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Articles

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The reflection on the relation between drama and theatre, particularly intensive in the last thirty years, has a long-standing tradition in this country. The writings on this subject being very numerous and now not always accessible, let us try to reconstruct the main lines of these thoughts. However in order to confront clearly particular statements we must define the relative terminology. So we assume that drama (its text) can be seen from two angles: as a text intended for the reader and as theatrical proposition. In the first case we have to do with the literary conception, in the second—with the theatrical one, and when both are equal—with the utraquistical conception of the drama.

The theatrical proposition can be realized in various theatrical artwork. The artwork exists in one or a series of performances and constitutes their invariable element. The theatrical proposition and theatrical artwork of drama remain in a relationship which can be presented by the following paragraphs:

1. scenario—interpretation of the main text, a concrete shape of the stage vision contained in that text and the didascalia, realization;
2. partial scenario—interpretation of the main text, transformation (i.e. selection, recomposition, substitution and amplification) of the didascalia, concrete shape, realization;
3. theatrical material—transformation of both the main text and the didascalia, interpretation of that transformed text, concrete shape, realization;

4. creative impulse—creation of a self-existing theatrical work.

These varieties should be treated of course typologically (i.e. there are smooth passages between them); the indicated order of these transformations in the production in relation to the theatrical proposition makes these procedures rather schematic.

The discussions on the subject: drama and theatre, can mostly be divided into a series of following questions:

1) what is the position of drama among the fine arts; 2) what are the differences in the ontic or semantic structure between the drama text and theatrical production; 3) is the drama text a work of art in its own right; 4) what is the status of the main text of a theatrical proposition in the hierarchy of various elements of a production; 5) what are the relations between a theatrical proposition and the production; the artistically desirable or admissible relations.

The early Polish theoreticians and those of the Enlightenment period stressed a close link between the drama and theatre. Maciej Kazimierz Sarbiewski does in fact identify drama with production since in his lectures *De perfecta poesi* (B. IX, chap. 3) he says that the purpose of all the drama varieties is “an imitation of acts not only by speech and word, but also by gesture, voice, motions, feelings and lastly by music, machinery and scenery,” and he gives much attention to the arrangement of the stage, lighting and setting.¹ Similar views can be found in subsequent textbooks of poetics. Filip Nereusz Golański consistently attributes to the drama the requirements of “representation” and of “the spectator.”² Józef Korzeniowski defines it less radically:

Drama is generally speaking a poem designed to be produced by characters acting by means of talks and gestures.³

During the romantic period this cautious approach became even more pronounced. There were in Poland no continuators of Hegel, such a strong advocate of the theatrical theory of drama that he

¹ *O poezji doskonałej*, transl. by M. Plezia, Wrocław 1954, p. 231.

² *O wymowie i poezji (On Eloquence and Poetry)*, Vilna 1788, p. 423.

³ “Kurs poezji” (A Course in Poetry, 1829), [in:] *Dziela zebrane*, vol. 12, Warszawa 1873, p. 89.

thought it unjustified to publish stage works in print (*Vorlesungen über Aesthetik*). Hipolit Cegielski says:

The drama brings an event into present, makes it to be seen publicly, it presents the place, time and the plot with all the circumstances before our eyes, puts them on the stage. The drama does not tell us about the background of the happenings but shows us themselves [...] Hence the need for staging the dramatic poems, and for the theatre itself. This is not indispensable for the drama as such, but it is very helpful and desirable.⁴

So Cegielski suggests the possibility of the drama existing without theatre and being only read but considers this case less advantageous. Mickiewicz goes farther along this line. In the famous lecture of the 16th course in Slavonic Literature of 1843 he does say in the introduction that the drama needs “to be brought to earth, to have a theatrical building, actors and all sorts of art.” But then he goes on to say that “all this is necessary but by no means essential”—in the case of a true poet; thus while reading Shakespeare the reader “gets the feeling as if he were on the stage among the actors.” And in view of the unsatisfactory state of “the drama’s auxiliary arts” (architecture, painting, lighting) the contemporary playwrights should get rid of their requirements and “stifle in themselves the desire to see their drama staged,” that is design them for reading. So in fact Mickiewicz was inclined, as regards the Polish drama of his day, to accept its literary conception. Let us say, by the way, that Słowacki too, when he was giving vent to his dreams, would consider his dramas as poems for reading; this is anyway the conclusion that can be drawn from the letter of February 1845 to his mother where he visualizes in a hundred years time a Cracow “rich peasant” not as a theatrical spectator but reader of Słowacki’s *Balladyna*...

The utraquistic conception of drama was formulated by Norwid in the introduction to *Pierścień wielkiej damy* (*The Ring of a Great Lady*) of 1872: while rejecting the purely theatrical works whose aim is “to entertain the viewers who have nothing better to do on a particular evening,” as well as the purely literary “so-called fantastical-philosophical drama” he opted for dramatical works which would be “as interesting in reading as they are on the stage.”

⁴ *Nauka poezji* (*The Teaching of Poetry*), Poznań 1860, p. 637.

