noteworthy to point out that, in contrast to the canons we encounter in the *Dance* and *Essays in Portraiture*, Homer and Hesiod were not explicitly mentioned as such in the one appearing in *Lexiphanes*.

25. It is worthy of note that there is no mention of comedy in the canon appearing in the *Dance*, which can be explained by the fact that what was termed *tragodia* included, implicitly, comedy, all the more so since the latter was Lucian's favourite genre, otherwise characterized as "attractive, lovely comedy" in his canon in *Lexiphanes*.

of the mythical imagery<sup>26</sup> helps us understand why Socrates, along with Homer and Hesiod, was represented as an exemplary painter in the canon of fine and plastic arts in *Imagines*,<sup>27</sup> and why so large a space in the text of the Greek novel was reserved for the descriptions of paintings and sculptures having, as will be seen later, a profound philosophical dimension.

A very close relationship has thus been established between mythical, or rather poetic image, and pictorial (sculptural) concept on one side and Platonic idea on the other, as testified by an illustrative example from Lucian's above-mentioned work, in which painting with words the portrait of Panthia—a woman of divine beauty and on top of that inspired by men's aristocratic ideal of *kalokagathia*...a (*kalokagathía*)—was deliberately chosen to visualize, as far as the needs of rhetorical instruction are concerned, the two basic principles of the new rhetoric given in bare outline in the *Phaedrus*,<sup>28</sup> such as the analytical partition of a phenomenon (*diairšseij* – *diaireseis*) and synoptic reduction of the partitioned to a single idea (*sunagwga*... – *synagogaí*), with both of them being slightly modified and disguised as *paradeigmata* (*paradeígmata*) and *ercštupa* (*archétypa*) in his dialogue<sup>29</sup> closely associated with *Imagines*—something that points to the fact that the relationship between archetype, Platonic idea and poetic image has become ever more evident in the early period of the Second Sophistic.<sup>30</sup>

This has brought us one big step closer to our goal of understanding the true nature of the Second Sophistic in so far as the description of painting the portrait of Panthia enabled us to see clearly what the use of the above-mentioned principles (*diairéseis* and *synagogaí*) in the schools of rhetoric looked like. What is referred to here is the method that could best be characterized as *assembling* or, in other words, *montage*, which makes it more difficult even for a scholar to understand the deeper and true meaning of things simply due to the fact that nowadays *montage* itself is largely identified with a wide range of purely technical and

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26. It should be pointed out that giving Thucydides the status of canonical author in *Lexiphanes* (22) can be interpreted in the same way, since his conceptual elaboration of real, historical events may be regarded as a kind of complement to Plato's method applied to the polar opposite subject-matter, such as myth. We can rightly assume that, as far as literary canons are concerned, Lucian passed over in silence Herodotus' work which seemed to be of greater importance than that of Thucydides to the men of letters in their attempt to work out literary material, as can be inferred from his writings *Herodotus or Aëtion* and *On the Syrian Goddess (De Syria dea)*, the latter of which stands out from the former for a noble attempt at imitating the celebrated historian's style. Truth be told, there is yet another exception in so far as we encounter rhetoricians presented as canonical authors in *Lexiphanes* (22).

27. *Essays in Portraiture*, 17: "We shall require many models ... and one, like herself (sc. Panthia), Ionic, painted and wrought by Aeschines, the friend of Socrates, and by Socrates himself, of all craftsmen the truest copyists because they painted with love".

28. 266b.

29. *Essays in Portraiture Defended (Pro imaginibus)*, 10.

30. *Ibid.*, 15.

mechanical skills all too craftsmanslike in nature. The paradox, then, is that in Lucian's epoch, as opposed to now, the aforesaid method was under the influence of Plato's philosophy closely linked to achieving sublime, lofty objectives in the field of art and literature, as can be inferred from the fact that the author's painting with words, or rather *assembling* the portrait of Panthia was represented as if the greatest names of fine and plastic art shared the task of portraying with each other and consequently shaped that part of her figure in the elaboration of which they were thought to be peerless,<sup>31</sup> as advocated by none other than Socrates in his conversations with both Parrhasius the painter<sup>32</sup> and Cleito the sculptor<sup>33</sup> in Xenophon's *Memorabilia* which can rightly be regarded as the legend of Socrates launched almost immediately after his death with the aim of putting the key terms of his political testament in *Alcibiades*<sup>34</sup> into practice as far as the literary activity is concerned. It's a strange paradox that the products of this seemingly dead art sprung from *montage* are, far from being dead and lifeless, truly immortal, in so far as their life in eternity is guaranteed by nothing other than the method itself. In order to understand how it is possible that an eternal life pulsates at high pressure through something seemingly dead, light must previously be shed on the phenomenon of the old Socratic *plasma* and the symbolism closely connected with it, as reflected in both Lucian's and Philostratus' work.

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31. Ibid, 6-7.

32. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3, 10, 1-5.

33. Ibid, 3, 10, 6-15.

34. 123d-e. What we are referring to here are *sophía* and *epiméleia* (*wisdom* and *industry*) as concepts initially having political dimension and being later on, under the influence of Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, closely associated with the central principles of the new rhetoric in the *Phaedrus* (*diairéseis*, *synagogáí*, i.e. analytical partition of the phenomenon and the synoptic reduction of the partitioned to a single idea respectively)—something that, as will be seen later, gave occasion for promoting the *montage* as the most efficient method for increasing creativity in both literary writings and plastic arts. That the new rhetoric had carried off an overwhelming victory over the rhetoric of a scholastic, technical type in the period of the Second Sophistic can be inferred, among other things, from a particularly characteristic statement we come across in Eunapius's *Lives* (497) about Libanius' rival Acacius said to have decisively based his method on ancient models (*léxis metá krótou pros ton archaíon metéstrephe týpon*). On the basis of the similar formulation in Lucian [*To One Who Said You're a Prometheus in Words* (3): *archaióterón ti tou plásmatos*] we can rightly assume that what Lucian meant here was Socratic *plasma*—something that Rohde failed to notice, as will be seen later. The same is also true for his failure to observe that the *Phaedrus*, Socrates and Plato's oeuvre account for the better part of the citations and allusions in Philostratus and Eunapius' *Lives of the Sophists*, as can be concluded from the citation and allusion index such as the one provided by Wilmer Cave Wright in his study edition of the mentioned authors.

## Lucian, Old Socratic *plasma* and the Principles of the New Rhetoric and New Art in *Phaedrus*

Lucian's description of painting the portrait of Panthia contains two key messages, with the first of them reading: the above-mentioned principles are by themselves capable of making a divinity of a mortal woman, as was actually the case with Panthia after being happily turned into an artist's model, and the second one being not so easy to decipher due to both the relatively unusual milieu it was transmitted from and something that appeared at first sight to be purely craftsmanslike in nature. This second message was for yet another reason hardly detectable, as evidenced by the fact that it has been conveyed implicitly to the readership exhorted by their author to raise the logical question as to how great potential the above-mentioned method must necessarily have for making a god of an artist, i.e., rhetorician, if what seemed to be an ordinary artist's model acquired, due to that, characteristics of immortality.<sup>35</sup>

The answer to the question as to what has such a daemonic power could be found in the emblematic passage from the second part of the *Phaedrus*, Plato's programmatic dialogue, where we come across Socrates' open confession that he personally regards one capable of looking at the same time towards One (*synagogaí*) and many (*diairéseis*) as a god, which makes him walk after that person and enthusiastically follow in his footsteps.<sup>36</sup> This kind of "following in someone else's footsteps" will, as will be seen later, turn out to be the key when it comes to shedding light on the phenomenon of the Greek novel as well as the better part of post-classical Greek literature. Thus, the main message, conveyed through painting the portrait of Panthia, essentially characterized by *montage*, reads: the author makes known to his readership in a graphic and yet enigmatic way that he too, filled with a kind of religious fervour, continues to follow in Socrates' footsteps, looking on him as a divinity, as testified, among other things, by the fact that both the concepts and the scenic elements of his dialogues are reminiscent of their Platonic models.<sup>37</sup>

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35. That can explain the habit of the sophists to dress themselves in the finest clothes in their public appearances, a fact for which Rohde had only the ready-made qualifier *barbarian* simply due to his misunderstanding of the phenomenon.

36. *Phaedrus*, 266b-c with an allusion to Homer's *Odyssey* (5, 193): Ἐν τε τῆν' ἄλλων ἵγ' ὄσμαι δυνάτῳ ἐ, ἔν κα' ἄπο' πόλιν πεφύκετο δῖον, τοῦτον δὲ κωκὰ τὸ πῆμα μετ' ἄκρον ἐστὲ θεοῦ κα' ἄνθρωποι κα' τὸ ἄνθρωπον ἀνθρώπων ἀνθρώπων δῖον.

37. Cf. *The Dead Come to Life or the Fisherman (Piscator)*, 6 where the message of Lucian's devoutness to the ideals of Platonic, or rather Socratic philosophy is conveyed implicitly through the use of the plural (philosophers) instead of the singular (philosopher), as can be inferred from the emblematic concept of the poet or rhapsode as a bee flitting from flower to flower, borrowed by the author from the *Ion* (534a-b): "I have always consistently admired philosophy and extolled you (sc. all of you) and lived on intimate terms with the writings that you have left behind. These very phrases that I utter—where

We can grasp the very essence of *montage* as a method closely connected with and inseparable from *following in someone else's footsteps* when contrasting it with its very opposite, such as *invention*—something that will shed light on and help us understand what seemed at first sight to be quite uncommon aesthetic and evaluation criteria applied in later times, such as those of the Second Sophistic, namely criteria which turned out unexpectedly to be essentially based on both the key premises of Platonic philosophy and its emblematic images. In Lucian's fairly brief writing *To One Who Said You're a Prometheus in Words* (*Prometheus es in verbis*), we come across such an emblematic image exuding Platonic influence and showing in a vivid, straightforward manner the core of the relationship between the two opposite methods referred to above, with the invention itself, explicitly characterized as *plasma*, being therein symbolized by Promethean figures made of clay and becoming living creatures as soon as Athena breathes into the mud and thus makes the clay models live, which is why the creation resulting from such a method assumed, as was to be expected, characteristics of a full-blown, truly living art.<sup>38</sup>

On the other hand, the *assembling* itself, based in a decisive measure on the archetype, (*ἄρχητυπον* – *archétypon*), was also denoted by the term *plasma* in Lucian's mentioned work and, moreover, additionally characterized by the attribute *ἄρχαιότερον* (*archaióteron*)<sup>39</sup> with the intent of giving honour to the method itself, as testified by the fact that he prides himself on his devoutness to the *montage* while disparaging the invention as *καίνωτης* (*kainótes*),<sup>40</sup> *καίνοποιον* (*kainopoieîn*)<sup>41</sup> and *καίνουργόν* (*kainourgón*)<sup>42</sup> understood as *sheer novelty* and as such lasting only for a short period of time. For now at least, we have the sense that the seemingly dead art which originated in the process of *assembling* is of a higher order than that which springs from invention, and what we still need to be assured that our initial assumption was not off the mark, is yet another emblematic image now concerning the concept of assembling, i.e., *montage* itself.

As such an image could not be found in Lucian's work, we were forced to make a detour into the same spiritual milieu and one of its most representative works such as Philostratus' *Imagines*, where we encountered it. The finding itself

else but from you did I get them? Culling them like a bee, I make my show with them before men, who applaud and recognize where and from whom and how I gathered each flower ...” The English version of the passage is borrowed from A. M. Harmon's study edition of Lucian (Loeb Classical Library), which is also true for all the other quotations from the mentioned author.

38. *To One Who Said You're a Prometheus in Words*, 3: ... *συνεῖργεζετο δὲ τὴν κατὰ τὴν ἀφῆρκα τῶν μὲν πρῶτα τῶν φησὶ καὶ ἀμύχου ποιοῦσα εἶναι τὰ πλάσματα.*

39. *Ibid*, 3: *τὸ μὲν οὐκ ἐνυφαντῶν, ἐ, καίνοποιον δόκο... ἤν, μὴ δὲ αἰκοὶ τῶν ἰσχεῖν ἀρχαιότερον τὴν τοῦ πλάσματος, ὁὰ τοῦτο ἀπογονόν τῆς στήν.*

40. *Ibid.*

41. *Ibid.*

42. *Ibid.*



surpassed all expectations in so far as it subsequently turned out that Philostratus' description of a painting featuring Daedalus' workshop<sup>43</sup> together with Lucian's emblematic image of Prometheus' modelling human figures in clay makes up a form of methodological diptych, with its parts standing in sharp contrast to each other. That in Philostratus' description Daedalus is represented as Socrates and his workshop as that of Socrates can be inferred from the fact that he speaks Attic, being, moreover, barefooted and clothed in tribon as a characteristic Socratic overcoat. That this is an allusive and yet elegant technique can be deduced from the fact that before starting on modelling his figures Daedalus is represented as "looking intently at the intelligible reality exceeding by far the cognitive powers of human mind"<sup>44</sup>—a fact which clearly points to the famous passage from the myth of the winged chariot in the *Phaedrus* dealing with Ὠπερουρανίος (*hyperouránios*),<sup>45</sup> i.e., the top of the vault of heaven as a realm of perfect Forms, which could be regarded as yet another clear indication that Philostratus thereby wanted to lay particular stress on the fact that he remained faithful to the ideals of a new art essentially based on the key postulates of the new rhetoric as expressed in the *Phaedrus*.

What is going on in the mentioned workshop clearly suggests that life pulsates at high pressure through this seemingly dead art sprung from *montage*, with figures including that of a cow being present in it in all their developmental phases, i.e. from a rough draft and its somewhat elaborated version to the shapes already giving an inkling of motion and gradually coming out of the workshop, thus covering all the stages in their life progress, from, so to speak, a bud to a ripened fruit, so that it is hard to shake off the feeling that a specific sea of life overflows from the workshop of Daedalus, Socrates' legendary ancestor. There is no more doubt that Lucian's *old plasma* is nothing other than Socrates' plasma, with the quintessence of this "new" art, essentially determined by *montage*, lying, unlike that of Promethean plasma and its narrow, limited lifespan, just in *palingenesis*, i.e., in a never-ending process of rebirth of the same mythical and poetic concept in the form of *plasma* and its eternal life in metamorphose, as shown by the fact that the concept itself, although substantially the self-same, is increasingly assuming new forms with the result that a steady flow of diversity circulates through thematic uniformity and monotony, which is to be regarded as *atopon*, with one and the same poetic motif simultaneously being the same and different, as in the case of another painting in Philostratus,<sup>46</sup> representing Achilles as a child and his ethos. Thus, what has emerged is a sharp contrast between Promethean plasma and its limited lifespan on one side and the old Socratic

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43. *Imagines*, 1, 16 (Pasiphae).

44. Ibid: αὐτῶν δὲ Δα...δαλοῖ ἐτικ...ζει μὲν καὶ τῶ εἰδοῖ ὀψρσοφὸν τι καὶ ἄνουν βλῆσων...

45. 247b-248a.

46. *Imagines*, 2, 2 (Education of Achilles).

plasma on the other, with the latter's daemonic power to provide an eternal life for its creations.

We can get the full picture of the art symbolized by Daedalus' workshop only after having hermeneutically read, along with Lucian and Philostratus' work, Plato's early dialogues, where we come across a whole series of artisan terms and expressions used in an attempt by the above-mentioned authors to graphically illustrate strenuous exertions in seeking to shed light on, elaborate and put finishing touches to a detail found in the archetype, such as *forging by the craftsman's hammer in the blacksmith's workshop* in Lucian,<sup>47</sup> *boring, polishing with the cutting edge* and *sawing* in Philostratus,<sup>48</sup> or again kindred expressions like *scraping, filing, whetting* and *cutting to small pieces* in Plato's *Hippias*,<sup>49</sup> which explains in the best way possible why such an art is so close to life, as evidenced by the fact that its creations cover a long distance from a bud to a ripened fruit or, to be more precise, from a rough draft to the final, polished version. The cited passage from Lucian's *Demosthenis encomium* graphically illustrates the essence of such an art, a passage that will bring us closer to both the ideal of life and aesthetics and evaluation criteria, otherwise closely associated with the phenomenon of Socrates' old *plasma*, without which it is not at all possible to understand either the poetics of the novel or the better part of the corpus of post-classical Greek literature.

### The Song of the Sirens:

#### Old Socratic *plasma* at its Best and its Reflection in the Greek Novel

Despite what has been said about the main aesthetic and methodological principles, as expressed in Philostratus' and Lucian's emblematic images and the literary canons of the latter, we need yet another key detail which may additionally explain why the old Socratic *plasma* held a special attraction for the above-mentioned authors, as evidenced by the fact that they walked after Socrates with religious fervour and followed in his footsteps, inspired, so it seems, by the above mentioned celebrated message of the *Phaedrus*, which made them look on the legendary philosopher as a divinity—something that will provide an incentive for recreating ideals of both aesthetics and life, restored to all

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47. *In Praise of Demosthenes (Demosthenis encomium)*, 14: œmyucon ka^ sfur»laton™po...hsen tÕn IÕgon.

48. *Imagines* 1, 16: ... tîn 'Erètwn ka^ of tÕ trÚpanon ... stršfontej ka^ of ... tù skep£rnJ lea...nontej t! m»pw °kribwmšna ... of dè™p^ toà pr...onoj œnoif£n te Øperbebl»kasi p©san.

49. *Greater Hippias*, 304b: kn»smat£ to...™stin ka^ peritm»mata tîn IÕgwn ... kat! bracÝ diVrhmšna.

their former glory in the later periods of the Second Sophistic, as will be seen shortly.

We can obtain an answer to the question concerning the magnetic attraction exerted on the men of letters by Socrates' plasma compared, among other things, to the songs of the Sirens in Alcibiades' speech in the *Symposium*,<sup>50</sup> only after having established a connection between the critical judgments of two authors, who, as far as ancient literary criticism is concerned, were the only style theorists that hit the mark and noticed an ironical, comical note in Socrates' or Plato's way of speaking and writing, as testified by Aristotle's statement<sup>51</sup> that by using one and the same stylistic device in the *Phaedrus*, such as dithyrambic compounds, Plato managed to achieve a huge effect, resulting in the fusion of polar opposites, such as pathos and humour. What Aristotle seemed to hint at was most probably Socrates' second speech on love in the *Phaedrus* as well as its emblematic feature, the myth of the winged chariot. Aristotle's attitude becomes increasingly important if complemented by the one we encounter in Lucian's *Hall* about Socrates proclaiming lofty ideals, and at the same time imperceptibly poking fun at Phaedrus of Myrrhinus as if the latter were—to paraphrase the author's words—a small, snotty child.<sup>52</sup>

Thus in keeping with Norden's favourite term, the myth of the winged chariot turned out to be a specific *Signatur* of Socrates' style, in so far as both flying up to ethereal heights, couched in lyric images, and a certain comicality reminiscent of childish naïve tales were mixed with and fused to each other in it in such a way, that the human eye—to use yet again Philostratus' celebrated analogy<sup>53</sup>—might not be capable of discerning where the sublime ends and the comical begins and what is so funny about such absolutely lofty subject-matter.<sup>54</sup> This kind of unparalleled combination of polar opposites in Socrates' style was, due to its daemonic power, regarded as something beyond imitation, just the way any attempt to remain indifferent to this type of creation reminiscent of a specific song of the Sirens was deemed next to impossible. What can also be adduced to explain the reason why this feature of Socrates' style remained peerless is Lucian's oeuvre itself in which the method of interweaving polar opposites such

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50. 216a.

51. *Art of Rhetoric*, 3, 7 (1408b).

52. *Hall*, 4: ka...toi Swkrētei mēn φσρχσε plētanoj eūfu%j ... ka^ phg% diaug%j mikrōn φpō toà 'llissoà, kçntaàqa kaqezōmenoç Fa...drou te toà Murrinous...ou kateirwneUeto ka^ tōn Lus...ou toà Kefēlou Iōgon di»legce ka^ tij MoÚsaj τμκλει, ka^ τμρ...steuen %xein aUtij τμρ^ t%n τμrh...an.

53. Philostratus, *Imagines*, 2, 2.

54. On the mixture of the serious and the laughable as a widespread ideal of life and aesthetics in late antiquity and the Middle Ages see Ernst Robert Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1961), 419-434. It is worth mentioning that Platonic origin of the mixture is not even touched upon in his summary presentation of the phenomenon.

as the serious and the laughable was characterized by perfect harmony and symmetry,<sup>55</sup> yet despite all this, the above-mentioned parts of a whole might be separated from each other if an operation were to be carried out on the text with the precision of a surgeon, so that an attentive reader, in keeping with Philostratus' analogy, could almost without effort discern where the serious ends and the laughable begins.

Thus, as regards the aforesaid main characteristic of Socrates' style, men of letters had to content themselves with a substitute for it, such as imitating the remaining features of his art of speaking, with those allusive and symbolic standing out distinctly from the rest, as testified by a particularly characteristic passage from Plato's early dialogue *Laches*<sup>56</sup> where we come across an explicit statement saying that as a rule Socrates' speech on children passes imperceptibly into one about men—a fact which recommended him as a teacher of children and adults alike and, by the same token, of the entire Greek world, which would find its clear reflection in both the novel and the works of the major exponents of the Second Sophistic, as will be seen shortly. Another characteristic of Socrates' style, as expressed in dithyrambic compounds, poetic images and analogies, seemed convenient to be set as a model for imitation, all the more as it was, along with the aforementioned ones, used in his speeches in both the *Phaedrus* and the *Phaedo* in such a way that the entire phenomenon might rightly be regarded as a philosophical poetry.<sup>57</sup>

Finally, a combination of the mentioned features of Socrates' style immediately sprang to mind as an ideal solution, in so far as this kind of philosophical poetry seemed to be closely linked to the symbol and thus to leave ample room for men of letters to exalt the glory of Socrates' or Plato's philosophy with the noble aim to make it, in keeping with the key message of Socrates' political testament in the *Alcibiades*,<sup>58</sup> continuously resound like a specific song of the Sirens for centuries to come—something that, as far as the mentioned litterateurs are concerned, could have been achieved by playing a specific game of hide-and-seek with the analogies, namely a play essentially based on recycling one and the same archetypal idea

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55. *To One Who Said You're a Prometheus in Words*, 5.

56. 188b.

57. Cf. Giovanni Reale, *Platone, Simposio: introduzione, traduzione, note e apparati* (Milano: Bompiani, 2000), 41: "... Platone vuole indicare in modo emblematico (sc. by means of Socrates' successful attempt to drive Agathon and Aristophanes to the admission that the same man could have the knowledge required for writing comedy and tragedy and that the fully skilled tragedian could be a comedian as well) la sua convinzione di essere proprio lui *tale poeta*. La sua opera, nella dimensione del vero guadagnato mediante la filosofia, e quindi come poesia filosofica, invero e supera la tragedia e la commedia."

58. 123d, where the stress is laid on the two crucial forces, such as 'wisdom' and 'industry', or rather *sof...a* (*sophía*) and ἑπιμύθεια (*epiméleia*) which were later to be given the role of a specific bulwark in defending the Greek living space from foreign influences as well as a guarantor of victory in any future clashes with the barbarian element.

and resulting in an entire sea of concepts. That the above-mentioned testament might have played an important role in the process of conceiving the poetics of both the Greek novel and the literary products of the Second Sophistic can be deduced from the fact that for men of letters Platonic philosophy, Socratic style and its marvelous *plasma* were, no matter how paradoxical it may sound, more important than their own writings, as can be inferred from Lucian's explicit statement,<sup>59</sup> which could have served as a guideline for how we should read their own oeuvre including that of the authors of the Greek novel.

### Byzantine Novel: Barbarism or Symbolism?

It is through the use of symbols that the two exponents of the genre in the age of Komnenoi, Makrembolites' and Prodromos' novel, bring us closer to understanding the higher-order goals with which both the origins and poetics of the genre are closely associated. Unravelling enigmas posed by hardly visible symbols was only possible by applying the method of comparative analysis requiring a lot of repeated reading of the same text. There is, however, an additional problem resulting from the fact that the aforesaid symbols are fully disguised by what seemed at first sight to be rambling details making no sense—something that Rohde couldn't help but label "barbarian,"<sup>60</sup> given his misunderstanding of the phenomenon. Ironically enough, what appears at first sight to be a formulation bereft of logic and sense ended up having not only its logical place in the composition of a whole but also the capacity to make that whole assume, in keeping with the key principles of Lucian's poetics, characteristics of harmony and symmetry. As far as the composition itself is concerned, key passages from Makrembolites' novel, i.e., those opening, central and final, fully characterized by the emblematic images of Plato's philosophy, point more than anything else to just that kind of conclusion, which might not be drawn if the compositional aspect was overlooked, with the above-mentioned images being, as a result of this kind of failure, inevitably reduced to nothing other than a platitude and inflatedness.

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59. *The Dead Come to Life or the Fisherman*, 6: "... and although ostensibly it is I whom they (sc. men) admire for the bouquet, as a matter of fact it is you (sc. philosophers, first of all Socrates and Plato) and your garden, because you have put forth such blossom, so gay and varied in their hues—if one but knows how to select and interweave and combine them so that they will not be out of harmony with one another."

60. *Der griechische Roman*, 561: "... und das Ergebnis ist doch nur ein, selbst den Achilles überbietendes Wortgekräusel und peinliches Difteln in armselig anspruchsvollen Phrasen (sc. in Makrembolites' novel), denen die ganz korrupte ... Redeweise ... noch einen besonders barbarischen Zusatz gibt."

Already in the opening passages from Makrembolites' novel we come across the scene wherein the novel's protagonist compares himself to both divinity<sup>61</sup> and Socrates.<sup>62</sup> The names of Socrates' legendary ancestors, Daedalus<sup>63</sup> and Hephaestus,<sup>64</sup> are also mentioned in the same context and, moreover, associated with the making of bird figures adorning the garden well in Aulikomis, namely a well whose motionless water surface is said—due to the wonderful effect produced by white island marble laid in its bottom and artfully marked with dark dappling—to create the impression of running like a stream, with stormy sea waves<sup>65</sup> at times seemingly swelling upon it, which seems to contain a veiled allusion to both the emblematic feature of Socrates' speeches, equated in the *Hippias* with muddying the discussion,<sup>66</sup> and the daemonic power of his word reminiscent of truly poetic, i.e., Homeric, utterances capable of provoking storms even on the river of the dead in the underworld, as can be inferred from a passage from Lucian's oeuvre.<sup>67</sup> There is in the same context yet another emblematic image, this time borrowed from the *Ion*, in which poet or, to be more precise, rhapsode is represented as an ordinary channel having no higher purpose than to let the daemonic force of poetry, streaming from the divine, celestial heights, pass through him<sup>68</sup> and thereby create the possibility for that force to both reveal itself to the world and people and make them dance to the beat of its lovely rhythms capable of galvanizing anyone. In a specific game of hide-and-seek the archetype in the *Ion* was subjected to a strange kind of metamorphosis in Makrembolites' novel, as a result of which it turned out to be almost unrecognizable, as evidenced by the fact that the men appearing in the archetypal concept were substituted in the latter with the trees, said to be broadening their branches and embracing

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61. *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 1, 3, 1: ¼kw k»rux kaˆ dšcomai par' aÙtÁj oÙc æj k»rux øll' æj qeÖj.

62. *Ibid.*, 1, 3, 2: ˆmè dè periest©si, kaˆ lamprÒn tina corÒn toàton ˆ...ssousin, oCEon kaˆ Swkr£thn of zhlwtaˆ perieist»keisan.

63. *Ibid.*, 1, 5, 6: § p£nq' (sc. figuras avium) ... Daid£lou ceˆr ˆtechnoÚrhšen ...

64. *Ibid.*, 1, 5, 6: § p£nq' (sc. figuras avium) "Hfestoj ˆcalkoÚrhse.

65. *Ibid.*, 1, 5, 7: tÒn toà fršatoj puqmšna nhsièthj ˆkÒsmei l...qoj leukÖj mšn, øll' Øpemela...neto kat' mšrh ... æj ˆnteàqen dokeˆn tÖ Ûdwr kineˆsqai dihnækij kaˆ katakumatoàsqai kaˆ oCEon ønakurtoàsqai.

66. *Lesser Hippias*, 373a: øll' Swkr£thj ... øeˆ tar£ttei ˆn toˆj IÒgoij kaˆ ˆoiken éesper kakourgoànti.

67. See n. 19. What we read in Dio Chrysostom's fairly brief discourse (55, 9), or rather "essay" speaks volumes about striking similarities between Homer and Socrates, as evidenced by the fact that "they both were devoted to the same ends and spoke about the same things" through different media such as those of verse and prose and were furthermore most "effective at making similies, comparisons and analogies." It has turned out that what applies to Homer's word does also to that of Socrates.

68. *Ion*, 533d-534b: øesti gˆr toàto tšcnh mèn oÙk xn par' soˆ perˆ `Om»rou eà lšgein, Ö nàn d¼ ølegon, qe...a dè dÚnamij ¼ se kineˆ.

themselves in the rhythms of a choral song<sup>69</sup> in order to form a vault of crowns impenetrable to sun-beams otherwise reaching to the ground only when Zephyrus creates some kind of a channel on the top of crowns by shifting their leaves with his whiff—something that in an allusion to the celebrated *Iliad* verse<sup>70</sup> was characterized by the novel's protagonist as *chryséa seirá* (“a chain of gold”)<sup>71</sup> symbolizing heavenly love<sup>72</sup> in Lucian and, by the same token, enthusiasm and mania-related origins of both poetry and rhetoric<sup>73</sup> streaming from the realm beyond heaven, as depicted in the myth of the winged chariot.

We also come across reflections which the two emblematic metaphors appearing in the second part of the *Phaedrus*, such as *writing in the black water*<sup>74</sup> and *planting the garden of letters*<sup>75</sup> found in the final passages from Makrembolites' novel, where the author gives vent to his own and his dearest's desire for their love adventures to be written in a kind of indelible script so as to be eternized, and for better understanding of what follows it is also worth noting that the mentioned metaphors were used by Socrates for the purpose of demonstrating all the impotence of the script when contrasted with the living and breathing word and its daemonic power to imprint itself on the soul of the listeners. It was, however, not that difficult to notice the reflection of the aforesaid metaphors in Makrembolites' novel, given that we find them therein slightly modified and changed into metaphors of both *painting on water*<sup>76</sup> and *painting by means of plants and their floral adornment*.<sup>77</sup> It was, however, much harder to fathom out their meaning, simply due to the fact that it was, first of all, necessary to establish a

69. *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 1, 4: dÉfnh gir ka<sup>^</sup> murr...nh ka<sup>^</sup> kÚparittoj ka<sup>^</sup> ¥mpeloi ... TM<sup>^</sup>faploàsi toÝj klÉdouj æj ce<sup>^</sup>raj ka<sup>^</sup> éesper corÕn susths£mena katorofoàsi tÕn kÁpon.

70. 8, 19: seir¼n cruse...hn TM<sup>x</sup> oÙranÒqen krem£santej.

71. *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 1, 4: TM<sup>gë</sup> dè eïpon „dèn: crusšan TM<sup>plšxw</sup> moi t¼n seir£n, Sèsqenej. On the popularity of the Homeric image closely associated with the myth of the winged chariot in the period of the Second Sophistic cf. Lucian, *Hermotimus or Concerning the Sects*, 3: Ð toà `Om»rou ZeÝj crusÁn tina seirín kaqie`j toÝj aØtoà IÒgouj, Øf' in se çnasp´ dhlad¾ ka<sup>^</sup> çnakouf...zei prÕj aØtÕn.

72. Lucian, *In Praise of Demosthenes*, 13: t¼n d' oÙran...ou crusÁj tinoj seir©j œlxin (sc. kçntauq' `n filosofoj tù IÒgJ) oÙ pur<sup>^</sup> ka<sup>^</sup> tÕxoi j TM<sup>ntiqe</sup>san dusalqe j nÒsouj traum£twn.

73. *In Praise of Demosthenes*, 13 where Demosthenes' oratory is essentially characterized by *sóphron manía*: ... çll' TM<sup>p</sup> t¼n aÙtoà toà k£llouj ¥crantÕn te ka<sup>^</sup> kaqar'in „dšan TM<sup>xormisan</sup> (sc. t¼n d' oÙran...ou crusÁj tinoj seir©j œlxin) man...v sèfroni tîn yucîn ...

74. 276c: oÙk ¥ra spoudí aÙt! TM<sup>n</sup> Údati gr£yei mšlani spe...rwn dil' kal£mou met' IÒgwn çdun£twn mèn aÙto j IÒgJ bohqe'n, çdun£twn dè fkanij t£lhqÁ did£xai.

75. 276d: çll! toÝj mèn TM<sup>n</sup> gr£mmasi k»pouj ... paidi©j c£rin spere<sup>^</sup> te ka<sup>^</sup> gr£yei, Ótan dè gr£fv, `autù te Øpomn»mata qhsaurizÒmeno j ...

76. *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 11, 21: sÝ d' çll', ð PÒseidon ... `m«n oÙ perisèseij t¼n mn»mhn (çq£naton) ... t! kaq' `m©j TM<sup>n</sup> Údati katazwgrafín ka<sup>^</sup> mšcrij TM<sup>sc£twn</sup> thrín çnapÒnipta.

77. *Ibid*, 11, 22: sÝ d', ð GÁ mÁter ... fut! d' oÙk çnadèseij Ðmènuma ... Ólon dr©ma tÕ kaq' `m©j to j futo j katazwgrafoàsa.

logical relationship between the keywords appearing in the same context, such as the names of the mythical personalities Icarus, Daphne and Hyacinth, including the emblematic metaphor of living speech as a sculpture in Plato's *Republic*,<sup>78</sup> slightly altered by the addition of the adjective *kat&cruson* (*kat&chryson*) in Makrembolites.<sup>79</sup> Only thus was it possible to draw the conclusion that the author by using the above-mentioned keywords makes it known to his readership in a more implicit manner that his own story might also be eternized only if it assumes, like Socrates' life and words, characteristics of myth and legend—something that can only be achieved by applying the frequently mentioned principles of the new rhetoric, *diareseis* and *synagogai*, to his own written compositions as well as by modelling his own and his protagonists' course of action down to the last detail upon Socrates' life, which found its reflection in the way of living enjoying widespread popularity in the later periods of the Second Sophistic covered by Eunapius' *Lives*, as will be seen shortly.

That it is all about the Socratic model is further corroborated by the final message we encounter at the very end of the novel, with the genre's term *drama*<sup>80</sup> not appearing therein, as it might seem at first sight, by sheer chance, a term with the help of which an essential relationship might, contrary to all expectations, be established between the allusiveness of Socrates' word, symbolism and the novel as a genre. And the message itself is hidden, as evidenced by the fact that the author recommends his own and his darling's adventures simultaneously to the opposed groups within the reading audience,<sup>81</sup> as represented by those already seized by erotic mania as well as those whose attitude to love is marked by continence, i.e., "sophrosýne," while, regarding the full context essentially characterized by the emblematic images and metaphors of Platonic philosophy, it is pretty much clear that the message itself was conveyed in an enigmatic way to the entire readership, just because in the adventures referred to above both "manía" and "sophrosýne" were—in keeping with the final message of the myth of the winged chariot—interwoven with and fused to each other in perfect unity and proportion, considered to be a guarantee of a blissful life in this world.

That the final message, conveyed by the author at the very end of his work, should be interpreted in a symbolic way is further corroborated by yet another scene we come across almost at the very end of Prodromos' novel, with the key principles of old Socratic plasma, or rather new rhetoric, *diareseis* and *synagogai* (i.e. analytical partition of the phenomenon and synoptical reduction of the

78. 540c: pagk&louj, œfh, toÝj &rcontaj, ð S&kratej, éesper &ndriantopoi&ij œpe...rgasai.

79. *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 1, 4: ka... tij tîn Nyig&wnwn katarrhtore&sei taàta ka^ œj œq&natJ st&IV toj I&ogoj &ndri&nta caklourg&sei kat&cruson.

80. Ibid, 11, 24: kl&asij œstw tí b...blJ t&ij kaq' `Usm...nhn dr&ma ka^ t&on `Usmin...an t&ms̄.

81. Ibid, 11, 23: Óson m&en oân t&mn œnqr&epoj t&mrwtik&eteron, tîn pollîn t&mrwtikîn caritwn t&mcj œpod&setai ka^ Óson parqenik&on ka^ semn&teron, t&aj swfros&nhj p&lin œg&setai: ka^ o&wtwj t&mn œstai tí t&aj mn&mhj œq&nata.



partitioned to a single idea), being visualized in it, as was otherwise the case with Lucian's *Essays in Portraiture (Imagines)*. What is depicted in the mentioned scene are the embraced figures of the protagonists and their fathers at the moment of the highest possible delight such as their reunification in the garden of Kratandros' house in Cyprus after so long a period of time marked by endless wandering and suffering. The form of the embraced figures intertwined with each other and characterized as  $\rho\lambda\epsilon\sigma\iota\gamma$  (*plásis*), gives the impression that four bodies either coalesced into one head or one head ramified into four bodies,<sup>82</sup> with Socratic plasma's key principles, unrecognizably modified into  $\delta\iota\alpha\iota\rho\sigma\omega$  (*diaréo*) and  $\sigma\upsilon\nu\iota\zeta\alpha\lambda\omicron\nu$  (*synizáno*), thus being with almost religious fervour represented and eternized as a sculpture and, moreover, in the key passage such as the final one. We were, it seems, quite justified in speaking of religious fervour, simply due to the fact that one of the key terms, which is used to denote perfect number<sup>83</sup> in the philosophy of Pythagoras, appears in the above-mentioned passage from Prodromos' novel—something that could be explained by the author's noble aim of achieving perfection in a symbol-based elaboration of detail.

The central part of Makrembolites' novel or, to be more precise, its fourth book,<sup>84</sup> which is largely made up of the description of the ensemble of three large scale paintings depicted on the garden wall in Aulikomis, speaks volumes about the author's aspiration to achieve perfection in terms of composition. What we are referring to here is a series of wall paintings with Eros' boyish figure represented as naked and disproportionately large and, moreover, placed right in the middle of the cycle so as to be framed on one side by allegorical representations of the Virtues and on the other by those of months, symbolized by human figures denoting time and season-limited occupations, such as those of soldier, gardener, ploughman, shepherd and hunter, to mention just a few. We shall decipher the hidden meaning of the ensemble of paintings only when equating the allegorical figures of the Virtues and those of the months with the world of gods and the world of men respectively, which gives occasion for interpreting Eros' central position in the mentioned ensemble in accordance with the key message of Socrates' discourse in Plato's *Symposium*, with Eros himself being identified therein with the daemon filling the void between these worlds by both transmitting and interpreting messages coming from the world of gods to that of men, and conversely.<sup>85</sup> Thus, the cycle of paintings with the key thesis of Socrates' speech in the *Symposium* depicted in it turned out to be nothing other than a symbol of the

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82. Teodoro Prodromo, *Rodante e Dosicle*, 9, 317-330:  $\kappa\alpha\hat{\ } \sigma\chi\mu\alpha\tau\iota\sigma\mu\acute{\omicron}\nu \kappa\alpha\iota\acute{\omicron}\nu \tau\mu\chi\epsilon\zeta\omega\gamma\rho\epsilon\phi\omicron\nu\acute{\omicron}\nu$  /  $\alpha\epsilon\rho\iota\acute{\omicron}\nu\tau\omicron \gamma\iota\rho \tau\acute{\iota}\tau\tau\alpha\rho\epsilon\gamma \Upsilon\eta\eta\rho\omega\pi\omicron\iota \kappa\epsilon\lambda\tau\omega$  /  $\alpha\epsilon\gamma \epsilon,\eta \kappa\epsilon\phi\alpha\lambda\acute{\omicron}\nu \pi\rho\sigma\epsilon\phi\upsilon\kappa\acute{\omicron}\tau\epsilon\gamma \mu\ldots\alpha\eta$  / ... /  $\mu\ldots\alpha\eta \kappa\epsilon\phi\alpha\lambda\acute{\omicron}\nu \epsilon,\eta \tau\epsilon\tau\rho\alpha\kappa\tau\acute{\omicron}\nu \sigma\omega\mu\epsilon\lambda\tau\omega\eta$  /  $\delta\iota\alpha\iota\rho\epsilon\upsilon\sigma\alpha\eta$ ,  $\acute{\alpha} \tau\epsilon\tau\rho\alpha\kappa\tau\acute{\omicron}\nu \sigma\omega\mu\epsilon\lambda\tau\omega\eta$  /  $\omicron\epsilon\omicron\sigma\upsilon\eta\zeta\eta\kappa\upsilon\alpha\eta \epsilon,\eta \kappa\epsilon\lambda\alpha\eta \mu\ldots\alpha\eta$  /  $\zeta\acute{\omicron}\nu\acute{\omicron} \tau\iota \tau\epsilon\tau\rho\epsilon\sigma\omega\mu\omicron\eta$ ,  $\acute{\alpha} \tau\omicron\upsilon\eta\alpha\eta\tau\ldots\omicron\eta$  /  $\mu\omicron\eta\omicron\pi\rho\acute{\omicron}\sigma\omega\pi\omicron\eta \tau\epsilon\tau\tau\epsilon\rho\omega\eta \zeta\epsilon\eta\eta \rho\lambda\epsilon\sigma\iota\eta$ .

83. *Tetraktýs* (9, 326, 327).

84. *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 4, 3-20.

85. 202e.

daemonic power of the old Socratic plasma, which, like Eros himself, transmits messages from one world to another.

On the basis of evidence obtained by unravelling the symbols, we are in a position to conclude that the old Socratic plasma was identified with the song of the Sirens even in an epoch as late as that of the Komnenoi. This tendency cannot be fully understood without evidence provided by Eunapius for the leading exponents of the Second Sophistic in its later, second phase such as, to name just a few, Chrysanthius, Aedesius and Prohaeresius who made great efforts to imitate Socrates' life down to the last detail, with this excessive zeal going in Prohaeresius' case so far as to induce him to spend cold winters in Gaul barefooted<sup>86</sup> and clad in a tiny threadbare cloak as well as to drink nearly freezing water of the Rhine regarded by him as the height of luxury,<sup>87</sup> and all of it, as it seems, with the aim of surpassing his master's legendary achievement during his military episode in ice-cold Potideia.<sup>88</sup> The Second Sophistic in a later phase covered by Eunapius' *Lives* is of paramount importance for understanding the phenomenon of the Greek novel due to, among other things, the fact that even the female exponents of this intellectual current, such as Sosipatra, follow, full of enthusiasm, in Socrates' footsteps,<sup>89</sup> which can explain in the best way possible the important role played by women in the plot of the Greek novel—something for which Rohde was unable to find an explanation,<sup>90</sup> despite the fact that it was within his reach.

The life of Libanius, as depicted in Eunapius' *Lives*,<sup>91</sup> shows the extent to which the sophists of the period were driven by a passionate desire to live up to their billing as Socrates' followers. What is referred to here is the noble effort made by Libanius or, to be more precise, his "mission impossible" undertaken with the aim of transferring the mentioned daemonic features of Socrates' style to

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86. Eunapius, *Lives of the Philosophers and Sophists*, 492.

87. *Ibid.*

88. Plato, *Symposium*, 220b.

89. See Eunapius, *Lives of the Philosophers and Sophists*, 470 where the most sublime aspect of Platonic philosophy, such as both the translation of ideas and forms from the place beyond heaven to the earthly plane and the divination closely associated with it, as depicted in the myth of the winged chariot in the *Phaedrus*, is personified by a woman, none other than Sosipatra, who is, in no way by mere chance, presented as falling to both prophetic ecstasy and divinatory mania at the very moment she was discoursing on the central theme dealt with in Plato's mentioned work, such as the constituent parts of the soul and its descent into earth. The very fact that Sosipatra's character is modelled on the famous passage from Xenophon's *Memorabilia* (1, 4), where Socrates lays stress on the importance of divination for every well-ordered society, clearly speaks of Xenophon's influence on Eunapius' writing.

90. *Der griechische Roman*, 71: "Im wirklichen Leben entwickelte sich höchstens den Heteren gegenüber eine gewisse Ritterlichkeit, die nun freilich mit einem sehr unangenehmen Zusatz frivoler Sentimentalität versetzt war ... Von einer wesentlich veränderten Stellung ehrbarer Mädchen und Frauen erfahren wir nichts."

91. 495-496.

his way of living and his course of action. As it was very hard, as far as Socrates' style is concerned, to discern where the serious ends and the laughable begins and what is so funny about it, considering the lofty nature of the subject-matter, so Libanius himself was in a similar way regarded as a second self by all those admitted to his teaching despite the fact that they were pursuing modes of life opposed to one another, with the consequence that everyone applauded in him qualities that were opposite. This can be explained by the fact that all possible temperaments were constantly alternating and complementing each other in Libanius' personality, including those contrasting with each other and mutually exclusive—in full accordance, one may say, with Socrates' ideal of classifying speeches and souls with the aim of adapting the former to the most diverse temperaments of the audience, as advocated for in the *Phaedrus* (271d-e).

### **A Short Synopsis of Rohde's Theses as Presented in the Mentioned Chapter and Seen through the Prism of the Newly Gained Results**

Due to the limited space, we focus our attention only on some of Rohde's particularly characteristic theses, as presented in the mentioned famous chapter, so as to highlight the deficiencies in their elaboration, and, by the same token, to point to the need for re-evaluating the entire corpus of post-classical Greek literature, all the more so, since the mentioned theses have done, as already seen, a great injustice to the Greek novel to degrade it to the level of barbarism, caricature<sup>92</sup> and, moreover, children's naïve fairy tales.

That something was wrong, as already implied above, with Rohde's theses is also shown by the fact that the Greek novel, contrary to what was thought, turned out to be a specific hymn to both Platonic philosophy and the legendary Socratic plasma—a fact which may urge the need to revise some of his famous theses, all the more so since they, erroneously considered undisputed, found their reflection in large-scale works on literary history, rhetorical prose and the novel as a genre, such as those of Albin Lesky,<sup>93</sup> Eduard Norden<sup>94</sup> and Michail Bachtin<sup>95</sup> respectively. Taking a retrospective look at Rohde's theses seems to be important for yet another reason, since by doing so a key principle of great relevance to modern-day literary studies will be brought to light, along with a methodological imperative of great significance for future research on both the novel and the entire corpus of post-classical Greek literature. All the shortcomings of Rohde's

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92. *Der griechische Roman*, 559: "Der ganze Roman (sc. that of Makrembolites) ist nichts als eine Karrikatur der Erzählung des Achilles Tatius."

93. *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur* (Bern und München: Francke Verlag, 19713).

94. See n. 3.

95. Michail Bachtin, "Epos e romanzo," in *Problemi di teoria del romanzo: metodologia letteraria e dialettica storica* (Torino: Einaudi, 1976).

theses were evident from the fact that he identified the new with the old sophistic, as a result of which low and selfish motives such as glory, splendid outward appearance and riches were regarded by him as the three mighty Sirens<sup>96</sup> exercising a decisive influence over both the world view and the literary activity of the leading exponents of the Second Sophistic, while, on the contrary, they were inspired by the lofty ideal of following in Socrates' footsteps and made great efforts to dance to the rhythms of corybantic élan<sup>97</sup> setting in motion his speeches in the *Phaedrus* so as to be able to revive in the best way possible his old plasma which they, following the example of Alcibiades in Plato's homonymous dialogue, regarded as a rapturous song of the Sirens. It is, therefore, not at all surprising that he characterized the rhetoric of the period as nothing other than "the Asiatic oratory known for its evil nature,"<sup>98</sup> with just the qualifier "Asiatic" being indicative of his disparaging attitude towards both the novel and the new rhetoric, in so far as it, instead of a geographic term, became an evaluation criterion now standing for literary creation of the worst possible kind, equated with the greatest possible evil and in other passages from his monograph characterized as "an eloquence bereft of emotions,"<sup>99</sup> "rhetorical emptiness"<sup>100</sup> as well as "immense vanity."<sup>101</sup> Rohde

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96. *Der griechische Roman*, 316: "Kam nun zu der Gunst der Großen und der Bewunderung des Volkes noch die Lockung äußerer Vorteile, welche dem berühmten Redner und Redelehrer auf das reichste zuströmten, so könnte man in dieser dreifachen Macht des Ruhmes, des äußeren Glanzes und des Reichtums in der Tat die drei Sirenen erkennen wollen, welche so viele Bewerber schmeichlerisch an sich zogen."