In the middle of the 19th century there was a return to the theatrical conception of drama. Fryderyk Henryk Lewestam deploras, probably under Hegel's influence, "the detachment of dramatic poetry from theatrical production" and says quite emphatically:

A beautiful play for the theatre without being played by actors who can render its qualities is like a body without soul. It is vain to expect that the mere reading will reveal all its beauties.⁵

At the same time there was a growing realization, under the impact of Wagner among other things, that theatre—as Henryk Struve put it—constitutes "an organical unity of particular arts forming a single artistic whole." In Struve's view the major elements that make it up are poetry, oratory, music and painting.⁶ The term "oratory" has here a special meaning, that of the "art of drama," that is declamation, mimicry and gesticulation. In a work of drama they supplement poetry which, though it is in its content superior to other arts, remains less efficient in its form since it can act in the scenes only by means of these arts.

The two lines of thought: the theatrical conception of drama and the both complex and synthetical character of the theatrical work, have come to the fore in the reflection on this subject in the Young Poland period. Wyspiański cared very much for the bookish presentation of his dramas, that is he meant them for reading, he would formulate the didascalia like poetic texts, or on other occasions would not take into account in them the theatrical possibilities; thus he could be considered an advocate of the utraquistical conception. But he too is on record as saying to Adam Grzymała-Siedlecki:

I can't read my drama at all. And indeed I can't imagine a work of mine—should it be even a lyrical poem—in another framework than stage, that is simply a closed room, half dark, half lit up, in which actors are acting.⁷

Also Przybyszewski treated his dramatical works as a theatrical proposition: in his opinion the playwright should reduce his indications

⁵ *O poezji dramatycznej (On Dramatic Poetry)*, Warszawa 1867, p. 36.

⁶ "O teatrze i jego znaczeniu dla życia społecznego" (The Theatre and Its Significance for Society), *Biblioteka Warszawska*, 1871, vol. II, p. 221.

⁷ "Wyspiański. Cechy i elementy twórczości" (W. The Features and Elements of His Work, 1909), [in:] *O twórczości Wyspiańskiego*, ed. A. Łempicka, Kraków 1970, p. 150.

to a minimum and regard his drama as a sort of shorthand notes which "the actor himself, if he is an artist, should decipher and reproduce or transform as his individuality permits him."⁸

In the Young Polish pronouncements on the theatre as a synthetical art one can already see an appreciation of the non-verbal components and of the initiative of other than the author contributors to the theatrical work. An exception is the opinion of Ostap Ortwin for whom the stage had no requirements that would not be at the same time those of dramatical poetry, therefore "the stage technique is comprised in the technique of the dramatical form"; the theatrical proposition is seen as the obligatory scenario: "the so-called stage conditions are as simple as the physical possibility of capturing and rendering the playwright's conception."⁹ Elsewhere Ortwin stated quite clearly that the playwright is the creator not only of words but also of "symbols, gestures and mimicry" in the theatrical work.¹⁰

It was the opposite opinion of Juliusz Tenner that was then characteristic; while calling the theatrical work "drama" he defines it as a combination of poetry and stage art. A drama of this definition is by no means a sort of lyrical or epical poetry, though it is generally regarded as such, but an organical combination of several arts. Tenner gave equal rights in the theatrical work to poetry and the stage art, thus to both the playwright and other men of the theatre.¹¹

In the Polish statements of the period of the Great Reform the playwright and with him the drama were moved to the background as a theatrical proposition. Most radical was in this Bolesław Leśmian as he put the director on the top, without even mentioning the playwright among the contributors to the theatrical art.¹² It surely was a *lapsus calami*, but a significant *lapsus*...

⁸ *O dramacie i teatrze (On Drama and Theatre)*, Warszawa 1905, p. 16.

⁹ "O teatrze tragicznym" (On the Tragic Theatre), *Tygodnik Słowa Polskiego*, 1902, no. 20.

¹⁰ "Utopie o dramacie" (Utopias on the Drama), *Krytyka*, 1901, vol. II, fasc. 2.

¹¹ "O twórczości aktorskiej" (About the Art of Acting), *Krytyka*, 1904, fasc. 8.

¹² "O sztuce teatralnej" (On the Art of Theatre), *Literatura i Sztuka*, 1911, no. 2.

The position of the young Leon Schiller was not consequent: in the article "Nowy kierunek badań teatrologicznych" (A New Line of Theatrical Research, 1913), in accordance with the postulates of the autonomous theatre using only its own artistic devices he outlined a project of the theatrical work whose "essence is a movement expressed dramatically": that is to say "not word of mouth but the gesture forms the basis of theatrical production," poetry being here of secondary importance.¹³ At the same time in his introduction in a catalogue to an exhibition of modern scenic painting (Warsaw 1913) Schiller is more moderate and liberal in his statements. He sees here three different possibilities: the theatrical work can be a realization of a project by an artist of the theatre (but he mentions only two such artists—Craig and Wyspiański), it can be formed jointly by the poet and director (among the poets of such theatrical intuition were Shakespeare, Słowacki and Maeterlinck), and it can be done by the director himself who transforms the literary values into the stage ones. Writing about Wyspiański in those years Schiller maintained that the former constructed his "libretti" in such a way as to make them be read by the author "like a detailed script," he composed the score of his dramas not with written words, which only in reading can make an impression, but with the symbols of a "spoken word" that only when pronounced become expressive, he could convey his thought "in a theatrical work by purely theatrical ways."¹⁴ So apart from the texts of drama which should be treated as only creative impulses, Schiller did admit—if only in Wyspiański's work—the existence of dramas which were for the theatre obligatory scenarios.

In the period between wars the autonomous character of the theatrical work became for the writers on theatre a generally accepted axiom. The theatre—stated Stefan Srebrny—is supposed to render the essence of a poetical work with its own means, different from those the poet makes use of; "they cannot be simply a psychological, physical concretization of the drama characters and a faithful presentation of the milieu as it is described in the play or results

¹³ *Na progu nowego teatru. 1908–1924 (On the Threshold of the New Theatre)*, ed. J. Timoszewicz, Warszawa 1978, p. 162.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 67, 121, 166.

from the author's information."¹⁵ In the drama—adds to it Jan Kochowicz—there appear literary and visual signs, while in the production we have an action of human bodies, their symbols which render through association those particular signs.¹⁶

It is rather paradoxical that just the theoretician of Pure Form, Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz did admit that in the four-dimensional theatrical play (comprising sounds, the representations and meanings that go with them, and the acting of actors) "poetry (or the drama prose) [...] is the essential element of what is happening on the stage through the statements of characters."¹⁷ It is another matter that Witkiewicz's statement was energetically opposed by Jalu Kurek who protested against the excessive hegemony of the word and called for a bigger part to be given to the non-verbal elements in the production.¹⁸

In the opinion of the theatrical theoreticians of that pre-war period the drama text constituted only one of the elements of the production, and not a ready one at that, made by the actors and director concrete, supplemented and transformed. Mieczysław Limanowski while writing about the actor's art applies the term of a "score" to the drama text, but at the same time he so extends this term that it signifies a "pretext" or an "impulse" for the actor's work.¹⁹ Mieczysław Orlicz allots to the playwright and to the drama text a function in the production equal to other elements, a function of being only a material of which the director creates his production as a separate aesthetical value.²⁰ (This is a good example of the conceptual uncertainty and terminological inconsistency in those statements which cannot be translated into the clear

¹⁵ "Forma literacka widowiska teatralnego" (The Literary Form of the Theatrical Production), *Wiedza i Życie*, 1931, no 8/9, p. 611.

¹⁶ *Wstęp do nauki o teatrze* (Introduction to the Science of Theatre), Warszawa 1931, p. 36.

¹⁷ "Teatr" (1923), [in:] *Czysta Forma w teatrze*, ed. J. Degler, Warszawa 1977, p. 101.

¹⁸ "Przeciwko teorii teatru S. I. Witkiewicza" (Against S.I.W.'s Theory of the Theatre), *Życie Teatru*, 1925, nos 38–39.

¹⁹ "Sztuka aktora" (Actor's Art), *Scena Polska*, 1919, no. 1.

²⁰ "Pojęcie i istota reżyserii" (The Notion and Character of Directing), *Scena Polska*, 1922, no. 5.

language of theory.) Pursuing his views Orlicz gives the director the right to disregard the didascalia and to make freely cuts in the play; however with the exception of “the works of poetical inspiration.”²¹

Less numerous were among the men of the theatre those who stood for the integrity of the drama text, who stressed the loyalty of the actor and director to the style and artistic intention of the drama. “To my mind it is a matter of simple aesthetical honesty to bring out on the stage essential qualities of the play, to render its real colour and undistorted structure” – wrote Józef Kotarbiński.²²

Of course we can find more opinions of this kind in the notices of theatre critics. It is enough to recall in this respect the way Boy-Żeleński fought the directors’ licenses with the texts of the classics. Similarly would speak out the younger critics, e.g. Zygmunt Leśnodorski and Wojciech Natanson.²³

Among the playwrights one can point to two opposite positions: Tadeusz Peiper would give the director *expressis verbis* the right to put in his own text into unspoken scenes; in the didascalia to the drama *Szósta! Szósta!* (*Six! Six!*, 1925) he wrote: “should some scenes need cries, words, sentences or songs in order to get the right effect, they must be added by the director.”²⁴ Józef Wittlin, on the other hand, having stated “the wild and barbarian banality of most of the plays” was suggesting that the director should receive from the playwright

a score of the drama with [...] a complete vision of the production, a symphony of all the voices, whispers and a list of fermatas, as well as the whole scale of gestures and all the tempi.²⁵

²¹ “Układ sceniczny a logika teatralna” (Stage Arrangement and Theatrical Logic), *Scena Polska*, 1922, nos 8–12.

²² “Nowatorstwo czy anarchia?” (Novatory Approach or Anarchy?), [in:] *Ze świata uludy*, Warszawa 1926, p. 154.

²³ Z. Leśnodorski, “Przerosty form teatralnych” (The Exuberance of Theatrical Forms), *Marchol*, 1937, no. 4; W. Natanson, “Teatr i krytyka” (Theatre and Criticism), *Pion*, 1937, no. 49.