97. See Eunapius, *Lives of the Philosophers and Sophists*, 501-502 where we come across a very revealing metaphor of reasoning, or rather elaborating the concepts and arguments as a "dance unfolding in the soul," namely a metaphor used by the author to graphically illustrate the effects of Chrysanthius' speech which like the sweetest song insinuates itself into all men's ears so as to both find its echo in the souls of the entire audience and—in keeping with the ideal of the new rhetoric as advocated by Socrates in the *Phaedrus*—adapt to the most diverse temperaments. The whole passage can also be regarded as an echo of Plato's concept of the theater of the world as reflected in the *Laws*, where the very processions, sacrifices, songs and dances were pointed out as the most advisable way of acting for man, regarded as an ordinary marionette of a deity, to spend his life in peacetime as best as possible by playing at the noblest of pastimes, in the *Philebus* (50b) succinctly characterized as the tragedy and comedy of life. See also n. 34.

98. *Der griechische Roman*, 311: "Außer einer strengeren und nüchterneren Übung der Kunst ... gab es eine üppigere Weise, welche im Glanze eines barock überladenen und grellen Schmuckes der Rede sich gefiel, die unter dem Namen der asianischen übel bekannte Beredsamkeit."

99. *Ibid*, 348: "Freilich war diese Art empfindungsloser Schönrednerei die notwendige Frucht einer bis zur höchsten Stufe der technischen Entwicklung getriebenen Redekunst ..."

100. *Ibid*, 380: "Wir haben diese rhetorische Leere, der jeder Gegenstand lediglich zum Vorwand und Anlaß über rein formalen Kunstübung dienen muß, aus dem ganzen Wesen der Sophistik zu begreifen versucht; wir werden nicht erwarten, daß aus den erotischen Exerzitien dieser Wortkünstler eine tiefere Seelenerfahrung zu uns spreche."

was, unfortunately, unaware of the far-reaching consequences of a negative kind that this thesis of his would necessarily have had if the question arose as to how it was at all possible for such evil to continue to exist for an entire millennium and yet experience a resplendent renaissance in an epoch as late as that of the Komnenoi.

### Conclusion: The Forthcoming Battle for Symbols

Finally, it turned out that all the deficiencies in Rohde's attitudes towards the Greek novel resulted from the fact that his research on the theory of narrative, quite rightly deemed a strong starting point, was not brought to an end in so far as it was not extended to the Byzantine period, more precisely to both 11th century rhetoric and the work of one of its most prominent exponents, with the *subject-matter of poetry* appearing all of a sudden in his definition of the third type of narration, which, from a purely formal point of view, could explain why stylistic elements of poetry have been widely applied in the Greek novel's prose narrative. As a result, Rohde had no other choice but to postulate the omnipotence of rhetoric as expressed in its centripetal force strong enough, in his view, to "suck in" all other genres, including both poetry and philosophy itself, due to which he succumbed to the temptation of comparing the Greek novel to its 19th century counterpart with which it has little in common.

A satisfactory explanation regarding the nature of rhetoric erroneously thought to be barbarian in the period of the Second Sophistic could be found in Eunapius' *Lives* which Rohde, for the reason stated above, did not dare to take into account, which ultimately proved to be an utter failure. Only on the basis of evidence provided by Eunapius, the far-reaching conclusion of paramount importance for the poetics of the Greek novel could be drawn, pointing to the *Phaedrus* and Socrates' speeches in it with their astonishing *plasma* as a prime mover behind all the ideals from which the late Greek renaissance drew its inspiration, a *plasma* that could in the best way possible explain the process of blending and fusing together poetry, philosophy and rhetoric with the purpose of creating a unified, organic whole. As an additional remark, it should be noted that in Dio Chrysostom's short "essay" (or. 55) on Homer and Socrates the fusing of myth, history and fable was pointed out as an essential conceptual and stylistic feature of the mentioned authors—a fact which, apparently, speaks volumes about the true nature of both the Second Sophistic and the novel as a genre, with the fictional or rather realistic narrative in the latter thus ending up being nothing other than montage, as advocated for by Socrates in Xenophon's *Memorabilia*.

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101. Ibid, 341: "Vorant steht eine, zuweilen ganz maßlose Eitelkeit. Diese war freilich ein natürlicher Ergebnis ihres, ganz auf die persönliche Virtuosität gestellten Berufes."

Thus, Rohde's controversial theses enabled us to draw three far-reaching conclusions on both the Greek novel and the entire corpus of post-classical Greek literature. First, we can rightly assume that the Greek novel still remains largely unread, and this is also true for the better part of post-classical Greek literature when it comes to an in-depth analysis of the texts. Second, the importance and relevance of the Greek novel to both the contemporary reading audience and the studies of modern literature is demonstrated by the fact that both the genre's plot and metaphors are laden with symbolism, as shown by particularly characteristic passages from the Byzantine novel, which gives rise to the assumption that a literary work bereft of a profound philosophical poetics is not worth much. Third, a major breakthrough in understanding the poetics of the Greek novel can only be achieved through an unrelenting battle for symbols.

Despite all that has been said about Rohde's theses, it would be wrong to conclude that his classical work is of little worth when it comes to inspiring further research efforts. As in the case of every major monograph, much of the book's significance lies in the fact that it raised the questions, such as those concerning the nature of the so-called erotic narrative (*erotische Erzählung*), the nature of sophisticated rhetoric and the role played in the Greek novel by both Tyche and women, none of which was fully answered to this very day. It can therefore be argued that what Hans-Georg Beck said about Krumbacher's classical work has to be true for Rohde's celebrated monograph as well:

“Was immer methodisch und sachlich an diesem Buch veraltet sein mag, ohne es ein paarmal durchgelesen zu haben, sollte man bei byzantinischer Literatur nicht mitsprechen!<sup>102</sup>”

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102. Hans-Georg Beck, *Das byzantinische Jahrtausend* (München: Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1994), 350.

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## **Analogy between Ancient Techniques of Theatrical Scenography and Shipbuilding Research Project: Iter Teatro - A Nautical, Nomadic Stage Using Water as Dramaturgical Element**

*By Ottavio Anania\**

*The paper outlines the initial idea behind this project, i.e., the similarity between theatrical dynamics, particularly on stage, and the building of wooden vessels, which during years of research, from 2004 till today, have led to the production of eight different versions of movable and floating stages. Historical sources provide evidence of how theatre stagehands and sailors shared very similar skills since the times of ancient Rome, and how some of the rituals typical of fishing villages, like the tuna fisheries in Sicily, consists of highly dramatized behaviours and methods, in a unique mixture of spirituality and engineering, which was applied by seamen spontaneously. During the years of development of this project, the element of water has always had the greatest importance, and consequently it represents the main performative element. Another key element is the journey, or Iter (in Latin). The concept of mobility has been translated into a stagecraft design which can be very easily moved from town to town, or from one country to another. The second part of the presentation will focus on concept-theatre and its latest developments, highlighting its main characteristics, structural details, purposes and prospects. The conclusion will argue the specific reasons why this project – which has long been teetering between dream and reality - should now be realized, considering, in particular, the ethical and social values pertaining to scenic arts, which since the Greek theatre have always been a powerful medium for telling the story and life of the people, and for renewing their cultural heritage.*

### **Introduction**

This paper is part of a study on mobile theatres that began in 2004. It is divided into two sections: the research and the consequent concept design, which was developed into the project of a theatrical equipment.

The analysis is focused on the similarities that have been found between theatre<sup>1</sup> and marine architecture.<sup>2</sup> There seems to be a specific parallelism in relation to these two sectors.

To begin with, the subdivision of spaces in height: in the theatre there is the substage, in a ship the hold; the theatre stage is the meeting place of all the workers, just like the deck of a ship. Even the equipment used in a theatre shows

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1. Giuliana Ricci, *Teatri d'Italia* (Milano: Bramante Editore, 1971).

2. Maurizio Elvetico, *Navigare, Dizionario Enciclopedico della Nautica* (Roma: Nutrimenti, 2012).

many similarities with that of marine environments.

More significant than these technical/aesthetical affinities is the attitude that characterized the workers in both fields, and specifically a widespread devotional respect.<sup>3</sup> Just like theatre workers in ancient times - who considered the stage a mystical place, where man could come into contact with the word of the gods - sailors too regarded their boats, and especially the sea, as elements of spiritual nature.<sup>4</sup> In both cases, man's relationship with the environment was deemed sacred.

These affinities, as simple as they may seem, are worthy of further analysis. The next step of our investigation was to look for tangible traces of cooperation between theatrical and maritime craftsmen, to find out whether they had ever met for a common purpose. Specific similarities have emerged on various occasions during these years of study, such as the way full-scale technical drawings are made: set designers,<sup>5</sup> who build the sets in the theatre workshop,<sup>6</sup> and shipbuilders actually use a very similar method,<sup>7</sup> so much so that they both create their drawings standing upright on sheets of paper tens of meters long laid on the floor.

Historical examples of such collaborative encounters have been found at different times, and in different places, from the theatres of Italian port cities, like Palermo,<sup>8</sup> Genoa, and Venice, to the coasts of the former Maritime Republics. We have also been looking abroad, in regions in close contact with water, in countries like Norway, Sweden, and the Netherlands, as far as the Far East.<sup>9</sup>

However, what we were looking for was right in the centre of the Mediterranean, in Rome, in the most famous place of spectacle ever: the Colosseum.

The Flavian amphitheatre, built at the time of the emperor Vespasian, was a revolutionary work, because new technological models were developed for its construction,<sup>10</sup> and today it is still regarded as a source of inspiration for contemporary entertainment architecture. The stage machinery of the arena represents a great example of theatrical engineering, and it is in this context that we have found evidence of cooperation between theatre workers and sea workers.

3. Luigi Lunari, *Breve Storia del Teatro* (Milano: Bompiani, 2007).

4. Vincenzo Consolo, *La Pesca del Tonno in Sicilia* (Palermo: Sellerio, 2008).

5. Renato Lori, *Scenografia e Scenotecnica per il Teatro* (Roma: Gremese, 2014).

6. Gianni Berengo Gardin, *La Fabbrica Scala all'Ansaldo* (Milano: Edizioni del Teatro alla Scala, 2004).

7. Pasquale Frascione, "Due Esperienze nella Cantieristica Navale Anconetana. Lo Stabilimento Fincantieri e la Cooperativa Tommasi (1974-1997)," *PRISMA Economia - Società - Lavoro*, no. 3 (2011): 123-139.

8. Giuseppe Bellafiore, *Palermo, Guida della Città e Dintorni* (Palermo: Mondadori Retail, 2009).

9. Guillame De Laubier, Antoine Pecqueur and James Levine, *The Most Beautiful Opera House in the World* (New York: Abrams, 2013).

10. Marialuisa Angiolillo, *L'Allestimento Scenico, lo Spettacolo nell'Età Classica* (Catanzaro: Framasud, 1979).

About a thousand sailors, due to their skills in the use of ropes and sails, were in charge of manoeuvring the awning covering the arena, called *velarium*, an enormous adjustable shade which sheltered the public from the sun during the games and was controlled by means of a series of winches,<sup>11</sup> which were quite similar to those that will be used in 18th century theatres.

It should also be noted that one of the most complex shows in Roman arenas involved the use of water, the so-called *naumachias*<sup>12</sup> (Figure 1), spectacular historical re-enactments of naval battles, created by flooding the stage where stage boats had previously been mounted.

Another area of investigation that has given great impulse to this research has certainly been the *tonnare*,<sup>13</sup> the tuna-fishing structures and facilities located in the province of Trapani, in Sicily.

There, in the vicinity of Greek or Roman theatres, religious temples were often found, and also inside the *tonnare* there were religious spaces, small Christian churches where people prayed for protection against bad weather and for a good catch of tuna.

Like in the ancient theatre, rituality was a major behavioural pattern of the life in the *tonnare*. The chorus songs carried out a social function in the Greek theatre, as an attempt to investigate both divine and earthly events; in tuna fisheries, songs were used to accompany the hard manual work that required sustained efforts.

Fishermen's testimonies state that religious figures were often present during the fishing ritual, like the monks who were in charge of blessing the nets, and the fishing season was not considered to have begun without these blessings. In both cases, therefore, men resorted to rituals, particularly religious ones, and the concept of the sacred took the form of a ceremony, of a spiritual dialogue.

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11. Eugenio D'Anna and Pier Gabriele Molari, *Il Velarium del Colosseo: una Nuova Interpretazione* (AMSActa Institutional Research Repository by AlmaDL University of Bologna Digital Library, Preprint 2020).

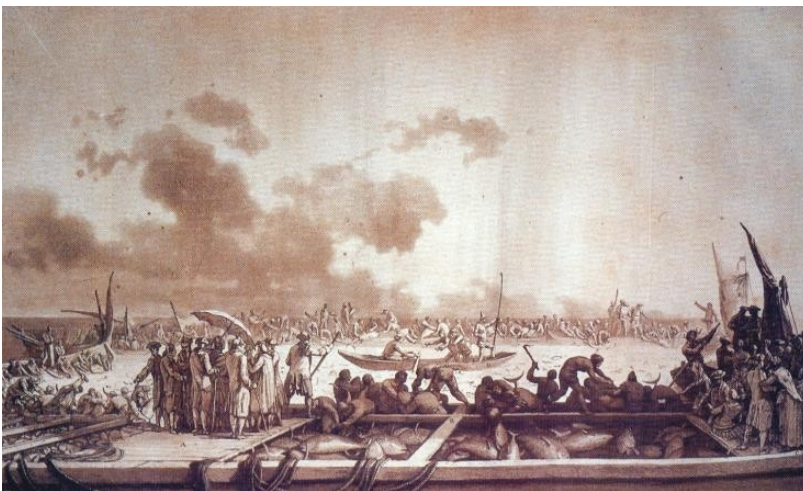
12. Dario Aureli, "L'acqua del Colosseo" *Giardini e Parchi Storici, Elementi 'Portanti' del Paesaggio Culturale. Pluralità di Aspetti e Connotazioni. Scuola di Specializzazione in Beni Architettonici e del Paesaggio "Sapienza" – University of Rome* (Roma: Bristol, L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2021), 135-140.

13. Consolo, *La Pesca del Tonno in Sicilia*, 2008.



**Figure 1.** Flavio Bolla, *Naumachia*, Illustration, 2013

Source: <https://www.deviantart.com/flaviobolla/art/Naumachia-372111100>.



**Figure 2.** Jean-Pierre Houël, *The Mattanza in Sicily*, Etching, 1782

Source: [https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mattanza#/media/File:La\\_pesca\\_del\\_tonno,\\_acquafort e\\_di\\_Jean-Pierre\\_Hou%C3%ABl.jpg](https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mattanza#/media/File:La_pesca_del_tonno,_acquafort e_di_Jean-Pierre_Hou%C3%ABl.jpg).

Between the 1800s and the 1900s, the owners of the *tonnare*<sup>14</sup> often asked their fishermen (*tonnaroti*) to be able to attend the last fishing phase. Wooden structures, scaffolds and grandstands were then mounted to allow the aristocrats to watch the *mattanza* (Figure 2), or the 'slaughter', a truly spectacular representation,<sup>15</sup> a violent act between man and nature reminiscent of the games between gladiators and beasts in Roman arenas.

Nowadays, this practice has ceased, and the buildings where tuna fisheries used to be are now abandoned examples of industrial archaeology, or they are used for other purposes. The last instances of ritual tuna fishing in southern Italy date back to the '80s and '90s, except for a few staged events, mostly for tourists, events that are far removed from the ancient tradition that was so important for the whole Mediterranean, and that in Italy has now been lost because of the destructive practices of the big fishing companies, which led to the extinction of a centuries-old ritual, rich in meaning.

### The Attitude of the Theatrical Spectator in the Consumer Society

The concept of the theatre as a building is now changing: in the past it was regarded as a sacred place, but this sacredness has apparently diminished over the centuries.<sup>16</sup> It remains something to be respected as a cultural venue, but its sacred aspect is in decline; in fact, it is often considered by the masses as nothing more than a place of entertainment. This process may not be ascribed to thematic content alone, because the public interests have changed and so has its attention span, but there could also be economical as well as political reasons.

Over the centuries, the function of theatre buildings has significantly contributed to the political and cultural changes of society, due to the complex dynamics that took place within and around them, at least until the late Romantic Age.<sup>17</sup> Now, it seems that these changes are taking place elsewhere: a greater number of venues and facilities have replaced the foyers of the great European

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14. A clarification must be made: in Italian, the term *tonnara* (or *tonnare* in the plural form) refers to two related but distinct items: the buildings and the fishing nets and traps. The first are the architectural structures, i.e., the complex of constructions on land used for processing the tuna and storing boats and fishing equipment. The second is the trap of nets that was stretched out in the sea for hundreds of metres, forming a labyrinth that "deceived" the tuna; this structure is technically called the "body" of the *tonnara*.

15. Istituto Nazionale Luce. *La Pesca del Tonno*. 1924-1931, 31 min., 35 sec. <https://patrimonio.archivioluce.com/luce-web/detail/IL3000051401/1/la-pesca-del-tonno.html?startPage=0>.

16. Franco Mancini, *L'Evoluzione dello Spazio Scenico dal Naturalismo al Teatro Epico* (Bari: Dedalo, 1993).

17. Nazzareno Luigi Todarello, *Le Arti della Scena* (Novi Ligure: Latorre Editore Teatro e Università, 2006).

opera houses of the XIX and XX centuries.<sup>18</sup>

One of the keys to understanding this change may perhaps be found in the revolution brought about by the consumer society. Around the middle of the last century, the shopping ritual was invented, a celebration of the possession of objects made even more widespread by the mass media, and grown exponentially today, with the Internet and the e-commerce giants, which made the ritual faster and more remote. This trend is causing increasing environmental issues. In spite of the many green movements around the world proposing alternative solutions, the phenomenon is on the increase, greatly strengthened by industrial automation.<sup>19</sup> The circumstances that have generated this phenomenology in the West, and for some decades in the East as well, seem to have taken a dogmatic character: acquired comforts and wealth must not be put at risk, like it was in the post-war years when the middle and lower middle classes achieved some prosperity.<sup>20</sup>

Greek or Roman audiences attended the theatre to satisfy a social need, to take part in a ritual that began with taking care of their aspect, selecting the clothes to wear, and meeting other people to discuss the value of the play or tragedy; today's men and women, in a tendentially greater percentage, no longer feel the same, because their needs can be satisfied from a wider variety of sources, even from a vocal command on a mobile phone, without having to move from their homes. This is true not only for the theatre, but also for the cinema, which faces similar consequences as a result of streaming or pay TV platforms, or libraries, because of web encyclopaedias, etc.

Greeks and Latins handed down plays from memory, people in the Middle Ages copied them down; later, with the invention of the printing press, theatre scripts began circulating the world in a pocket-size format, and then moved faster when they were typewritten, and faster still when stored on USB drives; today they can be archived on the Cloud: all it takes is a device, and the large part of the world's theatrical literature is made available to the user in a split second.<sup>21</sup>

To guarantee this extraordinary achievement though, we need to use an unprecedented flow of resources, infinite resources in a world that possesses finite ones, in an accumulation of data that has proceeded unabated since the age of the industrial revolutions.

In the current age of consequences,<sup>22</sup> we are faced with unprecedented challenges, and all the social and intellectual forces should work together and take

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18. Roberta Baldassarre, *Metamorfosi delle Architetture Teatrali* (Roma: Gangemi Editore, 2006).

19. Luca De Biase, *Homo Pluralis, Essere Umani nell'Era Tecnologica*. Torino: Codice Edizioni, 2016.

20. Carmelo Bene and Giancarlo Dotto, *Vita di Carmelo Bene* (Milano: Tascabili Bompiani, 2006).

21. A. Donald Norman, *The Design of Future Things* (Basic Books, 2007).

22. Umberto Galimberti, *L'Età della Tecnica e la Fine della Storia* (Salerno: Orthotes, 2021).



action.<sup>23</sup> The theatre and all the Arts, which have always promoted the development of man and society at large, prove to be more necessary than ever.

In the pandemic period of 2020, it became evident that technology saved the integrity of our society, computer engineering made it possible to deliver urgent information instantly, and the Internet guaranteed the right to education and so much more, in many areas. However, the proposal to do theatre work online appears questionable. Unlike cinema, the theatre still lives and breathes through the age-old ritual of being together; for a performance to be successful, actors and audiences must face each other, and must look at each other.

If in the '60s and '70s one of the main goals of western economies was the improvement of the conditions of the middle class, in a confrontation between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat that was passionate, violent and deeply felt, today, the new objectives seem to be less clear, except for a relentless economic growth and the defence of profits at all costs, even if the economic model to which all this should refer to seems quite elusive. This is a relevant question because every form of art, including the theatre, can never assert itself without a flourishing economy.

### **Personal Reasons Related to the Concept**

I grew up in Sicily where I lived until the age of twenty. Then I began to travel on a regular basis, visiting many different countries, and the theme of the journey became an integral part of my research. The city where I belong is Palermo, which the Greeks called *Panormo* "the all-harbour city", and water is another element I have always been interested in, probably because I am an islander.

In the eighties and nineties, I used to spend the summer in my mother's hometown, Castellammare del Golfo. It is a fishing village in the province of Trapani that has its own architectural icon, a castle overlooking the sea. For fifteen years now, I have been based in Milan, a city where waterways have been particularly important.

These regular movements, from the city to the countryside, and from the south to the north of Italy, have always been a source of inspiration. I think that living in Palermo is like watching an endless theatrical performance while being part of it at the same time: works of art are everywhere, and everything in the city, even the mere sale of fish in the local market, becomes a performance, visually framed in a melting pot of iconographic stratifications. So, the theatre, the journey, and water are the connecting elements that have characterized this

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23. Galimberti, "La Tecnica e l'Impotenza dell'Etica," in *Etica del Plurale: Giustizia, Riconoscimento, Responsabilità*. (Milano: Vita e Pensiero Pubblicazioni dell'Università Cattolica, 2004).

project and my previous ones.

Today, in the era of technological changes<sup>24</sup> and virtual rooms, people are no longer used to staying after the show to talk about it. Everybody just goes away, as though the theatre was a go-through area. My reflections are directed towards a theatre that lives 24 hours a day, that is always accessible and multifunctional, where at five in the morning a new event begins, taking advantage of the intimate atmosphere of the night; a theatre that breaks free from the nineteenth century austerity to become flexible, dynamic, moving from town to town, and using port areas as dramatic environments of encounter, because the theatre can live between land and water, like an amphibious creature.

## Design Rationale

The research has focused on the facilities that host the performances - today as in the past - and particularity on theatrical architectures,<sup>25</sup> especially movable ones, like those used in the “ephemeral theatre”.<sup>26</sup>

I have always been fascinated by the works of art that are centred on environmental contrasts, such as James Turrell’s *Skyspaces*, Edoardo Tresoldi’s sculptures, or the many, exciting projects of utopian architecture, like the *Arcosanti* city by Paolo Soleri,<sup>27</sup> or the Earthships; the unfulfilled ideals of social experimentation, such as the Venus project by Joseph Fresco,<sup>28</sup> or the studies of Lebbeus Woods, Carlo Scarpa, the *Walking city* by Archigram,<sup>29</sup> and the urban works of social criticism by Banksy. These ideas or ideologies actively challenge the consumerist logic, which in the last century has practically transformed the purpose of every human action, including artworks.

In the essay *Vers une Architecture*, Le Corbusier<sup>30</sup> said that the house, in the early twentieth century, was no longer the mere self-representation of its owners, but it had to adjust to the new functional parameters requested by a time that had just taken a giant step forward, separating itself from centuries of mannerism. The house then became a “machine”, and it was compared to a steamship that refused to comply to traditions and only obeyed to the forces of nature, heading towards a world organized according to the “new spirit”. Just like the house had

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24. Ibid.

25. Mario Panizza, *Edifici per lo Spettacolo* (Bari: Laterza 1996).

26. Maurizio Dell’Arco Fagiolo and Silvia Carandini, *L’Effimero Barocco* (Roma: Ed. Bulzoni BSA, 1978).

27. Paolo Soleri, *Conversations with Paolo Soleri* (New York: Lissa McCulloch, Princeton Architectural Press, 2012).

28. Jacque Fresco, *The Venus Project: The Redesign of a Culture* (Global Cyber Visions, 1995).

29. Valeria Menchetelli, “A Walking City by Archigram Group: on the Utopian Dimension of Drawing” *Diségno*, no. 9 (2021): 17-20.

30. Le Corbusier, *Verso un Architettura* (Milano: Longanesi, 1973).

to respond to new needs, so did theatre spaces, and a long period of avant-garde began, culminated in the age of “the theatre outside the theatre”.<sup>31</sup> For this reason, the installation should be at the service of the designated outer space and its environment, without reducing theatrical aesthetics to mere functionality, as it happened with the mobile side vans of propaganda shows in the twenties,<sup>32</sup> or the theatres on British trucks in the sixties, like the *Century Theatre* or *Blue Box*.<sup>33</sup>

Since 2004 I have designed several structures in different versions, but the elements that characterized them have often been the same.

I was greatly inspired by Alberto Martini’s studies for the *Tetiteatro*,<sup>34</sup> by the brilliant reasoning of Gropius and Piscator around the Total Theatre.<sup>35</sup> I have always found Aldo Rossi’s *Theatre of the World*<sup>36</sup> particularly poetic, just like the spectacular performance of the *Ulysses and the White Whale* at Renzo Piano’s Bigo in Genoa,<sup>37</sup> which was staged during the celebrations for the 500th anniversary of Columbus’ discovery of the Americas.

What has clearly characterized my projects so far, with respect to their construction, has been the close relationship that I have always observed between techniques of marine construction<sup>38</sup> and theatrical techniques. In the navy there are the sails and in the theatre the backdrops, on ships there are yards and shrouds, and on the stage battens and pin rails, the hold and the substage, lines and strops.<sup>39</sup>

I found another important confirmation about ten years ago, when I had the chance to do a show at the Drottningholms Slottsteater,<sup>40</sup> the court theatre at Drottningholm Castle in Stockholm, where the theatrical machinery is still working after three hundred years. On that occasion, we used every kind of machine available, from traps to elevators, from wave machines (*burloni* in Italian) to all the special effects of the baroque theatre.<sup>41</sup> It was in Stockholm that I was finally convinced that stage manoeuvres have undoubtedly many similarities with the

31. Silvia Cattiodoro, *Architettura Scenica e Teatro Urbano* (Milano: Francoangeli, 2007), 29-35.

32. Carlo Fanelli, “Vincenzo Tieri (1895-1970). Militanza Teatrale e Attivismo Politico,” *Rivista Calabrese di Storia del 900*, no. 1 (2021): 42-69.

33. Alan Hankinson, *The Story of the Century Theatre 1947-1983 Blue Box* (Bookcase, 2009).

34. Alberto Martini, *Il Tetiteatro* (Milano: Electa, 1990).

35. Nerdinger Winfried, *Walter Gropius 1883 – 1969* (Milano: Electa, 1988).

36. Alberto Ferlenga, *Aldo Rossi, Tutte le Opere* (Milano: Electa, 1999).

37. Peter Buchanan, *Renzo Piano Building Workshop* (London: Ed. Phaidon, 2003).

38. Elvetico, *Navigare, Dizionario Enciclopedico della Nautica*, 2012.

39. Ibid.

40. Ove Hidermark, Per Edström and Brigitta Schyberg, *Drottningholms Slottsteater Dess Tillkomst, oden och Beverande* (Stockholm: Baggforlaget, 1993), 74-113 .

41. Giuseppe Galli Bibiena, *Architectural and Perspective Designs* (New York, Dover Publications, 1964).

work of seamen, from the spaces used to the dynamics that develop in both contexts.

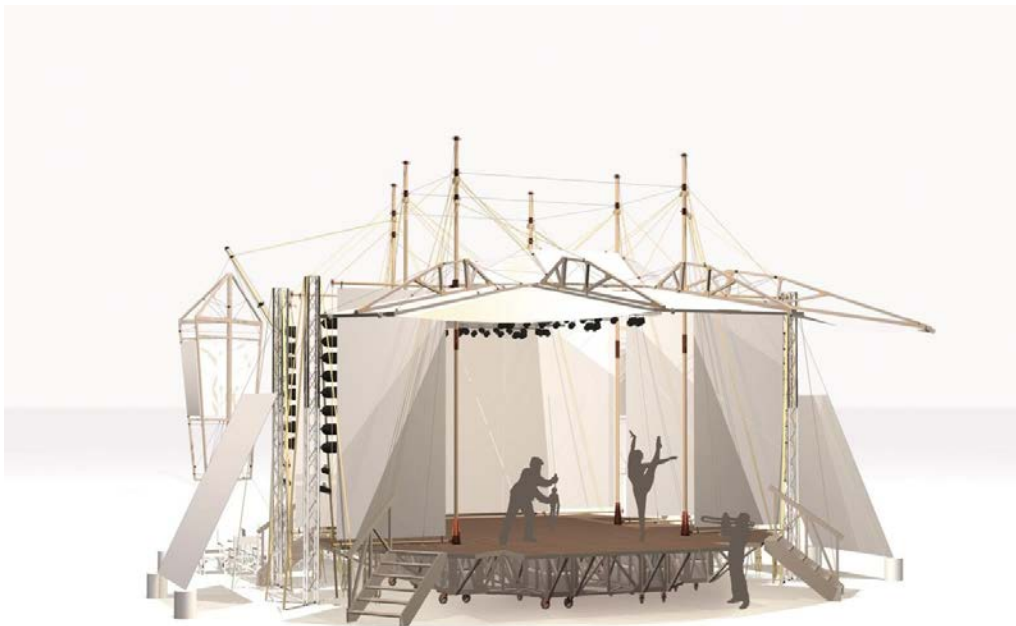
I decided to focus my study on a nomadic device that could satisfy - like other devices did before, starting with the legendary *Thespis's wagon* - one of the basic postulates of human nature: the need to keep telling stories.

### Iter Teatro

By taking a syncretic approach that mixes technique and spirituality, both connected to movement and water, a mobile equipment was designed that could be quickly installed in specific locations. Its name is *Iter*, because it is part of an "itinerary" of continuous research (Figures 3-4).

The function of this equipment is essentially that of a multi-purpose container, a physical vehicle for the dissemination of cultural information, from drama to academic and scientific conferences.

The operation of this structure has been inspired by various historical examples, starting from Thespis' wagon, to Renaissance and Baroque stage machines,<sup>42</sup> always adding water as a structural and dramaturgical element.<sup>43</sup>

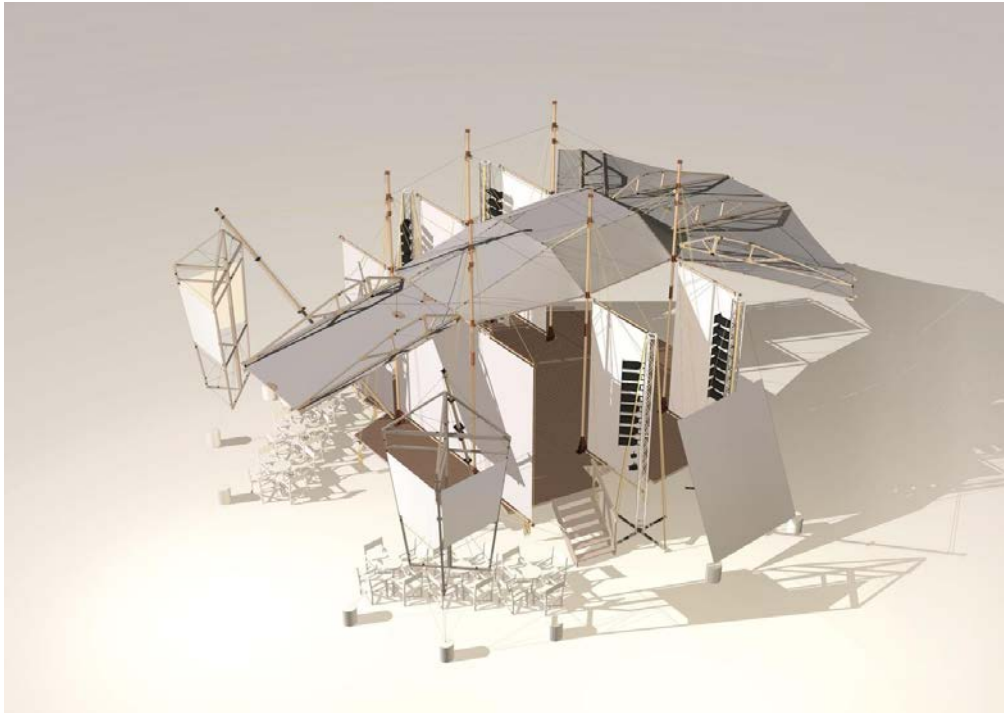


**Figure 3.** *Iter Teatro, Front View, Rendering*

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42. Hidermark, Edström, Schyberg, *Drottningholms Slottsteater Dess Tillkomst, oden och Beverande*, 1993.

43. Martini, *Il Tetiteatro*, 1990.



**Figure 4.** *Iter Teatro*, Axonometric View, Rendering

Iter Teatro may seem ephemeral, being installed in pre-established locations for a fixed period of time, but once in place it becomes a meeting point open 24 hours a day, because, ideally, access to proven cultural, artistic, and scientific contents, should be available to all in an egalitarian society, a resource for everybody and not a service to be commodified, nor a luxury for the rich few.

### **Technical Specifications**

The structure is mainly built with parts made of wood, fabric, and ropes, as it has been for centuries for the construction of boats. Wood, a solid and durable material,<sup>44</sup> is the base on which contemporary components are attached, like wheels of solid rubber to absorb the loads. For buoyancy, approved modular floats have been chosen, with an inner lighting system to obtain an evocative lighting effect<sup>45</sup> when the structure is set on land, and especially when it is on water.

The fabrics for the roofs are of a synthetic yarn that can filter air currents and shield from UV rays. Rigging and strops are of different types, depending on their function: from hemp and nylon, up to steel rods. Bollards, cleats, pulleys

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44. Bruno Mello, *Trattato di Scenotecnica* (Novara: De Agostini, 2003).

45. Liliana Iadeluca, *Light Painting. Tecniche di Base per Dipingere con la Luce* (Roma: Audinio, Collana Manuali, no. 254, 2021).

and other metal parts are made of steel, aluminium, and copper. The water-loaded ballasts are made of PVC (Figure 5).



Figure 5. *Iter Teatro*, Overview, Rendering

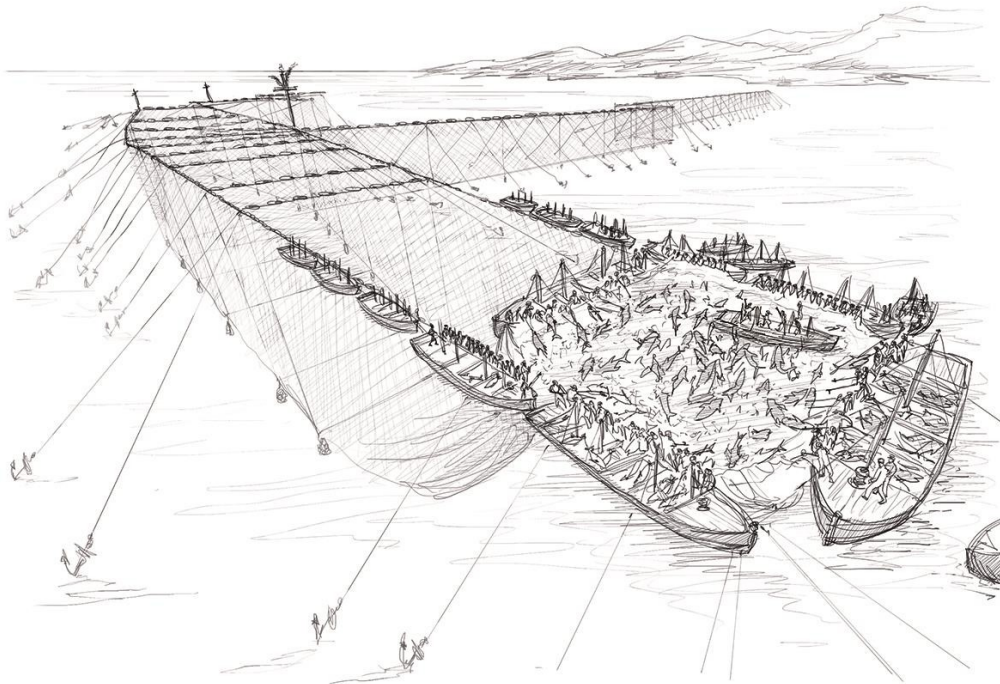
### Stage Specification

As it happened in Roman amphitheatres, where the famous *naumachias* were staged with prepared boats, or sea legends were told, an equally ancient ritual was performed in the *tonnare* of the Mediterranean. The body of the *tonnara* (Figure 6), but above all the death chamber, formed a sort of aquatic stage (Figures 7-8) where, season after season, a ceremony rich in functions and meanings was repeated.

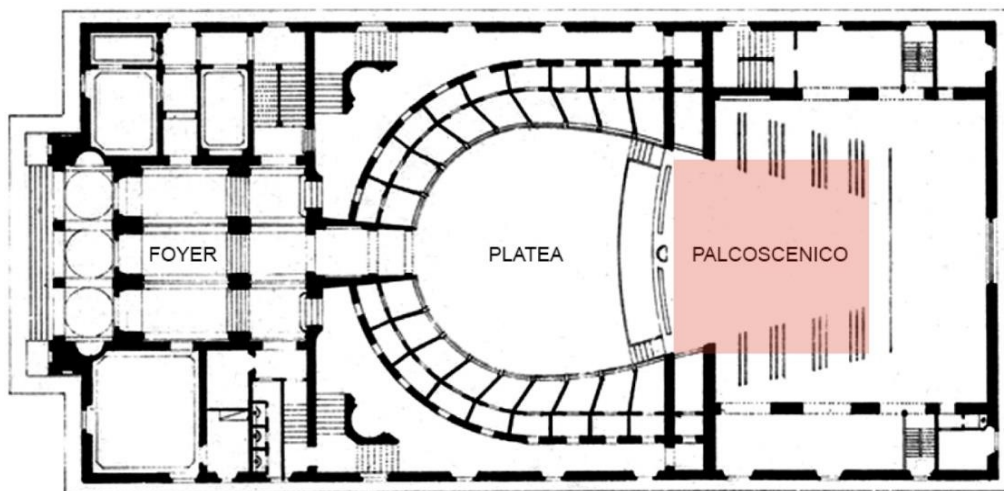
The architecture of the Sicilian *tonnare*<sup>46</sup> has had a decisive influence on the dramaturgical use of water. The unique social dynamics that developed in this environment, which survived until the '80s, tell us the story of behavioural patterns that are still of great interest: from the way in which people worked, with enormous efforts and an almost religious devotion, to the hierarchies that were created inside the workplace; from the tales of the *tonnaroti* in the *vicaria*, the common space where workers lived, to the famous *cialome*, not just songs but an alternative code of communication that was used only at sea. Syllogisms of this kind also apply to the Vietnamese theatre, that originated from the efforts of the peasants immersed in the rice fields, or to black music that was born in the plantations of the southern states of America.

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46. Cesare Sposito, *Le Tonnare Storia e Architettura*. Istituzional Research Archive of the University of Palermo (Palermo: Dario Flaccovio Editore, 2007).

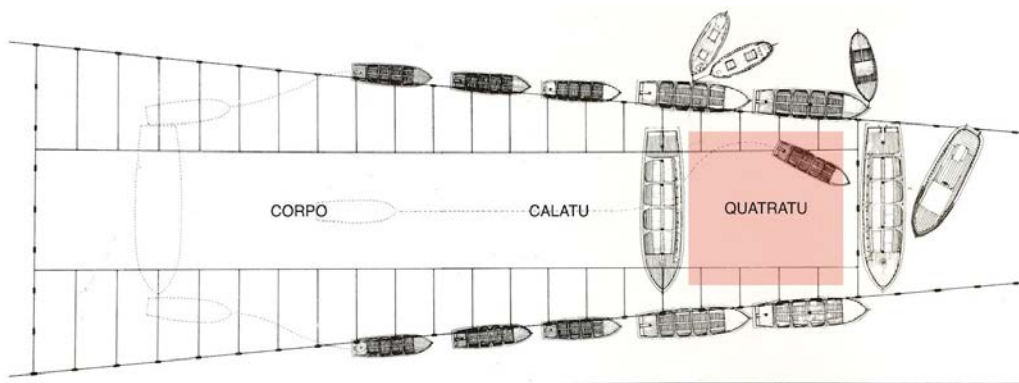


**Figure 6.** *The Body of a Tonnara*



**Figure 7.** *Plan of an Italian Theatre*

Source: <https://spazioscenico.altervista.org/#ottocentesco>.



**Figure 8.** *Tonnara of Favignana, the Quatrato Enclosure*

Source: Adapted from Consolo, Vincenzo. *La Pesca del Tonno in Sicilia*. Palermo: Sellerio, 2008.

### Theatre on Water

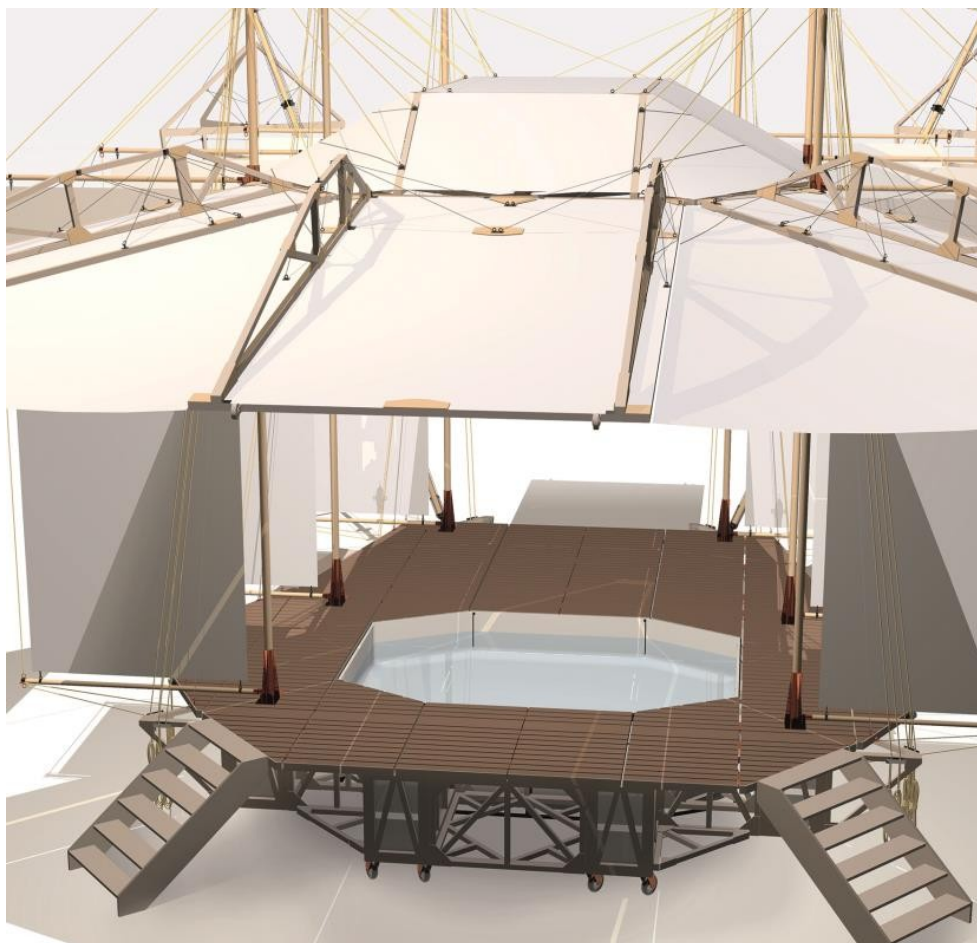
The whole installation can be transformed into a docking place (Figure 9), where the boats function as the boxes of an Italian-style theatre, creating an immersive relationship between the spectators and the environment around them, whether an artificial lake or a harbour.



**Figure 9.** *Iter Teatro, Illustration of a Performance on Water*

In addition, when the installation is on the ground, water can be used as a dramaturgical element by taking it from a hollow space under the stage, after raising the central modules of the planking. In this way, it is possible to insert a PVC net tank, reinforced with aluminium frames. The design of this structure philologically recalls the “death chamber” of the *tonnara* (Figure 10).





**Figure 10.** *Iter Teatro, The Waterlogged Stage*

### **Travel Theatre**

In times of widespread nihilism, which stifles the enthusiasm of new generations in particular, for whom dedicated spaces are almost absent, this project would like to provide a temporary facility for cultural socialisation, with the goal of intercepting needs “on site”, highlighting and confronting the practical urgencies that threaten to get out of hand.

In this way, even an ephemeral outpost like a town square or any other meeting place can provide, for a few hours, an experience which is first-of-all physical, like it used to be, so that we can pause the devices that force us to fast relations, fast and ill-formed answers, and even faster and instinctive reactions. The intent is to create a momentary suspension of time, so that we can think about what Kant identified as the basic categories - space and time<sup>47</sup> - and question the goals of us all who live inside them; or we may simply stop for a moment, and allow our body and soul to breath some fresh air while listening to

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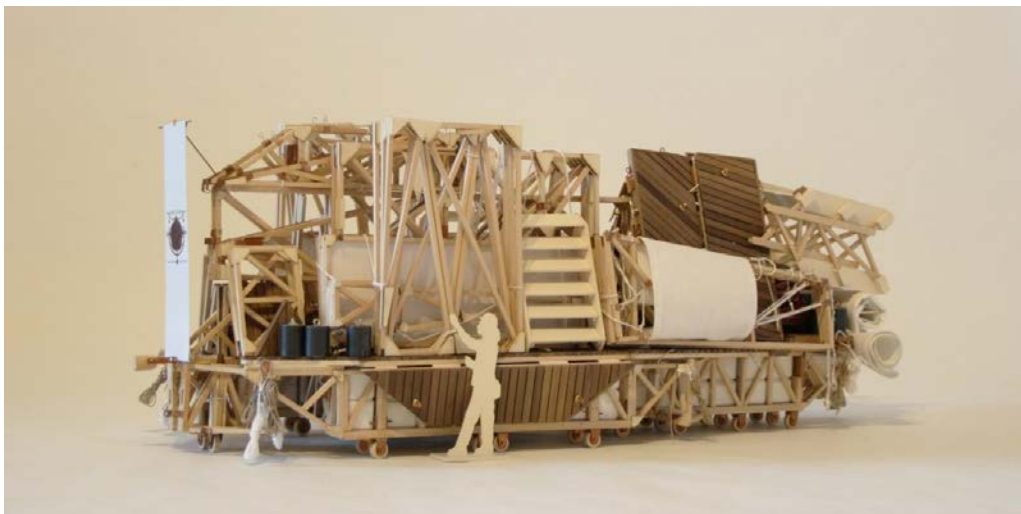
47. Immanuel Kant, *Critica della Ragion Pura* (Torino: Einaudi, 1957).

a piece of music or the reading of a sonnet, without leaving our urban setting or having to enter a cinema or a museum.