²⁴ *Poematy i utwory teatralne* (*Poems and Theatrical Plays*), Kraków 1979, p. 265.

²⁵ “O kompetencjach autora dramatycznego” (About the Competence of the Playwright), *Życie Teatru*, 1924, no. 21.

From the theatrical point of view, drama was subordinated to the production anyway. Hence the views that it could not exist on its own without theatrical production.

Drama is after all a substitute for the production—wrote Wiktor Brumer.—The best drama will not make in reading the impression it does when staged.²⁶

This was formulated even more clearly by Józef Mirski in a cycle of articles “Teatralizacja teatru”:

Drama is not a self-sufficient work of words, but a set of indications that are realized only by the actor; drama is a text that becomes alive only when played by the actor (in this respect it can be compared to a libretto or a score).

That is why—he had written earlier—drama belongs to literature only to some extent “that is as much as it makes use of words, but it does not belong to literature entirely.”²⁷

Quite opposite are those views in the theory of drama, not very numerous after all, according to which the drama texts, especially those of high artistic quality, can be adequately realized only when being read; a theatrical production can never do it to the same degree. Referring to Craig, K. Irzykowski said in a review of *The Tempest* (*Robotnik*, 1926, no. 169) that the great poetical and intellectual, even dramatical value of Shakespeare’s plays “appears only in reading—in the theatre it becomes lost and in each production of these plays there is something of school and something of parody.” (These views Irzykowski repeated some years later in the essay “O dramacie książkowym”²⁸ where he said that “the reader’s imagination is the best stage.”) In a similar vein Jerzy Pański pronounced himself in the article “Teatr na rozdrożu i teatr na bezdrożach.”²⁹

The utraquistical conception of drama was formulated most clearly at that time by Mieczysław Ostowski.³⁰ He rejected the

²⁶ *Uwagi o inscenizacji (Some Remarks on a Production)*, Warszawa 1922, p. 3.

²⁷ “The Theatralization of the Theatre,” [in:] *Dusza teatru*, Warszawa 1939.

²⁸ “About the Book Drama,” *Teatr*, 1938, nos 9–10.

²⁹ “Theatre at the Cross-roads and Theatre Gone Astray,” *Życie Teatru*, 1926, nos 36–37.

³⁰ “Dramat jako forma twórczości literackiej a jego realizacja teatralna” (Drama as a Form of Literary Work and Its Theatrical Realization), *Życie Teatru*, 1926, no. 7; “Aktor i dzieło” (The Actor and the Work), *ibidem*, no. 23.

theses about the artistic unsufficiency of the drama text and said instead that drama has two equal facets, although they are different in the kind of feeling they arouse: the reader identifies himself with the characters of the drama, whereas in the theatre "the live embodiment of the characters" creates between themselves and the spectator an objective distance.

Also Roman Ingarden accepted the utraquistical conception as he drew a clear distinction between the written drama and its theatrical production. He did it in a paragraph of his book *Das literarische Kunstwerk* (1931) in which he analyzed the art of the theatre. Though he did not state it, it was obvious to him that the production must be faithful to the drama text. In the production the accessory text is eliminated: instead of it there appear real objects, concrete and visible, representing those in the text; they are, as Ingarden put it later on, "the psychophysical existential bases."³¹ And just the presence of those means of representation in it makes the production different from the written drama.

Neither does Ingarden accept the common description of production as a realization of the respective literary work, because its meaning and represented objects cannot be realized at all, nor can the remaining elements be rendered being only created on the patterns of their counterparts in the written drama. But just the identity of the layers of meanings and represented objects "makes it possible to subordinate the two heterogenic works, and in this sense may we speak about the same drama in two different shapes, as a theatrical production and as a literary work." Without being a purely literary work the theatrical production remains for Ingarden—among other things because of its layer structure and its consequences with the presence of quasi-propositions and metaphysical qualities—a border case of the literary work. This conclusion liquidating in fact the separateness of theatre among the arts must surprise the readers of Ingarden's earlier pronouncements since it is at variance with the presence of actors in the production and

³¹ "O funkcjach mowy w widowisku teatralnym" (About the Functions of Speech in a Theatrical Production, 1957), [in:] *Wprowadzenie do nauki o teatrze*, ed. J. Degler, Wrocław 1976, vol. 1, p. 168.

with the things representing the layer of the drama objects, while what has in the play a schematic appearance becomes in the production concrete owing to the actors and material things.

The relationship between drama and literature was described quite differently even then by Juliusz Kleiner in his university courses, but he formulated them only after the war in the article "Istota utworu dramatycznego": a work of drama is not—he wrote in it—a variety of literature equal to epic and lyrical poetry because it does not create verbal structures suggesting certain representations, but instead it does create separate speaking subjects which influence the plot. And above all drama is a "theatrical creation," a "creation of the historical reality" and the theatre's task is to realize the theatrical qualities intended by the author and to select from among a variety of possible realizations one which will be the most faithful and adequate.³² It appeared from Kleiner's later pronouncements that in spite of these statements he did not remove the drama from the area of literature, its theory and history.³³

This was done by Stefania Skwarczyńska, who independently of Kleiner, and at the same time in greater detail and with stronger argumentation advanced such thoughts in the dissertation "Zagadnienie dramatu" (The Problems of Drama, *Przegląd Filozoficzny*, 1949) and who later on would return to this question.³⁴

Skwarczyńska's theses can be summed up as follows:

1. Drama does not belong to literature as an art of word, it is a separate art; the theory of literature can consider it only as a border phenomenon.
2. This separateness results from its many-material structure.
3. The text of drama is not in fact a complete work but simply a project of the theatrical production; its final moment

³² "The Essence of the Work of Drama," *Listy z Teatru*, 1948, no. 24.

³³ "Studia i szkice Stefanii Skwarczyńskiej" (Studies and Outlines by S.S.), *Życie i Myśl*, 1954, no. 1.

³⁴ "O rozwoju tworzywa słownego i jego form podawczych w dramacie" (About the Evolution of the Verbal Material and Its Forms in Drama), *Prace Polonistyczne* IX, 1951; "Niektóre praktyczne konsekwencje teatralnej teorii dramatu" (Some Practical Consequences of the Theatrical Theory of Drama), *Dialog*, 1961, no. 10; "Dramat – literatura czy teatr?" (Drama – Is It Literature or Theatre?), *Dialog*, 1970, no. 6.

in which it achieves its fulness and realizes its social function is only the production. (This thesis did not concern the so-called book drama designed only for readers.)

4. The verbal text is not an indispensable component of the drama, when it does appear it seems to be less important than stage movements, actors, concrete space and time.

5. But among the contributors to the production the playwright plays the major part; he is after all the one who "through his drama composition initiates the play of all the theatrical components, deciding upon their character and direction." The theatrical artist is here a co-creator, but his freedom is restricted by his obligation "to be faithful to the dramatist of whose will, placed in the play, he is the creative executor." He has no right therefore "to alter the drama's basic conception and the message linked to it," to "nullify the dramatist's general decisions on the transformations to which the theatrical material is subjected." He may, on the other hand, extract from the works of the past new, so far unnoticed qualities which of course involves a right to do selections and change the hierarchy of the drama's content. He may also correct the author's mistakes in the disposition of various theatrical elements.

Yet for all these reservations this theatrical conception of the drama was at the same time a literary conception of the theatre. While denying the drama the artistic autonomy, diminishing the role of the words in it, it did regard it as a sort of scenario determining the production.

Both the conceptions of Ingarden and of Skwarczyńska proved very fertile for the science of the drama and theatre; they initiated an extensive, long-standing discussion in which those taking part were aestheticians, semioticians, students of literature, theoreticians and men of the theatre. (It was only in the 1970s that this discussion began to die away having been replaced by another problem: theatre—paratheatre—non-theatre.) The discussion was so wide-ranging and intensive that to sum it up would require a separate book. So we shall restrict ourselves to a synthetical presentation arranged according to the list of the disputable questions we have mentioned in the opening of this article.

1. The thesis excluding drama from the area of literature, its theory and history, has not been accepted. It was indicated that in view of the fleeting nature and a great variety of theatrical

productions the text of the drama remains the only constant invariable form of the drama's existence as an object of learning; and its text is a linguistic text.³⁵ The main text, that is the signs designed for linguistic realization prevail distinctly in it over the marginal text determining the non-verbal components of the production.

2. The coexistence of various materials (verbal, musical, mimical, gesticulatory ones), also with the project of its staging included in it, can be seen in other pronouncements as well whose literary character is not questioned; these are not therefore arguments for the non-literary nature of the drama.³⁶

3. The reflection on the differences in the structure of drama and production developed after all along the line traced out by Ingarden with some corrections introduced into it. Thus Edward Csató argued that actors and accessories are part of the production and not simply psychophysical bases of being. Stanisław Świontek draw attention to the fact that the linguistic signs of drama as a theatrical proposition fulfil simultaneously two functions: they designate the represented world and designate the stage reality (the symbolic and ludic relationship)³⁷. Janina Makota reduced the structure of the production to three layers (combining appearances with represented objects) and stressed the triple structure: drama—performance—production; she described the last as a schematical "intentional creation superimposing itself in each performance on a particular group of people [...] in a scenery with the possible musical accompaniment."³⁸ Janusz Misiewicz objected to the theatrical production being regarded as a border case of literature,

³⁵ Kleiner, "Studia i szkice..."; E. Csató, "Funkcje mowy scenicznej" (Functions of the Stage Speech), *Estetyka* II, 1962; J. Abramowska, "Literatura – dramat – teatr" (Literature – Drama – Theatre), *Dialog*, 1970, no. 12.

³⁶ S. Dąbrowski, "Z zagadnień dramatu. Niektóre opinie o roli słowa w dramacie" (The Problems of Drama. Some Opinions on the Role of Word in Drama), *Pamiętnik Teatralny*, 1972, fasc. 21; J. Ziomek, "Projekt wykonawczy w dziele literackim a problemy genologiczne" (The Performance Project in Literary Work and the Genological Problems), [in:] *Problemy odbioru i odbiorcy*, ed. T. Bujnicki, J. Sławiński, Wrocław 1977.