### Traveling Machine System

Iter Teatro represents the evolution of the many installations that have left a “moving” mark throughout history, from the baroque machines,<sup>48</sup> like Santa Rosalia’s wagon in Palermo, to the Sicilian carts,<sup>49</sup> real “travelling stories”; from the hawkers, who loaded goods on their vans in the most peculiar way, and created their own lingo by shouting out the goods for sale, to the travelling funfair companies who move from one territory to another.

The theatre arrives disassembled in a suitable peripheral area of a town, far from the public. A few stagehands quickly reassemble the components of the moving machine (Figure 11), which can easily travel through the city streets. The route, the *Iter*, is already a performance in itself, as the machine morphology becomes an advertisement in its own right. After the parade, the appointed location is reached, and it is there that the metamorphosis into a polyvalent scenic space takes place (Figure 12).

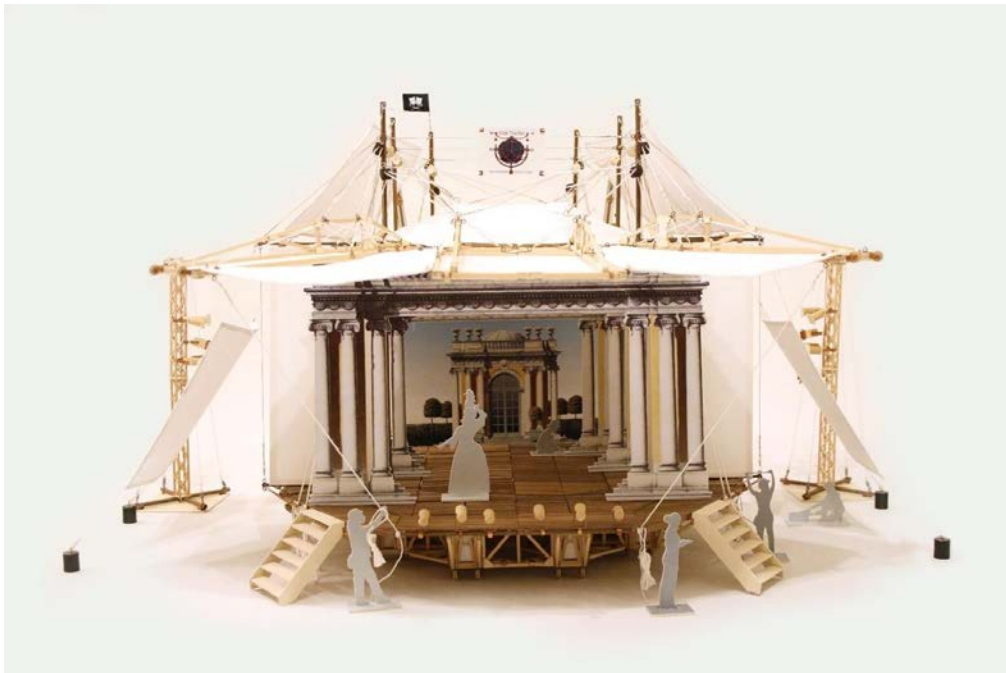


**Figure 11.** *Iter Teatro, Model of the Machinery Assembled like an Itinerant Machine*

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48. Clelia Arlandi di Balme and Franca Varallo, *Feste Barocche, Cerimonie e Spettacoli alla Corte dei Savoia tra Cinque e Settecento* (Milano: Silvana Editoriale, 2009).

49. Ubaldo Castrovinci and Mario Cuccia, *L'Architettura del Carretto Siciliano* (Bagheria: Plumelia Edizioni, 2012).



**Figure 12.** *Iter Teatro, Overall View, Model*

### Covered Installation

When the structure is set outdoor and left unused for some time, it may be useful to protect the stage from sunlight, or make it inaccessible at night. For this reason, the entire structure can be folded on itself by means of mechanical elements in the shape of petals that are connected to the grid and work both as curtains and backdrop covers. These structures, together with the side awnings, protect the whole stage from the sun, act as dramaturgical elements, and when lowered, separate the platform from the outside, protecting the planking level of the stage. Around the platform there are bollards and cleats that work as locking rails to support scenes, lights and other elements that have to be connected to the grid.<sup>50</sup>

### Environmental Dialogues

Shopping centres are spaces that provide a clear reflection of our behavioural patterns. These modern non-places have taken on the function of places of worship. After all, if consumerism is celebrated so loudly by the advertisements that mark obsessively our daily lives, it is a predictable consequence to spend a lot of time in places where there is a huge quantity of goods on sale. We are clearly ignoring the cultural impact that this has on society.

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50. Gino Copelli, *Manuale Pratico di Scenotecnica le Macchine Teatrali* (Bologna: Pàtron, 2006).

In the '70s, Pier Paolo Pasolini harshly warned us against the paradigmatic revolution that had taken place in the space of about ten years.<sup>51</sup> Now that we are facing the dire consequences of this revolution, there does not seem to be any cultural strategy to address the phenomenon: proposals are being criticized, audacious ideas are rejected as utopistic, and international summits have proved ineffective.

Nonetheless, nature's messages speak clearly. Iter Teatro intends to promote a debate of thinkers and experts that can help us reconnect with green spaces, especially far from urban centres, so that we can find answers, and share proposals, ideas, and solutions (Figure 13); a momentary experience to think about an alternative way of living and acting, to ask ourselves useful questions, consider the differences between development and progress, and also reconsider our motives to attend a theatre, in search of a personal renovation.



**Figure 13.** *Iter Teatro*, Illustration of an Event

Global warming is the most urgent challenge that mankind has to face. Since we are living in a time of global consequences, the whole world of entertainment has the moral duty to contribute to the fight against climate change, in terms of both artistic and technical contents, by taking advantage of the new energy technologies and giving its cultural contribution to the topic of energy transition.

An episode of the excellent Italian television drama of the '70s, *The Age of Cosimo de' Medici* by Roberto Rossellini, metaphorically describes a radical change of values: << [...] at this rate, we will all go mad >> says a philosophical old man about the ways of the world.<sup>52</sup> In an era dominated by markets and profits, it is

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51. Andrea Pera, "Borghesia, Rivoluzione, Potere: il '68 nel Teatro di Pier Paolo Pasolini," *UCLA Carte Italiane*, no. 2 (2008): 16-45.

52. Roberto Rossellini, "Potere di Cosimo," *L'Età di Cosimo de' Medici*, episode 2, RAI, 1972-1973, 124 min.

urgent to return to communicate with nature and listen to its clear messages, which science is translating into a call for action that cannot be postponed, as in the case of the dramatic consequences of plastic pollution in our oceans.

### Thematic Content

The months between 2020 and 2021 have certainly put a strain on the emotional state of entire generations, from childhood to old age. More worrying than the pandemic, however, is the general condition of human intelligence.<sup>53</sup> One relevant example of how this is evolving is suggested by our relationship with today's web infrastructures. The more powerful the medium, the more the end user should be aware of the actions/reactions involved in its use. What is the current orientation of intelligence? Throughout history, theatres have been crucial places for such questions and investigations, thanks to the works of extraordinary intellectuals and masters of the art of storytelling. If what Victor Hugo said is true, "Who opens the door of a school closes a prison", then the same could probably be said of the theatre, because a single, simple idea can make a difference and remain with the audience after the show, and maybe contribute to their personal renewal, so that they can direct their gaze to higher social aims, reappropriate of public spaces through culture and not violence, take to the streets and use Internet platforms as means of organisation, not as means for reprogramming unified thoughts. The theatre can probably help to investigate the importance of human actions in this often-confusing time.

It took only two months of pandemic to send the world's stock markets plummeting, but nature immediately started to breath more freely, offering spectacular animal appearances, clear skies and rivers, and recording a positive drop in pollutants across the planet.

This is a lesson which, if read correctly, offers rich insights into the shift of paradigm that needs to be completed as soon as possible.

### Conclusion

The research outlined in this paper allowed me to reach to various conclusions regarding the process of renewal that Italian theatres could undertake in their relationship with the audience, both in form and content, by proposing topics that can show how the classics of the international theatre are still relevant for the education of the individual and the society at large, particularly for the new generations that mostly live off purely esthetical contents.

If the available data show that young audience's attendance in the theatre is

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53. Pino Aprile, *Elogio dell'Imbecille* (Milano: Piemme, 2010).

steadily declining, maybe the reason could be that contents are not sufficiently focused on young people.

For the current generations, theatres are no longer places of wonder and entertainment, as they were a century ago (Figure 14).

If most theatrical venues provide their offer without enticing or capturing the enthusiasm of the young generations, without seducing them, the future will see more and more people sitting on their sofas in front of a screen, sometimes talking to the same screen.



**Figure 14.** Alfred Eisenstaedt, *Children Watching the Story of "Saint George and the Dragon" at an Outdoor Puppet Theatre in Paris, 1963*

Source: <https://www.life.com/history/children-at-a-puppet-show-paris-1963/>.

In a globalized world, if young people attend the theatre less and less, it is the theatre that must be brought to them, not only by making it more accessible, but also by engaging young audiences actively, as the social networks do.

The design of the installation described in this paper is an answer to this challenge, aiming to stimulate an audience continuously distracted by too much information by focusing first and foremost on the new generations that are asking to be listened to, to be involved, especially in the climate change debate, though they seem unable to dictate the agenda of political institutions.

Once funded and built, how could this multi-purpose machine actually work?

Considering the information I have gathered, also during my teaching experience in various Italian art schools, I am persuaded that the first contribution to this project could come from Art Academies and Universities willing to create a theatre-workshop, a space that can successfully combine arts with science. It is for

this reason that the outer appearance of the Iter Teatro resembles the machines created by Leonardo Da Vinci, the very icon of the scientist-artist.

With the support of high education centres and institutions, the machine elements can be turned into a space where teachers and students can study and research. The installation can remain inside the university premises to be used as a “rehearsal site” not only for plays or shows, but also for discussions about art and humanities, with the advantage of having immediate feedback from the audience, as it happened in the “anatomical theatres” of the XIXth century (Figure 15).

The collected data or documents can be easily moved inside their “travelling container” towards a scientific university, where the information could be submitted to further analysis by using a scientific approach.



**Figure 15.** *The Anatomical Theatre in the Archiginnasio, Bologna, 1636-1638*

Source: <https://sma.unibo.it/it/visita/scuole/percorsi-didattici/i-luoghi-della-sanita-a-bologna-tra-il-xvii-e-il-xviii-secolo>.

In addition, by creating a synergy between different educational institutions, the installation could widen its scope (or its itinerary) through a network where these “experimental results” (shows, exhibitions, concerts, conferences, seminars, workshops, etc.) can be shared and enjoyed by a larger audience.

Given the reduced management costs, the installation could easily travel from an Italian university to a Greek or a French one etc., building cultural bridges and exchanging experiences.

This academic tour could provide the structure with some field test, in order to fix any technical issue and possibly obtain some sort of type-approval for the travelling installation, which should be managed by a professional theatre company. After that, the installation is ready to move out of educational institutions and meet the people, reach town squares, and then, if the special conditions mentioned in the technical chapters are satisfied, end its journey by reaching water, the very symbol of renewal.

If globalization has brought about a paradigmatic social change in which we are all virtually connected but physically removed from one another, then we could find inspiration in the attitude of the ancient Greek audiences, who took care of the problems of their *Polis*. At the time, this kind of intellectual development was also due to the wars of expansion that saw the import of slaves and freed the Athenians from the most physically demanding jobs, allowing them to use their spare time by practicing arts and philosophy. Theatre-goers were invited, at the end of the tragic contests, to take part in animated debates about the play they had just seen, becoming directly involved in the intellectual event.

Today, it is automation and the general technological progress that could give us the freedom to be involved in more noble activities, but this does not happen as largely as one would expect.

In my opinion, this is one of the challenges that our machine could tackle: raising awareness about the actual quality of our lives.

The initial research also demonstrated that the “immersive” factor is particularly relevant, in this respect. The spectator, whether young or old, should be temporarily transported into an artistic adventure.

The experience of going out for an event that takes place at a special venue that materializes itself in the city streets, like a parade float, must become not another social occasion but something unique, where the ultimate goal is the wonder, the magic of a stage effect, the dream-like, poetic moment that sparkles deep feelings and emotions.

After the last phase of this project is completed by actually building the installation in full scale, I think that the above results can only be obtained with a committed artistic direction. I also believe that only a unique scenic space can inspire artistic innovation, as the avant-garde theatre of the last century has proved.

In conclusion, I am confident that this theatre will help spread a message of resistance in this complicated time, a message inspired by the metaphor of water, that lends itself perfectly to become an iconographic element suggesting ideas of internationality and union.

It is important to use art, science and any other means at our disposal to put human intelligence back at the forefront, contributing to the necessary cultural change, fighting against what threatens a real progress, first and foremost climate change, which is the greatest challenge man has faced since it took its first steps on this planet.



It is therefore urgent to re-establish the idea of the sacred. In ancient times, the stage and the sea were places of devotion, and in the same way we should consider our planet, as something to respect and protect, something we are part of as active contributors and not as predators.

Nature must once again be perceived as a sacred entity in our everyday life, because our entire existence and our future depend on it. And if the theatre is basically a group of people who come together to listen to a story, a rite that has been performed for thousands of years, our travelling machine wants to celebrate the age-old relationship with what is our only *home*, so that we can realign ourselves with that delicate but extraordinary system that is planet earth, incredibly interconnected by a universal language that communicates with everything, from plants and animals to the stars, a language which, for thousands of years, has been telling life.

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## **Musical Instruments' African-Based Studies: The Application of the Afro-Brazilian Knowledge to Study Non-African-based Musical Instruments**

*By Adrian Estrela Pereira\* , Ekaterina Konopleva±, Jehan Alghneimin °,  
Nicole Kasbary • & György Mészáros ♦*

*In the last two decades, the Brazilian music scenario has been marked by an increasingly academic-oriented interest in studying and applying musical knowledge stemming from African-heritage. Institutions and researchers from Salvador city hold an important role in the development and dissemination of this type of knowledge. Accordingly, this article's general aim is to discuss possible implications of the application of African-based musical knowledge in the study of non-African-based instruments, focusing on the Soteropolitan context. This paper has four specific aims to support the general purpose: 1) To present the Salvador city and the main historical and social elements related to musical contexts; 2) To present some publications which employed African-based musical knowledge for the development of musical competences related to non-African-based musical instruments; 3) To analyze these materials from a music education perspective; and 4) To integrate the examinations with broader social discussions. Pursuing these aims, the current study applies a qualitative document analysis as its methodological approach to acquire the data, examine the materials and develop the knowledge which will support the proposed reflections. Despite the municipal orientation, it is expected that the promotion of a deep understanding of a local phenomenon can influence broader sectors of music education.*

### **Introduction**

As an array of other human expressions, the artistic contexts are constantly passing through changes, adaptations, experimentations, modifications and transformations. In the music field, a myriad of possibilities may impact, by diverse means and extensions, in the update process of musical manifestations. Whilst one may compose in order to refine an instrumental technique, others may write songs to express a personal and intimate feeling; whilst one may innovate aiming for success and economic recognition, others may be inspired by the application of new possibilities provided by the latest technologies.

Regardless of the reasons that drive music makers throughout their artistic processes, it is undeniable the fluid and changing characteristic of the music field.

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Parallely with the broad music field, the area of music education also undergoes its own transformation, adaptation and resignification processes. Guided by an array of possible motivations and aims, music educators, scholars, researchers and students contribute, by several means, with the dynamic process of developing, testing, updating and assessing initiatives related to teaching and learning music-related skills and competences.

In spite of the fair categorization as belonging to music education, different initiatives pursued by different individuals are guided by different motivations and expectations. As an illustration, learning how to play acoustic guitar may create countless questions and lead to several different decisions depending on the motivations, priorities and aims of the involved stakeholders: 1) students may have different aims like playing guitar solo, accompanying themselves while singing, participate in music groups, etc.; 2) teachers may choose different start points like chords and strumming, scales and fingerpicking, chords and fingerpicking, scales and picking, etc.; and 3) courses' coordinators may integrate diverse expectations in the curriculum and courses' content like preparing students for an orchestra, preparing virtuous soloists, valorizing underprivileged groups, improving students' social emotional competences, etc.

This simple example aimed neither to present every possible stakeholder of music education (parents, policy makers, business owners and music producers could also be added) nor exhaust the totality of plausible issues that could be linked to the teaching and learning processes associated with the mentioned stakeholders (students could also be interested in developing social emotional competences, for example). Based on a small excerpt of music instrument studies (only considering acoustic guitar), this illustration intends to exemplify how complex the music education field can be and how this area can incorporate perspectives and demands from various interested parties. Different perspectives, approaches, aims, genres, rhythms, materials, curriculums, discussions, histories and expectations are intrinsically connected with the music education field and with the reasons for its constant transformations and innovations.

Additionally, it may also be relevant for the reflections to incorporate some issues related to the impacts of broader social, political and economic structures in the music field.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the discussions should not neglect the possible functions of music education in broader social issues. The role that the music field can play in the fomentation of emancipated and democratic societies

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1. Adrian Estrela Pereira, Ekaterina Konopleva, Dung Thi Do, Irênio de Cerqueira Paes Coelho Neto, and György Mészáros, "Educação Musical Afro-Brasileira: Uma Investigação do Ijexá como Ferramenta Educacional Descolonizadora," in *10o Musicom - Encontro de Pesquisadorxs Em Comunicação e Música - Playlists Das Diversidade*, 1-15.

should be constantly and consistently considered as part of music educators' discussions and reflections.<sup>2</sup>

Embedded in these reflections, the last two decades of the Brazilian music scenario have been marked by a myriad of changes due to the expansion of African-based music education. An increasingly academic-oriented interest in studying and applying musical knowledge stemming from African-heritage sources can be noticed in Brazilian universities, congresses, conventions, journals and other formal structures. Beyond historical and ethnographic investigations linked to African-matrix music and its ascendants from ethnomusicological, philosophical and social viewpoints, it can be observed a growing interest in scrutinizing African-based music and applying the developed knowledge in the study of "non-African-based" musical instruments such as piano, acoustic guitar, electric guitar, electric bass and drum kit. Besides materials directed to musical instruments training, in recent years, the African-based knowledge has been explored as a pathway to foster the development of other musical competences (e.g., melodic solfege, improvisation, rhythmic perception, etc.) that were dominated by other kinds of materials.<sup>3</sup>

Institutions and scholars from Salvador, a Brazilian northeastern city which is identified as the world's biggest Afro-descendent city outside the African continent,<sup>4</sup> hold an important role in the research, development, assessment and dissemination of this type of knowledge. In this context, the present article has as its general aim to discuss possible intentions and implications of the examination of African-based music traditions for its application in the study of non-traditional African instruments. This paper employs critical, sociological and ethnomusicological perspectives to reflect on possible impacts of this African-orientation in the music education scenario, focusing on the publications that were developed in the Salvador city or based on the Soteropolitan<sup>5</sup> context. Likewise, this work has four specific aims to support the general purpose: 1) To present the Salvador city and the main historical and social features that can impact in musical expressions; 2) to present some recent publications that focus on the application of musical knowledge inherited from African-Brazilian traditions for the training in instruments other than the originally used in the traditional contexts; 3) to analyze these materials from a music education

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2. Patrick Schmidt, "Music Education as Transformative Practice: Creating New Frameworks for Learning Music through a Freirian Perspective," *Visions of Research in Music Education* 6 (2005): 1-14.

3. Guilherme Scott, *Universo Percussivo Baiano de Letieres Leite - Educação Musical Afro-Brasileira: Possibilidades e Movimentos* (Salvador: Federal University of Bahia, 2019).

4. Maria Estela Rocha Ramos, *Bairros Negros: Uma Lacuna nos Estudos Urbanísticos: Um Estudo Empírico-Conceitual no Bairro do Engenho Velho da Federação, Salvador (Bahia)* (Salvador: Federal University of Bahia, 2013).

5. Soteropolitan means what is relative to the Salvador city (e.g., a person who was born in Salvador is called Soteropolitan).

perspective; and 4) based on the critical paradigm's perspective, to integrate the developed analysis with broader social discussions that may affect and be affected by the music field.

Pursuing these aims, the current study applies a qualitative document analysis as its methodological approach to acquire the data, examine the materials and develop the knowledge supported by diverse written, audio and audiovisual sources. In spite of this investigation being focused in a municipal context, it is expected that a better understanding of a regional phenomenon can create effects that reverberate not only in a local music context but also in broader levels and sectors of music education, considering our current increasingly connected and globalized societies.

The next sections of this investigation will be dedicated to the construction of the knowledge that will support the proposed reflections and the article's aims. Accordingly, the subsequent parts of this paper can be expected as: 1) the immediate next section will present a brief literature review about the Salvador city, focusing on features that can support the understanding of the link between this municipality and African-based music studies; 2) the following part will concentrate in introducing the main characteristics of some materials which employed African-based knowledge in the development of approaches to teaching and learning non-African-based musical instruments; 3) the next will provide a general comprehension of the methodology adopted during this article's development; 4) based on the critical paradigm perspective, the subsequent part will promote the reflections and discussions that will allow the integration of all previously presented information; and 5) the last section will present the authors' final consideration and the main conclusions of the current investigation.

## Literature Review

### The Salvador City

Founded in 1549 under the Portuguese Empire's rule, Salvador (SSA) is a city that contributed and keeps contributing to diverse aspects of the Brazilian fluid, dynamic and heterogeneous development.<sup>6</sup> Considering the Portuguese government's economic and political interests in Brazil, SSA was chosen to be the administrative, military, economic and political heart of the colony due to its geographically privileged position. Selected as the first capital of Brazil, Salvador

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6. Ramos, *Território Afrodescendente: Leitura de Cidade Através do Bairro da Liberdade, Salvador (Bahia)* (Salvador: Federal University of Bahia, 2007).



kept this position for more than two centuries (until 1763), when the administrative center was transferred to Rio de Janeiro.<sup>7</sup>

Since before its foundation, Salvador was marked by a very complex social and cultural environment. Calabrich et al. posit that the city was raised by the enslavement of Brazilian native peoples (indigenous).<sup>8</sup> However, as stated by the authors, due to the Catholic Church's interference and the resistance of the indigenous peoples, the colonizers started to import African people to work as slaves in the Brazilian territory.<sup>9</sup> Thereby, between the end of the XVI century and XIX century, African-Banto<sup>10</sup> peoples were brought to Brazil as slaves. From the beginning of the XIX century, the Portuguese colonizers started to trafficking expressive numbers of African-Sundanese<sup>11</sup> peoples (e.g., Fons, Iorubás, Jeje, etc.). Calabrich et al.<sup>12</sup> affirm that "the Sudanese were very numerous because their peoples were at war and prisoners of war were almost always sold as slaves. Thousands of people arrived in Salvador, speaking different languages and with different habits, values and religions".<sup>13</sup> However, not only enslaved Sudanese used to go to Brazil, business Sudanese individuals used to travel to SSA looking for commerce opportunities. As posited by the authors, "They were rich black merchants, who traveled mainly from Lagos, Nigeria, and came to Salvador to sell authentic African products".<sup>14</sup> The Bantos and the Sudanese are recognized as the main African peoples that formed the Brazilian society.<sup>15</sup> Concomitantly, Prandi<sup>16</sup> asserts that,

the Sudanese are the peoples located in the regions that today range from Ethiopia to Chad and from southern Egypt to Uganda in the northernmost part of Tanzania. [...]

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7. Ramos, "Bairros Negros: Uma Lacuna nos Estudos Urbanísticos: Um Estudo Empírico-Conceitual no Bairro do Engenho Velho da Federação, Salvador (Bahia)."

8. Selma Calabrich, Gerson Silva, José Francisco Izquierdo Yafiez, and José Maurício C. D. Bittencourt, *Afrobook: Mapeamento dos Ritmos Afro Baianos* (Salvador: Pracatum Escola de Música e Tecnologias, 2017).