³⁷ "O strukturalnych związkach i zależnościach tworzyw dzieła teatralnego" (About the Structural Interconnections of the Production Material), *Kultura i Społeczeństwo*, 1967, fasc. 3.

³⁸ *O klasyfikacji sztuk pięknych (On the Classification of Fine Arts)*, Kraków 1964.

arguing that the sound layer of objects and appearances becomes on the stage concrete and the linguistic semantic becomes enriched through the context of those objects and appearances.³⁹

The thesis about the multi-material nature of the theatrical production was reinterpreted semiotically through various attempts to systematize theatrical signs.⁴⁰ In this context the theatrical production began being defined as “a translation of the literary text into the language of theatre,”⁴¹ “the creolized semiotic translation,”⁴² a creation endowed with “connotation semiotics which is commonly expressed by various denotation semiotics.”⁴³ From the point of view of the relation of drama to the theatrical production it was important here to draw attention to a difference between the verbal signs in drama and production:

The theatrical word when spoken out becomes not only realized and concrete but also loses its semantic independence getting dissolved in the production's sound and scenery.⁴⁴

4. Has the drama text an artistic value of its own? Contrary to Skwarczyńska's statement, almost all the subsequent participants in the discussion answered in the affirmative, thus confirming the utraquistical theory of drama according to which drama exists both as a text for reading and a project for theatrical production.

Drama – wrote Artur Hutnikiewicz – is a literary work adapted, and even designed because of its structure to be staged, [but it also] may, as a *par excellence* literary genre, reveal its intellectual and artistic qualities.⁴⁵

³⁹ “Dramat pisany a tekst teatralny” (The Written Drama and the Theatrical Text), *Studia Estetyczne* X, 1973.

⁴⁰ J. Brach, “O znakach literackich i znakach teatralnych” (Literary and Theatrical Signs), *Studia Estetyczne* II, 1965; T. Kowzan: “Znak w teatrze” (The Sign in Theatre), *Dialog*, 1969, no. 3; *Littérature et spectacle*, Warszawa 1970.

⁴¹ Z. Osiński, “Przekład tekstu literackiego na język teatru” (Translation of the Literary Text into the Language of Theatre). [in:] *Dramat i teatr*. ed. J. Trzynadłowski, Wrocław 1967.

⁴² E. Kasperski, “Tekst widowiskowy” (The Text of the Spectacle), [in:] *Poetyka i stylistyka słowiańska*. ed. S. Skwarczyńska, Warszawa 1972.

⁴³ J. Ziomek, “Semiotyczne problemy sztuki teatru” (The Semiotic Problems of Theatre), [in:] *Powinowactwa literatury*, Warszawa 1980, p. 145.

⁴⁴ Brach, *op. cit.*

⁴⁵ “Czy dramat jest dziełem literackim?” (Is Drama a Literary Work?), *Dziś i Jutro*, 1954, no. 42.

Also other writers spoke in a similar way:

One must accept the obvious fact that any text of drama may be perceived by readers as an autonomous work of literature, like any other literary work, epic or lyrical, and that at the same time every text of drama can be used as one of the elements making up the theatrical production.⁴⁶

That is because the nature of drama is double. While serving the theatre it remains a literary work. And its literary character seems to be original and essential because its only material is language; it is in a language that its meaning and artistic qualities are expressed.⁴⁷

In the light of contemporary experiences one had to question the border between proper dramas and the book ones designed only for reading. For it appeared that the dramas, which in the general opinion and in that of their authors were not fit for staging, later became a theatrical material of great artistic energy.

5. In many pronouncements, especially those emanating from theatrical circles, Skwarczyńska's thesis was confirmed which made the status of word among the components of a production rather relative. History and geography of the theatre proved that even in the spectacles in which the verbal text is of basic importance, the role of the word is changing according to the kind of productions.⁴⁸ At variance with his day's experiences was surely Marek Kotorski when he stated that the drama text is superior in contemporary theatre, this being simply "a reproductive apparatus" designed for the "three-dimensional" realization of the drama.⁴⁹ The general situation was much better described by Stefan Treugutt when he wrote of a common tendency to break up the plot, of the preponderance of sound over word as carrying meaning, of purely functional and casual treatment of the literary text.⁵⁰

Some radical advocates of theatrical reform fought quite openly the word in theatre since the former seemed to them in the

⁴⁶ R. Taborski, "Dramat jest także literaturą" (Drama Is Also Literature), *Dialog*, 1962, no. 1, p. 114.

⁴⁷ Abramowska, *op. cit.*

⁴⁸ M. R. Mayenowa, "Wypowiedź w tekście dramatycznym" (Expression in Drama Text), *Pamiętnik Literacki*, 1964, fasc. 2.

⁴⁹ "Dramat a teatr" (Drama and Theatre), *Prace Literackie* VIII, 1966.