9. Antonio Vieira, a Brazilian priest, convinced the King of Portugal to stop enslaving the Indigenous people and to import Africans from the coast.

10. Banto is an oversimplified categorization based on language roots. Around four hundred African ethnic groups are considered Banto

11. Sudanese is an oversimplified categorization based on language roots. Even though they are from different ethnic groups, a myriad of sub-Saharan ethnicities are grouped as Sudanese (e.g., Iorubás, Fons, Fulanis, Jeje, Mandinga etc.).

12. Here and ahead: authors' translation

13. Calabrich, Silva, Yafiez, and Bittencourt, *Afrobook: Mapeamento dos Ritmos Afro Baianos*, 2017, 26.

14. Ibid.

15. Bruno Nigri, *O Samba no Terreiro: Música, Corpo e Linguagem Como Prática Cultural – Apontamentos para o Campo do Lazer* (Mestrado em Lazer, Belo Horizonte: Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, 2014).

16. Here and ahead: authors' translation.

below, the central Sudanese group, formed by numerous linguistic and cultural groups that made up different ethnic groups that supplied Brazil with slaves, especially those located in the Gulf of Guinea region and which, in Brazil, we know by the generic names of Nagôs or Yorubás (but comprising several peoples of the Yoruba language and culture, including the Oyó, Ijexá, Ketu, Ijebu, Egbá, Ifé, Oxogbô, etc.). [...] The Bantu, peoples of Southern Africa, extending to the south, just below the Sudanese limits, comprising the lands that stretch from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean to the Cape of Good Hope.<sup>17</sup>

Considering these expressive “immigration” processes, the African heritage became a very significant part of the Soteropolitan culture. Outside the African continent, Salvador is the city with the biggest Black population in the world.<sup>18</sup> According to Guerreiro, in 2017, 85% of Salvador’s population was formed by pardos<sup>19</sup> and blacks.<sup>20</sup> By different means, the countless African ethnicities that arrived in Salvador reinvented themselves into new forms of organization to incorporate the traditions of different peoples.<sup>21</sup> For the music field, one of the most important arrangements is related to the Afro-Brazilian religions known as Candomblé. Pereira et al.<sup>22</sup> posit that Candomblé “should not be understood as referring to a specific religion, but as a categorization of different Afro-Brazilian religions that share certain characteristics”.<sup>23</sup> Concomitantly, Cardoso asserts that “Candomblé is a generic term used to describe some Afro-Brazilian religions that share certain characteristics, such as the phenomenon of possession”.<sup>24</sup> These multiple religions also share the relevance of percussive music in their ceremonies. The music played in these ceremonies is one of the main sources that have been used to develop materials and initiatives related to music education, as it will be described in the next section.

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17. R. Prandi, “De Africano a Afro-Brasileiro: Etnia, Identidade, Religião,” *Revista Usp* 46 (2000): 53.

18. Ramos, *Bairros Negros: Uma Lacuna nos Estudos Urbanísticos: Um Estudo Empírico-Conceitual no Bairro do Engenho Velho da Federação, Salvador (Bahia)*, 2013.

19. Broadly speaking, Pardo is a term used in Brazil to classify light-skinned African-descendant people. In Brazil, the ethnic classification is based on self-identification.

20. Goli Guerreiro, “Prefácio do Afrobook,” in *Afrobook: Mapeamento dos Ritmos Afro Baianos* (eds.) Selma Calabrich et al. (Salvador: Pracatum Escola de Música e Tecnologias, 2017), 17-18.

21. Adrian Estrela Pereira and Ekaterina Konopleva, “O Ritmo Ijexá ao Piano: Aspectos Interpretativos,” in *XIV ENECULT (Encontro de Estudos Multidisciplinares em Cultura, Salvador, 2018)*, 1-14.

22. Here and ahead: authors’ translation

23. “Educação Musical Afro-Brasileira: Uma Investigação do Ijexá como Ferramenta Educacional Descolonizadora,” 7.

24. Ângelo Nonato Natale Cardoso, *A Linguagem dos Tambores* (Salvador: Universidade Federal da Bahia, 2006), 394.

## The Soteropolitan Publications

As cited above, this section will be dedicated to the presentation of some materials that exemplify the current Soteropolitan trend of employing Afro-Brazilian knowledge for the development of musical competences in instruments that do not necessarily share African ascendancy. In this direction, the current section will briefly present the main features, application and aims of the selected materials in order to provide a useful background to support the reflections that will be offered in the following sections.

The materials was selected to illustrate three main categories that can be identified in the Soteropolitan music education production: 1) the academic oriented – understand here as productions developed by scholars linked to music programs of universities which aim to fulfill the traditional requirements of a postgraduate music course; 2) the non-academic oriented – represented here by publications that were systematically designed to reach audiences outside the academic context, normally adopting certain standards (e.g., language, age, musical level) that are compatible with the desired audience (e.g., adults pianists, beginner drummers, children, guitar players, etc.); and 3) the publications endorsed by the Professional Postgraduate Program in Music (PPGPROM) of the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA) – identified here as materials which intend to fill the gap between the academia and the external world, as materials that were developed to integrate academic features in publications directed to the general public.

Identified as academy oriented, the article “Rhythm Ijexá on the Piano: Interpretative Aspects”,<sup>25</sup> by Pereira and Konopleva,<sup>26</sup> has as its main aim to present possible applications of the Ijexá (an African-based rhythm used in Candomblé ceremonies) into piano performance. The paper briefly presents the connections between the rhythm and the Brazilian culture at the same time that presents the main social and religious features of the Ijexá. Additionally, the article suggests a study protocol and introduces the UPB method<sup>27</sup> as the guide in the development of the examples (scores) presented in the paper.

As an outcome of his master degree, Alexandre Vargas published the dissertation entitled “Bahian Guitar: a methodology for instrumental teaching”<sup>28</sup> as a pathway to support teaching and learning processes related to the instrument Bahian Guitar (Guitarra Baiana). However, since its creation in the second half of the XX century, the Bahian guitar has been used to play Afro-

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25. Translated from Portuguese: “Guitarra Baiana: uma proposta metodológica para o ensino instrumental”

26. Pereira and Konopleva, “O Ritmo Ijexá ao Piano: Aspectos Interpretativos,” 2018.

27. The UPB (Percussive Universe of Bahia) is a method of teaching Afro-Brazilian music developed by internationally renowned Brazilian popular musician Letieres Leite.

28. Translated from Portuguese: Guitarra Baiana: uma proposta metodológica para o ensino instrumental.

Brazilian music. Thus, Vargas' work<sup>29</sup> integrates African-based knowledge into the study and training of this newborn Brazilian instrument. As an academic publication, the dissertation also offers sections with substantial theoretical backgrounds related to aspects like: history of Bahian Guitar and its connection with the carnival; music techniques, skills and competences; Brazilian rhythms; and music education approaches.

Starting the non-academic segment, the book "Afro-Brazilian Rhythms for Drum Kit", authored by Tito Oliveira, is a bilingual publication (Portuguese and English) which has as its main aim to contribute with the development of drummers by presenting possible applications of African-based music traditions for the drums (drum kit). To achieve his aim, Oliveira<sup>30</sup> was based on six Afro-Brazilian rhythms (Ijexá, Agueré, Samba de Roda, Cabila, Vassi and Samba-reggae) to develop exercises, studies, and grooves that provide knowledge associated with African-based music traditions and, at the same time, offer technical challenges that contribute with drummers technical improvement. It is relevant to mention that four of the chosen rhythms are used in Candomblé ceremonies (Ijexá, Agueré, Cabila and Vassi). In the early sections, the book presents brief theoretical sections related to the chosen rhythms, their traditional instruments, their roots and their common social and religious applications.

Still in the non-academic categorization, Rafael Lázaro published the document named "Guitar Strumming in Samba-Reggae: A proposal"<sup>31</sup> as a genuine and voluntary contribution to the development of guitar players that are interested in Samba-reggae, a relatively recent Afro-Brazilian rhythm<sup>32</sup> which is commonly associated to a Bloco-Afro<sup>33</sup> named Olodum. Lázaro's<sup>34</sup> main objective is to offer some possibilities for the employment of electric guitar in the accompaniment of songs played in the Samba-reggae rhythm. Additionally, the author provides a brief literature review related to the Soteropolitan's Blocos-Afro

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29. Alexandre Siles Vargas, *Guitarra Baiana: uma Proposta Metodológica para o Ensino Instrumental* (Salvador: Federal University of Bahia, 2015).

30. Tito Oliveira, *Ritmos Afro-Brasileiros na Bateria* (Salvador: Etina, 2014).

31. Translated from Portuguese: *Levadas de Guitarra no Samba-Reggae: Uma Proposta*

32. Although extremely influenced by African-matrix music, the samba reggae was forged in the second half of the XX century by a Brazilian percussionist "Antonio Luis Alves de Souza", known as "Neguinho do Samba". Unlike the majority of rhythms presented in this article, the samba-reggae is not found in centenary African or African-based traditions.

33. Blocos-Afro are organizations which started to be created in XX century with the aiming of showing African based cultures during the Soteropolitan carnival. Today, they have event all year long and have objectives related to social changing and social equality.

34. Rafael Lima Lázaro, *Levadas de Guitarra no Samba-Reggae: Uma Proposta* (2019).

(focusing on Olodum, the responsible for spreading the samba-reggae) and the rise of the “Axé Music”<sup>35</sup> in the Brazilian carnival.<sup>36</sup>

Despite being previously outlined, it is important to reiterate the reasons to create a third section dedicated to materials developed in PPGPROM. The PPGPROM is an innovative Postgraduate program which aims to strengthen the gap between universities’ knowledge production and the public outside the academy. Instead of requiring a dissertation, as the majority of master programs, the PPGPROM is flexible regarding the nature of the main outcome of the master degree’s studies. In general terms, the student needs to develop an academic memorial (focusing on the period he or she spent in the program), an academic article (as an evidence of the required scientific writing skills) and a “main product”.<sup>37</sup> What makes PPGPROM’s production closer to the general public is the fact that, as long as it achieves the quality demands, the main product may be presented in a variety of formats, since the traditional dissertation to a series of podcasts.

In this context, Rafael Palmeira developed the product “Rhythms of Candomblé Ketu on drum kit: adaptations of the Agueré, Vassi, Daró and Jinká touches,<sup>38</sup> based on the practices of Iuri Passos”<sup>39</sup> as an educational approach oriented to teaching and learning processes related to the drum kit. Palmeira’s<sup>40</sup> main product is focused on four rhythms (Aguéré, Vassi, Daró and Jinká) that are directly related with the experiences of Iuri Passos, a famous percussionist who coordinates the musical matters in one of the most influential candomblés of Salvador, the Gantois.<sup>41</sup> The academic article which integrates the author’s master outcomes reflects on a learning theory oriented to the development of drummer competences. Furthermore, as a support for the published products, Palmeira recorded a CD with samples, models and examples that make his product accessible even for instrumentalists who are not able to read scores.

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35. Axé music is an aesthetics formed by several local and global musical genres, such as, ijexá, reggae, salsa and lambada. Therefore, it should not be considered “a” musical genre.

36. P. Fryer, *Rhythms of Resistance: African Musical Heritage in Brazil* (London: Pluto Press, 2000); Castro “Axé Music: Mitos, Verdades e World Music,” *Per Musi* 22, no. 239 (2010): 203-217, claims that.

37. Débora Mara Lima de Oliveira, *Memorial Acadêmico: Uma Trajetória Profissional no Ensino de Piano em Grupo para Crianças* (Salvador: Universidade Federal da Bahia, 2019).

38. In soteropolitan Candomblés, the rhythms are known as touches.

39. Translated from Portuguese: “Ritmos do Candomblé Ketu na bateria: adaptações dos toques Agueré, Vassi, Daró e Jinká, a partir das práticas de Iuri Passos”.

40. Rafael S. Palmeira, *Ritmos do Candomblé Ketu na Bateria: Adaptações dos Toques Agueré, Vassi, Daró e Jinká, a Partir das Práticas de Iuri Passos* (Salvador: Universidade Federal da Bahia, 2017).

41. Calabrich et al., *Afrobook: Mapeamento dos Ritmos Afro Baianos*.

Closing the third section, the "Piano Workbook Based on the Rhythms Ijexá, Cabila, Barravento and Vassi",<sup>42</sup> authored by Adrian Pereira, has as its general aim to suggest some possible pathways to integrate characteristics of four Candomblé's rhythms (Ijexá, Cabila, Barravento and Vassi) into piano performance. Beyond presenting piano exercises, studies and complete solo pieces, the author developed a series of "preparatory studies" that can be done without any musical instruments. Furthermore, Pereira also recorded a CD in order to illustrate the written music materials. Despite briefly describing the most relevant features of the rhythms Ijexá, Cabila, Barravento and Vassi throughout the main product, for the academic article the author focused on Ijexá, providing a substantial historical, social and ethnomusicological literature review regarding the rhythm.

## Methodology and Discussion

### Methodology

This research employs qualitative document analysis (QDA) as a methodological approach to examine materials that can contribute to the development of the knowledge that will support the presented discussions. The QDA can be understood as a set of procedures for the search, selection, systematization and analysis of the data contained in several types of materials from different sources.<sup>43</sup> Bowen, states that, regarding researches guided by QDA, are considered "documents" the materials that were developed without the researcher's participation.<sup>44</sup> As posited by the author,

documents that may be used for systematic evaluation as part of a study take a variety of forms. They include advertisements; agendas, attendance registers, and minutes of meetings; manuals; background papers; books and brochures; diaries and journals; event programs (i.e., printed outlines); letters and memoranda; maps and charts; newspapers (clippings/articles); press releases; program proposals, application forms, and summaries; radio and television program scripts; organizational or institutional reports; survey data; and various public records. Scrapbooks and photo albums can also furnish documentary material for research purposes.<sup>45</sup>

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42. Translated from Portuguese: "Caderno de Exercícios para Piano Baseados Nos Ritmos Ijexá, Cabila, Barravento e Vassi". The "Piano Workbook Based on the Rhythms Ijexá, Cabila, Barravento and Vassi" is the name of Pereira's main product in PPGPROM. The Workbook is integrated in the author's publication entitled "Memorial Acadêmico".

43. Elise Wach and Richard Ward, "Learning about Qualitative Document Analysis," *IDS Practice Paper In Brief*, no. 13 (2013): 1-10.

44. Glenn A. Bowen, "Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method," *Qualitative Research Journal* 9, no. 2 (2009): 27-40.

45. *Ibid*, 27-28.

Following this trail, the construction of the presented article underwent searches for materials which linked the development of musical instruments' skills with African-based knowledge and approaches. Due to the focus on Salvador, the academic repository of the Federal University of Bahia, one of the most influential universities in the region, was particularly employed in the hunt for relevant materials. However, considering the purpose of investigating materials that can contribute to the development of competences related to music instruments (which may integrate contents directed to different ages and instrumental levels) not only academic-oriented materials were examined. Therefore, other search mechanisms such as google books, bookstores' websites and publishers' websites were also employed.

## Discussion

As stated above, this article's discussions are strongly influenced by a critical understanding of social manifestations. In general terms, Historical Realism can be considered the ontology defended by the critical paradigm.<sup>46</sup> According to it, the reality is accepted as historically "shaped by a congeries of social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic, and gender factors, and then crystallized (reified) into a series of structures that are now (inappropriately) taken as 'real' [...] for all practical purposes the structures are real".<sup>47</sup> The Critical Paradigm (CP) is based on deep analysis and reflections on diverse segments of a society with an aim of "raising consciousness"<sup>48</sup> about the relations which "illegitimately"<sup>49</sup> domains and constrains people's behavior.

Critical theorists aim to expose the hidden power relations that generate imprisoning worldviews.<sup>50</sup> Thereby, critical theorists tend to include in their inquiries and analysis reflections related to gender inequalities, religious intolerance, racial discriminations, economic privilege, class disadvantages and a number of other structural characteristics of the studied society. Focusing on oppression mechanisms, the CP aims to be emancipatory by promoting the replacement of ignorance and misapprehensions for more conscious and

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46. Egon G. Guba and Yvonna S. Lincoln, "Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research," in *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (eds.) Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1994).

47. Ibid, 110.

48. Antonina Lukenchuk and Eileen Kolich, "Paradigms and Educational Research: Weaving the Tapestry," in *Paradigms of Research for the 21st Century: Perspectives and Examples from Practice* (New York: Peter Lang AG, 2013), 61-90.

49. Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion, and Keith Morrison, *Research Methods in Education* (New York: Routledge, 2007).

50. G. Ryan and Hanah Sfar-Gandoura, "Introduction to Positivism, Interpretivism and Critical Theory," *Nurse Researcher* 25, no. 4 (2018): 14-20.

enlightened perceptions.<sup>51</sup> Furthermore, it is important to stress the “reformative”<sup>52</sup> characteristic as one of the most distinguishing features of the critical paradigm. For CP, besides offering well-based and enlightening analysis of oppressive and dominatory structures, it is extremely relevant to promote, by diverse means, a just, fair and democratic society. As stated by Cohen et al. “its purpose is not merely to understand situations and phenomena but to change them. In particular, it seeks to emancipate the disempowered, to redress inequality and to promote individual freedoms within a democratic society”.<sup>53</sup>

Considering this viewpoint, it is important to reinforce that the Brazilian culture had in its formation enormous influence of cultures coming from diverse African regions due to the slaving period of Colonial Brazil. However, because of the exploratory model employed for Brazilian colonization, Brazilian society was built on very uneven and unfair relations between people from different ethnic groups. Due to the very nature of their forced immigration, the African-descendants were particularly affected by this systemic unbalance. For a big portion of the Brazilian history, diverse elements that could be slightly linked to African heritage were repressed.<sup>54</sup> Therefore, African-based characteristics like skin color, habits, beliefs, cuisine, techniques, tools, sports, clothing, language, religion, dance, visual arts and music were placed in a hierarchically inferior position, considering the Brazilian overall social perception.<sup>55</sup> Unfortunately, even after the end of the formal persecution, the Afro-Brazilian heritage is, by diverse means, affected by these historically constructed discriminatory mechanisms.<sup>56</sup>

In addition to social, economic and political effects, the aforementioned mechanisms also encompass philosophical and psychological dimensions.<sup>57</sup> Abib refers to “coloniality” as the process of destroying a people’s “symbolic world” and replacing it with the colonizer’s worldviews; the process of westernization of peoples.<sup>58</sup> According to the author,<sup>59</sup> the coloniality represses “the beliefs, spirituality and knowledge of the colonized and imposes new ones”.<sup>60</sup>

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51. Guba and Lincoln, “Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research,” 1994.

52. Jabreel Asghar, “Critical Paradigm: A Preamble for Novice Researchers,” *Life Science Journal* 10, no. 4 (2013): 3121-3127.

53. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, *Research Methods in Education*, 2007, 26.

54. Sharyse Piroupo Amaral, *História do Negro no Brasil: Módulo 2* (Salvador: Universidade Federal da Bahia, 2011).

55. Wlamyra R. de Albuquerque and Walter Fraga, *Uma História do Negro no Brasil* (Salvador: Centro de Estudos Afro-Orientais da Universidade Federal da Bahia e Fundação Cultural Palmares, 2006).

56. Ramos, “Território Afrodescendente: Leitura de Cidade Através do Bairro da Liberdade, Salvador (Bahia),” 2007.

57. Catherine Walsh, Luiz Fernandes de Oliveira, and Vera Maria Candau, “Colonialidade e Pedagogia Decolonial: Para Pensar uma Educação Outra,” *Arquivos Analíticos de Políticas Educativas* 26, no. 83 (2018): 1-26.

58. Pedro Rodolpho Jungers Abib, “Culturas Populares, Educação e Descolonização,” *Revista Educação Em Questão* 57, no. 54 (2019): 1-20.



Furthermore, aspects of the current world globalization may impact on African-heritage manifestations. The globalization process can be understood as a philosophical approach that supports the institutionalization of a universal culture (or, at least, a worldwide common basis). Villodre claims that “the globalization phenomenon could be considered a homogenizing process involving dissolution of one’s own cultural identity in favor of what is considered universal”.<sup>61</sup> A consequence of establishing a universal culture is the creation of the perception of “other” cultures. Following this track, all behaviors and habits that are outside the “global culture” are understood as “the others”. Harmoniously, Barry asserts that the “Eurocentric universalism takes for granted both the superiority of what is European or Western, and the inferiority of what is not”.<sup>62</sup>

Employing a CP standpoint for the investigation of music scenarios, it is possible to notice a series of effects of the Eurocentric thinking. The psychological dimension of colonial influence (coloniality) can support hierarchical effects in musics that represent different peoples or social groups.<sup>63</sup> Queiroz attributes the term “musical epistemicide” to the process of inferiorization that, based on Western hegemonic principles, excludes non-Eurocentric music from significant social places.<sup>64</sup> According to the author,<sup>65</sup> “musical praxis not aligned with the perspectives of Western classical music [...] were excluded from 'civilized' contexts of music production”.<sup>66</sup>

A similar discourse to the one which hierarchizes different musical genres also influences upon initiatives oriented to music education.<sup>67</sup> In her denounce of neutral understandings, Hess states that in music courses “western classical music is constructed as ‘natural’, and the curriculum tokenizes alternative practices by making them tangential to the main curriculum”.<sup>68</sup> In many respects, Western music in music education acts as a colonizer”. Aligned with this, Bradley reports that many programs do not embrace “other” types of music and “if such

59. Here and ahead: authors’ translation.

60. Abib, “Culturas Populares, Educação e Descolonização,” 2019, 8.

61. María del Mar Bernabé Villodre, “Cultural Identity and Using Music in the Intercultural Educational Process,” *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences* 132 (2014): 236.

62. Peter Barry, *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 128.

63. Marcus Vinícius Medeiros Pereira, “Possibilidades e Desafios em Música e na Formação Musical: A Proposta de um Giro Decolonial,” *Interlúdio* 10 (2018): 10-22.

64. Luis Ricardo Silva Queiroz, “Traços de Colonialidade na Educação Superior em Música Do Brasil: Análises a Partir de uma Trajetória de Epistemicídios Musicais e Exclusões,” *Revista Da ABEM* 25, no. 39 (2017): 132-159.

65. Here and ahead: authors’ translation.

66. Queiroz, “Traços de Colonialidade na Educação Superior em Música do Brasil: Análises a Partir de uma Trajetória de Epistemicídios Musicais e Exclusões,” 2017, 137.

67. Juliet Hess, “Decolonizing Music Education: Moving beyond Tokenism,” *International Journal of Music Education* 33, no. 3 (2015): 336-347.

68. *Ibid*, 336.

musics are included in the curricula, they often tend to perpetuate the sense of 'different or exotic' (Campbell, 1994), rather than musics as equally important components of the curriculum".<sup>69</sup>

Embedded in these agitated and troubled contexts, the African based music managed to keep its relevance to the Brazilian national culture. However, despite its undeniable participation in the construction of Brazilian popular music, the African-heritage music still finds countless obstacles to join the formal contexts of music education. Even with its cultural, social and historical richness, it is noticeable that today it is still difficult to find materials for studying music based on Afro-Brazilian genres. Influential and popular publications such as Collura,<sup>70</sup> Faria,<sup>71</sup> and Giffoni,<sup>72</sup> usually present studies to superficially understand some internationally popular Brazilian rhythms, like "Samba", "Bossa Nova" and "Partido-alto".

Nevertheless, the availability of these materials can be considered as important steps in the struggles for a proper appreciation of the Afro-Brazilian music heritage. Furthermore, it is possible to mention the enormous contributions provided by the materials that were presented in the Literature review section. Focused on the production guided by investigation in Salvador city – the Brazilian municipality with the biggest percentage of African-descendant population – the introduced literature can illustrate how deep and meaningful the studies of musical elements of Afro-Brazilian culture can be. From a critical point of view, these initiatives can be comprehended as mechanisms to "erode ignorance", mitigating the effects of prejudicial preconceptions related to African heritage to and "raise consciousness" regarding the important role the African-based knowledge can undertake in the development of general musical skills and competences.