⁵⁰ "Dramat współczesny wobec współczesnego teatru" (The Contemporary Drama and the Contemporary Theatre), *Dialog*, 1972, no. 1.

actor's mouth "inefficient, unbearable" and vulgar as a way of expressing man's spirit.⁵¹

It is a dangerous and risky illusion of the impossible theatre that crying is a better means of conveying meaning than the articulate language. Referring to Artaud's terminology I prefer "a contracted throat," "an abstraction" which is reciting somebody's text to the vocal chords that are shouting themselves hoarse with their own cry.⁵²

6. Skwarczyńska's dissertation was right in drawing the attention of the drama researchers to the theatrical proposition included in it. At the same time Irena Sławińska advanced and realized the suggestion of investigating the theatrical vision and scenery determined not only by the didascalia but first of all by the main text.⁵³ Zbigniew Raszewski attached to it even greater importance than to the didascalia; at the same time he did say that drama is not endowed with the language and system of signs which would define the final shape with a precision that could compare with that of the musical notation. Thus the term "theatrical score," so often used, is merely a metaphore—"there is strictly speaking no theatrical metaphore and the latest history of European theatre was by no means favourable to its emergence."⁵⁴ So Zbigniew Osiński puts it cautiously that a work of drama can be treated "as a rule as an incomplete project of a theatrical scenario."⁵⁵

The contemporary men of the theatre still think in terms of a "score" but they do not expect to get it from the playwrights. Drama as an obligatory scenario became for them an anachronical notion—not by the way without the cooperation of some dramatists, representatives of "the open dramaturgy," e.g. Tadeusz Różewicz. "In the *Kartoteka (The File)*—he was recalling—anybody could go in and add a fragment or ending, extend or supplement a scene."⁵⁶

⁵¹ K. Braun, *Teatr wspólnoty (The Community Theatre)*, Kraków 1972, p. 64.

⁵² "Koniec teatru niemożliwego" (*The End of the Impossible Theatre*), *Kultura*, 1981, no. 33.

⁵³ *Sceniczny gest poety (The Stage Gesture of a Poet)*, Kraków 1960.

⁵⁴ "Partytura teatralna" (*The Theatrical Score*), *Pamiętnik Teatralny*, 1958, fasc. 3/4.

⁵⁵ "Z problematyki scenariusza teatralnego" (*Problems of the Theatrical Scenario*), [in:] *Wprowadzenie do nauki o teatrze*, vol. 2, p. 164.

⁵⁶ "Rozmowy o dramacie. Wokół dramaturgii otwartej" (*Talks on the Drama. About Open Dramaturgy*), *Dialog*, 1969, no. 7.

Edward Csató was not ashamed of saying that he admired the art of directing first of all for the duty of faithfulness to the author, a virtue that seemed to him attached to that craft.⁵⁷ Bogdan Korzeniewski and Jerzy Kreczmar allowed different degrees of contribution to the production from the dramatist and director, accepted much freedom in the staging, provided the director made use of it with competence and responsibility.⁵⁸ But then for Konstanty Pużyna the problem of being faithful to the author was not only anachronistic but also irritating or rather put incorrectly.⁵⁹ Pużyna's argumentation is not wholly convincing: he claimed that each theatrical production is narrower—through the fact of interpretation and concretization, and occasionally quite different from what the author could imagine. But in order to find ourselves on a verifiable ground it is enough to replace “the faithfulness to the author” with “the faithfulness to the text” which will enable us to tell whether a particular production does not exceed the limits of the text. So when we notice a playing against the text (sneer, parody, pastiche) or the scenery going far beyond the text then we can say that the faithfulness to the text has been violated as Pużyna himself, by the way, used to say while writing about some productions of Witkiewicz's dramas.

This faithfulness has been defended energetically also by Konrad Górski in his celebrated essay “Reżyser ma pomysły” and in the article “Literatura i teatr.”⁶⁰

The art of theatre—he wrote—consists in the visual concretization of a scheme of meanings expressed by the word and in the auditory concretization of the spoken sounds. [...] The autonomy of the theatrical art does not consist in a detachment from the literary work, in the introduction of elements that have never been in it, but in finding the theatrical means of expression suitable for the content of the drama being staged.

⁵⁷ “Sztuka ukryta” (The Hidden Art), *Teatr*, 1961, no. 6.

⁵⁸ B. Korzeniewski, “Twórca czy odtwórca” (Creator or Recreator), *Pamiętnik Teatralny*, 1961, fasc. 2; J. Kreczmar, “Czy kryzys pozycji reżysera?” (Is There a Crisis of the Director's Position?), *Dialog*, 1969, no. 12.

⁵⁹ “Nieznośni inscenizatorzy” (The Unbearable Directors), *Pamiętnik Teatralny*, 1965, fasc. 3/4.

⁶⁰ “The Director Has Ideas,” *Twórczość*, 1970, no. 2; “Literature and Theatre,” *Dialog*, 1973, no. 2.

Górski was supported by several other representatives of the literary and scholarly world, but what they said did not affect the position of those opting for freedom in theatrical productions. The latter gave a twofold justification to their stand. Some declared openly that a drama gave them only an impulse for creating a completely autonomous work of art. So after the first night of the *Akropolis* in 1966 Jerzy Grotowski called his undertaking "an attempt to build up a spectacle as a work inspired by the drama but being autonomous, a sort of reaction to the impulse given by the text."⁶¹ At the same time others, while speaking ironically of "the faithfulness to the author," referred to the faithfulness to the "essence" or "sense" of the play, expressed their intention to transpose it into contemporary ideas (e.g. the statements by Adam Hanuszkiewicz). Krystian Lupa in the programme to *Powrót Odysa* (*The Return of Odysseus*, Cracow 1981) treating the drama text as "a palimpsest," "veil" tries to be loyal to the author's, Wyspiański's feelings during the act of creation.

Zbigniew Osiński tried to give a theoretical foundation to such a position in his dissertation "Przekład tekstu literackiego na język teatru" (The Translation of a Literary Text into the Language of Theatre). He distinguished here three models of theatre according to the kind of their links to the drama: 1) realistic model: a substantial translation concerned with the substance of the literary text; 2) antirealistic model: a substantial translation concerned with the theatrical substance; 3) a creative model: functional translation concerned with the analogy of structures (structural homology).

Without going into the details of this conception it would be enough to recall the writer's conclusions: each of those models is in its own way faithful to the text—because there can be also "faithfulness through negation, negation of literature" in the anti-realistic theatre or through the creation of dialectical antinomies and "a jump into opposition" in the theatre of analogy or structural homology (as can be seen the writer identifies casually those two terms). Apparently Osiński is playing here freely with the sense of the word "faithfulness." It also seems that the borderline between

⁶¹ Quoted after: Z. Osiński, *Grotowski i jego Laboratorium* (*G. and His Laboratory*), Warszawa 1980, p. 292.

the antirealistic model of denying the drama and the homological model based on the dialectics of antinomies have been traced here very freely. The fact that the production by Schiller of Mickiewicz's *Forefathers* and that of *Akropolis* by Grotowski have been included in the third model indicates that the writer puts into it all the varieties of theatrical translation he does accept.

Stefania Skwarczyńska, too, modified her initial stand when she acknowledged the artistic validity of productions which are against the ideological message of the drama text, change the poetic world presented in it into another one, and even, while keeping some fragments of "the verbal material," they subordinate them to the fictional motives which are antithetical to the content of the drama text and to its ideological tonality. The author concludes by suggesting that an object of evolution can be only concrete productions and not the relationships between drama as a theatrical proposition and productions in general.⁶²

Though with different justifications, more and more common has been becoming the practice characterized by Osiński in the words: "The contemporary theatre can do [...] with each text all, or almost all, it does want."⁶³ Also a growing acceptance has been gaining a statement by Puzyna, expressed by him back in 1957:

If the spectator gets full artistic satisfaction, then we can subscribe to the spectacle with our mind at rest. And it will not matter whether the production is or is not fully adequate to the author's textual vision.⁶⁴

Yes, this is true. But also justified were the postulates of those who wanted to see among a variety of productions such which remained faithful to the theatrical proposition contained in the text and get from them artistic satisfaction. The director's freedom did not bring after all the results which always fulfilled the expectations of its early advocates. Today Puzyna having stated

⁶² "O typologię dzieł sztuki teatralnej ze względu na stopień ich odchylenia od dramatycznych tekstów" (For a Typology of Theatrical Productions Considering the Degree of Their Deviation from the Texts of Drama), *Acta Universitatis Lodzensis. Folia Litteraria* 2, 1981.

⁶³ "Z problematyki scenariusza teatralnego," p. 169.

⁶⁴ "Rozmowy o dramacie. Autor a inscenizator" (Talks on the Drama. Author and Director), *Dialog*, 1957, no. 1.

that "during the last decade the texts have become in the theatre only a groundwork, material for spectacle and not something that is 'faithfully' realized" adds with melancholy: "this is a Pyrrhic victory because it has revealed such inanity with the directors that now we do not know which was better."⁶⁵ We may therefore expect that in accordance with the usual rhythm of cultural changes we shall witness in the coming years, both in practice and the theory accompanying it, a return to the principle of faithfulness of theatrical productions to the theatrical propositions included in literary texts; the first signs of it can already be seen.⁶⁶

Transl. by *Ludwik Wiewiórkowski*

⁶⁵ "Firma 'Dialog'" (The Firm "Dialogue"), *Dialog*, 1981, no. 5, p. 97.

⁶⁶ This is what the distinguished director Kazimierz Dejmek says ("W stronę teatru polskiego"—Towards the Polish Theatre, *Kierunki*, 1981, no. 22): "In my opinion, director is the interpretator of a work of drama as conductor is of a piece of music. Both materialize the respective works, make them accessible to the public [...] I would suggest that the young musicians (who envy the men of the theatre their freedom of interpretation) tried to treat Mozart or Brahms as the avant-garde directors do it with the works of theatrical authors. I suppose that the first step in this direction would make them realize at once the whole stupidity and wickedness of such ways [...] There is also a more modest approach. This modesty consists in the 'modernization' [...] Apart from 'modernization' our avant-gardists are in the habit of using what has been called inaccurately 'the topographical direction' [...] Through a clash between the play's plot and the unexpected setting result unusual effects which fill with delight the critics and snobs. I have too little courage and too much respect for the theatrical author, therefore I am not an avant-gardist."