Parallely, the presence of these kinds of materials as a constitutive content of formal educational contexts may assist in the process of increasing the social appreciation of African-based culture in general. This reflection is supported by the assumption of a cross-feeding relation between the music field and the broad society. In other words, it is expected that, at the same time the political, historical, social and economic relations have significant influence in musical contexts, the music field also participates in the development of political, social and economic aspects of general societies. Following this trail, it is possible to reflect on the mutually influential relation between music, music education and

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69. Deborah Bradley, "Hidden in Plain Sight: Race and Racism in Music Education," in *The Oxford Handbook of Social Justice in Music Education* (ed.) Cathy Benedict et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 7.

70. Turi Collura, *Ritmica e Levadas Brasileiras para o Piano: Novos Conceitos para a Ritmica Pianística* (Vitória: Irmãos Vitale, 2009).

71. Nelson Faria, *The Brazilian Guitar Book: Samba, Bossa Nova and Other Brazilian Stiles* (Petaluma: Sher Music Co, 1995).

72. Adriano Giffoni, *Música Brasileira para Contrabaixo* (São Paulo: Irmãos Vitale, 1997).

broad society. Accordingly, Schmidt claims that music education “has the potential to reach as a transforming power to different realities; [...] it must not only establish its value in cognitive and emotional connections alone, but also search for social and thus, personal, transformation”.<sup>73</sup> Decolonization-oriented approaches to music education, as asserted by Stanton, “carries profound implications not only for decolonizing music as such, but for larger decolonial struggles”.<sup>74</sup>

Influenced by this comprehension, several scholars have been publishing research outcomes that call the attention of music educators for their possible role in fostering democratic societies.<sup>75</sup> Pereira, for example, suggests the “decolonial turn” to implement a “deconservative” approach in order to “denaturalize” the election of Western music as “the” content of music education.<sup>76</sup> This approach suggests the establishment of criteria that assign equal relevance to musics from different cultural backgrounds. On the other hand, as posited by the author,<sup>77</sup> the decolonial turn “does not exclude or deny Western musical knowledge [...] it only breaks with arbitrary cultural hegemonies, taking Western music to the status of ‘one’ among several possibilities for musical training”.<sup>78</sup>

Embedded in these ideas, it is possible to comprehend some possible implications of the aforementioned Soteropolitan materials to the music education field. The authors inverted the traditional reasoning of employing Western knowledge to make sense of African-heritage music and started employing African-based knowledge into the development of musical competences that were mostly achieved by western-oriented methods. Despite its municipal orientation, the release of the Soteropolitan materials may be an indicative of a brighter and fairer future for African-based knowledge in formal music education contexts. Beyond that, these publications and this trend of applying African-based knowledge in teaching and learning processes of non-African-based musical competences can be understood as mechanisms to encourage more democratic and emancipated societies.

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73. Schmidt, “Music Education as Transformative Practice: Creating New Frameworks for Learning Music through a Freirian Perspective,” 2005, 4.

74. Burke Stanton, “Musicking in the Borders toward Decolonizing Methodologies,” *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 26, no. 1 (2018): 4.

75. Frank Abrahams, “The Application of Critical Pedagogy to Music Teaching and Learning,” *Visions of Research in Music Education* 6 (2005): 1-16.

76. Pereira, “Possibilidades e Desafios em Música e na Formação Musical: A Proposta de um Giro Decolonial,” 2018.

77. Here and ahead: authors’ translation.

78. Pereira, “Possibilidades e Desafios em Música e na Formação Musical: A Proposta de um Giro Decolonial,” 2018, 20.

## Conclusions

Due to colonialism and the slave regime between the 16th and 19th centuries, several cultures were placed on the margins of Brazilian society. Additionally, aspects of globalization, arising from the 20th century, contributed to the devaluation of the same groups. The population of Salvador city, the world's biggest African-descendant municipality outside Africa, was particularly affected by these kinds of social discrimination. To combat this evidence, various socio-cultural manifestations (e.g., Blocos-Afro) were created with the aim of preserving, making visible and valuing the identities of Afro-Brazilian minorities. In recent years, it can be observed a Brazilian academic interest in studying African-based musical knowledge to apply it in approaches oriented to music education.

This article focused on the investigation of Soteropolitan publications which apply knowledge derived from Afro-Brazilian traditions in the development of approaches to teaching and learning non-African-based musical instruments. It was argued that these initiatives may contribute significantly not only to the process of increasing the Afro-Brazilian music social appreciation but also to the valuation and valorization of the minority groups that are commonly linked to these types of music. Accordingly, due to the cross-feeding relation between the general society and the music field, the current work defends that the systematic study of African-based music associated with its application in the development of musical competences can assist in the development of democratic and emancipated societies. Additionally, in spite of the municipal focus of this article, it is expected that the promoted discussions can influence similar reflections in other contexts, making it possible for this investigation to promote relevant impacts that can reverberate throughout broader scenarios, especially considering our increasingly globalized world.

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## From Margo Channing to Margaret Elliot: The Aging Actress, Age Performance, and the Dictates of Aging in Joseph Mankiewicz's *All about Eve* and Stuart Heisler's *The Star*

By Marta Miquel-Baldellou\*

*Bette Davis played the role of an aging actress in different films throughout her career. In Joseph Mankiewicz's All about Eve (1950), Davis performs one of her most highly acclaimed parts as Margo Channing, a mature actress who must face the decline of her acting career upon the arrival of a younger and ambitious counterpart. Only two years later, in Stuart Heisler's The Star (1952), Davis once more played the role of an aging actress, Margaret Elliot, who refuses to accept that her career as an actress has come to an end, thus taking a bleaker approach in comparison with Mankiewicz's film. Bearing in mind the intertextuality existing between both films, since All about Eve and The Star address the figure of the aging actress and are both considered self-referential films insofar as they are films about the film industry, this article will analyse how these two films address the performance of aging on and off screen, as actresses switch roles between acting younger or older in relation to characters that function as mirrors of aging, and how they eventually come to terms with the dictates of aging and their own aging process as women.*

### Introduction

Drawing on Mary Russo's notion of 'the female grotesque,'<sup>1</sup> which mostly depicts female aging as a process of decline, as this figure focuses on the disturbing qualities of women's aging process, Anne Morey has drawn attention to the character of the celebrated actress in classic films of the 1950s and 1960s,<sup>2</sup> who faces the decline of her career in acting, and whose histrionic performance both on and off screen reveals the performative features of aging. These films usually acquire an outstanding self-referential quality insofar as the main character is shown playing roles on stage or on screen as an actress, but also reveals a predisposition for performance in her everyday life, as a result of her zealous commitment to performance, but also due to the prevailing discourses of female aging, as she finds herself acting according to them, but also against them. This pervasive inclination to perform even transcends these films, as the character

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1. Mary Russo, *The Female Grotesque: Risk, Excess, and Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 1.

2. Anne Morey, "Grotesquerie as Marker of Success in Aging Female Stars," in *In the Limelight and Under the Microscope: Forms and Functions of Female Celebrity* (eds.) S. Holmes and D. Negra (New York: Continuum, 2011), 107.

of the aging actress is, after all, played by an actress who knows about the ins and outs of show business and has also devoted her life to acting. In the context of performance studies, Anne Basting underlines the intersection existing between aging and gender due to the performative quality that characterises both of them, and points out the potential transformative quality of performance.<sup>3</sup> In the field of gender studies, Judith Butler argues that gender is performed through a series of repeated practices in time,<sup>4</sup> which ultimately disclose the impossibility of exact repetition, thus finding an entry into transformability through performance which leads to its subversion. In analogy, the ways in which aging is displayed on screen and off screen in films often call attention to the performative quality of aging, as critics such as Margaret Gullette unveil that actors are often asked to act younger or older.<sup>5</sup> In the context of film studies, Deborah Jermyn claims that female aging in films can be interpreted from a subversive or a compliant perspective, since the embodiment of female aging may respond to a conventionally condescending representation, or rather, by means of this discomfiting portrayal, female aging can also be depicted from a dissident and critical perspective.<sup>6</sup> As a result of these ambivalent interpretations, Jermyn further argues that there is a need to revisit portrayals of female aging in classic films revolving around actresses who underscore the performative dimension of female aging with a view to analyse how female aging is represented and to transform how it is perceived.

In a series of films extending over the span of years, American actress Bette Davis played the role of an aging cinema star who was forced to face the decline of her career owing to the pressures and dictates of aging that prevailed in the Hollywood star system. In resemblance with the actresses that she played on screen, Bette Davis also had to struggle to keep on playing leading parts in her later years and had to face the dictates of female aging that prevailed at the time on and off screen in the world of show business. In fact, it is acknowledged that Bette Davis landed her role as Jane in Robert Aldrich's film *What Ever Happened to Baby Jane?* by means of placing an ad in a Hollywood publication to find employment as an actress, as, in spite of her fame, she had difficulties in being cast in a new film in her later years. Throughout her career, Bette Davis participated in different films which displayed a critical approach towards the way aging actresses were treated in their later years and had to face the decline of

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3. Anne Basting, *The Stages of Age: Performing Age in Contemporary American Culture* (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 2001), 7.

4. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London: Routledge, 2007).

5. Margaret Morganroth Gullette, *Aged by Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).

6. Deborah Jermyn, "'Get a Life, Ladies. Your Old One Is Not Coming Back': Ageing, Ageism and the Lifespan of Female Celebrity," *Celebrity Studies* 3, no. 1 (2012): 5.

their careers, addressing the issue of how they complied with the dictates of aging, but also struggled against them.

One of the first films in which Bette Davis played the role of an actress was Joseph Mankiewicz's film *All about Eve* (1950), in which Davis was cast as Margo Channing, an actress at the peak of her career who must begin to face her decline as a stage performer, as she grows older and feels that her lifetime roles are better suited to younger actresses, such as Eve Harrington, her younger counterpart on stage. Only two years after *All about Eve* came out, Davis once more played the role of an aging actress in Stuart Heisler's film *The Star* (1952). Although Heisler's film has always stood in the shadow of Mankiewicz's masterpiece, both films focus on the character of the aging actress and present significant intertextual links and parallelisms that can be established between them in terms of the main female character and how she approaches the aging process from a public and personal perspective, how she complies with the established dictates of female aging, but also subverts them, and how her performance of female aging lays bare its performative quality and pave the way for its subsequent perception and transformation. Nonetheless, in contrast with the character of Margo Channing in *All about Eve*, whose status as a great star is not overtly put into question, in *The Star*, Davis is cast as Margaret Elliot, an actress who must face the decline of her acting career and is reluctant to abandon her roles as a young actress on screen and her status as a cinema star off screen, in spite of the fact that she is no longer considered for leading roles.

This article aims to provide a comparative analysis of both films based on the analysis of the intertextuality existing between a series of scenes, the identification of the performative quality of female aging not only on screen but also off screen, how these actresses perceive their aging process from a personal perspective, and how they finally decide to envision their aging process in compliance or against the prevailing dictates of aging. In order to provide this analysis, the article will be structured into different sections, first addressing how these actresses suffer a process of decline, commodification and alienation as a result of the established discourses of female aging. Since the discourse of gender is also inherently associated with the discourse of aging, the ways in which these actresses comply and subvert the dictates of gender will also be analysed. Given the self-referential quality of these films, as they are films which explicitly address the art of performance, the continuous proclivity toward performing on behalf of these actresses will also be tackled. Finally, scenes which display dualities, mirror effects and the presence of doubles will also be given special attention, as they contribute to underlining the performative quality of aging, as characters act younger or older in relation to others.

### **Splendour and Decline: The Twilight Characterisation of the Aging Actress**

As Margaret Gullette asserts, aging has traditionally been associated with a life stage characterised by decay and decline,<sup>7</sup> and this reflects on the way the two female protagonists of *All about Eve* and *The Star* feel that they are perceived by the gaze of others. Although both Margo Channing and Margaret Elliot have been considered highly-acclaimed actresses, Margo is aware that she is approaching the later years of her career as an actress, whereas Margaret is reluctant to give in to reality and accept that her golden years as a cinema star have long gone by. Having reached the peak of her career, Margo is still praised as a theatre actress and retires from stage out of her own will, while Margaret is no longer cast in leading roles in spite of the fact she continually clings to the hope of coming back and playing a leading role in a new film.

In the opening scene of *All about Eve*, which depicts an award ceremony, where Eve is considered the youngest actress to win such coveted award, critic Addison DeWitt's voice over introduces Margo Channing as "a great star and true star," adding that "she never was or will be anything less or anything else," thus attesting her highly-acclaimed status as a theatre actress, even if, in so saying, he is also subtly referring to Margo's maturity, as she has had a long career which has extended for years. In *The Star*, Margaret Elliot's Academy Award is displayed on a shelf in her living room, thus conjuring up traces of her past splendour and evincing that she was also a celebrated cinema star who enjoyed great popularity among critics and admirers. Nonetheless, throughout the film, Margaret often repeats a recurrent litany which echoes the words "going, going, gone," as a reverberating and constant reminder of her virtually non-existent past glamour and fame, even if she is mostly reluctant to accept the bleak reality.

In Mankiewicz's film, when playwright Lloyd Richards offers Margo a role in his new play, she begins to feel hesitant whether she will be able to perform the part of a younger woman once more, as she admits that she has turned forty and the character that she is asked to play is around twenty. Nonetheless, Richards strongly disagrees and expresses she will be perfect for the role, thus affirming, "Margo, you haven't got any age," while Margo ironically retorts that "Miss Channing is ageless." Conversely, in *The Star*, Margaret asks her agent, Harry, to find her a part that is intended for a younger actress in a new film, on the grounds that she was a star and, although Harry agrees with this assertion, he also adds that something took the place of "that fresh, dewy quality" that used to characterise her in the past, hence disclosing that she is no longer suitable for this kind of role owing to her age.

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7. Gullette, *Declining to Decline: Cultural Combat and the Politics of the Midlife* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997).

When Margo realises that Eve has been chosen as her understudy in the play she is performing, Margo gives vent to her theatrical and histrionic manners with Richards, stating that “all playwrights should be dead for three hundred years,” whereas Richards retorts that “the stars never die and never change.” In spite of his inability to cope with Margo’s temperament, as a playwright, Richards once more unveils his total admiration for Margo as an actress, stating that her status as a star will never be questioned and referring explicitly to her everlasting and unchangeable qualities as an actress. Conversely, in *The Star*, Margaret’s daughter, Gretchen, confesses that children at school tease her saying that her mother is a washed-up actress who no longer makes pictures. Gretchen thus tells her mother that she knows she used to be a star, but then asks her whether she still is, ultimately compelling her mother to claim that “if you are star, you don’t stop being a star,” as if Margaret was also trying to convince herself with her words.

As Margo becomes more insecure and jealous as a result of Eve’s pervasive presence, Margo’s fiancé, Bill, who is also the director of the play, convinces her that her tantrums are entirely out of place and that she is “a great actress at the peak of her career.” Conversely, in *The Star*, when Margaret meets Jim Johanssen, a former actor whom she helped in the past with whom she starts a relationship, he reminds her that “it’s no disgrace to be through with pictures,” trying to make her understand that her acting career has come to an end. Nonetheless, Margaret insists that she has never done anything but act, and that it will never be over, thus indulging in make-believe to convince herself that her next role in a film will grant her the fame she used to enjoy in the past.

### **The Rise and Fall of a Cinema Star: Aging, Commodification, Alienation**

As Jodi Brooks argues, the image of aging stars is often marked as “both frozen and transitory”<sup>8</sup> at the same time, since, both Margo and Margaret feel haunted by their youthful image at this stage of their career. As actresses who have attained fame and popularity, Margo and Margaret have carved a public image that seems to have little to do with their true selves, as if their image as stars arose as a mask or a Jungian persona that was overlaid on them, and involved a role which they were also required to play off screen and that contrasted with their inner self and stood in front of their shadow. In Mankiewicz’s film, as Margo talks to her friend Karen, she confesses, “I want Bill — I want him to want me — but me — not Margo Channing — and if I can’t tell them apart, how can he?”, thus pointing out the overlapping of her two selves as

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8. Jodi Brooks, “Performing Aging/Performance Crisis (for Norma Desmond, Margo Channing, Baby Jane and Sister George),” in *Figuring Age: Women, Bodies, Generations* (ed.) K. Woodward (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1999), 233.

a public figure and as a woman, which often intermingles and renders her incapable of separating one from the other. Besides, Margo fears that Bill is truly in love with her persona, her public image as Margo Channing, the glamorous actress, instead of herself, and dreads that, as she grows older and is banished from stage, "ten years from now, Margo Channing will have ceased to exist," and along with her, Bill's faithful devotion to her. In Heisler's film, Margaret has already reached this stage that Margo dreads, since, in her case, Margaret's public image as a glamorous actress has already been left behind although she still struggles to hold on to it. In one of the first scenes of the film, when Margaret and her agent are discussing the possibility of her comeback, a waitress appears to recognise Margaret, but needs to ask her in order to make sure if Margaret is actually the glamorous actress Margaret Elliot. Even though this scene proves that her admirers still remember her, it also shows that the passage of time has had some effect on her and that Margaret's public image as an actress, her persona, has been relegated to its shadow.

In the course of an argument between playwright and actress, since Margo admits that she feels the need to change some of the lines in the script so that the audience will continue coming to the theatre to attend the play, Richards retorts to Margo, "I shall never understand the weird process by which a body with a voice suddenly fancies itself a mind." Through his words, as a playwright, Richards ironically refers to the commodification of performers, as they are perceived as frozen commodities deprived of humanity at the service of the industry of show business. In a later conversation with Bill, Margo herself takes Richards' cue and refers to herself ironically as "nothing but a body with a voice" as a performer. Although these words acquire a metaphorical and ironic meaning in Mankiewicz's film, they acquire a literal sense in *The Star*, since, in the opening scene of the film, Margaret passes by an auction in which her personal belongings are being sold, thus symbolically highlighting the process of commodification that Margaret has undergone as a former cinema star, whose image has been frozen in time, as the presenter entices those who have gathered into buying the exhibited items by referring to what Margaret had represented as an actress in her golden years.

In Heisler's film, Margaret strives to hold on to her former image as a glamorous actress, although her looks no longer seem to match those which characterised her as a cinema star. When Margaret spends one night in prison for driving while being drunk, even if she repeatedly asserts that she is Margaret Elliot, the rest of the prisoners believe she is pretending to be someone else and her identity is thus called into question. The dazzling and innocent-looking image of Margaret Elliot as a star does not match the gaunt and scruffy of their new companion, to the extent that one of the prisoners retorts, "what a coincidence, I'm Snow White," as if she were also playing the part of a purely gentle character, suspecting that Margaret is also pretending to be someone else. The fact that Margaret is no longer recognised as Margaret Elliot leads her to suffer an

increasing process of alienation, inasmuch as Margaret seems no longer able to match the former exultant image of Margaret Elliot that everybody used to know. Hence, there is a wide gap between her persona as recognised by the public and Margaret's actual appearance, insofar as there is also an outstanding difference between the public image Margaret still wishes to project and that of her actual projected self.

Similarly, it is also unveiled that Margo feels increasingly detached from the roles conceived for younger actresses that she is still offered as she grows older. The age gap between the role she is supposed to play and her own age also contributes to widening the gap between her public image and her own self, hence stressing further the process of alienation established between her two selves. Margo's anticipated fears finally find verbal reflection in Addison's critical review published in the paper, which, to Margo's shock, refers to the "lamentable practice in our Theater of permitting [...] mature actresses to continue playing roles requiring a youth and vigor of which they retain but a dim memory." Margo thus feels she cannot longer hold on to her former public image as her own appearance grows increasingly detached from that she tries to match upon acting on the stage.

While Addison's views on aging actresses seem to confirm Margo's fears and even consider the possibility of retiring from acting, in Heisler's film, Margaret rather chooses to ignore prejudices about age even though she must suffer them in her everyday life. Margaret becomes particularly aware of prejudices between her former image and her current aging looks, when she begins to work as a shop assistant and two customers recognise her, although one of them retorts that she cannot be Margaret Elliot on the grounds that the actress is much better looking than the shop assistant that they have in front of them. At first, Margaret pretends to be an anonymous person, however, when she realises that the customers feel shocked, Margaret's ego is hurt and finally unveils that, "I am Margaret Elliot and I intend to stay Margaret Elliot," hence reinstating her intention to hold on to her image as a cinema star and resume her career as an actress. However, Margaret's words also unveil her fluctuation between these two roles, between Margaret as an aging anonymous person subjected to the effects of aging and Margaret Elliot as the youthful cinema star whose image remains frozen in the memories of her admirers.

### **Performing Gender: Independent Women and Displays of Femininity**

In Mankiewicz's film, when Eve gets to know Margo as an admirer and is invited to Margo's dressing room after one of her performances, Eve concedes that she believes that "part of Miss Channing's greatness lies in her ability to choose the best plays." Margo is always cast as the leading actress in plays that her friend and playwright, Lloyd Richards, writes for her, and she is directed by

her fiancé and theatre and cinema director, Bill Sampson. Thanks to this successful collaboration and Margo's skills as an actress, for many years, Margo has been considered one of the most talented performers on stage. Conversely, in *The Star*, Margaret's financial strain is rooted in her will to manage her own career in show business and become a financially independent entrepreneur. She unveils to Jim the turning point that instigated her decline as an actress: her will to produce her own pictures and thus be able to exert some control over the cinema industry, which increasingly detached her from the roles that she used to play and cemented the dusk of her career. As a result of her daring endeavour, Margaret is gradually banished from the star system and, as she grows older, she is no longer offered the kind of leading roles that turned her into a star and made her the recipient of an Academy Award, as a confirmation of her public acceptance within the film industry.

As a successful and financially independent woman, Margo ponders about everything she had to sacrifice in order to devote her life entirely to the theatre. As Margo confesses to her friend Karen, it is a "funny business, a woman's career — the things you drop on your way up the ladder, so you can move faster — you forget you'll need them again when you go back to being a woman — that's one career all females have in common." Margo thus expresses the dilemma that women often face between devoting their lives to a career or to raising a family. It is mostly when she compares herself with Eve, who is mostly characterised by femininity, subservience and modesty, even if it is just in appearance, that Margo is mostly reminded of how she has had to renounce 'being' a woman and sacrifice family life to be on top of show business. In Heisler's film, it is also implied that Margaret's personal life has also suffered the consequences of her success as a business woman who was economically independent. Margaret unveils that she was the breadwinner of the couple when she was married, and that the reason why her husband divorced her was that she was too busy with her career and that he could not bear playing second fiddle in relation to his wife. Her divorce, her inability to see her daughter Gretchen as much as she would like to, and the lack of support on behalf of those who only stood by her side when her films were lucrative display that Margaret has been symbolically punished for having achieved success as a financially independent woman as well as for having chosen to take control of her career and the roles to play on screen.

As Susan Sontag asserts, gender can be approached as performance in itself to the point that "to be a woman is to be an actress", and this is displayed in scenes in which these two actresses give vent to performing femininity.<sup>9</sup> Both Margo and Margaret have relationships with men who are younger than them, which contribute to underlining further their aging process from their own

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9. Susan Sontag, "The Double Standard of Aging," in *The Other within Us: Feminist Explorations of Women and Aging* (ed.) Marilyn Pearsall (Colorado: Westview Press, 1997), 22.



perspective. At this stage of her career, Margo's increasing insecurity lies in her awareness that she is growing old, particularly in comparison with Eve's youthful appearance. As Margo is talking to Richards about her next role in his play, she admits that she is not twenty anymore, but forty years of age, confessing that "that slipped out, I hadn't quite made up my mind to admit it — now I feel as if I'd suddenly taken all my clothes off," thus revealing that, for an actress, the revelation of her age feels so intimate as the act of stripping herself of her clothes. In contrast, Margo states that her fiancé, Bill is thirty-two, and "he looks thirty-two — he looked it five years ago, he'll look it twenty years from now," thus referring to how the dictates of aging seem to treat women and men differently, and stressing that women are made to grow older earlier. Nonetheless, in spite of Margo's increasing hesitation and vulnerability as she grows older, Bill shows her loyalty and devotion to her both as her director and fiancé. In *The Star*, Margaret starts a relationship with Jim, who bails her out from prison in exchange for having procured him a role in a film many years before. At the time, Margaret was a glamorous actress at the peak of her career and Jim was a young boy playing his first role in a film. However, the tables have been turned, and now Margaret is bankrupt and Jim is the manager of a prosperous ship company who welcomes Margaret in her house after she is evicted from her apartment for not being able to pay the rent. The age difference between Margaret and Jim is evocative of that of Margo and Bill, and it is even more remarkable. Nonetheless, in contrast with Margo, whose fiancé convinces her that she is still at the peak of her career, as she grows older, Margaret seems incapable of letting go of her past splendour until it is Jim, who, despite his youth, shows a more realistic bent of mind and gradually persuades her to renounce her dreams as her years as a youthful glamorous star are over.

The act of performing off stage or off screen on behalf of these actresses also extends to gender, whose performative qualities were identified by Judith Butler as paving the ground for its subversion.<sup>10</sup> Upon discussing her career as an actress and how it has conditioned her personal life, Margo contends that, as regards "being a woman — sooner or later we've all got to work at it," thus unveiling that gender is also counterfeited and performed. Margo identifies traits of remarkable femininity in Eve which she associates with youth, and which Margo believes that she no longer possesses. Out of this alleged deficiency, Margo feels the need to stress her femininity and work on 'being' a woman, often giving in to outbursts of jealousy to draw Bill's attention so that he proves he is still in love with her. In *The Star*, when Margaret starts a relationship with Jim, he confesses that he fell in love with her when he met her in her youth, and Margaret works at making him confess whether he is still in love with her. When he retorts that the only thing that seems to be left is her ego, Margaret runs away and shows her vulnerability as she enters a drugstore to buy sleeping pills, but, instead, steals a flask of

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10. Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, 2007.

perfume, which compels her to run into Jim's arms and ask him for help in an overtly displayed performance of femininity.

### Writing the Script: Interaction Between Fact and Fiction

The titles of the plays and films in which Margo and Eve play a role often carry ironic and subtle references to the performance that is taking place off stage. The play in which Margo acts as leading actress is called *Aged in Wood*, and it is precisely when she is performing this role that Margo begins to call into question whether she is still a suitable actress to play characters who are younger than herself. Drawing further on this metaphor, the title of the play also alludes to Margo's consolidated career as one of the most talented stage actresses of her generation who has aged in wood like good wine. The next play that the playwright Lloyd Richards writes for Margo is titled *Footsteps in the Ceiling*, which subtly evokes actions that take place off the centre of the stage. Eve immediately admits that she likes the title, in an ironic reference to her own habit of performing also off stage. The interaction between fact and fiction through overt and self-referential displays of performance is also exhibited at Bill's birthday party, when Bill and Margo move upstairs to resume their argument and one of the guests, Addison, deliberately states, "we'll miss the third act — they're going to play it off stage," hence once more underlining the parallelisms that are established between theatrical performance on stage and off stage.

In analogy, in *The Star*, given her lifetime devotion to acting, Margaret often establishes correspondences between circumstances which befall her in real life and roles which she has performed as an actress in her films. When Margaret is convicted for drink-driving, she tells Jim that, in one of her films, she once played a girl who was arrested and, ironically, Jim responds saying that next time she will know better how to play the role as a result of this lifetime experience. When Jim begins to show affection towards her, Margaret recalls the role she played in her film *Night Court*, and states that this is also the reason why the character she played in the film was bailed out from prison, as the male protagonist felt romantically attracted towards her. Similarly, as Jim is fixing one of his boats, Margaret establishes parallelisms with a scene from the film *Vacation for a Lady*, thinking of Jim and herself as the main characters in the film. Owing to Margaret's tendency to make connections between her films and real life, Jim eventually accuses Margaret of being incapable of "thinking beyond a script," and even of mixing up her roles in her films with the different parts she is also metaphorically asked to perform in real life.

### Performative Tendencies: Playing on and off Stage

The inborn qualities as actresses of both Margo and Margaret often transcend the stage or the screen, as they often find themselves in need to resort to pretence and make-believe in real life, thus displaying a perpetual predisposition for performance also in their everyday routines which comes hand in hand with the self-referential discourse characterising these two films. In *All about Eve*, her personal assistant, Birdie, notices how Margo begins to act differently and displays some feigned and affected gentleness as soon as she meets Eve in the dressing room, even to the extent that Birdie declares, in relation to Margo's changed behaviour, that "all of a sudden she's playing Hamlet's mother." In analogy, Eve starts narrating the sad story of her life —which Addison will later reveal is all fake— and how, in her childhood, she grew extremely fond of acting to the point of confessing that she "couldn't tell the real from the unreal except that the unreal seemed more real," thus subtly admitting, from the very beginning, her tendency to lie and make things up. Similarly, in *The Star*, Margaret confesses that she has never done anything else but act, and always looks forward to her next role in a new film, although it is gradually unveiled that she also feels the need to resort to acting and make believe in her everyday life. When she visits her daughter Gretchen, Margaret pretends that she is going to start a new film soon and that she is still a famous actress, while, as she tries to hold back her tears, she makes explicit references to acting, stating that "some people cry when they're happy, and they laugh when they are mad, isn't that funny?" thus subtly drawing attention to theatricality and the need to pretend also in real life.

The stage thus extends further beyond the walls of the theatre in Mankiewicz's film, since it is off stage that Eve looks up to Margo in order to attain her expertise, whereas Margo identifies Eve as the embodiment of compliance and gentleness which she finds lacking in herself. As Margo claims, Eve is "so young, so feminine and helpless" and she embodies "so many things I want to be for Bill." Nonetheless, at this stage, Margo still remains oblivious of Eve's fondness for deceit and make-believe, as Eve projects a public image which does not match her actual mischievous personality. This scenario gives way to a reverberation of performances, since, owing to Eve's presence, Margo feels increasingly vulnerable, although she holds on to her image of a temperamental and strong-minded star. In front of Margo, Eve acts as a kind and humble young girl, even though, she is, in fact, concealing her boundless ambition and cunning disposition. As Margo feels more defenceless, Eve grows stronger, so that both of them end up mirroring each other's performances, Margo's replicating Eve's feigned frailty and Eve's reproducing Margo's determined behaviour, thus blurring the vague boundaries separating simulation from reality. Eve's character combines her performances on stage as Margo's understudy with brilliant performances off stage which make everybody believe her humility and compliance are inherent traits in her personality. When Eve gives a brilliant

performance although she was only supposed to read Margo's part in the script, Margo begins to unmask Eve as a character, stating that acting "doesn't just happen," but it is "carefully rehearsed I have no doubt, over and over," hence unveiling Eve's propensity to deceit and pretence also off stage. Margo's tendency to perform not only as an actress on stage but also in real life is also made explicit when she feels threatened by Eve's presence, as she believes that Eve is not only capable of banishing her from stage, but also of detaching her from her friends and even her fiancé. As they are having an argument, Bill tells Margo that "there are certain characteristics for which you are famous — onstage and off," thus alluding to Margo's tendency to resort to her performing skills and her traits as a diva also in real life.

In *The Star*, Margaret's increasing incapacity to distinguish fact from fiction is symbolically illustrated by a replica of a perfume flask. As she can no longer afford it, Margaret decides to steal a flask of the expensive perfume that she used to buy, but she eventually finds out that the flagon was just a sample and, in truth, contains only coloured water. In relation to the flask, Jim tells Margaret, "you thought it was real — it's the story of your life," thus establishing a parallelism between Margaret's mistaking the flask of coloured water for perfume and her propensity to take her own delusions as if they were actual facts. Similarly, when Margaret attends an interview for a post as a shop assistant in a shopping mall, she faithfully reproduces the script that she had carefully been rehearsing with Jim to conceal her real identity as Margaret Elliot. After she is given the job, Margaret tells Jim, "I gave one of my best performances," thus making it explicit that she played a role, also off screen, precisely to conceal the fact that she is an actress so as to be considered for another job which ironically has nothing to do with acting.

In Mankiewicz's film, Eve's arrival, as she declares herself to be Margo's fervent admirer, comes hand in hand with Margo's increasing hesitance whether she will be able to retain her status as a great star for much longer, which often leads her to give in to melodramatic theatrical performances off stage. Margo indulges in heavy drinking at Bill Sampson's birthday party and quarrels with him, as he despises Margo's "paranoid insecurity" and her turn for theatricality. Taking Bill's cue, Margo eventually exclaims "cut! print it! what happens in the next reel?", thus acknowledging the histrionic and overstated qualities of her demeanour, resembling those of a scene in a film. In *The Star*, drinking also leads Margaret to give in to melodrama and the full display of her performing habits, although, if Margo's performative ways show that her reasons to worry are mostly overstated, conversely, Margaret's situation is so desperate that she rather resorts to performance to escape her bleak reality. Driving her car while she is drinking and holding her Academy Award, Margaret pretends that she is a tourist guide, making a tour around the mansions of celebrities. When she stumbles upon her former house, which she had to sell as a result of bankruptcy, she holds her Oscar, as if she is about to deliver her acceptance speech, and

explains that, “this was the home of the wealthy, exciting, glamorous Margaret Elliot,” hence indulging in an overtly melodramatic performance that underpins her desperation and tragic circumstances.

In *All about Eve*, it is Margo herself who, upon deciding to retire from acting, she tells her friends, “no more make believe — off stage or on,” once more confessing explicitly how she has also been resorting to performance off stage. Conversely, though, Margaret’s inclination toward performance in *The Star* is used for the sake of self-deceit, as she often finds herself lying to herself and taking her own lies for real in the hope that they will actually come true. When Margaret makes a test for a role in a new film, she informs all the papers about it, although she still does not know for sure whether she is going to be given the part. Margaret eventually confesses to Jim that her reason for acting so is that she feels that, if she pretends that she has already been granted the role, her self-deceit will actually transform into reality.

### Performing Age: Dualities, Mirrors, and Doubles

As Lucy Fischer claims, specular moments in which characters gaze at themselves in the mirror denote a sense of doubling between the aging image reflected in the mirror and a youthful image frozen in time that becomes superimposed.<sup>11</sup> Different scenes in these two films display posters, photographs, film frames and mirrors which contribute to juxtaposing younger and older images of the female protagonists that arise as personifications of their doubles. From a psychoanalytical approach, mirror scenes often bring to mind Jacques Lacan’s premises about the infant’s mirror stage, in which, aware of its fragmented body, the child fantasies about the idealised image of unity which is projected in the mirror in contrast with its still developing body. In the same way, these aging actresses fantasise about the frozen image of their youth as symbolically reflected on younger doubles which act as their mirrors.

In *All about Eve*, when Margo enters the theatre for a reading, she stands in front of a poster advertising the play she is performing in. The poster shows a caricaturised image of the female protagonist in the play, looking like a child’s doll, which contributes further to accentuating the character’s youth, while it also arises as a haunting reminder of Eve, who will also perform this role in the play as Margo’s understudy. The youthful image of the doll on the poster stands in front of the actress who is playing it, hence creating a mirror effect, which joins, but also extricates, younger and aging selves that symbolically look at each other. In the initial scene of *The Star*, when Margaret passes by an auction where her

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11. Lucy Fischer, “Sunset Boulevard: Fading Stars,” in *The Other within Us: Feminist Explorations of Women and Aging* (ed.) Marilyn Pearsall (New York: Westview/Harper, 1997), 171.

belongings are being sold, she also stares at an advertising poster displaying a picture of herself in youth, as if it were a mirror which reflects back her younger self in contrast with her actual aging self. This scene evokes Margaret's wishful-thinking of revisiting her golden years as an actress, which were also the years of her youth, while it also denotes Margaret is wedged in self-delusion, as she still believes these years are not over yet.

In *All about Eve*, as she is taking Margo's costume in the play to fetch it to the wardrobe mistress, Eve looks at herself in the mirror while she holds up the dress against her body and starts making bows and emulating Margo's gestures which Eve observed carefully from backstage after the play. Although Eve believes she is alone, Margo is now symbolically backstage and stares at Eve as she is looking at herself in the mirror, in a reverberation of mirror scenes whereby Margo is looking at her symbolic younger self, Eve, and is figuratively fantasising with her mirrored younger self that she has in front of her. In Heisler's film, Margaret's attention is drawn to a magazine cover displayed in a shop window, showing the young face of Barbara Lawrence — who was played by actress Barbara Lawrence herself in the film — a younger star with whom Margaret competes for a role in a film. Once more, as if it were a mirror, Barbara's younger image on the magazine cover arises as an ideal that Margaret would like to match in order to regain her past splendour.

In Mankiewicz's film, Eve's presence unleashes Margo's dread and anxieties about her aging process. As Margo becomes increasingly conscious of her age, she gives Eve a dress on the grounds that she feels it is "too seventeenish" for herself, while Eve gives it no further importance and replies to Margo, "as though you were an old lady," although her words carry more insight than she actually seems to imply at first sight. Nonetheless, if Eve's presence accentuates Margo's age, to the extent that Margo symbolically regards Eve as the younger mirror self that she would like to match, Eve constantly studies Margo's behaviour as if it were a play, trying to imitate her gestures in order to become the experiences and revered actress that Margo is. In this respect, if Eve's presence accentuates Margo's aging but also her latent will to retain Eve's youth and act younger, Margo's presence stresses Eve's innocent-looking appearance, but also Eve's inner desire to acquire Margo's expertise and act older. In fact, in the opening scene in the film, as Addison introduces Eve, he states that she is "young in years, but whose heart is as old as the Theater," thus establishing a schism between what she appears to be and what she really is also in terms of aging. In this respect, Margo and Eve act as mirror images of each other, aging and younger selves of one another, which overlap, but also remain opposed to one another.

The corresponding contrast between younger and aging selves is also brought to the fore in Heisler's film. In *The Star*, convincing herself that she still retains her young-looking image as if time had not gone by, Margaret aspires to be cast in the leading role of an eighteen-year-old girl in a film. Nonetheless, Margaret is finally chosen for the supporting role of the protagonist's older sister,

who is around forty, thus matching Margaret's own age more closely. In the process of being characterised for the role, Margaret is put on some make-up and is made to wear clothes of darkish colours — thus resorting to what Gullette terms as age effects— which emphasise her aging traits and make her look older than her age.<sup>12</sup> As a reversal of previous mirror images, in which Margaret stares at a younger image of herself as an ideal, when she enters Barbara Lawrence's dress room and looks at herself in the mirror, Margaret cannot accept her aged traits which characterise her for the role. In this respect, this scene is evocative of Kathleen Woodward's mirror stage of old age,<sup>13</sup> in which, in contrast with Lacan's mirror stage, the aging person feels unable to identify with the aging image that the mirror reflects back as a symbolic fragmented self which contrasts with its unified identity as an adult person. As Leni Marshall admits, though, the subject's reluctance to accept its aging self as reflected in the mirror paves the way for transforming it with a final view to accept it.<sup>14</sup> Consequently, Margaret transforms her looks and adjusts her hair, make-up and clothes to convey a more youthful appearance. When the director sees her, he states that she looks too young for this part, and Margaret defends herself saying that "women at forty-two these days don't have to look ready for the old ladies' home." Besides, when she rehearses for a take, Margaret ignores the director's instructions and, instead of playing the character according to its age, Margaret performs it "like a young girl", as the director says, thus creating an entirely parodic effect, as she acts younger when she is supposed to act older.

In *All about Eve*, Margo gradually becomes more aware of the age gap widening between the young characters that she is offered to play, whose age remains frozen in time, and Margo Channing as an actress, who, despite her fame and success, is subjected to the effects of the passage of time. When Margo realises Eve has replaced her in the reading of the play and has performed her character magnificently, Margo exclaims to Richards, the playwright, "it must have been a revelation to have your twenty-four-old character played by a twenty-four-year old actress," thus subtly acknowledging that Eve appears to be a more suitable actress to play the character in terms of its age. Besides, when Eve unveils to Karen that she intends to take up the role of Cora and Karen reminds her that Richards wrote that part for Margo, Eve responds that "it could have been fifteen years ago," but "it's my part now," hence affirming that Margo is no longer suited to play twenty-old-characters any more. It is thus claimed that Margo has often been requested to act younger and play a younger character than her age. In *The Star*, Margaret decides to stick to her former younger characters

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12. Gullette, *Aged by Culture*, 2004, 168.

13. Kathleen Woodward, "The Mirror Stage of Old Age," in *Memory and Desire: Aging, Literature, Psychoanalysis* (eds.) Kathleen Woodward and Murray M. Schwartz (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), 97-113.

14. Leni Marshall, Through (with) the Looking Glass: Revisiting Lacan and Woodward in 'Méconnaissance,' the Mirror Stage of Old Age. *Feminist Formations* 24, no. 2 (2012): 63.

and play them young with disastrous effects. When she sees herself on the screen, acting young when she should be acting old, she realises her performance betrays itself and it is through her feigned and contrived acting that she gains insight into her situation and gives in to reality. Moreover, the actor that her character is talking to in this scene pertinently tells her, “you used to be quite a girl — you think you’re still one?” in a self-referential comment which underlines the change that Margaret has gone through both as an actress and as an aging woman. It is hence ironic that Margaret gives in to reality when she sees it projected on the screen, thus only gaining insight into truth and reality through acting and performance.

When Margo decides to retire from acting voluntarily, while Eve is at the peak of her career, it is assumed that a younger aspiring actress, Phoebe, who is reminiscent of Eve in her younger years, will play the same role that Eve played with regard to Margo, beginning as Eve’s understudy and eventually replacing her. Once more, it is through the presence of the other, of a double, who performs one’s own role that reality becomes more evident. In a final scene, Phoebe puts on Eve’s dress and holds her award in front of a mirror in a scene that replicates what Eve did with Margo. It is thus assumed that, as happened with Margo when Eve came along, Phoebe will replace Eve as she also grows older. In *The Star*, it is also through a mirror scene which blurs performances on screen and off screen that Margaret gains insight into her situation and makes her decision to retire from acting. Margaret is eventually offered another role, but, in this case, she is not required to play a younger or older character, but she is actually asked to play herself on the screen, as she is offered the role of an aging star who is always looking forward to the next part to play in a film. As the agent explains it to her, she is required to play one of those kinds of actresses who are constantly playing, those who permanently “think of themselves, what they look like, and what kind of impression they’re making.” It is once more ironic that Margaret is only able to gain insight into reality once it offers itself as feigned, as a performance, whereas she is unable to face the facts in real life. When she realises that the person that the script is describing matches her own situation in life, she refuses to accept the role and decides to give up acting.

## Conclusions

Although her role as Margo Channing in Mankiewicz’s film *All about Eve* granted Bette Davis great praise, only two years later, in Heisler’s film *The Star*, she would also play a similar role as an aging actress facing the decline of her career. As self-reflective films which explicitly deal with show business, film-making and performance on and off screen, both can be interpreted as complementing each other, although they also present some differing aspects in their approach.



Both films, *All about Eve* and *The Star* portray an aging actress —Margo Channing and Margaret Elliot— who was once a star, but is compelled to relinquish her former status as a result of the prevailing discourses of gender and aging. Both Margo and Margaret display an egotistic personality which is indicative of their roles as divas in the star system, although they are also portrayed as vulnerable women who feel increasingly hesitant at this crucial stage in their careers. As actresses, both Margo and Margaret display a proclivity for performance which transcends the stage or the screen, with histrionic gestures and temperamental demeanours which denote their devotion to the performing profession, which they use for their own benefit, although they also feel permanently required to play a role in their everyday lives. However, if in *All about Eve*, in spite of her fear and hesitance about the effects that her aging process may have on her career, Margo is still highly-acclaimed as an actress, conversely, in *The Star*, Margaret's golden years as an actress seem long gone by and, although some admirers still remember her, she is no longer offered any leading role in a film, as a result of which she undergoes serious economic difficulties.

Hence, despite the manifest intertextual links which paves the way for a comparative analysis between both films, *All about Eve* and *The Star* display a different approach in the characterisation of the aging actress. Margo mostly takes a realistic approach to her situation and keeps her feet on the ground, as her suspicions about Eve, which initially seemed overstated, are ultimately revealed to be not without foundation. In contrast, Margaret is prone to delusions of grandeur, she is unwilling to accept the fact that she is no longer the star she used to be, and she still clings on to hope and to her former image as a young actress. Hence, notwithstanding her inclination for drama, Margo displays a greater sense of self-possession, whereas Margaret's desperation and financial strain mostly turn her into a contemptible character. Besides, although both Margo and Margaret ultimately decide to renounce their career as actresses, Margo takes this decision voluntarily, as she believes she can no longer play the same roles she used to play as a younger actress, whereas Margaret is rather obliged to succumb to reality and unwillingly accept that her career as an actress has come to an end.

In Mankiewicz's film, Margo finds her counterpart and double in the character of Eve, who personifies the youth and freshness that Margo would like to retain at this stage of her career, although Eve's duplicity and limitless ambition eventually turn her into a villainess, thus, conversely characterising Margo as the heroine of the film, although both Margo and Eve replicate each other as doubles, since they find in one another what they apparently seem to lack. In contrast, in Heisler's film, although she also rivals with a younger actress —Barbara Lawrence, who happens to play herself in the film in a self-referential allusion—, Margaret rather arises as an anti-heroine, who acts as her own double, as her present self often tries to hold on to her former self as a star. Margaret's vulnerability and mental instability already prefigure Bette Davis' later grotesque and histrionic role as Jane in Robert Aldrich's film *What Ever Happened to Baby*

*Jane?*, which addresses how show business treats its youngest stars once they grow old and how they face mental disorders and disability as a result of their circumstances, as Sally Chivers claims.<sup>15</sup> Bette Davis' roles as Margo Channing, Margaret Elliot and Baby Jane thus move from a brighter to a bleaker portrait of the actress as an aging woman.

In Mankiewicz's film, Margo is asked to perform younger characters on stage, while Eve aspires to emulate Margo's maturity as an actress on stage. Margo would like to retain Eve's youth, and Eve would like to possess Margo's maturity as an actress. It is thus by means of Eve that Margo gains insight into her own process of aging, and it is through emulating Margo that Eve grows more aware of possessing the youth that Margo no longer seems to rejoice. As mirrors of each other, the performance of aging allows them to transform the way they approach their own aging process. Besides, it is unveiled that aging is a cyclical process, as Phoebe is ready to symbolically take over Eve's role and play the same part that Eve used to perform with Margo. In Heisler's film, for Margaret, performance implies her own personal way to understand reality, but also the means to transform it, as it is through performance that she lets go of her past splendour and is forced to make up a new identity of her own that will allow her to be herself.

By means of a concatenation of dualities, mirror scenes and doubles which overlap and entangle the characters' younger and aging selves, these films draw attention to the performative quality of aging, as characters are asked to play younger or older according to the prevailing dictates of aging. By means of the presence of symbolic others, characters gain insight into their aging process, as Margo becomes aware that she is growing old through Eve's presence, and in her solipsism, Margaret believes she can still cling to the frozen image of her youth as a glamorous actress until she is offered the role to play herself in a film and it is precisely through this fictional part that she is asked to perform that she becomes aware of her own circumstances as an aging actress. Performance of aging thus paves the way to raise awareness as regards aging, but also to transform age expectations and how characters are supposed to act according to their age. In this respect, both films share an ambiguous ending, since, away from the stage and the screen, both Margo and Margaret are finally allowed to act as themselves, although their decision to abandon acting is also informed by the prejudices of aging that prevail in show business. Hence, it is assumed that the performance off stage and off screen that they have also been entertaining will still go on, since it is not only show business which demands women to act according to age and gender, but also cultural discourses which condition the process of female aging.

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15. Sally Chivers, "Baby Jane Grew Up: The Dramatic Intersection of Age with Disability," *Canadian Review of American Studies* 36, no. 2 (2006): 211-227.

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